Voices of Resilience: Female experiences in
and out of Youth Justice Residence

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Jamie Marie Goodwin

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This thesis is dedicated to the loving memory of Janine Kay Storer. Sis, I wish you could have been here to be a part of this, and all that comes after this project. Love you and miss you each and every day.

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Abstract:

This project critically examines the notion that young women experience being admitted to a youth justice residence as turning point in their lives as well as their experiences of transition back to the community. Residential care has the potential to be a fundamental agent of change for serious female youth offenders. Retrospectively, understanding the experiences and knowledge of female young people who have been through the youth justice residential care system is essential in order for professionals working in this field to be able to respond to their needs and engage in purposeful and meaningful interventions. Understanding the way females transition back to the community from residence provides information about how the system supports young women to transition into young adult/adulthood and build on the change they created while they were in residence.

The retrospective lens that was used for this project will draw on the experiences of former female residents of youth justice residential care and their transition back into the community. Prospective participants were recruited using key informants, Facebook and snowball sampling methods. A small group of participants were interviewed about their experiences, knowledge, issues and solutions for the youth justice system in New Zealand. Data collection was carried out utilising semi-structured interviews applying a descriptive interview approach, with a total of six interviews that were completed, transcribed and approved for use by the research participants. The thematic analysis that was used to analyse the data helped to create the key themes to present the findings and discussion chapters. The key findings from that data that was discussed further include the findings that contribute to the knowledge about female youth offenders and their life experiences that led to their involvement in the youth justice

system; how their sense of self developed throughout their time in the system; the impact and support the youth justice residence provided for young women; the experiences of transition back to the community and the support that was provided during this process; and lastly the implications these findings have for social work practice within the system as a whole, for youth justice residence, and for transition services. The participant experiences highlight how the youth justice system responds to its responsibility to successfully develop the well-being of young women to create lives they are proud of.

Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction

Dylan, one of my participants, during her interview said "Ultimately what all of this boils down to is your personal growth as a young adult" as we were talking the purpose of the youth justice system. This statement is a reminder that the youth justice system is for some, a key part of their development as adolescents and provides a context for their ability to navigate their growth and development into adulthood. It is also a reminder that the youth justice system has a greater responsibility, more than holding young people accountable for their actions and providing justice to victims of youth offending. The following chapter provides background about the youth justice system in New Zealand and situates female young people within it. It will examine my personal interest in the project. Additionally, it will explore what is currently understood in social work practice within youth justice as well as what is understood about female youth offenders. Lastly, the research objectives of this project will be discussed, and the structure of the thesis will be outlined along with a big-picture view.

1.1 The field and the context

The youth justice system in New Zealand works with youth who are between 12-17 years of age who have or are alleged to have committed crime[1]. The system is designed to acknowledge the vulnerabilities of young people whose behaviour results in the youth justice involvement. It acknowledges that young people are at a stage of development where they make mistakes and push boundaries, and depending upon their life and socialisation experiences, the boundaries that are pushed may have more serious consequences. It is also believed this behaviour should not impact upon the rest of their

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[1] For more about New Zealand's Youth Court seehttps://youthcourt.govt.nz

lives and that young people are given the opportunity to learn and move on from their mistakes in an environment that allows for positive self-development to take occur. There are numerous principles in place to ensure that young people are provided with opportunities to make amends for the hurt they caused and change their behaviour so that they can move on. Since the Youth Justice Residence (YJR) is the highest tariff sanction within the powers of the youth court, it is reserved for serious and prolific young people who commit crime[2]. The legislation, principles and policies that guide decision-making around this process will be discussed in a later chapter.

Within the youth justice population there are several sub-groups comprised of those who are vulnerable and require tailored sets of interventions. These groups are as follows: young people with aggressive or violent behaviours; young people who have neurological, behavioural, emotional and mental health problems; young people who have substance misuse and addiction issues; and young women (Lambie, 2016; Office of the Childrens Commissioner, 2017). Young women are a specific client group within youth justice due to the unique set of characteristics that should be considered while working with them. These characteristics include engagement in prostitution and harmful/risky sexual behaviour, and higher (rates than their male counterparts) of mental health disorders, substance misuse/addiction, and higher rates of extensive maltreatment histories (Sanders et al., 2016; Severinsen et al., 2016). Female young people experience high levels of all the behaviours and disorders mentioned in the individual sub-groups identified above which identifies the need for an understanding of the experiences of female youth offenders in order to create knowledge about how to best engage with them.

[2] For more about New Zealand's Youth Justice system see
https://www.orangatamariki.govt.nz/youth-justice/overview/

During my work with female young people in the Youth Justice Residence (YJR) and as a social worker in the community I have come to believe two things. The first is that the YJR has the potential and the power to be a positive turning point in the lives of female youth offenders. The environment of residence should be one that is safe and secure, can adequately assess and manage risk, while at the same time be aware of, understand, and respond to the well-being and welfare needs of young women and further improve their positive self-development. Young women should leave a residence with a healthier sense of well-being and an understanding of who they are, that provides them a better steppingstone for future decision-making and transition opportunities. Secondly, I believe that for a small group of female young people who are admitted to YJR it is not in their best interest to return to the care of their families, due to the dangerous and risky situations they put themselves in while in the community, as well as the environments within the context of their family, and the limited services that are offered to families within the Youth Justice System.

I also questioned how being a part of the YJS impacted upon the ability of young women to function in society including: what the challenges were in creating change in their lives, and how the labels and negative stereotypes that often come with being a female youth offender have an effect on their sense of self. It is my experience that female youth offenders are often viewed as "the problem" and they are also viewed as " bad girls" yet, if their offending behaviour is viewed alongside the variety of complex negative life experiences and traumatic events that are common for these young women, then are they the sole the problem? This then made me think about their socialisation experiences and how these life experiences impacted upon their

involvement in the YJS. Within this context I wanted to explore which female experiences were common in the YJS and how it all fit together to provide a service for female young people.

1.2 What is currently understood

1.2.1 Youth justice system

The youth justice system within New Zealand has a complex dual focus that can certainly make social work practice challenging. At the international level the human rights instruments articulate welfare principles, for example, they emphasise the need for countries to focus on the best interests of the child. This is because at an individual level a focus on accountability and punishing young people for their actions is dominant (Becroft, 2008; Lynch, 2012a; Maxwell, Kingi, Robertson, Morris, & Cummingham, 2004). This focus at a national level of accountability has shaped the notions of responsibilisation. Responsibilisation implies that irrespective of the pressures and limitations imposed on young people by contextual factors, they are autonomous, self-governing and capable of making their own decisions (Henry, Henaghan, Sanders, & Munford, 2015).

Within the well-being component of youth justice the concept of responsibilisation has an equally significant impact on the processes and the social work practice. For example, if young people fail to participate or succeed in programmes designed to address well-being needs, such as, counselling, or mentoring, it is attributed to individual failings or insufficient motivation on the part of the individual young person (Goldson & Muncie, 2012; Henry et al., 2015). Another way of viewing young people's inability to engage in services could be to examine the appropriateness or accessibility of services, or the impact

of other stressors and risks in the lives of the young people of which they have little control but impact upon their ability to engage in these interventions (Liebenberg, 2014).

Within the YJR this dual tension is somewhat more acute with the need to maintain safety and security through assessing and managing the risk posed to and by young people within this environment, the rules and regulations, and the annual audits of residential services that ensure young people are treated in a just and humane manner. Residence has the additional challenge of creating an environment that simultaneously fosters positive self-development of the identities and manages this risk associated with the environment.

Young people in New Zealand's youth justice system are seen as both victims and offenders, this means that they can be treated in a manner that has the potential to lead to more just outcomes (Henry et al., 2015; Munford & Sanders, 2015a). This idea encompasses the dual tension of the system, and it is hoped that this project will be able to assist in understanding how managing this tension takes place in practice with female youth offenders.

1.2.2 Female youth offenders

The following section will canvas the knowledge that already exists about female youth offenders and the unique risks that are common amongst them.

These spheres include (but are not limited to) the social risks, personal risks and institutional risks. The social risks of abuse and victimisation, poverty, criminal associations, peer relationships, family dysfunction; the personal risks of mental health and alcohol, drug issues, physical

and sexual health problems; the institutional risks, such as, welfare involvement, lack of engagement in education, and service provision/structural disadvantage (Mullis, Cornille, & Mullis, 2004; Sherman & Balck, 2015). Many of the young women within the YJS present with a complicated overlap of many, if not all, of these risks. These risks often intertwine with each other in a way that has allowed the young women to cope with all the negative experiences in their lives the best way they can. This experience requires specific interventions to address all of the risks to effectively help female youth offenders create change in their lives.

Abuse and trauma has been identified as a primary risk factor for female youth offenders (Chesney-Lind, Morash, & Stevens, 2008; Swanston et al., 2003). Several studies carried out on adult women in prison found those women who had been convicted of violence crime had experienced significantly more physical and sexual abuse as children (Arnull & Eagle, 2009; Smith, Leve, & Chamberlain, 2006). Another study found that childhood sexual abuse was a predictive of aggressive behaviour in woman. Studies have also found females who experience abuse and victimisation commit both crimes of a low nature along with the development of mental health disorders, for example, anxiety and mood disorders, so that, increasingly, research is suggesting that childhood abuse/trauma can increase females vulnerability to mental illness and that both can be found in adult female prisoners (Ford, Chapman, Connor, & Cruise, 2012; Goodkind, Ng, & Sarri, 2006). There is evidence to suggest that exposure to trauma increases the risk of females both internalising (anxiety, mood disorders) and externalising (aggression) their problems (Ford et al., 2012). This victimisation and the experiences of maltreatment, such as, physical and/or sexual abuse, psychological abuse, and exposure to domestic violence have been linked to recidivism.

Therefore, it is now argued that in this situation, offending behaviour should be seen as a symptom of trauma (Arnull & Eagle, 2009). This is as opposed to an activity that is separate or in isolation of all the other risks and negative behaviours that female youth offenders display. This finding is significant because while working with female youth offenders, it needs to be acknowledged that the offending behaviour displayed is, in fact, another risk behaviour female youth offenders use to cope with the negative experiences in their lives. In essence, the YJS is punishing females for the disruptive, violent, and anti-social behaviour that originates from the abuse they have gone through at home. Whereas, the system ought to create an environment where young people can take accountability for their actions and have opportunities to heal the trauma they have suffered from.

Mental health and substance use disorders are extremely prevalent within the youth justice population. Many studies have been carried out to show the prevalence of mental health issues in this population. It has been highlighted in American literature that female youth offenders have a greater risk of deliberate self-harm and/or have contemplated or attempted suicide, and report feeling depressed and hopeless about their future (Lederman, Dakof, Larrea, & Li, 2004; McReynolds, Schwalbe, & Wasserman, 2010). McArdle and Lambie (2018), reported that young people in secure residences (YJR) reported high levels of mental, emotional, behavioural problems, as well as strong links between these issues and substance misuse disorder, self-harm, and suicide. In a report conducted by the Ministry of Health (2011), it stated that between 40-60% of youth offenders had mental health and/or substance misuse disorders. Furthermore, a study completed by the National Health Committee (2007), found that among the offenders under the age of 18 in one youth residential unit, 56% of the young people had an emerging diagnosable mental health

disorder, and of that 56% to 73% were females. This is an extremely high rate of mental health disorders within the youth offender population and it is particularly high for female youth offenders. Similarly, studies in Canada have consistently highlighted the high rates of mental health and substance misuse disorder among youth offender populations. Odgers (2005), found that 50% of the incarcerated youth population in one secure residence reported a substance use disorder. Even though Guebert (2014), argued that the treatment of substance use disorders and mental health issues should be a focus of immediate targets to create change and stability in youth offenders, he warned that this should not be done in isolation and should be coupled with addressing criminogenic needs and cognitive behavioural interventions to work with reducing recidivism.

There is an increasing body of knowledge about the risks and needs of female young people who end up in the YJS. It is now understood that a large majority of young women within the youth justice system are involved as a result of victimisation, so the effectiveness of the system to respond to this needs to be explored further. It is hoped that this project will provide information about experiences of female youth offenders and how the system responds to this group and the contexts of their offending behaviour.

1.3 The research objective

As identified above, within the youth justice system female young people have been classified as a group within the youth justice population that have a specific set of needs, which in turn, requires a wide array of interventions to ensure the purpose and goals of youth justice are met in a meaningful way for this client group. Due to the small number of female young people in the system, this often gets

overlooked for more dominant discourses or interventions within youth justice that are not adequate to work with young women. One of the ways to establish how the system currently responds to young women is to hear what it was like for young women going through the system. Therefore, the objectives of this project are as follows:

- To understand former female young people's experiences in youth justice residences and their journey back into the community
- To inform professional practice within the YJS
- To represent the voices of young woman who have been in youth justice care and give them space to share their stories
- To add to the body of literature on female delinquency in New Zealand

Even though initially, it was not an objective of the project to understand how sense of self of the young women changed throughout the youth justice system, it became an important aspect of the experiences of the young women based upon the literature about youth justice residence and the system as a whole.

The following chapters will explore female experiences of the youth justice system. Chapter 2 will demonstrate the theoretical framework that shaped the ideas and thinking around the project and it will provide a foundation on which to append the ideas that develop from the data collection process.

Chapter 3 includes an outline of the current literature and the arguments that surround the ideas in project. Section 3.1 includes the legislation, policies and principles surrounding the youth justice system as well as debates around the dual focus of the youth justice system. 3.2 includes the arguments and debates in the youth justice residence and the challenges in this environment. 3.3 discusses the transition of

young women back to the community and the challenges surrounding this concept. 3.4 consists of the arguments and debates in relation to female youth offenders and social work practice.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology that is used to carry out this research. It will explain and justify which methods were employed to recruit participants, collect the data, and analyse and present the data. The ethical considerations for the project will also be explored and explained.

Chapters 5 and 6 present the findings from the data collection and a discussion about those findings. Chapter 7 presents the conclusions and recommendations from this project and offers areas for further research in the future as a result of this project.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

2.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the theoretical framework that has guided the thinking and development of the research. The three main theories that were applied include socialisation, juvenile delinquency, and resilience. First of all, juvenile delinquency is discussed with a focus on the challenges surrounding the definitions of this concept and how it impacts upon the manner in which delinquent behaviour is viewed and addressed. Following this, there is a discussion of socialisation wherein both the traditional and the contemporary views are highlighted, along with consideration for how this process could affect delinquent behaviour. Lastly, the concept of resilience is explored and how it effects youth justice. All of the theories are linked back to the research and there is a discussion about how they are grounded in the development of youth justice.

2.1 Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency is most commonly defined as "behaviours by persons under the age of 18 that violate criminal laws" (Hoffman, 2011c). It establishes an environment in which the laws exist to govern the behaviours of individuals in society, and delinquent behaviour is any behaviour that breaches or abuses the laws that have been created. While this definition is commonly used it is heavily critiqued for the narrow scope it takes on delinquent behaviour. Many authors (Akers, 2012b; Hoffman, 2011c) have found this definition inadequate, saying that the boundaries of delinquency are created by lawmakers, which establishes a black and white picture of what delinquent behaviour is, how it is displayed, and how it should be addressed. It does not take into account the social issues that have an impact upon

and contribute to delinquency. For example, a young person who is found to be in violation of the law may potentially be from an environment where there is poverty, low socio-economic status, low education engagement, high experiences of trauma, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Even though none of these social issues are considered in the above definition, they all have significance as they relate to juvenile delinquent behavior. They provide a context and meaning to the delinquent behaviour young people display and demonstrate that their behaviour does not take place in a vacuum. Moreover, the social systems and constructs in place have an impact upon the law-breaking behavior of young people.

To further affirm the importance of context and social structures while considering delinquent behaviour some authors (Akers, 2012b; Hoffman, 2011b) have described a concept referred to as official bias. Official Bias is described as the tendency for officials (i.e., Police, Youth Court Judges) within the youth justice system to disproportionately arrest or institutionalise certain adolescents based upon something other than their law-violating behaviour (Akers, 2012b; Hoffman, 2011c). This idea highlights that juvenile delinquency is more complex than the definition suggests. It demonstrates how the macro-system ideologies and ideas can have an impact upon how the youth justice system responds to female youth offenders, while providing a valuable scope to address the offending behaviour that is not apparent from the definition of delinquency.

Since this project investigates the experiences of female youth offenders it is appropriate to highlight the feminist perspectives of defining delinquency. Chesney-Lind (1989) argued that the "… major delinquency theories [are] fundamentally inadequate to the task of explaining female behaviour"(p.10) (Gavazzi, Yarcheck, & Chesney-

Lind, 2006; Hoffman, 2011b, 2011c). This means the system does not take into account the unique needs, risks and environments of delinquent behaviour in the lives of young women. Many young women end up in the YJS often as a result of victimisation or escaping harmful/unsafe environments and they are charged with absconding or running away (discussed more in section 3.5) (Hoffman, 2011c; Severinsen et al., 2016; Sherman & Balck, 2015). Comparing this reality, as it relates to the female experience, with the definition mentioned above, it shows how important context is considering female youth offending.

It would seem from the above discussion that the current definition is limited in its capacity as to that which is defined as delinquent behaviour and how the reality of youth offending, in particular, in relation to female youth offending that fits within this definition. Even though it is outside the scope and framework of this project to establish an appropriate definition of delinquency, it is important to understand the definitions and their shortcomings that make it difficult for female young people who struggle to conform and receive help within the youth justice system. In this thesis understanding this definition, and the various critiques it has, provides a framework or backdrop to explain the experiences of female youth offenders and how the definition fits with the reality of delinquent behaviour of young women. This project will add to the literature on female delinquency and to the ability of the definition of delinquency to delineated and describe the female lived experiences.

2.1.1 Theories of Delinquency

Classical delinquency theories are characterized into individual theories that attempt to explain delinquent behaviour and why it may occur. Similar to the definition of delinquency these theories take a

narrow perspective on what delinquency is and how it is displayed in society. The three main theories that are used to explain juvenile delinquency include strain theory, control theory, and social learning theory.

Strain theory posits that human beings experience interpersonal and social issues that put pressure on individuals so that they react in different ways to cope or eliminate these pressures (Agnew, 1985; van Breda, 2018). In other words, strain is a reaction to the anxiety, and the stress that is experienced through the socialisation process helps to explain why people offend (Agnew, 2001; Broidy & Agnew, 1977).

Control theory is based on two key concepts. The first, social bonding, involves those connections that human beings make with each other during the socialisation process. If the bonds are weak, for example, between young people and their parents this impacts upon the ability of the young person to conform with norms in society and will likely lead to delinquent behaviour (Brauer & De Coster, 2015; Faleolo, 2014; Hoffman, 2011a). The second concept is self-control. If an individual loses one's self, by either, losing their temper or another inter-personal issue (for example the need for immediate gratification) that results in "losing control" in this manner has been said to link to delinquency (Faleolo, 2014). The result of the weak social bonds with family, school and other positive social groups the young person has, could be associated with the socialization process and their lack of self-control due to the interpersonal issues the young person may be experiencing, results in an inability to conform to societal expectations and increases the likelihood of their participation in delinquent behaviour (Akers, 2012d; Hoffman, 2002).

Social learning theory is based on the idea that human beings learn behaviours and characteristics from others through the process of socialisation (Bandura, 1969). In other words, social learning theory focuses on the development of individuals sense of self through socialisation and interacting with others in everyday life. Social learning theory has the ability to explain both conforming and deviant behaviour by the same mechanisms. Therefore, deviant and criminal behaviour is learned through access and exposure to others who display and participate in criminal behaviour. Young people learn offending behaviour from others in their social groups and they learn the skills and attitudes that are favourable in being accepted by these groups and reduce apprehension (Akers, 2012c; Akers, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce, & Radosevich, 1979).

