

Building Safer Communities Fund

Evaluation Report: 2023 - 2026



Working together to meet the needs of all Londoners.

Acknowledgements

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We extend our sincere thanks to the six funded organizations that designed and delivered projects to address gun and gang violence in London. Their leadership, expertise, and commitment to the young people of London are the reason this work has had an impact.

We also thank the six grassroots organizations who received seed funding and brought programming closer to the communities most affected by gun and gang violence. Their deep local knowledge, trusted relationships, and reach into communities expanded the impact of this work.

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Section 1.0

Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

In March 2022, the federal Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness announced new federal support to prevent gun and gang violence through the \$250 million Building Safer Communities Fund (BSCF), administered via Public Safety Canada. The fund is intended to help municipalities and Indigenous communities tackle the root causes of gun and gang violence by focusing on programs that support children, youth, and young adults who are involved in or at risk of gun violence and gang involvement.

The City of London received \$2,783,933 in funding over a three-year period toward the implementation of projects selected through London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant.

1.2 About London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant

London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant is being administered through the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan.

London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant supports the development of new, youth-focused prevention, intervention, and transformation programs aimed at reducing gun and gang violence in London. Its objectives are to:

- Create actionable steps to contribute to community safety and well-being.
- Effectively address risk factors that may result in a young person engaging in gun and gang violence.
- Enhance protective factors that may result in a young person refraining from or exiting involvement in gun and gang violence.
- Identify and support innovative, evidence-based practices and programs to prevent or address youth involvement in gun and gang violence.

In November 2023, Municipal Council approved funding for six projects. In addition to these six projects, 6 grassroots organizations received seed funding to support community-based outreach and engagement. Programs operated from December 2023 to March 2026.

Recognizing that funding alone is rarely enough to deliver lasting change, the grant was designed to act as an integrated model that paired project funding with a range of additional supports. These supports were intended to strengthen the capacity of funded organizations so that the benefits of the investment would extend beyond the funding period and contribute to a stronger local network of organizations supporting young people. Supports offered to funded organizations included:

- **Group capacity-building workshops** on topics central to the grant's objectives, including restorative practices, anti-racism and anti-oppression, diversity and inclusion, and youth gun and gang violence prevention.
- **One-on-one capacity building** tailored to each organization's specific needs and stage of development.
- **Evaluation support**, including help designing evaluations, developing tools, collecting and analyzing data, and reporting on impact.
- **Honoraria funding** to recognize the time and contributions of participants, community members, and lived-experience partners.
- **Translation and interpretation support** to help organizations engage with the communities they serve.

In addition to these supports, the City of London contributed in-kind backbone support in alignment with the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The City of London provided the coordination, oversight, and connective infrastructure that allowed the funded projects, grassroots partners, and capacity-building supports to operate as a coherent initiative. Together, these investments reflect the City of London's commitment to addressing gun and gang violence not only by funding programs but also by strengthening the conditions, partnerships, and organizational capacity that enable this work to succeed over the long term.

1.3 Project Partners

London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant was delivered through partnerships with organizations across London that work closely with children, youth, and families. Six organizations received project funding to design and deliver new youth-focused prevention, intervention, and transformation programs:

- 13 Moons Land Based Learning
- John Howard Society of London and District
- Northwest London Resource Centre
- South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre
- St. Leonard's Community Services London and Region
- Youth Opportunities Unlimited

In addition to the six grant-funded projects, six grassroots organizations received seed funding to support community-based outreach and engagement with populations most affected by gun and gang violence. These organizations are deeply rooted in the communities they serve and helped extend the reach of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant. The seed-funded organizations were:

- Igbo Association of London and Area
- Korean Society of London
- London Muslim Mosque
- Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support Integration
- Now for Tomorrow A South Sudanese Wellness Network
- Somali Association of London Ontario

Together, these funded and seed-funded organizations formed a network of trusted, community-based partners whose collective reach and local knowledge were central to the delivery and impact of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant.

1.4 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to present the findings from the evaluation of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant across all years of the initiative. The report documents the reach of the funded projects, the impacts experienced by the children, youth, families, and community members who participated, and the outcomes of the training and capacity-building supports provided to funded organizations.

