

GANGS 4 TUITION

Keep6ixOrg is a not-for-profit organization with a mission to provide the highest standard of mentorship, workshops and capacity building sessions to individuals involved in the justice system. The Gangs 4 Tuition program provides individuals with the necessary support for a successful transition to a more positive lifestyle, through the acquisition of transferable skill sets and training, leading to employment and sustainable, self-sufficient living. This program is a collaborative effort with multiple community partners, providing support in the areas of social reintegration and mental health to ensure individuals are prepared for success.

Social Reintegration Component

T.R.A.P

The Transition & Recidivism Action Plan (T.R.A.P) is a new and innovative program that addresses known risks for recidivism and offending among at-risk youth and high risk offenders using initiatives that highlight specific factors associated with violence and gangs in marginalized communities where these issues previously exist, or are emerging.

T.R.A.P is facilitated in three (3) Modules, with six (6) classes per Module, over 18 weeks. Classes are held weekly for a duration of 2 hours.

Evaluation

Observation Report – Attendance, participation and engagement

Self-Reflection – Template completion and writing submission

Creative Presentation – Poem, music, songwriting, story telling

Cover Letter & Resume Writing – Professional

Overview

T.R.A.P utilizes evidence-based models and practices to address known risk factors to reduce violence, offending and re-offending among at-risk youth and high-risk offenders, while promoting decarceration and restorative justice. T.R.A.P educates participants to develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve a successful reintegration.

T.R.A.P's design focuses on the shortcomings, issues and barriers faced by individuals looking to exit a criminal lifestyle, or to acknowledge and change negative and antisocial behaviors. Some examples are, but not limited to, the following: Limited Employment Opportunities; Barriers to Education; Culturally Relevant Programming; Lack of Resources; Limited Access to Pertinent Information; Inadequate Programs and Absence of Authentic Mentors.

We address a variety of areas from lack of education and work experience, to conflict resolution and communication. T.R.A.P. provides employment training, pathways to education, and conflict resolution and communication skills with the unique ability to reach their audience through relatable life experiences and examples to develop a tailored and personalized action plan for participants to follow.

Background

T.R.A.P. was designed by Tyler Murphy, an individual with an in-depth understanding of the barriers faced by those exiting the justice system or “street life”. Today, Tyler is a devoted father, husband and a licensed paralegal with a career in the legal field and a positive outlook for the future; however, he was not always this man.

Tyler became entrenched in a criminal lifestyle at a very young age. During that period in his life, he found himself homeless, sleeping in stairwells and in and out of the justice system labelled as a gang member. His involvement escalated and he was eventually caught for more serious offences, and ended up in custody for a significant period. Once released, Tyler was unable to leave his past behind and found himself more heavily involved in the street life, this time on a bigger, more organized, and dangerous scale. He was arrested again.”

Tyler realized that the destructive path he was on was going to end in one of two ways: death or prison. He changed his way of thinking and turned his life around. Only two months after being released from custody, and with only a grade 8 education, Tyler enrolled in a recognized college as a mature student. He successfully obtained a Business Fundamentals diploma and graduated from an accredited paralegal diploma program, with hopes of becoming a licensed paralegal.

Because he had a serious criminal record, for Tyler, becoming a licensed paralegal would require more than just passing an exam. He had to go through a good character investigation and subsequent hearing with the Law Society of Upper Canada (now named Law Society of Ontario). Tyler represented himself throughout the investigation process and at the final hearing. He was granted his Paralegal license in 2015.

Tyler has overcome significant stigmas, obstacles and barriers throughout his own reintegration process. He has documented, analyzed and reflected on the shortcomings, issues and obstacles faced by someone looking to exit a criminal lifestyle, or gang, while attempting to acknowledge and change negative and antisocial behaviours, and has applied this knowledge and experience to the design and development of the T.R.A.P. program.

Tyler’s passion is in criminal justice, facilitating transitions to a positive lifestyle and community reintegration, and exploring recidivism reduction strategies. He strives to be an example to those already in that life, or heading down that path, that you can change the direction of your life and make a positive future. Redemption is real.