The individualistic nature of theories around delinquency have been challenged. Theorists acknowledge that offending is a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon with multiple causes and therefore cannot be defined using strain, control or social learnings theories in isolation. As a result of this Elliott, Ageton, and Canter (1979) linked the appropriate theories together that describe the mechanisms that link specific factors to delinquency to form an integrated theory. This is based on strain theory and control theory. It argues that strain, inadequate socialisation, and social disorganization lead to weak conventional bonds. These weak conventional bonds lead to strong bonds with those involved in delinquent behaviour, the strong bonds with delinquent groups lead to socialisation, learning, and acceptance from this deviant social group and this results in delinquent behaviour (Farrington, 2003).

For the young women in this project it is important to understand how these theories could potentially relate to their lives and help to explain

their offending behaviour. For example, the strain of experiencing traumatic life events as well as other significant intra-personal issues relating to the trauma experienced or issues that were compounded by the trauma. These experiences shaped the context of their socialisation. Their life experiences do not meet the "norms" of society, and their ability to engage in positive coping strategies with their incidents of trauma coupled with inadequate positively conforming support systems lead young women to seek belonging, comfort and support in deviant groups of the population. Having strong social bonds within this group, the young women then go on to learn criminal behaviour from their peers within the group, become more proficient in deviant behaviour, reducing the likelihood of them being apprehended. Greater than achieving goals and becoming successful within the population of society, is the safety, security, sense of belonging, and self-development that young women gain from this group that they do not feel they receive while they are a part of the conforming side of society. These ideas and concepts will be explored throughout this thesis and will provide a starting point to generate an understanding of female experiences in the youth justice, in general.

2.2 Socialisation

Socialisation is the process by which human beings acquire their self-identity and learn how to be a part of society. It is a process that every member of society goes through, irrespective of gender, culture, or geographical location. This process involves two notions that encompass the socialisation of both the individual members of society and the social structure of society as a whole. The first is the development of a self-image or a self-identity. The self-identity of a person is fostered and modified through an interpretative process whereby individuals firstly create meaning internally, then check it

externally with others. Self-identity is created through a person's interactions with others and subsequently is influenced by cultural and social "norms". The second notion is that it is through the socialisation process that social structures and societal stability are established and worked through. This is how collective norms, customs, roles, and behaviours and beliefs are established, learnt, and accepted. This process allows for the continuation of social and cultural structures and protocols (Faleolo, 2014).

Understanding the socialisation process of female young people is important to the current research since it helps to explain how these experiences could lead to their involvement in youth justice and offending behaviour. While there are other theories that can explain how and why young people offend, this process demonstrates how the different experiences of socialisation can lead to different societal experiences. Looking at socialisation from the perspective of female youth offenders adds to the knowledge of socialisation in terms of the way individuals respond to learning from and teaching others within the different spheres that make up their world. It helps to explain how their participation in their systems and society may contribute to the development of the individual's self-identity and how they fit within and add to society.

2.2.1 Symbolic Interactionism and Structural Functionalism

Symbolic interactionism and structural functionalism, classical theories of socialisation, underpin the socialisation process and assist in recognizing how these young women attain self-identity and a sense of self. They also support the understanding of how these young women find their place in society, and how society views, understands, and responds to delinquent behaviour and the role/social norms of female young people.

Symbolic interactionism focuses on the relationship between individual conduct and various forms of social organisation (Denzin, 1969). Symbolic interactionism has its genesis in Mead (1934, 1938), who proposed the philosophical foundations and Blumer (1969), who built on this foundation and developed it into a systematic sociological approach (Blumer, 1936, 1937). Mead (1934), believed that people develop their self-image through their interactions with others, the self is the central piece of this ideology. He said that people paint their self-portrait by taking the role of "other" and imaging how they look to another person. Blumer (1965), and other symbolic interactionists (Sandstrom, Martin, & Fine, 2003; Serpe, 1987; Stryker, 1980; Ulmer, 2011), developed the concept of the "looking-glass". This concept focuses on three main ideas that explain how self-identity, and sense of self is developed/built. First, people imagine how they appear to others. Second, they imagine the judgement of that appearance. Third, they develop their self-identity through the judgement of others. Blumer (1965), illustrated Mead (1934, 1938), conception of objects (an object is anything that can be indicated or referred to) into three types, physical objects, social objects, and abstract objects. Physical objects include trees and chairs, social objects are roles, such as, student, mother, sister, friend, and abstract objects are similar to the moral ideals of concepts, for example, delinquency and justice (Blumer & Morrione, 2004; Craib, 2015b).

Faleolo (2014), states that symbolic interactionism focuses on the subjective aspects of social lives, rather than the objective, and macro-structural aspects of social systems. Interactionalist theorists see humans as active, creative participants who engage in and construct their social world. They have a strong focus on interaction and on the meaning of events to the participant taking part in those events. This

shifts their attention away from the stable norms and values toward more changeable, continually re-adjusting social processes (Blumer & Morrione, 2004; Craib, 2015a). Faleolo (2014) goes on to compare functionalism because it tends to focus on the passive conforming objects of socialisation. Functionalists tend to focus on the macro systems that create stabilization within society as a system (Akers, 2012c).

Structural functionalism stresses how socialisation contributes to a stable society and perpetuates itself by making the needs of individuals appear to match the needs of society (Faleolo, 2014). This perspective places importance on the organization and on the structure of society. It sees society as a system in which the different institutions within society are connected to make up society as a whole (Craib, 2015a). The relationships between all of the parts and agents of socialisation contribute to the production of social beings who are committed to the maintenance of society (Craib, 2015a). Socialisation within this paradigm has five parts that help explain the process. Parsons (1964a, 1964b, 1966) theorised that there are three parts to this process, the primary, secondary, and the tertiary. Primary socialisation occurs during childhood, it is the part wherein the child learns values and behaviours that the child displays in order to live accordingly to a specific culture. Secondary socialisation occurs as a person learns the appropriate behaviour to display within a smaller group which is still part of a larger society. The tertiary level of socialisation occurs once an individual has integrated into the world and is able to interact with its institutions based on the learning from his or her primary and secondary socialisation and it also sustains the relationships within which a relatively large group of people live, through the on-going processing and internalisation of new ideas and values of socialisation (Craib, 2015a).

Structural functionalism has become less popular since the twentieth century as it focuses too much on the causes of actions and influences as they occur rather than before, and it does not explain what happens if individuals experience conflict (Craib, 2015b; McClelland, 2004). For this project, due to the significant impact societal thoughts and ideas have on female youth offenders and how this behaviour should be addressed, it seemed apparent to understand how collective societal norms and ideals are learned and the impact this has on the individual.

2.2.2 Conflict Theory

Conflict theory is the contemporary theory of socialisation that helps explain conflict at macro and exco system level. Vold (1958), defines society as a congeries or combination of groups that are held together in a dynamic equilibrium of opposing group interests and efforts. Vold also said that this "… provides an opportunity for a continuous possibility of shifting positions of gaining and losing status, with the consequent need to maintain an alert defense of one's positions. Conflict is viewed, therefore, as one of the principal and essential social processes upon which the continuing on-going society depends "(p.204).

Within this theory power is the principal determinant of the outcome of the conflict. The groups with the most power control the law, their values are adopted as the legal standards for behaviour. The members of the less powerful groups, though they suffer legislative and judicial defeats, continue to act in accordance with their internal group norms, for example, religious, ethnic and other cultural minority groups that adhere to a set of behavioural standards that conflict with those of the dominant "conventional" society (Akers, 2012a).

While this theory attempts to explain law and crime, it has been heavily criticized since it does not describe juvenile delinquency, or serious crimes, such as, murder or robbery (Craib, 2015a). It effectively explains how conflict can be created within in a society and how the power and dominance of one set of ideas, thoughts and norms can become the dominant views of a society. Conflict theory helps to create that understanding. It also helps to explain how dominant ideas and norms change within society. For this project it is important to understand the dominant views about how crime and delinquency are punished and how those who violate the law are perceived within that society. Finally, it helps to explain how the dominant ideas and minority ideas can clash with each other. What is interesting is how young women manage living in a world where they have to manage and balance ideas from the dominant ideas and the ideas that come from the minority ideas. As the majority of the young women in this project identified as Māori (the indigenous people of New Zealand) and through the impact of colonization they are a minority group within New Zealand society and western norms and ideologies are dominant, this means that many of the young women experience a conflict of values and beliefs at all levels of society, so it is important to have a framework to shape the conflict so that the socialisation process that the young women experience can be understood.

In this thesis the understanding is adopted that both perspectives of socialisation provide a framework to understand how female young offenders establish and shape their self-identity, how they respond to the societal structures around them, while at the same time understand how society defines and responds to the behaviour displayed by female youth offenders and how these opinions may have an impact on those who are not part the dominant narratives, values and beliefs.

2.3 Resilience

Resilience is the concept of achieving better than expected outcomes following adversity (Fitzpatrick, 2011; van Breda, 2019). Traditional definitions of resilience typically focus on how and how well young people cope with difficult life experiences or how young people achieve good outcomes in spite of serious threats to their adaptation or development. Within this paradigm, young people are assessed in relation to the risks they pose to themselves and others to justify interventions. Resilience is a dynamic process that involves the interaction between the individual and the environment that enables positive adaptation following adversity. Resilience is not a quality or trait of an individual, although certain dimensions of a person's personality might consistently be associated with resilience (John, Williams, & Haines, 2017; Walklate, 2011).

The major critique of this definition is that it limits the view of young people to *problematising* them and their behaviour, while in turn it limits their ability to identify, choose, and achieve greater pro-social ways of acting and being. Robinson (2016) argued that a wider perspective encompasses the young person's strengths and coping strategies in their attempts to gain a sense of power and personal agency even in negative circumstances. Resilience is intimately connected to an individual's ability to achieve and maintain a view of themselves that is healthy, using the resources and opportunities that are available and accessible to them at any given time. Robinson said that particularly within youth justice this view may mean that health-sustaining resources may not be conventionally pro-social. Young people may choose the best option that is available in the environment of the young person.

Environments are important in fostering or hindering the ability of individuals to survive or to thrive. Therefore, utilising a social-ecological perspective is important to understand resilience across a broader range of social contexts to include all systems that could potentially be connected to both the adversity and resilience of young people (Ungar, 2011). This viewpoint allows for a greater perspective and an understanding of how young people survived difficult environments and maintained their self-identity. Bronfenbrenner (1979) identified four systems that make up a series of inter-connected social levels. The first is the micro-level which is the interpersonal (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The second is the meso-level, the larger social groups, such as, family, or school which may interact with each other (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The third, the exo-system, may affect daily life yet not involve the individual as an active participant (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The fourth is the macro-level, this encompasses the ideological, social, and political ideas that are expressed in the practical terms in the exo-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Within this lens the youth justice system is characterised as an exo-system with practices that reflect the prevailing social and cultural constructions of young people, crime, and risk.

For the young women within this project and in the youth justice system generally, resilience is an important to concept to understand. Many of them within the system have experienced adversity from most if not all of the systems explained in the social-ecological perspective as mentioned above. For example, many of the young women have experienced trauma, such as, neglect, physical, psychological/emotional, or sexual abuse. They may respond differently to these experiences of trauma and it can have an impact on their sense of self, personal development and their interpersonal relationships. Support either adequately or inadequately provided by

the young women's meso system can contribute to the maintenance or further development of their sense of self and resilience. Meso systems interact with each other to impact upon the individual to potentially compound negative life events and traumatic experiences. Having involvement in the youth justice system has a significant impact on young women, how they view themselves and their resilience to maintain a functional view of the identity that functioned for them. On a macro-system level, the dominant ideas about political, cultural, social, and gender norms, and ideologies around deviance, crime, justice, have an impact on their development. The influence of the macro system also has an impact on how the young women within the youth justice system are perceived by all of the other systems within their lives, and also and most importantly, how the youth justice system sees them. It also influences how they cope with and respond to these situations to maintain a sense of self that is healthy to them, to achieve positive outcomes and a life that is meaningful to them. This thesis adopts this framework to understand and examine resilience and the experiences of young women who go through the youth justice system since it creates a wider view of them and creates space for thinking about the variety of environments that have an impact upon the female experiences of the young women who are involved in the youth justice system.

3.4 Summary

This chapter has examined the theories and concepts that have guided the thinking behind the current study. The definitions and theories of juvenile delinquency explain how delinquent behaviour is defined and the theories of delinquency enable us to better understand how and why young people commit crime. Socialisation is an important theory because it explains how young women find their self-identity, their

place in society and it provides an understanding of how social structures are established and social and cultural norms are developed. The discussion of theories outlining resilience identifies how young people achieve better than expected outcomes, even in the face of adversity and extremely negative life experiences. These three theories are fundamental in the development of this study. They provide the context for the systems and behaviours that are involved in the individual lives of the young women in the study.

Chapter 3 Literature Review

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a contextual background for the study and its research interest. By tracing the research literature offered in this review the meaning, the effects, and the importance of this study are demonstrated. There is more that can be accomplished with the female youth offenders who have been admitted to and discharged from state care and who are transitioning back into the community they originated from. The literature review provided here not only reveals the gaps in ensuring the transition process is successful it also shows the key themes, debates and suggestions for placing more emphasis on the transition process rather than on the care and experience provided in the youth justice residences alone.

The chapter constitutes six sections. It begins with an overview of the relevant social policies and principles of the Youth Justice System in NZ and around the world and the principles that underpin and guide this system and social work practice (section 3.1). Next, is a review of the research literature outlining the challenges for the Youth Justice Residence (YJR) and the key themes and debates underpinning it, namely, the balancing of 'justice' and 'welfare' (section 3.2). Further debates are revealed as the positives and the negatives of the YJR are provided in section 3.3. There are two key themes in section 3.4 that emerged while exploring the Transition experience from custody through to the reintegration back into the community: it is important to consider the voices of young people who are former residents as well change that needs to occur in the environments they are returning to, not just to the resident within the residential experience. The review also examines the implications for social work practice, and, in particular, for female youth offenders to understand the current

assessments and interventions within the YJR and their post YJR experiences as in their Transition Plans (section 3.5). Finally, the chapter summary returns to the key themes and debates that have been pre-empted or displaced during the review and carries these ideas forward into the next chapter for further testing (section 3.6).

3.1 Social Policy and Principles of the Youth Justice System

3.1.1 Key legislation

Social policies and legislation are the legal frameworks that guide social work practice within the youth justice system. There are several pieces of legislation that are of interest. The first is the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989[3] which sets out the youth justice principles and procedures and govern the New Zealand youth justice system and the Youth Courts. This legislation affirms the need to promote the well-being of children, young people and family groups by ensuring that if young people offend they are held accountable for their actions, they are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and they are dealt with in a way that acknowledges their vulnerability and provides them the opportunity to develop in responsible, beneficial, and socially acceptable ways (Part 4f(ii)).

This 1989 Act has undergone several reforms since it was introduced into law. The most recent including, in 2017, when in changes to the Care and Protection and Youth Justice services requiring restructuring so that these services became their own separate department within the government (Oranga Tamariki, Ministry for Children)[4]. This change

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[3] Formerly known as the 1989 Children Young Persons and Their Families Act, it was renamed to 1989 Oranga Tamariki Act on 14 July, 2017. So here with 1989 Oranga Tamariki Act or the 1989 Act is used throughout.

[4] For more information about the changes see https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/work-

in the department witnessed a review of and several changes to the standard guidelines of social work practice within Youth Justice, which included a commitment to empowered engagement with Māori young people and their whānau, working in partnership with others, and ensuring/enhancing the safety and well-being of all the children and the young people and their families. As well as in July 2019, there were also changes to the legislation for youth justice, which included extending the age of criminal responsibility in New Zealand to include 17-year-olds. This means that young people remain in the youth court until they turn 18. This change of age is significant as it means that young people up to the age of 18 still receive the protections of the Youth Court and the services and support of the youth justice system (to be discussed below) whereas previously once young people who had turned 17 and continued to offend were moved up to District Court. This meant that they were charged as adults and their charges would go on their criminal records. Since these changes are still new, they have not been evaluated or critiqued at this stage. The results from the Office of the Children's Commissioner's audit of the youth justice system for 2019 have been released as of the time of this writing of this literature review (Office of the Childrens Commissioner, 2017).

The second piece of legislation that guides social work practice within the youth justice system is the Oranga Tamariki (Residential Care) Regulations Act 1996[5]. This 1996 Act outlines the practice guidelines that are specific to youth justice residence. These regulations provide a framework for the rights of young people while they are in residence

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programmes/investing-in-children/establishing-mvcot/establishment-of-the-ministry-for-vulnerable-children-oranga-tamariki-transition-arrangements.pdf
[5] See this link for the full 1996 Act:
http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1996/0354/latest/DLM225697.html At the time of writing this thesis it is currently under review by a Government Select Committee.

and highlight the daily practice for social workers and other professionals within the youth justice residence. There are 14 Rights children and young persons have who are in residence (Part 1 s3-16), there are legal guidelines managing the practice around applying sanctions (Part 2 s17-s24), searches (Part 4 s39 & s45) and records management (Part 6 s52-s58) and the maintenance and safety of the Residences (Part 3 s25-s38 & Part 5 s46-s51).

3.1.2 International Social Policy

New Zealand is a member of the United Nations (UN), and as a member, we agreed and signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCROC). This declaration sets up a standard of practice internationally that shapes how to work with children who are in trouble with the law. Articles 37 and 40 of UNCROC state what this should encompass for youth justice. Article 37 addresses the right for children to not be punished in cruel, degrading, or hurtful ways and that arrest, detention, or imprisonment must be a last resort and it should be for the shortest appropriate period. It also highlights the right, if children are imprisoned, that they are to be treated with humanity and respect for their dignity. Article 40 is the right to a range of protections for children accused of breaking the law (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989). In the most recent periodic report (New Zealand Government, 2015) submitted by the New Zealand Government to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child it shares how New Zealand meets the required standards of the rights of the children, as set out in the UNCROC, who offend and come into contact with the youth justice system. This report highlights how the legislation and policy ensure that young people are treated appropriately, and that practice aligns with the international principles of youth justice. The report states that for the most part New Zealand complies with these principles and

acknowledges the rights and vulnerability of a child and young people who offend. More about the principles of the youth justice system will be discussed below.

3.1.3 Key principles

In terms of the key principles, the three main principles include keeping young people away from court processes, their age, and minimising their length of stay in residences so it is as short as possible. In 2009, with a change in the Government, the major election platform of which was a "tougher stance" on youth crime, saw a change in the way that young people who broke the law were addressed and there were additions to several policies that had an impact on the youth justice system (Stevens, Munford, Sanders, Dewhurst, Henaghan, Stanley Clarke, et al., 2013) . These changes focused largely around the implementation of the *Fresh Start* package[6] and an amendment to the Oranga Tamariki Act, saw that the Youth Court powers, were able to charge children, some of whom were only 12 and 13 years of age, with serious offences (Stevens, Munford, Sanders, Dewhurst, Henaghan, Stanley Clarke, et al., 2013). The Youth Court had increased power to issue new orders including parenting orders, mentoring for youth, and drug and alcohol treatment orders. Under this amendment supervision with activity and supervision with residence, orders were extended for the worst youth offenders (Stevens, Munford, Sanders, Dewhurst, Henaghan, Stanley Clarke, et al., 2013). These extended orders were supported by the inclusion of supervised bail programmes and electronically monitored court orders (Stevens, Munford, Sanders, Dewhurst, Henaghan, Stanley Clarke, et al., 2013).