Findings are intended to demonstrate the collective impact of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant, support evidence-informed decision-making, and inform the future design, delivery, and funding of youth-focused gun and gang violence prevention efforts in London. The report may also contribute to broader planning and policy discussions related to community safety and well-being.

A short [video](#) accompanies this report, sharing reflections from the grant and seed-funded organizations and showcasing young people engaged in programs at the heart of this work.

Section 2.0

Evaluation Approach

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation was conducted to assess the impact of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant across all years of the initiative. It examines how the funded projects addressed the risk factors associated with gun and gang violence, strengthened the protective factors that help young people refrain from or exit involvement in violence, and contributed to community safety and well-being in London.

The evaluation looks at impact at two levels. The first is the impact on the children, youth, families, and community members who participated in the funded projects. The second is the impact of the capacity-building support provided to funded organizations, intended to strengthen their ability to design, deliver, and evaluate effective programs beyond the funding period.

2.2 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant used a mixed-methods approach, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data collected across the funded projects. This approach was designed to capture what the projects delivered and the outcomes they achieved, as well as how participants experienced the programs.

A range of data collection tools were used across the funded projects, including:

- **Participant surveys:** Surveys administered to children, youth, parents, and caregivers to capture self-reported changes across a range of risk and protective factors, as well as satisfaction with the programs.
- **Program data:** Administrative and service delivery data on program reach, participation, and retention.
- **Workshop and training feedback:** Feedback collected from participants in capacity-building workshops and training sessions to assess satisfaction and knowledge change.
- **Stories of impact:** Qualitative narratives, collected using a structured template, describing participants' experiences and the difference the programs made. Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Quantitative data was aggregated to assess program reach, participation, and the extent to which participants reported changes across risk and protective factors. Where possible, results were combined across projects with comparable data. Throughout the report, “n=” denotes the number of individuals who responded to a specific data point.

Qualitative data, including open-ended survey responses and stories of impact, were analyzed thematically. These themes, along with illustrative quotes and stories, are presented throughout the report alongside the quantitative findings.

Together, these data sources allow the evaluation to present measurable results alongside the lived experiences of the people the projects served.

2.3 Limitations and Considerations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings in this report:

- **Variation across projects:** The funded projects served different populations, used different program models, and collected data in different ways. Not all projects measured the same outcomes, and not all participants took part in every data collection activity.
- **Self-reported data:** Much of the data is self-reported and may be influenced by recall bias or individual perceptions.
- **Varying stages of participation:** Participants were engaged in the programs for varying lengths of time and were at different stages in their progress at the time of data collection, which may affect the outcomes observed.

Despite these limitations, the use of multiple data sources across many projects strengthens the overall analysis and provides a comprehensive picture of the impact of London’s Building Safer Communities Fund Grant.

Section 3.0

Snapshot of Key Findings

Program Access and Availability



132 safe and positive spaces were created for young people

5,200 young people were engaged in violence prevention and intervention activities

93% (n=491) planned to use what they learned in the future

"It added something for me to look forward to, and to stand for." ~Youth Participant

Skills and Self-Development



89% (n=30) learned strategies to cope with tough or stressful situations

90% (n=63) understood why it is important to take responsibility for their actions

92% (n=24) reported getting better at understanding both sides of a conflict

"It has helped me express my feelings, to be myself, and to always stay positive." ~Youth Participant

Connection and Belonging



80% (n=49) felt more connected to their community

83% (n=35) felt more included in their community

91% (n=30) learned about places or ways to find positive community

"Today is my first day here, but I already feel super welcomed, and everyone is actually really nice!" ~Youth Participant

Health, Safety, and Opportunity



79% (n=50)
reported being
more open to
learning in school

91% (n=60)
had an improved
understanding of
the risks of gun and
gang involvement

93% (n=61)
learned new
practical life skills

"I love this program because I learned about positive things and the negative things for my life." ~Youth Participant

Parents and Caregivers



58 parents and
caregivers were
engaged in
programming

89% (n=17)
of parents and
caregivers felt better
able to support their
child

100% (n=21)
of parents and
caregivers learned
more positive ways
to deal with conflicts

"I feel like I better understand what my child is going through and how to help!" ~Parent/Caregiver

Collaboration, Training, and Capacity Building



35 partnerships
were developed
across the funded
projects

208 individuals
engaged in learning
and training
opportunities

93% (n=55)
learned strategies
for communicating
the dangers and
consequences
of gun and gang
violence to youth

98% (n=194)
of workshop
participants were
satisfied with the
workshops

"It introduced us to new partners. We learned about them and how we can work together." ~Program Partner

Stories of Impact

Meeting Youth Where They Are

For many Indigenous young people, both in rural First Nation communities and in urban London, the barriers to taking part in violence prevention programming were significant. Cost, transportation, and a lack of culturally safe spaces could keep them from ever walking through the door.