Mental Health Component

ForGiving ForRestoring Canada (FFC)

FFC is a Canadian not-for-profit organization partnered with Fundación para la Reconciliación in Colombia and Forgiveness International in North America to promote the advancement of a pedagogy and culture of care, forgiveness and restoration. We offer an intensive program, known as ESPERE, on the processes of forgiveness and restoration to address and prevent conflict for families, individuals and groups of all ages, cultures and geographies. Participants walk away from the course having achieved a certain level of personal growth, while entire communities have benefited from the healing capacity of the program.

ESPERE is a 42-hour, 12-module program. The program generally takes place over two 3-day weekends, however, can be tailored in many different ways to meet group needs, including virtual delivery.

Evaluation

Facilitators guide participants through the program's 12 modules step-by-step, with the first six (6) modules focused on forgiveness (liberation from the impact of harm), and the latter six (6) on restoration (righting relationships). Each module consists of the introduction of a learning piece, plenary exercises, discussion in small trust groups, reflective journaling, and creative exercises designed to add meaning and context to the presented theory.

Throughout the program, participants are encouraged to reflect on and work through a personal case where forgiveness may need to be applied.

Participants receive a certificate of completion at the end of each six-module segment.

Overview

FFC's work is based on the belief that forgiveness is a skill that can be learned and applied to help overcome the resentment felt by those engaged in conflict or who suffered significant harm or violence. Forgiveness can discharge the negative feelings that anchor people in victimhood and can disarm the urgency of revenge in their search for justice or resolution. The experiential workshops offered by FFC introduce ESPERE's revolutionary pedagogical model teaching the practice of forgiveness.

Background

Following his work with FARC guerillas in Colombia, and the country's failed peace-negotiations in 1998, Leonel Narvaez and the *Fundación para la Reconciliación* founded ESPERE (Spanish for "hope" and an acronym for "EScuelas de PERdón y REconciliación" or Schools of Forgiveness and Reconciliation). The program has been recognized by the UNESCO Education for Peace Prize for its significant contribution to peacebuilding in Latin America. Since 2002, more than two million people in 22 countries have taken a personal journey of liberation from the impact of violence or conflict in their lives and on their communities.

The basis of the theory and methodology of ESPERE lies in the simple principle that human beings can be trained for violence or benevolence, for retaliation or compassion, that forgiveness is an art that can be learned and that this process contains countless benefits for the forgivers and their community.

Participants learn about the secondary wounds of violence and injustice, which are often unaddressed by human rights and other liberal peace reconciliation practices. When harmed, both victim and perpetrators are damaged in three important spheres of their lives: their self-confidence, sociability and significance of life. Moreover, when left unattended, these wounds can foster negative emotions of rage, resentment, and revenge, which in turn can further the cycle of violence.

Forgiveness is presented as the best alternative to overcome the subjective interpretations we apply to our offender in justifying our anger and hatred, which anchor us in victimhood. By cleansing the pain and healing the wounds of violence, memories can become less rigid, and the victim's horizon of hope and agency can be reinstated. The results of forgiveness are new understandings that serve to restore people and right relationships.

Expected FFC outcomes: Empower participants to break the cycle of violence that may exist in their lives by changing their negative narratives, helping to restore their self-confidence, sociability and significance of life, and equipping them with the emotional tools necessary to right their relationships with themselves, others and the community at large.

Program Implementation

Individuals joining the Gangs 4 Tuition program will be required to complete a brief assessment to ensure that the programming is tailored to their needs. Support will commence by means of the T.R.A.P. program, to create the framework for their transition. Upon successful completion of the T.R.A.P. program, individuals can enroll in the more advanced FFC program. Keep6ixOrg will work alongside program coordinators, to pair graduates with partners – LiUNA, CrueTV, J.A.D.A Trucking Empire, to commence job training and secure employment.

Individuals will continue to receive support throughout their employment, to ensure successful reintegration and recidivism reduction. Keep6ixOrg recognizes that success relies on communities working together consistently and intentionally. We look forward to the journey ahead!

If you have any questions or require any additional information, feel free to contact:

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