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[6] For more information about the Fresh Start Package see
http://youthjustice.co.nz/node/218

The youth justice system is based around the belief that the majority of youth offending should be void of formal proceedings. The life development stage is taken into account while working with young people who break the law. There are clear links back to the legislation and policies that guide youth justice within these principles. It is acknowledged that minor delinquent behaviour at this stage in life should not follow the young person for the duration of their life (see 2.2.1). Therefore, avoiding formal proceedings and utilising diversion where possible is the first response from the system. Part 4 Section 208 of the "Oranga Tamariki Act" 1989), outlines the guidelines for the operation of the youth justice system. The principle 208 (d) states that whenever public safety is at risk that young people should be placed in a youth justice residence, otherwise every effort should be made to keep young people in the community.

Becroft (2006) highlighted the importance of keeping young people in the community and the use of diversion wherever possible as a factor in preventing recidivist offending by a young person (Cleland & Quince, 2014; Maxwell, Robertson, & Kingi, 2002; Richards, 2014). Lynch (2012b) similarly noted that placing vulnerable young people in custody has a negative impact on a young person's well-being and can exacerbate young people's mental health issues and can have an impact so that it can increase negatively offending behaviour upon a young person's release back to the community. Several other authors have a similar stance about young people being placed in a YJR describing the residence as being a breeding ground for youth gang recruitment and placing emphasis on the point that young people continue to learn negative anti-social behaviours from each other that only increases recidivist behaviour upon release back to the community (Atkinson & Gerull, 1994). How do residences operate in a system that is opposed to their existence? The challenges for youth

justice residences will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter (see section 3.3).

Internationally, United Kingdom (England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales), Australia, and Canada all operate under the same principles. Diversion is used in the first instance and all efforts are made to keep young people who are in trouble with the law in the community. Placing young people in custody and limiting their liberty is a punishment utilised in the cases of serious or recidivist offending (Bateman, 2017; Corrado & Alan, 2016; Doob & Sprott, 2004). For example, in Canada, the Youth Criminal Justice Act (2002)[7] clearly sets out guidelines' principles for the use of formal proceedings and places young people in secure residences. The 2002 Act emphasises community-based interventions and resources to work with and address minor offending. These principles across all these countries, including New Zealand, are consistent with United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNROC), which guides policy, legislation, and practice worldwide to create a universal approach to youth justice (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989). The 2002 Act also protects the vulnerability of youth offenders and acknowledges their maturity level while taking into account the risk-taking behaviour that is expected with adolescent development (Convery, 2014; Oranga Tamariki Evidence Centre, 2018)

While keeping young people from being prosecuted in courts is important, another factor is the age of the young person. Age is a qualifying component when considering the sentencing and remand time for young people being held in custody in a youth justice

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[7] For more information on the Youth Criminal Justice Act see https://www.laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/y-1.5/index.html

residence. This is specified in section 208 (e) of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989:

"The principle that a child's or young person age should be a mitigating factor in determining - (i) whether or not to impose sanctions in respect to offending by a child or young person; and (ii) the nature of any such sanction." (p.184)

Based on a review of the literature, there has been much debate both within New Zealand and internationally around the age of criminal responsibility and at what age a child or young person is old enough to understand and can be charged with an offence (Lambie, 2016; Lynch, 2012a; Maxwell et al., 2004). For instance, in 2010 with the rollout of the *Fresh Start* package there was a lowering of the age of accountability from 14 years of age to include children who were 12 to 13 years of age, and in serious cases (that is, murder and manslaughter) children who were 10 years of age can be brought before the youth court in New Zealand. Whereas in Australia, England, Wales, and the United States of America the minimum is 10 years of age, while for Belgium and Luxembourg it is 18 years of age (Lambie, 2016). There is significant inconsistency in the age of criminal accountability internationally. The reasons for this inconsistency are not clear and they also vary.

It has been argued that age is not only a mitigating factor and that a YJR should be used as a last resort, it has also been argued that young people should be placed in a YJR for the shortest time possible. This is one of the principles for youth justice within New Zealand's Oranga Tamariki Act 1989 (Becroft, 2006; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989; "Oranga Tamariki Act," 1989). This means sentences for young people in New Zealand range from between three to six months with an opportunity for early release after

two-thirds of the order has been served. The average number of days on remand is 46 days (Lambie, 2016). Internationally, however, it is a different story. It is not clear which kinds of sentences are handed down to young people who admit their charges and are sentenced to a period of time in custody. For example, in Australia due to the legislation, policy, and practice that varies in the different states of the country, it means that the different states have various orders for custody and for the processes of diversion. Between 2013 – 2014 in Australia, the number of days young people spent sentenced in custody was 106 days and the time spent in custody on remand was 40 days (Lambie, 2016). Whereas in England and Wales over the same time period, the average number of days spent on remand in custody was 51 days and the average days sentenced was 109 days and 409 days for longer sentences (Lambie, 2016). It is preferred that young people spend the least amount of time in custody as possible due to the impact that incarceration has on young people. For example, the effects on their mental health and development, as well as the loss of freedom has been shown to have a negative impact on youth offenders. This will be discussed in greater detail in section 3.3.

Given that there are two main legislation pieces and three key principles, another important closing point, is that the principles that ensure the well-being of young people within the system is maintained and developed during their experience within the youth justice system. As Part 5 section 1(b) states, "the well-being of a child or young person must be the centre of decision making …" and clause (vi) states that a holistic approach should be taken that "…includes but is not limited to a child or young person's developmental potential, educational and health needs, whakapapa, cultural identity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and age." The challenge with the principles, legislation, and policies is that they cross two different spheres of ideological thought, namely, justice and welfare. Balancing these two

ideas can be difficult and it is discussed below.

3.2 Dual Functions of Youth Justice

Youth justice straddles two spheres. They need to be balanced in order to effectively assist youth offenders in New Zealand. The first sphere is justice, to make sure that young people are held accountable for their offending in a manner that has significance for the victims, too. The second is the welfare/social issues, ensuring that all the needs of young people are met to make sure that they can develop and transition into healthy young adults and members of society. Becroft (2008) best described this concept as the two-fold function of youth justice in New Zealand.

The two-fold function entails working with young people in a manner that addresses all of the underlying issues that surround the offending behaviour to ensure their well-being is maintained and further developed, while at the same time holds space for accountability offending behaviour and the damage it caused the victims and their community. These ideas are often competing ideas that do not fit comfortably with each other. Therefore, one usually has more emphasis and power than the other which greatly impacts the services provided as well as the maintenance and development of well-being of young people. In New Zealand there is a greater emphasis on justice over welfare, which means there is a stronger focus on holding young people accountable for the harm caused by their offending (Drakeford, 2010; McAlister & Carr, 2014; Muncie, 2013; Smith et al., 2006).

Henry et al. (2015), described the welfare-accountability tension in relation to how youth offenders are seen within the system. While on

the one hand they need to be held accountable for their actions, on the other they are understood to be vulnerable to the impact of contextual risk factors beyond their control that may be instrumental in their offending. In addition to this is the notion of responsibilisation, which is the expectation that irrespective of the pressures and limitations imposed on young people by contextual factors, they are still autonomous and self-governing (Henry et al., 2015). This concept is present in terms of the well-being components of the youth justice process as much as the accountability conversations. The failure to participate or succeed in the interventions designed to address well-being needs is attributed to individual failings or to the insufficient motivation in the young person (Ungar, Liebenberg, & Ikeda, 2014) . This concept demonstrates how the focus point within the New Zealand youth justice system is justice, and how the development and continued growth of the well-being of a young person can often be lost in the pursuit of justice and holding young people accountable for their actions (Goldson & Muncie, 2012; Muncie, 2013). Lambie (2016) added that due to the lack of research about the outcomes and evaluations within the youth justice system it is unclear how youth justice systems around the world manage this tension.

Youth justice systems around the world are struggling with similar variations in this discourse of trying to balance competing ideas. McAlister and Carr (2014) discussed what the tension looks like from the perspective of Great Britain. They established that there is a clear attempt to balance the dual goals of youth justice within a system yet struggle to keep the balance. This is due to the complex nature of both of these concepts as discourses and how they transfer into practice within the system. This makes finding an appropriate balance difficult. McAra and McVie (2010) and Muncie (2013) analysed this tension within Great Britain. Traditionally, Northern Ireland prioritises

restoration, Wales places importance on the rights of children, England focuses on the risk of young people and re-offending, and Scotland emphasises welfare. McAlister and Carr (2014) focused on the restoration priorities in Northern Ireland. They argued that for young people having a focus on restoration largely places the "burden of restoration and reform on their [young persons'] shoulders. The question of their wider experiences, including multiple traumatic life events, poverty, paramilitary punishments and other forms of exclusions are for many not addressed in a meaningful way" (p. 251). These ideas are similar to the balance that the New Zealand youth justice faces in terms of managing the tension. There is a clear argument that the systems both in New Zealand and the varying systems in Great Britain are failing to adequately balance the dual functions and meaningfully work with all the offending-related issues, not just the offending and justice function of the system (Bradt & Bouverne-De Bie, 2009; Gough, 2016). How this is played out in Youth Justice Residences is thus a complex and dynamic experience that could conjure the positive and negative experiences where the balance is not always even and equitable.

3.3 Youth Justice Residences

A majority of the literature relating to youth justice residences portrays residence in a negative light. It raises questions about the ability and effectiveness of a secure residence to meet the needs of the young people, while at the same time maintaining and developing the well-being of young people. Lambie and Randell (2013) carried out a review of the literature on the impact of incarceration on youth offenders, highlighting that the majority of the literature from the early 2000s placed a strong emphasis on the negative impacts of secure youth justice residences on youth offenders. Gretton and Clift (2011); Lambie (2016); Lambie and Randell (2013) have suggested that the

incarceration of young people in secure residences has adverse behavioural and mental health consequences. They noted that secure youth justice residences fail to meet the complex social and criminogenic needs of young people who are placed in these care facilities. The effects of incarceration increase the difficulty of a successful transition into young adulthood/adulthood for a vulnerable population of young people that for the most part had a less than adequate experience of childhood (McElvaney & Tatlow-Golden, 2016). Several authors have stated that more research is needed to understand the purpose and the objectives of residence so that the practice and operating procedures can link in with the dual goals of youth justice (Hart, 2017; Lambie, 2016; Office of the Childrens Commissioner, 2017).

Some studies note that residence has its benefits and uses. Secure residence is a way to hold young people accountable to their victim(s), the public and communities for their offending behaviour (Becroft, 2009; Lambie, 2016). Cox (2011) Iderbitzin (2006)suggested that residence can be a place where young people have their immediate needs met and plans are created and put in place for their future well-being. It provides an opportunity to remove young people from their "difficult environments" and provides a safe space to engage in programmes and activities that teach them about the different capabilities they possess. "Secure residence provides structure and routines that address unmet needs in educational, health and physical wellbeing, as well as support with such things as alcohol and drug use and anger issues"(Urry, Sanders, Munford, & Dewhurst, 2014) Residence meets the fundamental needs of young people which allows them to feel safe and secure during their stay which is important for their continued development and sense of self (James et al., 2015; Morgan, 2012).

Another key critique of the youth justice residence is the ability for youth gangs to recruit new members within the residence. The youth gang culture is prominent within the youth justice system and within the secure residences (Lynch, 2012b; Maxwell et al., 2004). The ability for youth gangs to recruit while in secure residence makes it difficult for young people to make the choice to create positive change in their lives. However, residences also allow young people to connect with each other, share stories and experiences, which can have positive impacts. Young people can create connections through shared experiences in a safe, structured environment (Munford & Sanders, 2015b). This is important as young people can find common ground in a healthy way and encourage each other to create positive change. Residence can allow for reflection about the decisions the young people have made around their offending and the hurt they have caused others, their families, and themselves (Lambie, 2016; McElvaney & Tatlow-Golden, 2016; Munford & Sanders, 2015b). The way secure residence puts emphasis on how young people create connection is unclear due to the lack of research and information about the theoretical frameworks of practice within these environments (Lambie, 2016; Office of the Childrens Commissioner, 2017).

The literature focused on the lived experiences of the young people in residence shows both sides of the argument to the way young people create connection whether it be positive or negative. As part of a five-year longitudinal study Urry et al. (2014), sought to understand the experiences of vulnerable young people who were multiple services users in Aotearoa New Zealand. They found that the youth justice residence was an important turning point in the lives of vulnerable young people who followed an offending pathway, which can either be

positive or negative. They explained that the support young people received from staff and others in residence enabled them to utilise this experience as a positive turning point in their lives. Young people started to develop a more versatile sense of self with the opportunities and environment that residence provided. Young people were able to create positive change in their lives by learning new skills and developing new coping mechanisms to assist them to deal with the challenging situations they faced. This side of the turning point creates motivation to change and elicits increased positive behaviour from young people. Kelly (2015), also noted similar findings from the lived experiences of young people who had been placed in a youth justice residence.

The negative implications of residence as a turning point in their lives is that young people may establish greater bonds to offending communities. From these communities, young people can increase skills and knowledge related to their offending/deviant behaviour and gain greater motivation to continue offending as they continue to see a positive reward for offending behaviour (Lynch, 2012a; Maxwell et al., 2004). Young people have an increased sense of community through deepening connections with other youth offenders (Lee & J, 2007; Lynch, 2012a). Studies conducted by Lynch (2012b); Ryan, Marshall, Herz, and Hernandez (2008) claimed that secure residence has a greater negative impact on young people because they are surrounded by negative peer influences. This can lead to an increase of anti-social behaviours being learnt in residence that exacerbate offending behaviour once young people return to the community. Residence for young people with these experiences was about how it had a negative impact on the development of the young person. Residence within this experience allowed for the continued enabling of offending behaviour through greater encouragement of this behaviour

by peers within this environment. Young people with these experiences also felt they did not receive the right type of support within residence to create positive change in their peer choices and offending behaviour.

Even though youth justice residence has both positive and negative implications, much of the literature focuses on the negative implications and how this impact on young people. This could be due to the fact that much of the legislation, policies and general beliefs mentions that locking young people up has adverse effects on their development and ability to transition into their community and adulthood. While residence has its benefits more research is required to explore the positive impacts of residence for young people and to understand what guides and drives the practice in this environment. As the next section demonstrates all the good work in Youth Justice Residences can be undone if support is not put in place post-Residence.

3.4 Transition from Residence

In terms of the transition back to the community, it is one of the most important parts of the youth justice process. Bateman, Hazel, and Wright (2013), noted that while the transition from custody back to the community is a window of opportunity when young people are enthusiastic to change, this window is often hindered by a lack of sufficient, relevant, and timely support. They also noted that this lack of support often leads to disillusionment and a return to the offending behaviour. In particular, plans for suitable accommodation and education, training, or employment are often not established by the time of release. Additionally, other authors noted that transition plans need to be holistic in nature and spread across all areas of well-being

to ensure a well-rounded integration back into the community (Boden, Munford, Sanders, Liebenberg, & McLeod, 2016; Jülich, MacRae, & MacRae, 2009; McAra & McVie, 2010).

According to , Stevens, Munford, Sanders, Dewhurst, Henaghan, Mirfin Veitch, et al. (2013), transition plans should include family relationships, practice skills for independent living, accommodation, education/training and employment options, health and development, financial arrangements, and a leaving care pack (with important legal documents). Premdutt (2013), carried out a study examining the effectiveness of the transition process for young people leaving a secure residence. The study highlights the need for transition plans to be well structured and planned. She stated that there are several concerns that need to be addressed in relation to transition. These is the need for different types of intervention that meet the needs of individual young people, for services involved in transition to be integrated and collaborative, and there is a significant lack of community support for young people who are leaving a secure residence. Morgan (2012), suggested that there is a lack of information available on what makes a successful transition into the community. Having the voices of young people who have experienced this transition can help create processes that support young people and their families in the future.

Joseph (2009) conducted a study that interviewed eight young people who had experienced transition back to the community from residence, along with five professionals who were involved in the transition of young people within the youth justice population. Her research highlighted several key elements of transition. She found that despite the negative influences most of the participants who were part of the study managed to achieve successful transitions. The

recommendations from the participants were the need for more mentors, financial support, family support, greater youth involvement in the Family Group Conference (FGC) process, and more connections with their communities through schools, sport, recreational activities, and church. The recommendations from professionals included the need for young people to have adequate support, longer service follow-up timeframes, facilitating engagement with transitions into schools and the community, and fostering the development of personal visions and goals for young people to see change within themselves. Similarly, Beal (2014) carried out a small-scale qualitative study that employed an interpretative phenomenological analysis of young people's accounts of their transitions from secure institutions and found the experiences of transition were highlighted by three psychological processes, specifically, goal-directed approaches, self-efficacy and identity development. These three elements should be included in transition plans. This project highlighted the need for specific, tailored packages that align with the individual and their complex needs, goals, and the development of the young person who is transitioning into the community.

The young people in both of the studies discussed above communicated what they needed to transition successfully back into the community and indicated that their voices were not heard as part of the transition planning process. In New Zealand, the family group conference process (FGC) provides young people and their families the opportunity to support the development and implementation of transition strategies to effectively allow their young people to return to the community (Joseph, 2009)

Urry et al. (2014) found that even though some young people made positive changes while in residence and wanted to continue in this

direction once discharged there was apprehension about the difficulty of maintaining the changes and further developing positive lives in their community. This was due to the fact that they were returning to environments and families that had not changed and the young people did not have the same access to the positive support and networks in the community that they had in residence. Several authors have highlighted the lack of resources around the transition back to the community (Bateman et al., 2013; Mendes, Baidawi, & Snow, 2014). The Office of the Childrens Commissioner (2017) recommended greater therapeutic support for families while their young people are in residence to assist them to support young people to build on the positive changes they made while they were in residence.

Based on a review of the literature, it would seem that transitioning young people back to the community could be done better. While the research clearly presents several options for effective transition, it is necessary to understand the barriers and limitations the young people encountered while these various options are put into practice while transitioning the young people from residence back to the community. In the community though, in order for better support to be in place, a focus on those who will ensure support is available, to meet the needs of the transitioning residents, such as, social workers, is imperative.

3.5 Female Youth Offenders and Social Work Practice

Within the Youth Justice system, female young people have been established as a minority group that have unique needs that connect with offending behaviour. Many authors (Morgan, 2012; Sherman & Balck, 2015; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996) have highlighted the need for specific interventions to be established to meet the needs for this sub-group of the youth justice population. These specific needs and risks that have been identified are important, these risks should shape

social work assessment and intervention in the youth justice field. Risk factors for female youth offenders are spread across several spheres of the lives of young women and are often interlinked. As mentioned in section 1.2.2, young women who are part of the youth justice system experience high rates of trauma and abuse, mental health issues and substance misuse disorders and self-harm and suicide ideation (McArdle & Lambie, 2018; Sherman & Balck, 2015). These issues have an impact and compound offending behaviour. Acknowledging and working with the multitude of risks presented by female young people and not the offending behaviour in isolation has been suggested to greatly improve young women's transition into adulthood and reduce re-offending.

Based on a review of the literature the most common argument surrounding female youth offending is that the system is not responsive to the highly individualised needs and characteristics of female youth offending. Many authors have argued that the system responses often fail to acknowledge the underlying causes that the young women who offend often have (Chesney-Lind, 1989; Chesney-Lind et al., 2008; Hoyt & Scherer, 1998; Sanders et al., 2016). For example, the experiences of trauma and abuse that female young people have been subjected to and the way these experiences have shaped their ways of coping and sense of self are a contributing factor in their offending behaviour. Within the New Zealand context, Severinsen et al. (2016) suggested that witnessing and experiencing violence, exploitation and sexual abuse at the hands of males created resentment towards traditional gender roles and self-identity. Females who had these experiences sought to associate with machismo stereotypes that bring social status that provided them with a level of equality with their male peers. This was a way of coping with the trauma these young women experienced.