One program set out to remove those barriers. Land-based learning, weekly youth nights, and weekend drop-ins were all offered free of charge. Nutritious traditional meals were provided, transportation was arranged, and all necessary equipment was supplied so that a young person's circumstances would not determine whether they could attend. Just as importantly, the programming was culturally grounded, trauma-informed, flexible, and hands-on, allowing youth to participate at their own comfort level.

The result was consistent access to safe, positive spaces for hundreds of young people. By meeting youth where they were and clearing away the practical obstacles, the program created not just access, but a genuine sense of cultural identity and belonging.

~13 Moons Land Based Learning

When a Community Comes Together to Rebuild

In an elementary school. At one elementary school, staff noticed a pattern of conflict, exclusion, and hurtful behaviour among older students. It led to physical aggression, spread into online spaces, and created tension among parents. A restorative approaches team facilitated honest conversations about everyday jokes and comments, respect and human rights, and the consequences of students' choices. Students then co-created a Classroom Agreement, written in their own words, naming the values they wanted to guide their class. What began as conflict became a shared vision for their classroom community.

In a secondary school. At one secondary school, accusations by one youth escalated into an assault against another. With support, both students took accountability and agreed to attend school without interfering with each other. In a separate case, information shared online without permission led to retaliation. Some made amends and repaired relationships. Others received apologies and chose to step back from those friendships respectfully, without violence. Resolving these conflicts let students attend school without fear for their safety or wellbeing.

~St. Leonard's Community Services London and Region

Section 4.0

Youth Results

4.1 Program Uptake, Access, and Satisfaction

4.1.1 Availability and Accessibility of Programs

Finding: London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant created new, accessible programs and safe spaces for young people across the city.

- **24** new programs were implemented
- **132** safe and positive spaces were created

"The welcoming atmosphere of the program. All staff were very kind, knowledgeable, and passionate about running the program."

~Youth Participant

4.1.2 Uptake and Engagement in Programs

Finding: The funded projects reached and engaged young people.

- **5,200** young people were engaged in violence prevention and intervention activities
- **88% (n=68)** reported improved access to programs and services

"I have something to look forward to on the weekends now."

~Youth Participant

4.1.3 Satisfaction with Programs and Interventions

Finding: Young people reported high levels of satisfaction with the programs and interventions.

- **76% (n=553)** indicated overall satisfaction with the programs they took part in
- **93% (n=491)** shared that they planned to use what they learned in the future

"It's been amazing! Can't wait to continue in it!"

~Youth Participant

What This Means

- **The BSCF Grant created real, accessible opportunities.** New programs and safe spaces were established across the city, and efforts to reduce barriers, such as transportation, helped young people get through the door.
- **Young people showed up and stayed.** Strong participation and a high retention rate suggest they were not only willing to engage but found enough value to stay involved over time.
- **Young people valued the experience.** High satisfaction, along with participants' intentions to use what they learned and recommend the programs to peers, points to programming that was relevant and worthwhile.

These results show meaningful demand for youth-focused prevention and intervention programming and lay the foundation for the participant outcomes explored in the sections that follow.

Story of Impact

Frank Reconnects with Culture and Support

When Frank joined the program in 2025, he did not yet have stable housing following a period of incarceration. Until that was resolved, it was difficult to focus on anything else, so his caseworker started there, helping him connect with the right agencies to secure housing. Once that was in place, the two began meeting regularly to work through topics such as conflict resolution, positive communication, and emotion management.

Frank's caseworker was also Indigenous, which shaped their work together. Sessions often closed with a smudge and drew on teachings such as the Seven Grandfather Teachings. When Frank mentioned a healing camp he had attended before, his caseworker encouraged him to return and provided bus tickets so that transportation would not be a barrier. By the time their sessions ended, Frank chose to continue counselling with the organization, noting that he valued the ongoing support.