Another manner in which female young people cope with these negative experiences is by displaying risk-taking behaviour that resulted in getting in trouble with the law, and risky sexual behaviour. Female youth offenders also experience problematic family relationships and have higher rates of mental health disorders, substance abuse issues, and sexual and physical health problems (Chesney-Lind & Bilsky, 2011; Severinsen et al., 2016). This suggests that meaningful and purposeful engagement with the inclusion of female-targeted interventions that view offending behaviour as part of a symptom of trauma can assist young women to develop a positive sense of self/identity and reduce the risk re-offending (Davidson, Pakso, & Chesney-Lind, 2011).

Gaarder and Hesselton (2012); Sherman (2012) argued that the current youth justice systems fail to acknowledge the influence of the contexts of family, community and society in females' offending. The importance of these contexts can be seen from discussions in Chapter 2 relating to the theoretical frameworks that guide this research. That is to say, female offending and the needs of female youth offenders should be considered ecologically. They also suggest that there is increasing pressure for the system to pay more attention to the social and structural drivers of female offending. They further highlight the need for female offending to be considered from an ecological perspective (Lambie, 2016; Office of the Childrens Commissioner, 2017).

The dominant narrative within youth justice social work practice draws on and responds to the risk and responsibilisation of young people. This narrative does not serve female young people within the system and is an example of how the system specifically responds to male

young people (Sanders et al., 2016) (refer to section 1.2.1). This paradigm is framed on three elements, specifically, Risk-Factor-Prevention. It identifies the young person in relation to their problems, shortfalls, and pathologies. Finally, it prescribes intense risk management through individualised 'offender' and offence-based interventions (Robinson, 2016). The main criticisms of this narrative and model of practice are that it oversimplifies the lives of young people to 'restricted bundles of risk' with an overriding focus on individualising the cause of and in turn the solutions to offending (Gray, 2013; Haines & Case, 2015). This means that the wider historical, cultural, and social structural context to the development of young people and their offending behaviour is ignored. As previously discussed, these contexts are vital for meaningful engagement and intervention to take place with female young people within the youth justice system (Lambie, 2016; Office of the Childrens Commissioner, 2017).

While this type of intervention is effective with low to moderate youth offenders and it is important knowledge to have at the assessment phase while working with high end prolific or female offenders, it is not effective as a stand-alone intervention for this client group given the specific needs and risks they present (Robinson, 2016). John et al. (2017), suggested utilising a social-ecological lens while working with prolific offenders, who are placed in secure residence. This perspective views the young person in terms of the relationships with their immediate environment and the wider socio-cultural, and political-economic context (see chapter 2.3 about resilience for more detail). Henry et al. (2015) and Munford and Sanders (2015b) noted that this view of the young person's environment is illustrated as a constellation of inter-connected settings within which human development occurs and is shaped by various complex environments as opposed to one

single setting. What is recommended, for example, is a social work practice lens that focuses on how these environments interact with each other and impact upon the young person's ability to engage with these environments. For the social work practice with a lens focuses on interrupting the offending of young people through replacing anti-social activities with positive pro-social activities on a regular basis and over an extended period of time with increasing complexity in order to develop a positive identity and sense of self (Byrne & Case, 2016; John et al., 2017; Li, Liebenberg, & Ungar, 2015).

The social-ecological lens within the Youth Justice social work practice provides a wider perception of female youth offenders and places their offending within the context of their environment. This allows for the positive development of young women's well-being to be included in interventions where the dominant narrative within youth justice only has a narrow focus. Lastly, this practice framework may create a better balance between justice and welfare paradigms to potentially create better outcomes for female young people who are involved in the youth justice system.

3.6 Summary

This literature review highlighted key themes, debates and potential avenues for redressing the current youth justice process, particularly the transitioning of young people back into the community. Based on an examination of the guiding policies, principles, and legislation within the youth justice system in New Zealand and comparing these with international systems it highlighted a key theme: the dual tensions within the youth justice system that make this field challenging to work in between accountability and welfare. The experience also identified the principles that guide decision-making that are predominantly individualised rather than situated youth justice residences within a

holistic context and take into account the cultural and socio-ecological complexities as the debates point out. As a consequence, these institutions are negatively portrayed according to the research literature for failing to meet the needs of the population it serves. This is particularly so for the transition back into the community for female high-end prolific youth offenders where the youth justice social work literature exposed concerns around dated, gender-biased and highly acutely focused social work assessments that also influence the result of the ineffective and inappropriate interventions. Nevertheless, what is required though is to test these claims, questions and concerns by considering a suitable research design.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to justify and describe the research theories and methodologies that are utilised and provide a critique of the reason they used for this project. In terms of understanding of how the research is carried out, it means that the project could potentially be repeated on a larger scale and the results can be compared. The methodology allows for sharing information about the recruitment techniques utilised as part of this project. The use of social media is new and a relatively unexplored medium for seeking and managing participants. This concept will be explored as well as the benefits and challenges of this method.

This chapter outlines the methodology that grounded this research project and justifies its use. It will then present the research design and go on to discuss the data collection component of the study and will finish with a section on the data analysis element of the study, highlighting the methods used to produce trustworthy data. The last section of this chapter will focus on the ethical considerations involved in conducting this research.

4.2 Methodology

The two potential research methods that could be utilised for this research project include the quantitative methodology and the qualitative methodology. Quantitative research is based in positivism and empiricism paradigms. It is based on a scientific hypothetico-deductive method that is designed for large scale projects that can be generalised and uses statistical analysis. It searches for singular truths that rely on hypotheses, variables and statistics. The process of

quantification allows for the ability to examine large populations and it offers the validity of the results through the use of statistics and probability. It allows for the traditional indicators of credibility, such as, validity, reliability, generalisability and reproducibility (O'Leary, 2014a) . Quantitative methodology allows for research to be carried out objectively and it maintains a separation between the individual doing the research and the group or subject they are researching. A critique of this methodology is that it does not allow for an in-depth analysis of the ideas or concepts that are being studied and covers the surface of these ideas (Silverman, 2013).

In regard to the qualitative research approach, it holds a belief based on valuing depth and complexity over quantity and generalisability. It argues that there is value in understanding the individual life experiences of members of a society or a target population within society to gain insight into how they live their lives (O'Leary, 2014a). Another point that qualitative research argues is that it is important to understand how people create meaning in their lives (Silverman, 2013). Finally, qualitative research seeks to understand how individuals attribute value to the social roles in which they participate within society. It creates space for the grey areas of individual experiences and allows for similarities, gaps and improvements to be highlighted. Qualitative research is heavily critiqued for being value laden, biased and sometimes as provisional or ad hoc (O'Leary, 2014b).

It was decided that the qualitative methodology would be the most appropriate methodology for this project. The reason for this is because the research objective is trying to gain insight into two things. The first has been to understand the experiences of female young people within the youth justice residence and their transitions back to the community, this is a specific part of the system since all of the

young people who enter the system are a part of it. The second was to understand how the individual journey through that system had an impact on their lives. Finally, this project wanted to give a voice to a marginalised group within an already vulnerable population of young people, specifically female youth offenders. It is believed that an in-depth understanding of individuals' experiences of the youth justice system would most appropriately address the aims of the research.

A retrospective lens has been employed for the current project. This means that all the participants who took part in the study had been discharged from the youth justice system and they were reflecting on their experiences. This is as opposed to a prospective lens which would have participants answering questions about the youth justice system while still being a part of the system (Euser, Zoccali, Jager, & Dekker, 2009; Flick, 2009; Wolfram Cox & Hassard, 2007). A retrospective lens would be most appropriate due to the nature of the youth justice system, the vulnerability and life experiences of potential participants, and because the possible experiences of the young people while they were in the system could be challenging to discuss for the participants. Therefore, using a retrospective lens along with the criteria of the potential participants having been discharged from the youth justice system for a minimum of two years along with other criteria that sought to assist in collecting the richest lived experiences of participants in the safest possible manner. There are three considerations that are involved in using a retrospective approach versus a prospective approach. The first consideration is how effective young people in the system would be in terms of being able to answer the questions related to the research objective of the project. The second is the age and vulnerability of the young people who were involved in the youth justice system. The third is how the research on young people currently within the system would impact upon the

professional therapeutic work already being undertaken within the residence and any conflict the research could cause. Not only would a retrospective approach address the above-mentioned issues, it also allowed potential participants to provide a greater description of their experiences about a challenging time in their lives while they were not currently in the situation.

4.3 Research Theory: a review of the research literature

There are a range of theories within the qualitative research methodology that would be relevant for this research. These include phenomenology, life history and grounded theory. Phenomenology aims to develop a complete, accurate, clear and articulate description of a particular human experience (Goulding, 2005; Paley, 2016). This could potentially be an important aspect for this project as it allows for the findings to feed the theories as opposed to the findings fitting into the theories or not. Life history, however, could also be an important consideration because allows for the expression of feelings, ideas, and opinions from the point of the person who created meaning through their life experiences (Atkinson, 2015). As well as Grounded theory, the aim of this research is to describe a specific human experience and develop adequate theoretical conceptualisations of the findings. This means that the researcher begins with no pre-existing theory, hypothesis or expectation of the findings and allows for a theory to emerge from the data and flexibility within the data collection phase to create space for ideas that the researcher had not considered, this could also be relevant for this project (Goulding, 2005; Oktay, 2012). Overall, grounded theory was chosen as the main research theory that drives this project. This is because it is expected that most of the findings will be induced by the participants voices in the final analyse of this project.

4.4 Research Design

This section provides a step-by-step guide about carrying out the project. It canvasses and outlines the main stages in the research process, the sampling and recruitment (section 4.4.1), which is based on the snowball technique and a purposive selection criterion. The next stage, the data collection (section 4.4.2) explains the process of how the information is to be collected and includes the management and security of the data. The third stage, data analysis (section 4.4.3), describes the process of how the collected information is synthesised through transcriptions, coding, pattern matching and triangulation. The final stage is a discussion around the potential ethical dilemmas (section 4.5) and how the consideration of the dilemmas is essential to ensure the validity, reliability, and that the highest quality information is yielded and reported on with confidence.

4.4.1 Sampling and Recruitment Participant Criteria

The following criteria were developed to identify and recruit prospective participants:

- Female or identify as female;
- Any ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or not, and reside in the Auckland area or the North Island region;
- Be directed to spend time in a YJR by the Youth Court of New Zealand;
- Be discharged OR aged out of the youth justice system for a minimum of 2 years;
- Have no active involvement with the Department of Corrections.

The participants were recruited for this project using three different methods. The first was utilising key informants to disseminate and distribute the information about the project (or *Information Sheet* see Appendix B) either in person or via Facebook, a social media site, so as to advertise and attract interest. Key informants were used to mitigate any conflict of interest, for example, due to my work in a YJR it is possible that I may have known potential participants. The utilisation of key informants allows for information to be passed over to potential participants and for participants to make an informed and voluntary decision to participate. The key informants were essential people because they were already embedded within the community agencies and organisations and they had extensive knowledge within the youth justice field. They were used to create an initial seed sample of approximately three or four participants that could then pilot the interview questionnaire (see Appendix C) and promote the research project throughout their networks.

Secondly, Facebook doubled as a recruitment tool with the potential participants in terms of responding to posts on the page seeking participants for the project. Facebook was also used since it allowed access to a hard-to-reach population group (Fileborn, 2016). A Facebook page was created specifically for participant recruitment and a place where all the information regarding the project could be accessed. There were posts on the page that had to do with the research documentation for this study including the Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix B), *The Interview Schedule* (see Appendix C) for participants, *The Participant Consent Form* (see Appendix D), and *The Authority to Release Transcript Form* (see Appendix E). All of this documentation was posted so potential participants had access to all the required information to make an informed decision about whether they wanted to be a part of this

project. So the use of Facebook provided space and time for potential participants to make informed decisions about participating in the project that traditional methods do not allow for.

Secondly, the snowball sampling technique was utilised as this involved building the participant sample through referrals from the participants who were already engaged in the project. According to the research literature, snowball sampling is the most preferred and highly recommended approach for identifying and accessing hard-to-reach population groups (O'Leary, 2014a) such as, former female youth justice residents. The three participants, who comprised the seed group of participants, were asked if they knew anyone else who met the research criteria and could be interested in being part of the project. Every participant from the seed group knew at least one other person who was interested in being involved. From this method of recruitment four participants were identified and their details were passed onto the researcher after the individuals involved gave their approval.

During the recruitment process the participants from outside the Auckland area responded to the promotion of the project and met the other criteria faster than those in Auckland. The majority of the females that the key informants suggested or could think of to approach about the project had corrections involvement and most were in custody under the Department of Corrections, which meant because they were in prison, they were not able to participate in this research project. The geographic area for the potential participants was expanded to include the Northland area and the Central North Island area. This allowed the participants who wanted to participate in the research to do so.

4.4.2 Data Collection

The data collection method involved semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow for a rich set of data to be drawn from the participants' thoughts, feelings, emotions, knowledge and experience (Patton, 2002). The approach used to collect the data aligned with the theories that grounded this project and the qualitative research methodology. This method was chosen, since it was believed to be the most appropriate manner to gather the information that was required to be able to answer the research objectives that this project sought to understand (O'Leary, 2014b). The objectives of this project required data that could show how being part of the YJS shaped and informed the lives of a small sample of the young women who had experience within the YJS. Employing the semi-structured interview meant that while the main interview questions were set, other questions could be added and asked if they arose during the process of the interview.

The interview schedule (see Appendix C) was developed in a manner that allowed for an understanding of not only the participant experiences of the YJS, it was also to gain an understanding of their lives before they entered a YJR and how their experiences may have contributed to the fact that they ended up in residence and in the YJS. The interview structure was set up in three sections. The first section had questions about their life experiences before they were admitted into residence, the second section entailed questions about their life experiences during their stay in residence, and the third section was about their experiences after leaving the residence and transitioning back to the community. Each section of the interview had sub-questions to guide the conversation with the participants around that section of the interview.

Appendix C is the initial interview that was utilised in the first two pilot interviews of the research project. After the first two interviews, the

interview schedule was evaluated, and questions were added to the sub-questions that took place in the during the residence phase of the interview schedule. The questions that were added were "How was it interacting with the other young people in the Unit?" and "What was it like when you first walked into the Unit?" These questions were added as both participants spoke about these topics in the first two interviews and they provided rich and detailed answers. Exploring these two areas of experience for the other participants to draw similarities and differences seemed important and it was necessary to explore them further. After the initial two interviews, the interview schedule remained unchanged in order to create consistency in the manner in which all of the interviews were constructed and the manner in which participants were engaged with during the interview process.

The plan was to conduct the interview process in a total of 90 minutes, which was conducted outside of their normal daily duties and in a neutral comfortable and confidential environment. The first 30 minutes would be a briefing to enable the participant to re-read the research documentation (see 4.4.1) and ask any questions before the interview commenced. It is important that the participant is clear about her rights, what would happen to their information, and they were given the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Once the participant consented then the remaining 60 minutes would be the actual interview and that would be audio recorded and it would include opportunities for the participant to have a break or receive further support after the interview if required.

4.4.3 Data Analysis

On completion of the data collection, all of the interviews were to be self-transcribed. Once the transcription was completed the transcripts

were returned to the participants to check the content and approve it as well as agree for their transcript to be used as a means to report on. Hence, all of the participants signed *An Authority to Release Transcript Form* agreeing to the use of their interview in the project. The participants were given pseudonyms and any identifying information was removed to maintain confidentiality and protect their identity and this included that all place names and organisations were removed to protect the confidentiality of participants and organisations (Litchman, 2014).

The data would be analysed by using a thematic analysis approach, which processed, extracted, and synthesised the data to yield and elicit emergent themes. There was to be no software used during for analysis of the data. Instead, a preliminary analysis begins during the transcribing stage with the initial pattern matching occurring looking for repetitive words or phrases with similar meanings and would continue throughout the data analysis stage. These repeating words and phrases were to be colour-coded into groups to create sub themes, while also examining for isolated data that could be important. These sub themes were to be merged together to create key themes that provide a board umbrella for the sub themes. These key themes would underpin the key findings from the data. The framework of "most participants said, some participants said, and few participants said" was utilised to discern the importance of each sub theme and report the findings. Triangulation of the key themes would be carried out by cross referenced and cross examined against the literature review, what the findings would discover, and according to the researcher's critical evaluation (Gavin, 2008; Seidman, 2013).

4.5 Ethical considerations

All ethcial considerations were guided by the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (2015)[8] and approval to implement this research design is sought from the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern Ethics Committee (see Appendix A). The four ethical issues that were identified included participant safety and protection; governing and managing social media usage; assessing and responding to any likelihood of harm; and any potential conflict of interest.

Participant's safety and the protection of the participant's identity was of the utmost importance, so the study was transparent in all stages of the research process. For example, the study made its research documentation available and declared its intentions and motivations clear during every stage of the project. At the data collection phase, the potential participants were asked to attend a briefing for the purpose of checking-in and so the researcher could declare the intentions and motivations of the project a second time. And again, the researcher contacted the participants to check with them and have them approve their transcriptions and then asked them for their authorisation to use their transcript as part of the findings.

The ethical considerations related to the use of social media as a recruitment tool were important. This is because the use of social media to recruit research participants is a relatively new method of recruitment, which means there are few well tested ethical guidelines

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[8] For more information about Massey University Code of research ethics see https://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/PolicyGuide/Documents/c/code-of-ethical-conduct-for-research,-teaching-and-evaluations-involving-human-participants.pdf

to utilise this platform in that manner . Therefore, considerable time was spent on ensuring the safety of all of the potential participants and the researcher through the usage of social media (Kosinski, Matz, Popov, Stillwell, & Gosling, 2015). In order to keep the researcher safe, a separate Facebook page is planned specifically to promote the research and recruit participants to participate in the research. Again, the safety of the participants, the researcher, and the wider community was paramount (Sikkens, van San, Sieckelinck, Boeije, & de Winter, 2017).

The project was designed in many ways to reduce or eliminate any potential harm. For example, in terms of any distress that could be caused by the interview schedule or the questions, counselling services were offered as an option. All of the participants had the right to withdraw from the project at any time or participants had the option to decline answering a particular question if they did not feel safe. Support was available for any harm incurred on the project and remedies, such as, alerting the research team of the time and location of interviews to ensure the researcher and participants were kept safe. Conducting the interviews in public spaces, such as, libraries was another remedy.

Finally, the project considers any potential conflicts of interest as a serious matter. These must be declared immediately. For example, the researcher works in the youth justice field within youth justice residences and thus it was possible that the researcher may know or have worked with potential participants. To address this issue special attention is taken during the participant recruitment stage of the project. Key informants were utilised (as discussed above) to mitigate any potential conflict of interest as the researcher would not be directly recruiting for the project, potential participants could talk to

the key informant regarding any concerns they may have. The other way this issue was addressed was by setting the research criteria that all participants had to be either discharged or aged out of the youth justice system for a minimum of two years. This meant that none of the participants would have current involvement in the YJS.

4.6 Summary

This chapter discussed how this research project was developed. It examined the paradigms and methodologies that grounded the research. These theories and methodologies helped to guide the thoughts, concepts, and objectives of the research. The theories are socialisation, delinquency, resilience. The qualitative research method was used as it was the most appropriate method to answer the research objectives and it would provide the kind of rich data that is required to understand the life experiences of a specific vulnerable population within society. The retrospective lens was utilised as it was believed that much richer data could be obtained from having participants reflect upon their experiences as opposed to currently being part of the system and talking about it "in real-time". The research design was then discussed and the complications that arose around the data collection phase of the research. Finally, the ethical considerations of the research project were considered.