~John Howard Society of London and District

4.2 Skills and Self-Development

4.2.1 Communication

Finding: Young people developed stronger communication skills, including how to express themselves and listen to others.

- **78% (n=58)** had increased understanding of how to improve their communication
- **88% (n=16)** reported getting better at listening to and understanding others' points of view
- **90% (n=46)** shared they were getting better at working positively together with others

"I made new friends, and I learned how to communicate with people."

~Youth Participant

4.2.2 Conflict Resolution and Problem-Solving

Finding: Young people built practical skills for resolving conflict and working through problems.

- **79% (n=82)** reported they learned more positive ways to deal with conflicts
- **79% (n=75)** felt better equipped to resolve conflicts without violence
- **87% (n=73)** learned valuable restorative conflict resolution skills
- **88% (n=36)** noted getting better at calmly working through tough problems
- **89% (n=31)** learned how to deal with hurtful behaviours
- **92% (n=24)** reported getting better at understanding both sides of a conflict

"There are appropriate ways to tackle conflict instead of responding with emotions such as anger."

~Youth Participant

4.2.3 Emotional Regulation and Coping Strategies

Finding: Young people improved their ability to understand and manage their emotions and to cope with stress.

- **79% (n=113)** reported getting better at understanding and managing their feelings and emotions
- **89% (n=30)** learned strategies to cope with tough or stressful situations

"I felt more comfortable and relaxed, which helped me stay calm."

~Youth Participant

4.2.4 Self-Identity

Finding: Young people developed a stronger sense of who they are, including deeper connection to their culture.

- **65% (n=55)** reported increased involvement with their culture
- **73% (n=62)** indicated they had a strong sense of identity
- **82% (n=32)** said the program helped them better understand who they are
- **100% (n=10)** learned more about Indigenous culture and traditions
- **100% (n=10)** felt more connected to their cultural heritage and traditions

"Personal growth. Learning self-identity and being proud of where I come from, knowing how to use what I've learned today in the future for myself and my own family."

~Youth Participant

4.2.5 Self-Confidence

Finding: Young people reported increased confidence and self-esteem.

- **75% (n=79)** learned where self-esteem comes from and how to increase it
- **79% (n=74)** reported improved self-esteem
- **84% (n=36)** felt more confident in themselves

"I have become more confident and able to express my opinion and participate without fear, something I was not comfortable doing before."

~Youth Participant

4.2.6 Pro-Social Behaviours

Finding: Young people grew in their ability to work well with others and take responsibility for their actions.

- **73% (n=36)** reported getting along better with other people
- **81% (n=77)** understood the importance of taking accountability for their actions
- **90% (n=63)** understood why it is important to take responsibility for their actions

"I learned the skill of taking responsibility and working confidently, and how to deal with different situations in a better way. This helped me a lot in my studies and future life."

~Youth Participant

4.2.7 Peer Mentor and Youth Leader Development

Finding: Young people who served as peer mentors developed leadership skills and grew in their confidence to support others.

- **91% (n=52)** reflected positively on their experience as a peer mentor
- **94% (n=16)** found the training they received useful in their role
- **94% (n=15)** felt better able to support others as a result of being a peer mentor
- **100% (n=37)** reported satisfaction with their experience in the program

"Being able to help others learn and grow while also growing and learning myself."

~Peer Mentor

What This Means

- **Young people built practical skills.** Across communication, conflict resolution, and emotional regulation, participants reported learning concrete tools they could use, like working through problems calmly, listening to other perspectives, and managing difficult emotions.
- **They grew in confidence and identity.** Many reported a stronger sense of who they are, deeper connection to their culture, and greater confidence in themselves, internal strengths that help young people resist negative influences.
- **Some stepped into leadership.** Youth who served as peer mentors not only supported others but grew themselves, developing leadership skills and the confidence to guide their peers.

These results suggest that the funded projects helped young people develop the personal skills and self-belief that make up some of the strongest protective factors against involvement in gun and gang violence.

Story of Impact

Becoming One Person Again

At the start, many of the young people in the program were, in a sense, two different people. There was the version of themselves they became around gang members and bullies, and the version that showed up when they were in positive situations and felt safe. They often lacked the skills and the confidence to imagine themselves as successful adults, and negative relationships pulled them in the wrong direction.