Chapter 5 Findings

5.0 Introduction

The findings, presented in this chapter, focus on the lived experiences of participants who have been a part of the YJS. These findings represent the accounts of the opinions, perspectives, and stories of six female former youth offenders who were admitted to a YJR, have been transitioned back to the community and have been discharged from the YJS for a minimum of two years. Five of the participants identified as Māori (Bobbie, Felicia, Sharon, Marie, and Dylan) and one non-Māori (Janice), they were between 22 and 26 years of age. These young women were ordered by the Court to YJR for various crimes, such as, unlawfully taking motor vehicles, aggravated robbery, grievous bodily harm, possession of drug paraphernalia, and common assault. The unique perspective that participants offered provided insight into not only their experiences within the YJR and their transition back to the community it also provided insight into their lives, support system and sense of self which created and understanding about the circumstances and situations that young women live through and how the adds to these experiences.

The ideas are presented in three sections: 5.1) Before Residence (narratives of the young women's lives leading up to being placed in residence); 5.2) During Residence (narratives of experiences during residence); and 5.3) After Residence (narratives about leaving residence and transitioning back to the community). There were common themes that were developed in each section. Each theme was explored and the stories of the female experiences are used to highlight the significance of each issue.

5.1 Before Residence

5.1.1 Pathways into Offending

A pathway into offending is the avenue a young person took and the experiences that a young person had, that led them to become involved in the YJS and placed in a YJR. For female youth offenders, these pathways are of an extraordinarily complex and intertwined nature. From the participant's experiences four pathways were identified, these included, experiences of trauma; substance misuse; addiction[9] and lack of self-fulfilment. These four pathways will be explored in detail below.

All of the participants in this study disclosed that they had experience in a traumatic situation or negative life event that triggered their offending behaviour. This trauma, along with other social issues, played a significant part in them ending up in youth justice residence. The type of trauma experienced varied and encompassed institutional trauma such as being uplifted from their family and placed in state care due to care and protection concerns, social trauma such as sexual assault, physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and personal trauma which included terminal illness of a significant family member, and attempted suicide by another significant family member. Many of the young women described experiencing multiple traumatic and negative life events that contributed to their offending.

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[9] It is important to note here that while substance misuse and addiction commonly can mean the same thing, there is a distinct difference between the two terms from participant accounts in this project. Addiction was seen as an identity for some young women. Whereas substance misuse was viewed as a coping mechanism for experiences of trauma.

In Bobbie's case, she noted that having found that a family member attempted suicide was the event that contributed to her becoming involved with youth justice. She said:

Family issues, one of the main reasons why I did actually end up in YJ was I found my sister hanging and after she went to the hospital with my Dad I couldn't handle it, so I went and stole me some wine, got drunk and then beat up this person. But thankfully my sister is ok…[I was] drinking, fighting, hurting vulnerable people. People that didn't even need to be hurt [Bobbie]

From Bobbie's traumatic experience she did not have adequate coping strategies to deal with this shock. She turned to crime, alcohol and violence as means to cope. Random encounters with strangers fuelled her violent and delinquent behaviours.

Alcohol and drug use was a common factor that escalated offending behaviour. Some showed signs of addiction leading to criminal behaviour. Stealing a car and smoking marijuana was normalised and justified as fun as Janice explains below:

I thought oh what the hey, if I'm getting into trouble for someone else might as well start getting in trouble for myself. I stole a car and smoked a lot of drugs. Basically, that's what I was doing. I don't remember much from those days…It was in a time where I just thought it was fun. I thought that lifestyle was fun. But it's not. [Janice]

For Janice, the draw of using drugs and alcohol and stealing cars also gave her a sense of belonging and at the time she got enjoyment from these activities it was with the people she then called her friends.

Another significant aspect of pathways into offending for participants was committing a crime to meet a need that was otherwise unmet in

another area of their lives. The need that was unmet could have been from many different areas of a young woman's personal life. It may be a physical need, a mental/emotional need, or a family/social need. The benefit of offending may outweigh the cost, and the gain had the potential to cover many different areas of their lives.

For instance, Sharon, described the many different ways her offending behaviour helped her meet her needs that she wasn't receiving from her family home. Crime replaced the lack of fulfilment in her life that she was not getting from other people or situations as she explains below:

> Nah, cause everything at home was handed to me, and when I went out, I had to get it myself type thing. So the thrill wasn't there anymore at home, getting new shit the thrill of it was gone. It then moved to how I could get it…the money, stuff, the friends I met, everything [were benefits of offending]. Yea everything I was around I wasn't getting at home. So yea. [Sharon]

Female youth offending pathways result from an accumulation of factors at various circumstances of their lives. They include the experience of trauma or a traumatising event that could be a trigger, alcohol and drug misuse and/or addiction, and committing a crime to fulfil a need that was not being met in another area of their lives. By analysing their support systems, it could be revealed as a source of strength that is underutilised or lying dormant or another cause that influenced young women into seeking out delinquency and the friends they made in this activity as a means of attaining social support that was absent in expected pro-social circles.

5.1.2 Support System

Support systems are vital to helping young women achieve in their lives. They develop a sense of belonging and create their identity through the different roles they play in life and learn behaviours deemed appropriate by their social circles. Support systems, for these participants, included family, peer groups, and professionals involved in the young person's life, which were apparent in the participants' accounts before they had been placed in a YJR. The support systems can be tracked within this section starting with the benefits the participants see within these systems to where they breakdown and become less than effective in supporting the young women compared to how supportive they could have been.

Several of the participants described their support system as mostly positive and encouraging, but the negative peer influence was a significant factor in the lead up to their criminal offending and gradual decline of family support. Although family support is regarded as one of the chief sources of support it loses its hold on some young people. Sometimes it is not the family that drifts away from their young people but the young people instead that drift away from their family. It is only once they are in trouble that the support of their family is important otherwise their support is mainly from their friends. As Felicia explains:

> *I had a lot of support. My family, they have always been there for me. I just did what I did, didn't really care. I only wanted their help when I was in deep shit. … I taught all my little friends what we did back then. Yea I was the instigator over everything [Felicia]*

An older sibling could be either a great source of support or a reason that leads younger siblings to crime. Older siblings are role models for their younger siblings to look up to and they can act as best friends as well. Some older siblings are a bad influence and even persuade the younger sibling not to utilise support from other family members as Janice recalls below:

> My family support was amazing. It's not like I wanted it or accepted it or listened to it. That's probably why I got into more trouble. My sister wasn't the greatest influence. I was hanging out with her all the time and that [pause] life seemed fun, I didn't really have any friends. I started breaking into cars and stuff, and that was really fun at the time. [Janice]

Having found a sense of belonging and support with her older sibling and her friends contributed to Janice's on-going offending behaviour and limited the positive support available from other family members.

Another reason family support systems wane is because some families become numb and surrender. There is a limit to their patience, forgiveness, tolerance and resiliency. If someone in their family is constantly getting into trouble, and family members pick them up from the Police cells or from a hospital ward, these families gradually lose hope. This was true for Marie as she explains below:

> I had my family, they were good support but for them it was hard, I was in too deep with what I was going through, and they pretty much let me go through, like through the course of everything. [Marie]

Marie's family had reached their limit of capabilities and knowledge to continue to support her in her behaviour and what she was going through. They felt they had no other option but to leave her to go through what she was going through without them.

If family relationships were to break down and if they were dangerous for the young women, they would seek support from the other adults in their lives, mainly from professionals and this would limit the peer group they engaged with. Dylan discussed the way in which professional support served as the most critical support in her life:

> My Social Worker who has probably known [to] me since I was about eight years old was a very very significant adult in my life at the time...I've always been really aware that my circumstances with my family and our dynamics were really chaotic and toxic [from personal experiences]. So [I] didn't willingly share that with people [other people in my life]. I was a, a very lone wolf. I had one best friend that I psychotically obsessed over, who still loves me now, which is awesome. [Dylan]

Due to the toxic and chaotic dynamics within her family, Dylan did not connect well with other people in her life. Her Social Worker became the most important adult support person in her life and the person, as well as one other friend, who she felt she could trust.

This section discussed the makeup of the support system for the participants and how these support systems played a role in the lives of the participants, from positive and helpful, to demonstrating how family support could break down. It highlighted the complexities of family support, the willingness or unwillingness of these young women to use this support, and the inability of family to provide appropriate support. It also showed how professionals impacted the lives of youth offenders. These support systems played a part in shaping participants' sense of self and setting goals in their lives. The following section discusses the participants' feelings about themselves before residence and the goals they wanted to achieve in life.

5.1.3 Sense of Self and Life Goals

This theme demonstrates how female youth offenders perceived themselves, how they felt within themselves and what kind of life goals they had set before being placed in a YJR. Below are examples of the various identities, expressions and/or personas they adopted as they moved from one view of themselves to another, and how this impacted on their personal and interpersonal outlook and life goals.

Most of the participants had a sense of self that was deeply rooted in the identity of that of a youth offender or they held the identity of an addict. They preferred being known as a tough person or an Alpha female and this was an important perception to project since it instilled high levels of self-confidence for this person and it also raised her status amongst her peers and in society as a fearsome person and someone to be reckoned with. This is an important image as Sharon commented below:

> I wanted to be the worstest female [laughs] honestly I wanted to be the worstest female juvenile in [City Name]. I wanted to hold that record. ... any look [from another person] walking down the street anyone who looked at me funny mate I was like "boof" [punching motion]. I was pretty bad aye [pause] I'm not proud of it now. [Sharon]

To have the reputation of an addict was not to be seen pejoratively, it was about demonstrating that one can handle a cocktail of substances (alcohol mixed with drugs) and still come out of its euphoria as a strong and self-confident young woman. Among her peers this is important as it defies health messages and warnings and shows how substance misuse and having been labelled as an addict is not a bad thing. Certainly for Janice this was true as substance misuse was more than just a means to suppress stressful and emotional situations, it removed

her temporarily from reality which is all she needed, to recharge and push on once the effects wore off.

> *I started doing drugs again. I suppose it was an emotional coping mechanism. I just wanted to feel numb, and so that sort of did it for me. [to deal with a break up] [Janice]*

Many participants reported that they felt they had little control over the way their life was heading. They felt their sense of self and any goals they had were wrapped up in antisocial behaviours and the negative life experiences they have been exposed to, consequently, their sense of self was shaped over time, and at times, unfortunately they acted out in their public life.

For Bobbie, she was clear about what she wanted to be while she was growing up however her motivation waned because she also decided to pursue other interests as well. She has regrets and realises she made the wrong decision because if she had focused on her life goal she feels life for her would have been a lot different as she explains below because she mentioned she wanted to be a photographer:

> *I wanted to be a photographer, I've always wanted to be a photographer and just go about life. I didn't really wanna take that path going through [Organisation Name] and the Courts system and ending up in the places I did. But yea it happened. [Bobbie]*

She said that she did not want to end up in the YJS, even though she did. She had a strong sense of feeling as if she had no control over her circumstances and she ended up in involved with youth justice.

During adolescences it is common for young women to be defiant, push boundaries and neglect their roles and responsibilities. This assists young women to establish their sense of self and develop life goals. However, if one is not able to have control their behaviour/attitude during this time, or the outcome is not what is expected it can impact upon the development of their sense of self. This is apparent in Dylan's account of her experiences as she recounts below:

> *I thought I fucken knew everything, I thought I was really justified in my thinking. I saw myself as a really resistant angsty teenager...my only focus was being free...[Organisation Name] has been such a big part of my life since day dot. Every day, you know Ward of the Court. I'd have to go to Court to get my ears, to ask to get my ears pierced...I always felt so bloody watched and stuff. [Dylan]*

Dylan described how being in state care since a young age impacted her sense of self, she felt as if she had no freedom or control over her life. This can be very traumatic, the feeling of being restricted and living with so many regulations, life becomes stifling and since there is so much apathy, the feeling of wanting to break free sets in.

A young women's sense of self can become so dire that she would feel like drifting aimlessly into oblivion and be without any thought of her life goals. Marie's sense of self and identity was wrapped up in the trauma she experienced while she was growing up, so that she could not separate herself from it. She shared at that point in time (when she was placed in residence) that she wanted to end her life.

> *To be honest, I really didn't want to be here (alive). I just felt a lot of anger. [Marie]*

All of the participants expressed that they did not have any goals in life or that they felt as if they could not achieve their goals due to feelings of restriction and over regulation and all that they wanted was control and freedom over their own lives. Not being able to do what they wanted, and the limits and restrictions placed upon them by others, led them to have feelings of apathy so they wanted to escape.

Before their residence some of the female youth offenders had a clear life goal, while others did not. For those who did have a clear life goal, it gradually dissipated over time because of poor decision-making and distractions. For those who did not have a clear life goal, it was because of the negative socialisation experiences which they wrestled with and could not get on top it, except through a life of crime. At this stage, any thought of positive life goals was not a part of their identity and the sense of belonging they achieved was through their association with crime and with other like-minded peers. It demonstrated the many complex layers of experiences they have been through and it established how they themselves had developed a sense of belonging with their peers. The next section of this chapter explores the participants' experiences about the time they spent in a YJR.

5.2 During Residence

5.2.1 Initial Welcome

This sub-section was developed from the stories the participants had heard from others in the community about their time in residence, their feelings about being placed in a YJR. This includes encounters about what it was like for them, coming into a new and different environment, and how all of this impacted on their early days in residence. All of the participants identified a "settling in" period which

took place after they first arrived in residence. This concept was very prominent across the various narratives from all of young women in this project.

All of the young women in this study spoke of the stories they had heard about the YJR from others before they entered the residence themselves. They all spoke about an initial "settling in" period where they had to get accustomed to the rules, regulations, and the structure of the residence.

> *… Hearing about the place (before going in) what different people would say about it. About this and that, it was completely different anyway when I went there. I had to stay in Secure. I nearly got a hiding. … As I was walking in the unit, one of the girls tried running outta the TV room and down the wing. She tried to give me a hiding, but she failed (staff intervened). I had heard when you're new you get rushed. After that is was alright. It was good you know, got fed, had a shower, had a bed. You were just in a confined area. I had to get used to the staff and the rules and regulations. [Bobbie]*

Bobbie's experience is representative of all the participants. It highlights the stories that young people often hear before they come into residence and how different they were compared with the reality of being in residence. She mentioned how she had to get used to the new environment, which included the regulations, routine and structure.

All the participants reported that it was an intimidating place to be and they shared that they did not feel welcome at first.

Felicia described what it was like at first walking into the Unit:

For me, I felt real fucked cause I was in the cells through the weekend, and I hadn't had a shower and looked like a mess. There are all these girls sitting around this circle thing, and I'm walking in, and they're all just sitting there staring at me. [Felicia]

Felicia explained the challenges of being new to residence and seeing the rest of the young people in the Unit for the first time. She highlighted what this experience was like having been admitted to residence directly from the police cells.

Marie talked about her admission process and how she was asked about gang affiliation:

[pause] going through the process of coming in, the paperwork and that being brought into the Unit. I was just asked are you blue or red? … she [Staff Member] was like cause everyone in here is all blue, so that you know before you walk in and I was like "oh ok." I remember walking in and pretty much had eyes staring at me like "Oh My God who's this?" … I had to sit down and introduce myself, and I was told not to say why or what I was in there for. [Marie]

Marie described the admission process, she mentioned the significance of youth gangs within the residence and what importance was placed on youth gangs, and she also described what it was like to be new in the Unit.

The theme, and the initial welcome, indicates that there were rumours amongst young people about residence that were not true even so there was still a settling in period which occurred where young people have to get accustomed to their new environment. The participants reported that residence was an intimidating and difficult environment to come into for the first time. The following theme reports on the

tools the participants utilised that supported them in residence during their time there.

5.2.2 Tools for Support in Residence

This theme highlights the tools that the young women received during their stay in residence that were helpful for them. Tools, such as, knowing how to organise their days, from the structure they were exposed to, which included baking, understanding how others perceived them, studying and achieving school qualifications, and to how manage one's anti-social behaviour.

All the young people reported that the structure in residence was essential to them achieving their goals during their time in residence. For example, Marie's account described the daily structure and the various day-to-day activities that were typical of her residence life during her stay that appeared to give her and other residents a sense of control.

> *Well, there were some duties to do around the place [laughs]…mop out the showers, the toilets, vacuum out our isle, clean out our rooms and then, if you're on breakfast you have to set up for breakfast and there was mopping the kitchen areas and all that stuff. Yeah, then we had school. [Marie]*

Programmes and activities were an important part of residence. They kept the young people busy throughout the day and created a sense of safety and security compared with the chaos and instability of their lives in the community. For instance, Sharon's comment not only shows further insight into the structured days within the residence life, it also shows how residents learned new life skills, such as, baking, self-

management, sole charge, and being trusted. Sharon remarks on her typical experience during her residency:

> *During the day it was pretty cool [pause]... shower, breakfast, go to school, come back, then there'd be a couple of activities, or the teacher would leave us baking stuff and depending upon our behaviour and how the staff's feeling for the day they'd let us bake...Or make decorations for them [the baking]. [Sharon]*

Bobbie reported being given a programme that was individualised for her that helped shape her identity and sense of self and allowed her to see herself in a different light:

> *...I remember this one programme we did. We got given songs, lyrics, and we had to read through it. Go through and pull out points to why you think they (staff) had given you that song. Then you came back to your circle and you would read about it. That was a cool as one (programme) cause they chose that 'Super Woman' song from Alicia Keys for me...Just how another person can look at you. Give you a song and think that song is about you and then when you actually go through it you can kind of relate to it. Coming from people that you don't really know sorta well. [Bobbie]*

While Sharon and Bobbie's programmes taught them new skills, these same programmes and activities also got the residents to explore different qualities within themselves that were important to their self-development as young women.

School engagement improved for the young women while they were in residence compared with their previous experiences in the community. Most of the participants reported high rates of school achievement during their residency. Dylan discovered the schooling experience within the residence to be very different to what she had encountered outside of the residence, she was comfortable it because

it was less stressful compared to her encounters with school before. Dylan described how school in residence was different from regular school and that it assisted her to understand the importance of education so that she could improve herself:

> *We had schoolwork; most of my education has come from residence. … I liked it … it was quite personal. It wasn't anything like a normal school, there is pressure or something (in a typical school). It wasn't like that. It was cruisy. Yea I liked it. [Dylan]*

Sharon spoke of her educational achievements during her time in residence:

> *I got my NCEA Level One and Two in residence. … I think I only had like three units more to get my Level Three NCEA. And I did some correspondence courses cause I did all the Unit Standards offered by [School Name]. [Sharon]*

The young people who participated in this research reported that school was very important to them. Most of the participants achieved well during their time in residence, and this was where they got the most education during their teenage years. However, for some participants the school in residence was challenging and they struggled to engage. For example, Felicia had little motivation to engage in school and she was influenced by like-minded others. She described what that was like for her:

> *I first started going to school I would sit there and do things, but then I realised that I didn't have too. Oh well, I had to, but I started not doing it. … we would do our own things, but I can't remember what. [Felicia]*

The last point regarding their experiences of spending time in a residence was learning about incentivisation and reward. Another

typical programme and activity is the Behavioural Management System (BMS), which is used to teach and reward positive behaviour displayed by young people in the Unit. Young women learned about pro-social skills and the tools involved with applying it. Janice shared her experience with this tool and how it assisted her in changing her antisocial behaviour:

> *Well, you'd either be level one, two, or level three. … You'd get different points for your chores, your behaviour, the way you treated other people in the Unit, the way you treated the staff, I think your overall attitude and stuff throughout the shift. … Level three was the best if the DVD players were charged. [Janice]*

The BMS system gave Janice rewards for her good behaviour that helped her stay focused on her goals to get out of residence. Dylan described how the Time Out room was helpful for her if she needed space away from the rest of the young people or if something had upset her.

> *Dylan: I also went to Time Out quite a lot.*
>
> *Interviewer: What was the purpose of Time Out?*
>
> *Dylan: To give you some space away from the group. To recollect to prevent a larger situation from escalating.*
>
> *Interviewer: Did Time Out help?*
>
> *Dylan: Yeah fully, those [pause] that really short stint of isolation was a major diffuser for so much. Even filling out that stupid form, with the stupid questions. Even re-reading that and thinking of an answer for that, that process was helpful. By the time you'd finished that you've already calmed down. [Dylan]*

Dylan acknowledged that time out was useful as it provided space away from the other young people in the Unit, time to reflect if she was upset or angry and if she needed time to herself to process issues.

There were many tools the participants found were helpful to support them with behavioural issues and daily living while they were in residence. These included the structure and routine that was provided daily, the programmes and activities that allowed them to learn new skills and develop their sense of self, their engagement in study and education while in residence compared with their previous community engagement in education and the behavioural management tools that were taught to the young people to encourage positive behaviours and how to work through negative behaviours were the main tools the participants commented about. The ability to effectively utilise these tools depended heavily upon the support system within the residence and the types of support the young women had access to.

5.2.3 Support System

The support systems in residence were just as fundamental as the support systems in the community and they played an important part in the lives of the participants. The support systems served as an agent for change in the offending behaviour of the participants as is detailed by the participants below. The support systems from their perspective included the residential staff, other young people within the Unit, external professional support, and family support.

All of the participants reported that the support that the residence staff provided had a significant impact upon them wanting to create change in their lives. They formed positive working relationships with the staff. Dylan and Marie's narratives below encompass the views of all participants.

Dylan noted that it was important that staff took their time to build relationships with her and other young people in the unit. Understanding each individual's characteristics and how they displayed negative behaviour appeared to demonstrate to Dylan that the staff offered positive support:

> *How the staff supported me is [pause] I think it's building some kind of friendship amongst it all. That can be done in a professional way where it's just an understanding of how that kid ticks and how that other kid ticks. That was super supportive for me in there you know, for anybody in there at the time. It's personal, that's kind of what we really need in there. [Dylan]*

Marie noted that the staff created a family environment for the young people during their stay in residence. She found this supportive:

> *Basically they gave us family support. I'd say they pretty much looked out for us. Looked after us as we were their on our own. Some staff I didn't like, there was only maybe one or two of them. The rest were, I sort of looked at them as a family for me then... [Marie]*

So Dylan and Marie described how the staff within residence provided positive support, they took the time to learn who the young were as individuals, and they provided a family environment to make the young people feel safe during their stay.

Several young people reported that other young people in the unit provided support while they were in residence. The importance of peer support within the residence for the participants was that it provided a mostly positive experience. For instance, Dylan sought support from the other young people in the unit. She could see similarities and differences between herself and the rest of the girls in the unit and she felt a sense of belonging:

> *… Once we were all in there, those girls were awesome. … it was cool because learning about the other girls, it gave me a good perception on everybody, why we were there, what it meant, how to use the time well. [Dylan]*

Dylan saw an opportunity to connect with other young women her own age and who she thought she had similarities with. She wanted to utilise her time in residence to support and learn more about the others in the unit.

The external professional support was reported as helpful because these professionals were specialised in particular areas and they provided counselling and other types of assistance. Janice described utilising this support for her drug and alcohol issues:

> *… the dude [drug and alcohol counsellor's name] was pretty cool. You could tell that he had been there, done that. Those sort of counsellors are good when it comes to drugs and that cause they actually know what it is like. Instead of having some fresh out of bloody college student sitting there, never touched drugs in his life, it's like how the fuck are you gonna know about addiction. So he was pretty cool. [Janice]*

She said it was important for specialised professionals to be relatable and have an understanding about what it was like for young people to be in particular situations.

Family support while in residence had many intricate layers about which type of support was provided by family and how residence provides an opportunity to re-build the relationships. This support was sometimes difficult to navigate. For instance, Bobbie found that it was not easy communicating with her family while she was in residence as she missed them and she found it difficult being away from them:

I only got one visit from my Dad and Sister in YJ, out of all the times I was there that was quite sad. After that visit, I never wanted to bring them in again cause letting them go was the hardest. … I would rather not have seen them at all. Talking to them on the phone is hard enough, but at least it's talking. Actually watching them leave or you leave them. Nah, that sucks. [Bobbie]

On the other hand, Sharon had an opportunity to repair her family relationships while she was in residence. She highlighted how staff supported her in trying to re-build her relationships with her family as she explains below:

Before residence it was just my Mum, my Aunty, and my Sisters, there wasn't really a relationship with them and me before residence. Then I came in, I think it was [Staff Member's Name] we were talking, and I was like "ah fuck them" cause I had to put down an emergency contact, she (staff member) rung them. Nobody knew I was in there. Then my Mum ended up ringing my Sisters, they come in (residence) to visit, and I didn't even know I had a visit or nothing. … Yeah, re-built it (family relationship) in a way. I lost heaps, heaps of connections, before (residence), I think that is why it was a big thing to me when she [Staff Member] rung my Mum. Yeah, I wouldn't have. She [Staff Member] didn't have to do that; I'll never forget that. [Sharon]

These examples discuss the difficulties of family support in residence and the opportunities that can be created to work on relationships with their families.

Support systems are an important part of the experiences of young women in residence which is evident in the accounts above. The significant aspects of the young women's support system in residence was residence staff taking the time to check on the relationships with the young women, the peer support they received from other young women in the Unit, specialist support from external professionals and

family support. Their residence stay had a significant impact on the lives of those young women who were involved in this project. The importance of their residence stay for these young women is discussed in the following section.

5.2.4 The importance of Residence within Youth Justice

This theme was developed from the learnings that participants took away from their time in residence. It highlights the importance of residence within the YJS and how it has had an impact on the lives of the young women who participated in this project.

All the participants said that YJR had a significant impact on their lives, it assisted them to start to create change in their decision-making and create a positive self-identity. Below are examples of how each participant was impacted by YJR.

After Dylan was removed from her difficult and complex everyday life, she had space to reflect and it allowed her to see that her family situation was still the same without her in it:

> *For me talking to my parents and hearing how things were and that they were still super crazy and bullshit and toxic [laughs] it actually made me come to peace. I was super resistant when I first went to juvey. I was not about it. Hearing that was a good affirmation that "shit is the out there". [Dylan]*

Dylan also decided that this was the last time that she would be locked up. She arrived at the realisation that where she was at in her life was not what she wanted and that there must be something more or better she could do with her life. She also realised that being contained was futile and a waste of her life:

I just knew that I would not waste my time in prison. I knew when I left there. I was cool; I've spent my time isolated, away. I knew that when I walked away and left there that I would not go to prison…It was beneficial, and I learnt a lot, and I'm grateful I had that experience. I did not want to waste my time, adult life in a fucking prison. It just doesn't make sense. [Dylan]

For Sharon her thoughts about her life while in residence brought her to a place where she learnt essential values that would help her in her adult life and that she was not the only person in the world who experienced pain, hurt, and sadness. She commented:

…I think it taught me how to forgive. Going in there I was a pretty angry person. I think residence taught me patience. I didn't get what I wanted when I wanted it in there. That's different to what was happening out here before residence anyway. … Just helped me to realise that I wasn't the only one there. I was pretty demanding [laughs]. It helped me to wait and just be patient. [Sharon]

Bobbie pointed out that during her time in residence she was able to form relationships and connect with people. She was not proud of spending time in residence since she was at a low place in her life at that time, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the relationships she established with the positive people she met who believed in her meant a lot to her:

I will always remember the people I met and all the ones that did good to me. And helped me in there. Mostly just about the people really. All the chicks and fellas that I met, that are actually legit cool. Even the staff too, you know YJ was actually a huge part of my teenage life. Right up until I was like 16. So there was heaps that I had learnt. … Mostly grateful to the staff. [Bobbie]

Whereas Janice's time in residence allowed her to reflect on the importance of family and how she allowed herself to drift away from them due to her substance misuse and criminal activities. Her time in residence helped her re-align her priorities to that which was most important to her, and that was her family. She said:

That family was more important than anything or anyone that I was hanging out with at the time. … I supposed I learnt a lot about love and respect. … I was missing out on seeing my nephew grow up and my family and my Grand Ma and basically [it] just made me more family orientated. [pause] so when I got back into the real world that was all for quite a while. I still have the same respect and morals for them now. I don't think I'd have that if I didn't go to juvey. I would probably be dead. [Janice]

Both Marie and Felicia found the loss of freedom and being away from family was a turning point that created change within their lives. Their experience spending time in residence convinced them they did not want to have to go there again:

Being away from the outside world. Not being able to do what I wanted do. Pretty much having no freedom. … It helped me mature. My thought was I hated it, and coming out of it was like yay I can go now, freedom but then I didn't want to go. I felt like I aged in there [laughs]. [Marie]

Yeah, just being away from my family, being away from everyone for that long. I don't think I've ever been away from everyone for that long. I realised what I was doing was stupid and I didn't want to do it again. [Felicia]

YJR had a significant effect on the lives of the participants. This can be gleaned from the accounts above. Each participant took away something different from their time in residence which included that it was a turning point in their lives. It gave them an opportunity to be away from their environment, so they could reflect and realign with

the values that were important to them and that they had lost. They were provided with the opportunity to form new and healthy connections and relationships with others and repair family connections that had had been strained or lost through their offending behaviour. Their YJR experience served as a deterrent as the young women lost their freedom and the ability they had to do whatever they wanted to do. In the final part of this section the key theme emerged. The participants made suggestions about what they would change or add to YJR.

5.2.5 Ideal Day in Residence

It is clear from the previous section 5.2.4 that their YJR experience brought significant changes to the residents. Another key aspect of the study is for the voice of those who have experienced state residential care because the young women offenders also had an opportunity to share their ideas about the ways the service could be improved. All of the participants reported that they would not change much about their YJR experience. They liked the structure and they had high praise for the support they received while they were in residence. Several young people suggested a greater emphasis on community.

For instance, Dylan suggested that there could be more communal activities that got young people to learn about each other and form deeper relationships.

> *… It always felt real individual. There was probably more communal things we could have done together that actually forced us [laughs] to interact with each other more. Instead, we'd go to school, but we're focusing on our own thing. I don't have to learn something about you to finish my work. … a personal kind of sentimental aspect, especially like being young girls. [Dylan]*

Dylan described the importance of having a significant connection with other young people in the Unit and creating a community. She wanted personal development programmes that engaged young people in learning more about themselves and connecting with the other young people in the Unit.

Several participants suggested the consideration of other programmes that could be added into the structured day within the residence, such as, ones that placed emphasis on cultural identity and cultural realignment. As Bobbie mentions:

> *Maybe more cultural programmes, around everybody's ethnicity, not just Pakeha's, Māori's, Islander's. So you can learn about it. That would probably help people understand more too … different programmes or more like fitness, cooking programmes and Life Skills. [Bobbie]*

While Bobbie wanted to learn about other cultures outside those in New Zealand, other potential topics included cooking, physical health, and what Dylan suggested, psycho-dynamic and self-identity programmes. They were content to get help so they could learn more about themselves and develop their identity in a positive way. See Dylan's comment:

> *… maybe not you're conventional educational, but I think like psychological programmes where we'd all sit and be asked … a range of personal or vast questions so you know we could all get to kind of not only learn more about each other but also ourselves. [Dylan]*

The participants suggested some changes they would make within YJR. The majority of changes that were identified were around taking advantage of the community within the YJR and the communal aspect that residence provides and programmes that provide greater

opportunities to learn about one's self and life skills. The third section of this chapter explores the participants' experiences after they received their YJR discharge and their journey back to the community.

5.3 After Residence

The last section of the chapter describes the participants' feelings about leaving residence, and their transition back into the community. It also discusses their thoughts and feelings around this process. It starts with their initial feelings about leaving YJR and then it explores the proposed transition plan to manage their return to the community. According to the participants, the transition plan that was put together by their community social workers was inadequate (section 5.3.2). In addition, the support system that was in place to assist with their transition was also weak and poor (section 5.3.3). Their sense of self that that they had at the time of their return back to the community was very positive, strong, and confident, and even though they left with clear life goals and objectives that they had built during their time residence, it seemed to be in jeopardy (section 5.3.4). So the participants recommended an ideal transition plan (section 5.3.5).

5.3.1 Initial Feelings

Anxiety and destabilisation were the two main initial feelings that the participants had upon returning to the lives they had before YJR. Several of the participants spoke about the fear they had going back out into the community, leaving the support and comfort they found in residence. They also spoke about how disconnected they felt from the outside world, having not been part of society for so long. For instance, Dylan said returning to the community and her family was a

very big deal, because she was scared, and nervous, and she felt disconnected from society and from her community:

> That whole day…I remember it like it was yesterday. My last day was not a joyous Oh My God I'm going, it was like Oh My Fucken God I'm going. Yeah, I was actually pretty scared. I was really nervous…I just felt so disconnected from the world. I remember the first time I went to the grocery store…I looked a weirdo I just watched this guy pick fruit…I was like, woah who are these people just going about their lives, knowing I wasn't a part of this for so long. It tripped me out. [Dylan]

It was similar for Sharon, she described the struggle she had with returning to the community and re-adjusting to having her freedom back. Many different feelings emerged for her upon her return to the community and the struggle of trying to re-integrate back into society. She left a sense of comfort and belonging in YJR and she struggled to move on upon her discharge. Leaving was challenging for her as she expressed the sense of loss around leaving residence and the support that she received. Sharon said:

> … they kind of make a home for you. Like a home away from home. You know they don't call it a home, but they don't make it like it's not yours either. You know they try and get you comfortable for the time that you're there. [Sharon]

There was a strong sense of loss the participants associated with leaving YJR. They had trouble leaving and returning to the community, they experienced anxiety, a sense of not belonging, and destabilisation. One of the reasons for these feelings was related to inadequate transition plans.

5.3.2 Transition Plan

All of the young people expressed that they felt their transition back to the community was inadequate. There were concerns surrounding the transition plans the social workers had created for them. They did not have the right support or enough resources to make their journey back into the community effectively. They said that the transition plans were designed to fail because they were not tailored to individual needs. See Dylan's comment below:

> *Interviewer: What else did you have to do as part of the plan?*
>
> *Dylan: It was obviously to stay drug-free, stay alcohol-free, get involved in school. But it was, to be honest, I knew I would either self-sabotage, or it wouldn't happen, cause that was way too fucken much. That was all way too much. To come out of [pause] juvey, come back into the real world and then have this plan, which looks nothing like what I've ever shown (I could do) before. I've never shown that I've been a consistent school goer, I've never shown that I've been drug and alcohol-free. So it's like [an] expectation of all these things I have never displayed before, in a situation I've never been in before (living with Dad). … Yeah, I already knew when I saw that plan, I knew it was going to go to shit. … It's so impersonal. [Dylan]*

She said that the transition plans that had been created for her were impersonal and contained elements of behaviour that she had previously not shown any ability to achieve. It seemed to be a transition plan to make the social workers look good and even though conceptually it was very appealing, in reality and in practice, it was far from it. Another example, Felicia highlighted, was that one of the conditions in her transition plan was not to associate with her boyfriend. It was a condition that the Police may have imposed and perhaps conceptually it was meant to protect Felicia from getting into trouble again, except realistically it was never going to stop Felicia from

seeing her boyfriend. Perhaps if they had consulted with Felicia first it might have made a difference. Felicia responded by saying:

> *Because they were setting me up to fail, they kept me away from my partner. When they knew I would just go back anyway. So I think that was stupid. [Felicia]*

Felicia's boyfriend was an important person that she was not allowed to draw on for support especially for her transition back to the community because the Police and other professionals did not believe it was appropriate for them to have contact with each other. While Felicia had a problem with too much interference from professionals in her transition plan, Sharon experienced the opposite effect. Sharon reported feeling abandoned with no support at all from professionals and limited support from her family. She said that plans were made for her before she left YJR however as soon as she was discharged from residence nothing from the plan eventuated upon her return home. Sharon was disappointed and she shared the following:

> *Oh, yeah, we made a plan in there, but as soon as I got out, there was like no contact with them [professionals] at all. Like none, [pause] and then I just pretty much went back down to [city name]. [Sharon]*

She said that in terms of the conditions on her transition plan, no one followed up and this had an impact on her ability to return to the community and look after herself. She did not feel there was any support she should utilise after she left YJR.

Transition plans are an important part of the youth justice system. This section sheds light on the feelings the participants had about returning to the community and some of the challenges the transition presented to young people who were returning to their community and it also

highlights the systemic issues that have an impact young on people within the system as a whole. The support systems are one aspect of their transition, and the significant changes for participants in relation to support upon returning to their community.

5.3.3 Support System

In terms of the support systems and the requirements for the participants, the support systems changed after they left YJR. This means that nearly all the participants tried to reduce or restrict the parts of their support system that were no longer beneficial. The participants described these changes in the excerpts of their stories below. Again, in this context, the support system included family support, their peer support system, and the professional involvement that was available to them in their everyday lives.

Most of the participants reported they had less support on leaving YJR than was available before they entered. This loss of support was reported by Janice who said that the different support that was provided often conflicted, and it was not possible for her to effectively take advantage of the help she needed at the times she needed it the most:

> *I think I had more support on the outside before I went into residence than after. I think there just was less. They tried to set me up with drug and alcohol counselling, but seeing as I was going to school, I found it a bit hard to get to it cause I was doing correspondence school. Then I got a job and stuff. [Janice]*

Some participants talked about the fact that upon their return to their original environment, they found the support that was available to them was less than it was prior to the time they had left to enter YJR,

and the environment they returned to had not changed, so they were not necessarily much better off, because they did not have the same access to the good support that was available to them previously. Both Sharon and Janice summarised this in such a way that it encompassed the views of most of the other participants in the project. They reported returning to environments where the offending and harmful behaviour happened in the first place. They both commented about how since they were returning to the same environment they started engaging in the same behaviours that got them into trouble before.

> Nah cause it was the same thing when I [got] out of there [Residence]. Because I came out to them (family), and they thought I must be alright. So I came out, they went back to their normal lives. [Sharon]

> I kinda started smoking too many drugs again and stuff ... because it was just around me. My sister was on drugs. So as soon as I got back out again I was sort of in the same environment that I was in beforehand. [Janice]

Sharon and Janice both felt a sense of frustration because they went back to the environments that had created the dangerous dynamics in the first place. Returning to these environments meant it was highly likely that that would return to the same behaviours.

Concerning family support, several young people discussed how they had to rebuild relationships with their families upon returning to the community. For example, in Marie's narrative she talked about the judgement that she felt from her family regarding her offending behaviour and her placement in YJR:

> ... they were just like oh you're this, you're that, you're an embarrassment to the family. The support was there but it was, [a] disappointment as well, I was the first in my family ever to on my Mum's side to be put in one of those places,

Marie indicated that she had to work through all the judgements from her family and she also had to re-build the trust with her family so that she could rely upon them to support her during her transition.

Bobbie took time upon her release from YJR to reconnect with her family and rebuild her relationship with them:

… But it was just reconnecting with the family. … [it was] like lollies scramble with my niece. I hadn't been with them for so long. Nor had I seen them. So the first couple of weeks was just like family time. [Bobbie]

Bobbie also had to rebuild her relationship with her family members by spending quality time with them since they had spent so much time apart. Only then was she able to focus on building and creating the change she had created within YJR.

The support system in this context highlighted the difficulties for the young people who were trying to find and make the best use of their support system again once after they left YJR. It demonstrated that there was a significant shift that had taken place, in terms of what the participants needed from their support system as they compared what they needed from their support system before they entered YJR and after they left. Some participants returned to the same environments while others required space and time to reconnect with family once they returned to the community. The following key theme will explore the participants' narratives about their sense of self and their life goals after they left YJR.