Over the course of the funding, staff worked steadily on life skills, building self-esteem, learning what healthy relationships look and feel like, managing anger, and communicating better. The program gave young people somewhere to go, a positive space that reduced their exposure to risk while strengthening their relationships with peers and the wider community.

The change showed up in small, real ways. One youth shared, “I have learned stuff from being here. Teamwork, kindness and friendship.” In the school-based programs, staff saw young people joining conversations respectfully, sharing more, and attending more often.

~South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre

4.3 Connection and Belonging

4.3.1 Healthy Relationships and Trust

Finding: Young people learned how to build positive, healthy relationships and formed meaningful connections through the programs.

- **78% (n=121)** said they now have the skills to build positive, healthy relationships
- **1,930** young people were connected with a mentor

“In this program, I have learned how to make friends, because everyone here is very nice and patient.”

~Youth Participant

4.3.2 Community Connection

Finding: Young people felt more connected to their communities and more aware of the positive supports available to them.

- **80% (n=49)** felt more connected to their community
- **83% (n=35)** felt more included in their community
- **91% (n=30)** learned about places or ways to find positive community

“It’s a great way to meet new people, make friends, and be in the community.”

~Youth Participant

What This Means

- **Relationships are the foundation.** Young people built trust, formed friendships, and connected with mentors and caring adults, the kinds of positive relationships that protect against involvement in violence.
- **Belonging took root.** Most participants reported feeling more included and more connected to their communities, and many said they felt less alone, a meaningful shift for young people who often start out isolated.
- **Connection spreads.** As youth felt they belonged, some brought others in, extending the program's reach and reinforcing a sense of community that is hard to build but powerful once established.

Combined, the funded projects did more than deliver activities. They created spaces where young people felt they belonged, strengthening one of the most important protective factors against gun and gang violence.

Story of Impact

Finding Belonging Through Sport

Several young people entered the program with few positive peer connections and limited access to safe, prosocial spaces. Many were carrying real isolation and finding it hard to manage their emotions, which left them more vulnerable to negative influences and to unhealthy ways of coping.

These youth began attending a group-based program regularly. It was a consistent, supportive space focused on building skills like communication, teamwork, and emotional regulation through sport. Over time, it became a place where they could connect with peers and build relationships of their own.

As they kept coming, the youth developed strong peer connections and a sense of community that had not been there before. Staff saw real improvements in their emotional regulation, greater confidence in group settings, and more positive interactions with others. Some began inviting others to join, helping shape a welcoming and inclusive environment. For these young people, the program strengthened the protective factors that matter most: positive peer relationships, a sense of belonging, and healthier ways of coping.

~Youth Opportunities Unlimited

4.4 Health, Safety, and Opportunity

4.4.1 Awareness of Gun and Gang Violence Risks

Finding: Young people gained a clearer understanding of the impacts, risks, and consequences of gun and gang violence.

- **75% (n=48)** reported less involvement with police
- **91% (n=60)** had an improved understanding of the risk of gun and gang involvement
- **91% (n=60)** had an increased understanding of the impacts of gun and gang violence
- **91% (n=60)** had an increased understanding of the consequences of gun and gang violence

"The most important thing I learned about this workshop was resolving conflicts without violence."

~Youth Participant

4.4.2 School Engagement

Finding: Young people became more engaged in school, including improved attendance and openness to learning.

- **70% (n=59)** said they built a stronger sense of school community
- **70% (n=33)** stated they attend school more often
- **79% (n=50)** reported being more open to learning in school

"I am showing up to school more."

~Youth Participant

4.4.3 Employment, Career, and Recreation

Finding: Young people explored career paths, interests, and strengths.

- **79% (n=26)** learned about possible career options related to their interests and strengths
- **88% (n=64)** rated their overall experience at a career fair positively
- **89% (n=56)** learned about next steps in a career path

"I learned about new path options, and it was very interactive."

~Youth Participant

4.4.4 Life Skills

Finding: Young people developed practical, hands-on life skills they could use at home and in daily life.

- **71% (n=15)** shared they can follow a simple recipe or make recipes at home
- **93% (n=61)** learned new practical life skills like following a recipe and cooking, self-care strategies, using tools and woodworking, and traditional land-based skills

"I think cooking has helped me develop skills for the future."

~Youth Participant

4.4.5 Well-Being

Finding: Young people reported improvements in their mental health, well-being, and overall outlook on life.