5.3.4 Sense Of Self and Life Goals

In terms of their sense of self and life goals after YJR, it builds on the theme in section 5.3.1. The participants were asked how they viewed themselves after YJR and how their sense of self changed from before they were placed in YJR to after their transition back to the community. All of the young people reported having a completely different sense of self after their transition from YJR, and they all had life goals that they wanted to achieve. For instance, Dylan said she had finally achieved what she wanted, her freedom and control over her own life:

> *Oh a lot, compared to then, [pause] I wanna say that I'm a lot happier. I don't think I wasn't happy then. I was resisting a lot in my life. The happiness has always been there. It's just now [pause] I don't have to fight to resist anything. … I'm free. That is what I wanted then, and I got it, I'm free dude, it's mean, it's beautiful.*

> *I would like to spend time in Australia, working for "Save the Children." I'd like to do that for a couple of years. … Obviously, I would love to get to Italy with my Brother. To meet our other half of our family. … Going to see old buildings and things like that. [Dylan]*

For Marie, she wanted to move forward with her life and not continue the negative behaviour that limited what she could do with her life:

> *I just thought to myself look, residence, going there once was enough. [laughs] and I should have learnt my lesson by then, which I did. I just thought ok. I'm not gonna go backwards. I'm going to go forwards, and I did.*

> *I see myself travelling and maybe settling down. … I think with me it's like jump into a job and see how it is. … I feel like I've come a very long way and have accomplished things. [Marie]*

Being sober was a massive change for Janice and, her sense of self, she felt better because of it. Being a mother and taking on that role changed how she viewed herself and what she wanted for her life as well as the life of her son:

> *Being sober. Life is so much happier without drugs, and I actually didn't realise it while I was on drugs. It's taken me ages to realise that. To realise I was still using all of my past experiences and negative things as an excuse [to explain] why I was taking drugs.*

> *I was involved with [Organisation Name] for my son, so when I moved to [City Name] that got signed off, that was a really proud moment getting my letter saying that they were not involved anymore. [Janice]*

Becoming mothers, for both Felicia and Bobbie, changed how they felt about themselves and what they wanted to achieve in life. Being able to provide stability for their families became the most important thing:

> *I realised I wasn't making good choices for myself. I wanted to do a hospitality course, and I ended up doing that, nearly completed it but then I got a job. I took the job instead, and life was great. … then I had to stop the job cause I got pregnant. Now I'm a Mum. [Felicia]*

> *Now I'm a Mum. … Yeah, I made a big change. …you know more mature. I want a job now, a stable job. Eventually, I will finish off my culinary arts course that I started last year. [Bobbie]*

The positive changes in sense of self and life goals was something that the participants spoke proudly about. The participants stressed several different aspects of their identity and how it changed from before they were placed in YJR. They all had positive goals they wanted to achieve in their lives and were figuring out how to work towards their goals. The final part of this section presents the opinions of the participants

about what should be included in the transition plans to better assist young people effectuate an effective return back into the community.

5.3.5 Ideal Transition Plan

Transition plans are vitally important if a young person is going to effectively transition back to the community and maintain the changes they have effected during their YJR time. There is much that can be learned from the young people themselves as it relates to this area. Janice wanted an entirely new environment to go to upon her YJR discharge. This was important for her because her home life was not a safe or stable place for her to return to:

> *… like a transition house. Like how they have for adults coming out of rehab centres and stuff. … they'd have all the proper connections like support people that would be assigned to you while you were staying there. It would be a short time just so that they could help you find a flatting situation or some sort University. From there you have your transition into life. [Janice]*

While Janice expressed extreme frustration that this kind of service was not available for young people who could not return home for various reasons, Marie suggested a mentor who will provide activities that will help to widen the experiences of life and get young people to think about what they could do, other than commit crime:

> *It would be cool if a course came alongside them and took them out rafting and what not. Take them out camping, hunting, fishing, all that stuff. And show them there is more. Show them things they can do rather than crime. [Marie]*

It was essential for Marie, from her perspective, for young people to have more activities to fill the time during their transition phase. These

experiences could provide young people with more options to experience new things. Sharon suggested that there should be a team within YJR specifically to help young people transition back into the community and help to provide extra support for them once they have been discharged from residence:

> *Maybe free counsellors, just people that are there to listen and talk to you. To the young person, there is fuck all of that around aye. A team of four [from Residence] to get out there and interact with them [young people] and get to know them. So that they're gonna see a familiar face out there [in the community]. [Sharon]*

Dylan talked about being involved with peers her age and doing more social activities with other young people, as well as holistic well-being approaches to help her manage herself more appropriately in the outside world:

> *… put things in place to have me involved socially, more involved with other people on a bit of a personal growth mission. … I always felt so bloody cut off from everything. … I would definitely have one person preferably a woman that I would meet once a week to review stuff with. … some kind of nature healing, holistic healing, natural healing … incorporate some kind of mediation. So a more social aspect with your peers, one key person that isn't your family, that is important, and some kind of holistic, natural approach to things. [Dylan]*

She had many elements to her transition plan that she deemed were important to a successful transition. The most important was having involvement with more peers her age and one person to talk with and review her journey. This person was essential to provide support for a young person and this was a common theme across many of the participants' ideas.

All of the participants in this project put ideas forward to change the transition plans, and the examples given best reflect the ideas of the participant population. These ideas included having a transition house for young people who could not return to their family, having a mentor who encouraged the young people to participate in activities that would not usually be available to them, the suggestion of a team within YJR who specifically assisted with the transition of the young people back to the community and provided familiar and consistent support from YJR into the community, and peer support that provided opportunities to help the individuals positively develop the their personal sense of self during their transition and they envisioned it would allow for a plan that was more accustomed to the needs of the individual.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has presented the findings from the six semi-structured interviews that were carried out as described in chapter four of this thesis. The findings were categorised into three parts: before residence, during residence, and after residence. From these findings we can understand that the pathways of offending, and the manner which these pathways are navigated, are important for female youth offenders. All of the support systems, at every stage, including before, during and after residence, are important and help shape these pathways and the sense of self of the young women. Having an understanding of the sense of self of the young women and how it changed through their journey within the YJS provides feedback about how youth justice manages the dual 'welfare' and 'accountability' functions within the system. Specifically their initial welcome into YJR provided insight into the many different aspects of life within the secure residence, such as, the reality of being in YJR compared with the

rumours, as well as being new to the Unit, and that experience, and the participants also shared the tools within YJR that helped them to change and address their behaviour during their stay. The impact that YJR had on the lives of participants provided an understanding of the benefits YJR has for young people. In terms of the other suggestions the participants provided that relate to the changes that could be made to improve YJR, they had to do with how they would plan their ideal day. Finally the topic of transition is addressed while the participants shared their initial feelings about leaving YJR, their thoughts about their transition plans and returning to the community and they also provided suggestions about how to improve this service while they were asked to plan their ideal transition plan. The key findings including the importance of YJR, the transition back to the community, the female pathways into offending, the support systems, and their sense of self and life goals will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 6 Discussion

6.0 Introduction

The intention of this chapter is to discuss further the findings as they were presented from the participants' accounts of their experiences in the YJS including the YJR and their transition back to the community. Additionally, arguments will be advanced utilising what has been learned from the participants and from a review of the literature to further make sense of the female experience as it relates to the YJS. By bringing together all these ideas, conflicts and experiences, the information that has been gathered will contribute to the existing knowledge about female youth offenders and the social work practice within the YJS. This chapter will discuss the findings as highlighted above in four sections.

Section 6.1 is about female youth offenders; a critical lens will be cast over their experiences that resulted in their placement in YJR and argue that a multiple marginality perspective needs to be considered while trying to understand female youth offending. This is along with the dynamic, unstable and chaotic environments which these young women drew meaning from, and it provide the context in their lives. The second section (6.2) discusses the importance of YJR and the support it provides for female youth offenders, and it also explores the challenges around balancing the dual functions of 'welfare' and 'accountability' within YJR. Section 6.4 explores the experiences of their transition back to the community and the challenges presented by the participant accounts of their experiences as they relate to this process. Lastly, section 6.4 will examine the implications of these findings and that which was found in the literature review on social work practice within the system as a whole, for YJRs, and transition services. The participant experiences highlight how the system

responds to its responsibility to successfully develop the well-being of young women to develop lives that they are proud of.

6.1 Female Youth Offenders or Female Youth Survivor

Female youth offenders have complex and tangled sets of needs and life experiences that led them onto offending pathways. Most of these and their origins are derived from the impact of their negative life experiences and the effect they had on their sense of self, identity. These negative life experiences affected their decision-making processes, as well as their ability to participate in society. Simultaneously, the negative experiences are powerful expositions of the resilience and resourcefulness these young women displayed that allowed them to survive such situations, for example, the trauma they encountered and how they subsequently moved forward to make positive changes in their lives.

One can ask if an argument could be made that the YJS is based on deficit thinking and as a consequence the "strengths" that young women show as survivors and their abilities to push through trauma are either ignored, concealed and/or lost in the overall narrative? The balance between "justice" and "welfare" is not only a clear demarcation within the research literature (see section 3.2) it could also explain why the contextual information or the welfare background of the young women offenders in terms of where they come from, is not considered to be important compared to the necessity to establish accountability for the victim as well as the wider community. It is certainly apparent in the findings, especially where the participants commented on the many pathways that led to their offending and then residence (see section 5.1.1). A case can be made that those in positions of authority are most certainly aware of the backgrounds of the young women who are referred to YJRs even though the main

driver behind residential placement is that young women are contained, sanctioned, and they are also accountable for their transgressions.

Based on the research, I would argue that the YJS, and, in particular, the YJRs are constantly searching for the right balance between establishing "justice" and meeting the "welfare" needs of the residents. All of the participants in this project withstood an incredible amount of trauma and experienced a complex array of social issues. It was evident how each event impacted upon the next one to result in the offending behaviour that reached a level that required YJR intervention. Based on the accounts of the participants in this study, it can be seen that negative life events impact upon offending behaviour (see section 5.1) yet amongst this, there are also positive life events that have subsided and decreased or diminished in terms of their influence on ensuring better life choices and decisions are arrived at. Instead it seems that once a young woman makes a poor decision, she continues down this pathway, sometimes continuing to make the wrong decisions knowingly, and then she slides down this trajectory until it stops. Everything is preventable and a lot more could have been done to halt the accumulative downslide of experiences felt by the former young women offenders in this study. It should not take an experience in a YJR for young women to reach a turning point in their lives so perhaps more attention could be directed towards understanding the impact of the "welfare" situation rather than the "justice" perspective.

The welfare situation or the context is an important part of understanding the causes behind offending behaviour and also for setting up ways of preventing and eliminating it, too. For instance, the context of the welfare situation ought to be considered while engaging,

assessing, and carrying out interventions with young women. According to the research literature review, this context (socialisation) is either partially or not considered while trying to understand the actions and motivations behind the behaviour of female youth offenders or if it is considered it does not end up being in the final calculation (see section 2.1 and 2.3). As the researcher, I would argue that in light of the continuing and long-running debate between the principles of welfare and justice, it is noted that at the level of policy, it has repeatedly been argued that responding to the offences of young people and providing for their welfare are inseparable. However, this apparent consensus has resulted in a range of different service structures and delivery systems over the years, that are characterised by 'turf wars' amongst policymakers and practitioners, and this has resulted in unintended consequences in terms of damaging outcomes for young people. Ideologically, I would argue that even though the context (welfare) is an essential consideration, in reality, it is not the prevailing driver and thus the balance is tipped more in favour toward accountability (justice).

Returning to the notion of a female youth offender who is a survivalist, resilient and resourceful is where I would suggest the focus of the policymakers, social service providers and practitioners ought to be. This is because it is more important to focus on this aspect rather than the horrific and tragic events that plague their lives as this study has highlighted (see section 3.5) and how their experiences related to their unresolved trauma play a role as a precursor toward their delinquency and anti-social behaviour. Layer upon layer, viewing the devastation from the perspective of the physical, sexual, emotional and/or neglectful trauma and the effect it has upon their intrapersonal development coupled with externalities, such as, domestic violence, family dysfunction, poverty, being expelled or excluded from school, or

child protection involvement upon their interpersonal development, while viewed in this way and particularly since many of these negative life experiences remain unresolved trauma, it is far better to look at how these young women and young people, in general, were able to withstand and push through despite the difficulties and challenges. It is far better to focus on these stories and learn how they managed them and which strategies they successfully employed. While involvement in criminal offending may be the pathway they chose to survive, often this would have been as a last resort so there would have been an opportunity to help them before they became involved in crime or before their crimes escalated. As a researcher and practitioner, I am wondering how all the pro-social environments, for example, family, social services, community services (church, marae), professionals and practitioners missed this opportunity. Perhaps there has been too much focus on negative life experiences rather than reorienting and re-balancing the focus to include the positive life experiences, too.

All of these experiences in various ways, shape, or feed into a young women's identity and sense of self. Substance misuse is commonly used as a way of dealing with the experience of trauma (see section 3.5). There is a clear trauma progression trajectory starting with trauma, next using alcohol and drugs to cope with the trauma, and then criminal activities to perhaps fuel and prolong the use of alcohol and drug use to continue managing the trauma (see section 5.1.1 Bobbie's story). While the experience of trauma is not the only reason that young women commit crime, it can be argued that where it has been identified that some form of trauma was experienced by a young woman, offending could be viewed as a progression of coping with that trauma. In viewing offending behaviour as a progression of coping with trauma as opposed to behaviour in which the young woman needs to

held accountable and be punished for it, not only changes how the young women are viewed within the system it is also related to the way professionals go about engaging and creating change with this behaviour. For example, in taking this stance with offending behaviour, it enables an inclusive view of the social and environmental context that surrounds the offending behaviour and it also allows for the origin or root cause of the offending behaviour to be addressed (in the case of this study, the experiences of trauma) which in the long run will be much more likely to lead to a reduction in offending and transition onto a more positive life.

Viewing offending behaviour as a progression of experiences of trauma removes the label of female youth offenders as "bad girls" and the over-simplicity that this creates. This label falls within the risk and responsibilation narrative that dominates social work practice within the field of youth justice (see sections 1.2.1 and 3.5 as well as the discussion below) which identifies the young women as the problem and solely responsible for bad behaviour so that any inability to participate or be motivated to engage in and complete programmes and plans is placed at the feet of the individual young woman without much consideration at all of the other factors, such as, the environment, social contexts and intrapersonal/development that are clearly evident in the lives of young women who commit crime. It can be argued that the limited view of the dominant narratives concerning female youth offenders necessarily needs to change in order to adequately assess and engage with and reduce the offending behaviour and also the work within the wider context of the offending behaviour.

Changing the narrative of risk and responsibilisation and creating a greater balance between the "welfare" and "justice" focus within

youth justice also has the potential to change the public perception of youth offenders, especially female youth offenders. Changing these two ideas will change conversations about female youth offenders to encompass all varying contexts within this behaviour not just the offending they are charged with. This should in turn change the manner in which social workers in youth justice engage in conversations with other stakeholders, such as, the Police and Courts. Based on experience in the field it is largely the Police and Youth Court that initiate the heavy leaning towards justice, accountability and responsibilisation that has a significant impact on the welfare context the seems to be falling between the gaps. Having a change in these conversations at this level as well as the way in which the media reports on and about youth offending, and the young people who commit crime, to see the whole context, is important. As has been reported in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4, young people who commit crime are given special consideration due to age, vulnerability and life development stage while considering how to address their offending behaviour. I would argue that all stakeholders involved in the youth justice system, including the media have a responsibility to ensure that these considerations are met which includes how the offending behaviour is viewed and that an appropriate balance is maintained between the "welfare" and "justice" divide.

6.1.2 Sense of Self and Life Goals

Sense of self and identity can influence the ability of young women to participate in the world, it can affect their motivation and it can play a part in the pathways they take into offending. How their identity is developed during their time in residence could similarly affect their ability to transition back to the community. Understanding how the sense of self and the goals of the young women within the youth justice

system changed and developed as the participants went along on their journey through the system until they were discharged back into their communities has been an important part of this project. The YJS and YJR play a fundamental part in the development of self-identity and sense of self for the young women involved in the system. Understanding how the system responds to this responsibility is and has been another important part of the project.

Developing individuals' sense of self and identity is an important and a part of the YJS that is often ignored. It supports the principle of advancing the well-being of children and young people as members of their families, communities, and societies (please see section 3.1). Here the "welfare" and "justice" tension within the system as a whole is clearly identifiable within a residential context and it is slightly altered to "containment and control" and "welfare/positive identity development". Firstly, this is because YJR is punitive, in essence, it was established as place to send young people who have done wrong in the eyes of the law and society. Because YJR is grounded in containing and confining young people who are deemed by the Court to pose a high risk to the community and themselves, it immediately sets a persistent example that risk and safety, and containment and control are paramount issues to be managed in YJR. This immediately creates an environment which is described in the literature about the negative impact and negative side to YJR (please see section 3.3). These ideals are at the forefront of professional practice within YJR and have very little alignment or commonality with developing young people's identity and sense of belonging.

The challenge for YJRs is how to create a therapeutic environment in which young women feel safe and secure enough to develop and learn who they are as young women while managing the risks associated

with having these young women in residence. A greater therapeutic focus on the development of sense of self while in YJR will go further in reducing recidivism upon transition back to the community. Even though it is still important to know, understand and respond to the risks within the residential environment as it is too important to be ignored and having this intervention knowledge keeps everyone safe however it should not be the ultimate practice. It could be argued that professionals within the residential environment are aware and engage in a purposeful manner to balance this tension in order to assist young women to develop a positive sense of self while they are in YJR. It could also appease the public/community and other stakeholders within the YJS youth justice system as this focus has the potential to lead to greater success in YJR and during transition and reduce recidivism. This idea will be discussed in greater detail in the Implications for Social Work Practice section (section 6.4).

From the accounts of the young women who participated in this study this conflict can be seen while the young women discussed are in YJR and the changes that they would make to the programme content. They suggested additional programmes relating to personal development, learning social skills to build appropriate and healthy relationships with peers their own age, and learning about other cultures and ways of doing things (see section 5.2.5). The undercurrent that carried through these conversations with the participants was that they wanted to better understand who they were as individuals and how they fit into their communities, societies, and the world. These suggestions about programme content could be applied to social work practice within YJR. Programmes that allow space for personal development and learning social skills to form healthy relationships with peer groups and family are important in developing a sense of self and identity in young women. YJR provides an opportunity for these

programmes to be developed and implemented in a safe and secure manner that would not be possible otherwise. Creating change can be based on growing and stabilising young women's sense of self and identity. In creating the suggested programmes, it will allow for a more grounded sense of self for young women outside of the negative sense of self and negative life experiences that they had to shape their identity up until the point of being placed in YJR.

Accounts from young women in this project show the progression of their identity and sense of self during their journey through the youth justice system through to their transition back to the community. Before YJR participant's accounts (see section 5.1.3) show a common thread of identity being engrossed in the negative life experiences and experiences that led them into pathways of offending. Participants had a significant absence of life goals and seemed caught in a cycle of coping with life experiences in unhealthy ways.

After YJR participant accounts showed a significant change in participants' sense of self and life goals (see section 5.3.4). That is to say, young women after YJR felt more secure in their sense of self and identity and could all identify life goals they wanted to achieve. There are several ideas that can be taken from the stories of the young women with this project that support the changes in sense of self and identity over their journey through the YJS. While there are positives to be taken away from the differences on between the sense of self during the progression of young people through the YJS, it would seem from the participant accounts that more could be done to help the young women positively develop their self-identity within the YJS. YJR has the potential to be a catalyst for the development of self-identity and sense of self. The environment that YJR provides presents a unique

opportunity for positive self-development with the right programmes and support from staff and others wrapped around those programmes.