- **71% (n=65)** reported improved mental health
- **80% (n=32)** felt their overall well-being, including health, eating, and sleep, had gotten better
- **80% (n=69)** reported a better outlook on life

"Participating in this process has made me feel more confident, emotionally stable, and way happier than I was at the start."

~Youth Participant

4.4.6 Online Safety

Finding: Young people learned how to stay safer online and understand the risks of sharing information on social media.

- **72% (n=245)** better understood how to be safe online or on social media
- **72% (n=245)** better understood how to get help with conflict or bullying online
- **73% (n=250)** better understood the possible risks of sharing information online

"I learned how to safely use social media and protect personal information."

~Youth Participant

What This Means

- **Young people increased their awareness.** Most reported a clearer grasp of the impacts, risks, and consequences of gun and gang violence, and many reported less contact with police, one signal of the project's purpose.
- **They reconnected with school and opportunity.** Improvements in school attendance, openness to learning, career awareness, and recreation reflect young people building positive pathways and taking a stake in their own futures.
- **Their well-being improved.** Gains in mental health, outlook, life skills, and online safety indicate that young people are healthier, safer, and better equipped to navigate daily life.

The results demonstrate that funded projects strengthened the conditions, awareness, stability, opportunity, and well-being that help steer young people away from gun and gang violence.

Story of Impact

A Place to Come Back To

When one young person first connected, they were facing a lot at once: difficulty managing emotions, communication barriers, ongoing peer conflict, involvement with delinquent peers, and strained relationships at home.

Over roughly a year and a half, they became a consistent part of the program, attending regularly. Progress was not always a straight line, and there were ongoing challenges along the way. But with repeated exposure to skills-based programming and trusted relationships with staff and peer mentors, real change began to show. The youth started to pause, manage their emotions, and talk things through rather than reacting or shutting down. Hands-on activities like woodworking, gardening, and cooking gave them positive outlets, and they began bringing some of those skills home, including preparing their own meals.

By the end of the period, the young person had built stronger relationships with trusted adults and peers, healthier ways of handling conflict, and steady involvement in positive activities. Today, they describe the program as a safe space, somewhere they feel supported and can turn to for guidance when things get hard.

~Northwest London Resource Centre

Section 5.0

Parent and Caregiver Results

5.1 Impacts on Parents and Caregivers

5.1.1 Engagement and Satisfaction

Finding: Parents and caregivers engaged with the programs and reported high satisfaction with the family-focused sessions.

- **58** parents and caregivers were engaged in programming
- **89% (n=24)** reported satisfaction with the family-focused sessions they took part in

"This workshop has been really helpful for me."

~Parent/Caregiver

5.1.2 Capacity to Support Young People

Finding: Parents and caregivers felt better equipped to understand and support their children.

- **89% (n=17)** felt better able to support their child or young person
- **92% (n=11)** learned self-care strategies and ways to manage frustration as a caregiver

"I learned tools to deal with challenging behaviour."

~Parent/Caregiver

5.1.3 Conflict Resolution and Communication Skills

Finding: Parents and caregivers developed the same conflict resolution and communication skills their young people were learning.

- **86% (n=21)** reported getting better at listening to and understanding others' point of view
- **90% (n=21)** learned their conflict style and how they react to conflict
- **92% (n=24)** reported getting better at calmly working through tough problems
- **100% (n=21)** learned more positive ways to deal with conflicts they can use to support their child or other young people

"I appreciated learning about my interaction style."

~Parent/Caregiver

5.1.4 Observed Changes in Their Young People

Finding: Parents and caregivers noticed positive changes in their young people at home.

- **82% (n=14)** saw a change in the way their child communicates
- **100% (n=11)** noticed their young person was more prepared to make positive choices about their future

"My son's confidence and pride in our culture and himself grew."

~Parent/Caregiver

What This Means

- **Parents and caregivers grew more capable.** They reported feeling better able to support their children, manage their own frustration, and respond to challenging behaviours.
- **Families learned together.** When parents and caregivers built the same conflict resolution and communication skills as their young people, those skills were more likely to take hold at home.
- **The changes were visible at home.** Parents and caregivers noticed their young people communicating better, growing in confidence, and making more positive choices.

These results suggest that supporting the adults around a young person multiplies the impact of the programs, reinforcing positive change in the places where young people spend most of their time.

Story of Impact

Bringing the Whole Family into the Conversation

When the organization first began running conflict resolution workshops, they were offered only to youth and peer mentors to help young people manage conflict within the program. But as the sessions went on, the youth kept sharing something the staff had not expected: much of their conflict was occurring at home, with parents and siblings.

It became clear that while the young people were building valuable skills, their families lacked access to the same tools, making it harder to carry those skills into everyday life. In response, the workshops were expanded to include parents, caregivers, and siblings, so that everyone involved in family conflict could learn the same strategies for healthy communication and resolution.

Bringing the whole family into the conversation strengthened family capacity, reduced misunderstandings, and helped young people apply what they had learned more consistently at home. By equipping youth and families together, the program created more lasting change than working with young people alone could have achieved.

~Northwest London Resource Centre

Section 6.0

Funded Organization Results

6.1 Collaboration and Partnership

6.1.1 Service Coordination

Finding: The funded projects built extensive partnerships and coordinated services to wrap support around young people.

- **35** partnerships were developed, including with specialists in gun and gang violence prevention (e.g., London Police Service), grassroots organizations, and community organizations
- **16** collaborative solutions or approaches were mobilized and co-implemented

“I like how quickly the team responded and how positive they were with staff, students, and parents to restore and repair a challenging safe schools situation.”

~Program Partner

What This Means

- **Partnerships expanded what was possible.** Organizations developed dozens of partnerships, including with specialists and equity-denied groups, extending the reach and depth of support available to young people.
- **Coordination filled gaps.** Working together, partners connect young people to services no single organization could provide on its own and reach youth who might otherwise have fallen through the cracks.
- **Responsibility became shared.** Schools, agencies, and community organizations increasingly saw youth outcomes as a collective responsibility, aligning their efforts around the young people who needed them.

The results demonstrate that collaboration was not a side benefit of the project but a core mechanism for its impact, allowing the entire support system to work better than the sum of its parts.

6.2 Learning & Training

6.2.1 Uptake and Engagement in Training

Finding: Staff, professionals, and partners actively engaged in the learning opportunities offered.

- **6** BSCF capacity-building workshops were offered: Fundamentals of EDI, Understanding Guns & Gangs with London Police Service, Restorative Justice Practices (Part 1), ARAO Strategies, Restorative Justice Practices (Part 2), and Building Inclusive Teams that Thrive.
 - **208** individuals engaged in the learning and training opportunities
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6.2.2 Satisfaction with Training

Finding: Participants reported very high satisfaction with the workshops and training.

- **97% (n=194)** found the workshop valuable
- **98% (n=194)** were satisfied with the workshop
- **99% (n=203)** found the facilitators knowledgeable
- **100% (n=204)** found the workshop content easy to understand

“The workshops helped broaden our way of thinking and better understand the diverse needs of young people.”

~Program Partner

6.2.3 Learning and Knowledge Change

Finding: Participants reported meaningful gains in knowledge across the workshop topics.

- **91% (n=52)** learned how to identify at-risk youth, warning signs, and how to monitor them
- **91% (n=42)** learned anti-racism and anti-oppression concepts
- **92% (n=55)** learned why youth get involved in gun and gang violence
- **93% (n=55)** learned strategies for communicating the dangers and consequences to youth
- **96% (n=24)** learned restorative justice best practices

“Information shared by the London Police Service about current gun and gang violence trends was particularly valuable. Learning the signs that may indicate youth involvement strengthened staff confidence and informed prevention-focused responses.”

~Program Partner

What This Means

- **The training met a real need.** Workshops gave staff, professionals, and partners practical knowledge on topics central to the project, including understanding gun and gang violence, restorative practice, and equity.
- **It was very well received.** Satisfaction was consistently high, and participants reported genuine gains in knowledge across every workshop topic.
- **Learning translated into practice.** Participants did not just attend; they planned to apply what they learned in their work with young people.

Training strengthened the knowledge and skills of the people working most closely with young people, extending the project’s reach well beyond any single program.

6.3 Capacity Building Support

The Building Safer Communities Fund Grant offered participating organizations a range of supports beyond program funding, including group workshops, one-on-one capacity-building (e.g., one-on-one support, quarterly check-ins), evaluation support (e.g., development of data collection tools and data analysis), honoraria funding, and translation and interpretation support. The findings below draw on an End-of-Project Survey completed by seven of twelve participating organizations. Results represent one response per organization; not all funded or seed-funded organizations accessed all supports.

6.3.1 Satisfaction with Supports

Finding: Organizations rated the capacity-building supports highly.

- **100% (n=7)** rated their overall experience with the BSCF grant as excellent
- **100% (n=4)** of organizations that accessed one-on-one capacity building found it valuable
- **100% (n=4)** of organizations that accessed evaluation support found it valuable
- **100% (n=4)** of organizations that accessed honoraria funding found it valuable

“Having access to workshops and group learning sessions was very useful. These opportunities strengthened staff capacity and created space for shared learning and reflection, allowing organizations to exchange ideas and learn from one another.”

~Program Partner

What This Means

- **The supports were valued across the board.** Every organization rated its overall experience as excellent, and those who accessed each support, workshops, one-on-one help, evaluation, honoraria, and translation, rated it valuable.
- **The integrated model outperformed funding alone.** Organizations were unanimous that pairing funding with capacity-building support strengthened outcomes more than money alone would have.
- **The capacity will outlast the grant.** Organizations reported being better positioned to design, deliver, and evaluate effective programming, and to sustain partnerships, well beyond the funding period.

Investing in organizations themselves, not just their programs, was one of the most distinctive and lasting contributions of London’s Building Safer Communities Fund Grant.

Section 7.0

Conclusions

7.1 What the Results Tell Us

Across all years of London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant, the evidence points to a clear conclusion: when young people are given access to trusted, well-designed programs, and when the organizations and families around them are supported to help, meaningful change follows.

Young people showed up, stayed, and grew. The funded projects reached young people across the city, kept them engaged with strong retention, and earned high satisfaction. Beyond simply taking part, young people reported real growth:

- They developed practical skills in communication, conflict resolution, and emotion management.
- They developed greater confidence, a stronger sense of identity, and deeper connection to their culture.
- They formed healthier relationships, felt more connected to their communities, and reported a greater sense of belonging.
- Many gained a clearer understanding of the risks of gun and gang violence, became more engaged in school, explored career and recreation opportunities, and reported better mental health and well-being.

Taken together, these are the risk and protective factors that London's Building Safer Communities Fund set out to address.

The impact reached beyond young people themselves. Parents and caregivers felt better equipped to support their children and noticed positive changes at home, and equipping families with the same skills as their young people helped those skills take hold in daily life. Funded organizations built extensive partnerships and coordinated their efforts, allowing them to wrap support around young people and reach those who might otherwise have been missed. The organizations themselves also grew stronger, with nearly all reporting they are better positioned to deliver and evaluate effective programming as a result.

The consistency of the results across many projects, data sources, and voices strengthens confidence in the overall picture: London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant made a meaningful difference for young people, their families, and the organizations that serve them.

7.2 Implications for Policy, Practice, and Funding

The results of London's Building Safer Communities Fund carry several implications for how communities invest in preventing gun and gang violence.

- Prevention works when it is community-based and trusted. The strongest results came from programs delivered by organizations that young people and families already trusted, in spaces that felt safe and welcoming. Continued investment in local, community-rooted organizations is essential to reaching young people most affected by gun and gang violence.
- Reducing barriers is part of the work. Practical supports like transportation, meals, culturally relevant programming, and bringing programs into neighbourhoods directly enabled young people to participate. Funding models should account for these enabling supports, not just program delivery.
- Supporting families and systems multiplies impact. Change was strongest when the adults and systems around a young person were engaged too. Investing in parents, caregivers, and cross-sector collaboration extends the reach of any single program.
- Funding paired with capacity building goes further than funding alone. Organizations were nearly unanimous in that the combination of funding and capacity-building support, including training, evaluation, and one-on-one help, improved outcomes. This integrated model is worth sustaining and expanding.
- Sustained investment matters. Building trust, relationships, and lasting capacity takes time. Longer-term, stable funding would allow organizations to deepen this work and realize its full potential.

London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant offers strong evidence that a coordinated, community-based, and well-supported approach can strengthen the protective factors that help young people stay safe and steer away from gun and gang violence. As London continues to invest in community safety and well-being, London's Building Safer Communities Fund Grant provides both a foundation to build on and a model worth sustaining.