6.2 Importance of Residence

Within this project, YJR has shown to have significant importance in the lives of female youth offenders. This project has highlighted the possibility that YJRs can positively impact the lives of young women. YJR was a significant turning point in the lives of the participants. This is an idea that is similar to the literature about turning points within YRJ. It has been identified in the literature that YJR can have significant negative impacts on the lives of young people and it has been found to be a turning point that either creates a positive change or strengthens young people's community and desire to reoffend once released from care (see section 3.3). For the participants of this project, it was a positive turning point which they used to create positive change in their lives.

6.2.1 The Impact of Residence

The findings in this project show that YJR has a significant impact on the lives of the young women. This impact can be seen in Section 5.2.4, where according to the participants, YJR has made a meaningful difference in their lives in many different ways. For many young women who are placed in secure YJRs they have been through the YJS and they have exhausted all other opportunities to create change in their lives and make amends for their offending. The impact of losing their freedom, being removed from their families and being placed in residence was a catalyst for them to create change in their lives. The effects of this loss of freedom presented itself in many different ways and was different for each participant.

One of the main critiques about the utilisation of YJRs (see section 3.1 and 3.3) is that it deprives young people of their freedom and liberty, and this is often used as an argument against the use of YJR. Participants in this study shared that the loss of this freedom and liberty was a deterrent from the continuation of their offending behaviour. The act alone of having to be "locked up" with limited choices was enough for young women to want to create positive change in their lives and not repeat the experience of being placed in YJR. This demonstrates that despite the heavy critique of YJR as a sanction within the youth court, for some, having their freedom taken away and feeling as though they are missing out, is a turning point to create positive change in their lives. There are many safeguards, as mentioned in section 3.1, that protect young people while they are in YJR to ensure they are kept safe, to acknowledge their age and vulnerability, and to ensure their rights are realised and respected for the duration of their time in YJR. With these protections in place, a case can be made for some young people, that the use of residence is beneficial, and provides a unique set of circumstances and experiences that cannot be replicated in another environment.

Secondly, this loss of freedom allowed for several things to occur for the participants. They were removed from their usual environments into a structure with stability, which then provided the participants with time and space to reflect on a number of situations as well as time to think about the future. The stability and structure of YJR provided an opportunity for the participants to learn and develop new skills and ways of managing their behaviour. As well as providing space and time to reflect on their behaviour and the environments they came from while at the same time providing opportunities for realignment with the core values that they deemed important to them it provided meaning and direction in their lives. These situations and experiences

were unique to YJR since many participants shared that they did not believe they would have the same experiences if they had remained in the community. This insight is one that is not commonly mentioned in the literature about YJR.

Much of the research on the impact of YJRs on young people capture the negative effects of placing young people in secure YJRs (Lambie & Randell, 2013). While the negative side of YJR needs to be constantly addressed in order to minimise its impact on the environment created in this space, it can be argued that the participants who needed to be placed in residence experienced a positive side that helped them create change in their lives that would not have occurred if they had not had that experience. All the participants said that looking back on their time in YJR they were grateful for what they learnt, the impact it had on them, and the time they spent in YJR. For some of the young women, it was lifesaving, Janice noted that if not for the YJR, she would most likely be dead due to substance misuse and addiction and the situations that her use placed her in. I would argue that residence has the potential to be a powerful environment in which young people return to the community with a greater sense of self and understanding about what they want out of life. This positive aspect of YJR requires more exploration to increase the knowledge about the positive impact that it has on the lives of young people.

6.2.2 Support System

One of the major contributing factors as to why YJR had such a huge positive impact on the lives of the young woman is the support system provided within YJR. The support system that they have while they were in residence from both the YJR staff and other professionals who come in to provide specialist treatment was the first time many felt they could utilise positive support. The other part of the support

system is the family involvement with the young women during their time in YJR.

Munford and Sanders (2015a)discuss how seeking safe and secure connections is an integral part of developing identity and sense of self and by extension, creating change in the lives of young people. The entire sample of young women who participated in the project discussed the positive support they received from within YJR. They highlighted was how staff in YJR went out of their way to make YJR feel like a home away from home. The participants felt that the staff cared for them as though they were "their own family". They felt safe and as though someone cared about them. These feelings of safety, security, trust, and support went a long way in allowing the young woman to form safe and secure connections with others. Dylan believed that staff took the time to build individual relationships with each young woman in the Unit, to find out what sets that young person apart and makes them different (see section 5.2.3). Staff were said to have taken the time to learn how each individual young person displays behaviour if they are upset, how best to work with them to calm them down, what makes them happy, and what their strengths are. Staff would use this knowledge to support and encourage the young women to take part in new activities and to learn new skills. This is significant for many young women since this was the first time, they had safe and secure connections with adults and the ability to test other parts of themselves and to build on the positive skills that they have.

Another part of support within YJR is around the external professionals who provided services for the young women during their stay in residence. They provide specialised services, such as, drugs and alcohol, mental health, primary health care, and education. All of these services provided vital support for the young women during their stay

in YJR. Janice discussed her drug and alcohol counsellor as an important part of her attempt to create change in her behaviour. She highlighted how it was important for these professionals to be relatable and to provide a service in which they see value and insight in the work they carried out as independent professionals. Another example of external professional support is of the education that was available while in YJR. All young women in this project said that they received most of their education in YJR. There has been much research around non-engagement in education and in the delinquency of young people (Munford & Sanders, 2016). The fact that the young women reported such high and positive engagement and achievement in education while in YJR is a significant finding as it has been highlighted in the research that trying to engage young people in education in the community has been a struggle (Sanders, Munford, Thimasarn-Anwar, Liebenberg, & Ungar, 2015). Both of these examples highlight the importance of YJR as a place where support is provided in as many different areas as possible, to meet as many needs of the young women as possible to help them create positive change in their lives.

Residence provided an opportunity for the young women in this project to rebuild relationships with family members in the community that had been non-existent or challenging before placement in YJR. Having that space away from family members allowed the young women to observe relationships from a different point of view. This time away and ability to view relationships in a new context helped them work out what they wanted from life and who they wanted to be involved with. in their life. With support from staff within YJR the young women were able to start working on repairing the damaged relationships that they felt were most essential to them. Sharon demonstrated this, she discussed how her relationship with her Mother and Sisters was being rebuilt while she was in YJR. She said that

if it was not for the YJR staff supporting her to work on these relationships they would not have been repaired because she could not have done the work by herself. She highlighted a time where her Mother and Sisters came in to visit her and how much of a shock and surprise that was for her. The undercurrent to this conversation was that the experience allowed her to heal and move forward with her Mother and Sisters by her side (please see section 5.2.3). This is one of the strengths of YJR. It allows space for the young women and their family members to establish new transactions in relationships in a safe and secure manner. The young women are safe and have support to be guided through the process and the family members also have support from residence staff to help grow and develop healthier relationships with their young women.

6.3 Transition

The transition of young people back into the community after they have been discharged from YJR was the topic that extracted the strongest and most negative reaction from all the participants in this project. Transition from secure YJR back to the community within the literature elicits a similar feeling, and from a practice standpoint, the transition process could be managed more effectively with more well-rounded interventions.

6.3.1 Transition Plans and Systemic Issues

One of the key issues shared by the young women of this study is that the transition plans were not necessarily personalised to fit with the needs of the young women for which they were created. This means that the transition plans were created from a prescribed list of categories that are supposed to help the young people achieve a successful transition. Developing the plan in this manner displayed

minimal regard for who that individual young woman was and what her abilities were. It was not strengths-based planning that created activities and programmes that would most benefit them or build on the strengths and the changes they had made in YJR. It was not centred on the young persons, it did not support the family to look after their young women, and it was not achievable for most of the young women in the system. It is evident from the literature that plans should be based on strengths-based perspectives and allow for family to support their young women (please see section 3.4).

The participants felt that the transition plans did that exact opposite of what they were supposed to do, as highlighted by participant Dylan (please see Section 5.3.2) where she talks about how she felt about the transition plan that was created for her. What stood out most was that she discussed how the plan that was created looked nothing like what she had ever been shown she could do or achieve out in the community. This was frustrating for Dylan as she knew that the plan was not going to work and that she would not be able to complete it. She had very little motivation to try and complete the plan since she did not believe it. There has been much research carried out on transition from state care and much social policy created in response to this research to attempt to get the transition of the vulnerable young people back to the community "right" and have supports in place to assist young people (please see section 3.4). But evidence from the young women themselves suggests that these plans are still not right. The plans need to work with the young woman's strengths and abilities and should be based on what the young people can actually achieve.

All of the young woman in this study highlighted that the transition plans "were too much" and they felt that they were being "set up to

fail". The activities and conditions in the plans that are put in place are over-complicated and did not have the young person at the centre of the plan. From the participant accounts, Felicia highlighted that the unrealistic bail conditions set by the Police were the reason she felt set up. Both Felicia and the Police knew she would still see her Boyfriend during her transition, yet it was still put in her plan and she would be in breach of her bail conditions if she was caught with her partner. Instead of making a bail condition that they not associate, it could have been put in her plan that Felicia and her partner ought to seek support to work on and form healthier connections to allow Felicia to utilise the support of her partner who was a significant person in her life.

6.3.2 Support System

Upon discharge from YJR the support systems the young women identified with had shifted significantly. All of the young women reported that they wanted to build on the change and positive lives they had created in YJR. For most of them that meant letting go of peers who were a negative influence on them. This decision was a very considerable and challenging decision for these young women to make. It meant that once they returned to the community, having made that choice they were without a large and significant part of their community support (see section 2.2). For all of these young women letting go of these negative influences was an acknowledgement of taking accountability for their actions and removing peers from their lives that would not support them. This is a challenge that needs to be acknowledged in terms of transition. Making sure that negative peer support is replaced with positive pro-social peers who will support and encourage young women to build positive self-identities is important.

The second part of support systems involves the placement of young people on their discharge back to the community. For a majority of the young women in this project they are to return to that environments that allowed the offending and negative behaviour to occur in the first place. This was highlighted most meaningfully by Janice and Sharon who discussed their frustration at returning to the same environment especially since they had put in effort to change while in YJR (please see section 5.3.3). Returning to this kind of environment meant that is was not easy for the young women to sustain and develop further the change they created while in YJR. This is where the concept of responsibilisation was mostly clear within the youth justice system (please see sections 2.2 and 3.2). Young women are returned to environments that enabled offending and negative behaviour to occur in the first place, even though the young women were doing their best not to be involved in the environment or to run away from the environment and then they are blamed. They are told they are not complying with their plan, and in some cases, they get charged with new offences. This is even though all they are trying to do is make a better life for themselves and keep themselves safe (Davidson et al., 2011). Or as some participant accounts indicated, they reverted back to their old behaviour and any change they created in YJR was lost. The participants were trying to survive in environments that they should not have been and they were returned to it in the first place. The solutions given by participants will be discussed later in the chapter.

One of the surprising findings from this research has to do with the feelings that the participants had on their discharge back to the community. They talked about feeling a sense of loss as they left the residence. For the participants, it felt as if they were leaving their home away from home. YJR was the most stable placement/environment they had ever been in. It was a place where they felt safe and

comfortable. As well as a sense of loss, the participants also shared feeling nervous and scared about what would happen out in the community. They felt feelings of being disconnected from the communities they lived in, and from society, after spending time in a secure residence for an extensive period of time. These feelings of loss and disconnectedness were significant feelings that are not necessarily taken into consideration while creating and implementing transition plans for young women to be returned back to the community. They are feelings that need to be respected as they have an impact upon the young women's ability to commit and engage in their transition plan. Space should be held for the young people to work with these feelings to ensure that they do not have an impact upon the plan set out for the young people. Perhaps more could be done in YJR to prepare young people to return back to the community.

6.3.3 What needs to change in transition planning?

One of the significant findings of this project is the suggestion from the participants that a transition house should be an option available for those who do not or cannot return home to their family (see section 5.3.5). It would seem that this is a suggestion that does not currently exist since most young people are returned to their family or to care and protection placements after they are discharged from YJR. In the right setting, this could be a very valuable asset to the system and has the potential to provide much needed support for young women transitioning out of YJR. The house could provide an environment in which young women could build on the changes they made in YJR while providing a stepping stone onto a safe and independent young adulthood. More research needs to be carried out to establish what this transition house would look like in practice.

The next suggestion was a team based in YJR who work with the young people on their transition plan while they are in YJR and keep in contact with them while they are in the community to provide extra support as required. This idea could be useful because it means that the young people will still have a connection to a YJR which was a place that provided positive support for the young people and allowed them to create change in a way that was important and meaningful to them. This extended support from a "transition team" in residence could be a positive way to keep young people motivated to continue to create positive change in their lives and it will assist them to complete their transition plan. As YJR has been highlighted as a place for positive support and growth for females in the YJS, having a team within YJR that has a focus on transitioning the young people back to the community and following those young people back into the community to provide extra support should be considered as an option. Having this team may assist the young women with some of the feelings of loss about leaving YJR and the disconnectedness from society if they receive support from YJR while they are in the community.

The last idea that was identified as an idea that was necessary was to involve young women with peers who are pro-social and will help their continued positive development. This idea was discussed with Dylan who highlighted that she continually felt cut off from everything and as though she did not belong (please see section 5.3.5). It was important for Dylan to feel "normal" and as though she belonged in society. Having the opportunity to connect with young people her own or a similar age who would support her in a positive way was something she felt she was missing. This feeling of not belonging was compounded with being unable to return home to family due to care and protection issues. It must be a focus of professionals to work with young women in a manner that allows them to be comfortable with the realities of

their lived experiences and help set them up for lives that will allow them to feel as though they belong and are able successfully transition into young adulthood and beyond.

6.4 Implications for Social Work Practice

The wider and somewhat underlying objective of this project has been to understand through female's experience how YJR and the process of transition support young women to develop their sense of self and a positive self-identity, as is consistent with the legislation (see section 3.1) of the YJS. It has also been to understand the kind of position the system puts young women in so they will be able to transition positively into adulthood and be confident they can have productive and fulfilling lives. A case can be made that the findings as well as the literature from this project illustrate that a wider lens is required to change the view of assessing, engaging and carrying out interventions with female youth offenders to include the whole context.

One way to do this is to locate the individual young women who offend and employ a practice that involves a social-ecological perspective (see section 2.3), since it can be seen that on a micro (individual) level each of the young women experienced multiple significant traumatic events that impacted upon their development and sense of who they were as young women. The strategies the young women chose to use to cope with these traumas often escalated their negative development and this led to their offending behaviour. Compounding these experiences of trauma was the inconsistent, non-existent or negative support systems (meso system) which included family, peers, and professionals in their lives. This elevated the current development of their self-identity. The exo-system of the YJS and how this had an effect on the lives of these young women, has for the most part been positive and

helpful, even so, there are areas where practice within the system could improve. The macro-system that is grounded in Western norms, traditions, values/beliefs, culture, and ideologies, can often oppress indigenous and minority groups[10].

Another strong case can be made to look at the strengths and resilience of these young women. Examining how the young women navigated their way through all of these experiences, trying to make to the best out of complex and difficult situations, developing their sense of identity and self with the opportunities and resources that are available to them. As the young women located and assessed through the lenses of their systems their strengths, their resilience is clearly evident. Add offending behaviour into the equation and the wider context can be seen with a more complete view of the individual as a person and not as the problem. Interventions then have the ability to be well-rounded and can work to positively develop self-identity.

The two aspects of this project are firstly to understand through the female experience how YJR supports and contributes to eliminating offending behaviour and developing positive self-identities. The second aspect is to understand through the female experience how the transition process is carried out, what drives this process and how this process supports the continued elimination of offending behaviour as well as the continued affirmation of positive self-identity. Therefore, there are two specific areas of social work practice that this project has specific implications for, within the youth justice field. The first is social work within residence and the second is social work practice for transition. These specific areas of practice will be explored in detail below.

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[10] For more information about the social-ecological perspective see section 2.3 as well as (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

6.4.1 Social Work Practice in Residence

The daily operations of residence are heavily regulated through the legislation presented in Chapter 3 (3.2). Maintaining residence safety and the security of all staff and the young people is paramount. Assessing and managing the various levels of risk is vital in day-to-day operations, and this is related to the management of some of the negative impacts of residence and the way they can be effected (please see, section 3.3 and 6.2.1).

For social work practice in residence, the findings from this research suggest that it is important for social workers to take time to build individual relationships with the young women in residence. Building meaningful and stable relationships has the potential to be an initial catalyst in helping the participants to create positive change. The basis of these connections will create the tone for all of the work going forward. These relationships provide safe, secure, and consistent connections for the first time for many of these young women. These relationships will help the young women to re-create and develop an optimistic sense of self and identity. The formation of these fundamental relationships provides safety for the young women to test the new dimensions to their identities.

Lastly, it can be argued that despite all of literature that is not optimistic about secure residence it still has a strong impact on the lives of the young women. Residence can be a place that holds great potential to create change and the motivation to change for the young women. It would be beneficial for Social Workers in residence to examine how to best enhance the positive effects of YJR and work with the negative effects to empower and create change for the young women while they are in secure residence.

6.4.2 Social Work Practice for Transition

The transition plan along with its processes, design, implementation and post-implementation needs to change. Currently, transition plans skew more favourably toward compliance and accountability ("justice") and less on supporting ("welfare") the young women to return to their communities. It places strict bail conditions which they have to adhere to and several activities they have to complete within a certain period of time (usually six to twelve months). Even though the activities that were put into the plan have made vague attempts to positively develop and empower the young women, ultimately it was created to tick boxes and ensure the young women complete an immediate plan and receive their discharge from the YJS. There has been little focus on transitioning them into young adult/adulthood.

Research has been carried out to understand the process of transition, however much more work still needs to be undertaken because it seems we could be doing better in this area (please see section 3.4). The participants who participated in this project all had similar experiences, for example, lack of support, and transition plans that were impersonal, not achievable, and that were accountability and problem-focused. Their plans were based on a list of things that were deemed appropriate and that satisfied the professionals and Youth Court that were involved in the lives of the young women.

Transition plans should entail an opportunity for young people to make amends for their actions. Wrap-around services should be involved to ensure the needs of the individuals are met, while undertaking activities that are focused on their strengths and interests and allow for continued positive identity. Having these activities allows for the young women to create a new and positive peer network and this is important to assist them in transitioning into positive and "normal"

young adulthood and further into their adult lives through finding a sense of belonging (see section 2.3).

Finally, the concept of transition houses is an important finding and has a significant implication for social work practice. For young women who cannot or do not want to return home, having this service available will provide a valuable platform to build upon the positive changes they have achieved in residence and it will be a practical launchpad for the young women to move smoothly into young adulthood.

This suggestion of a transition house is one that is unique and something that several young women within this study were very passionate about. This suggestion also aligns with my belief as mentioned in section 1.1 that some young women should not be returned to the care of their family. Based on professional experience in the field, this service would be exclusively for young women who have completed a Supervision with Residence Order and are placed on a Supervision Oder[11] for between 6 to 12 months. This service will be available for the young woman's Supervision Order and it will be a 24 hour live in service. It will house between 4-6 young people at any one time. The house will be grounded in the principles and practices of Therapeutic Community (TC) and have a similar structure to that of residence with opportunities for varying levels of freedom as the young woman progresses through the programme.

The house will be an environment that will be as normal a home as possible, where basic life skills are taught (e.g., cooking, cleaning and how to look after a house) as well as learning skills, for example, paying

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[11] See section 296G- 297B of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989
http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0024/latest/DLM147088.html

bills, budgeting, setting up the basic necessities to live independently. It will offer a compulsory six week personal development programme in house coupled with education services during the day as well as opportunities for the exploration of hobbies and interests in the afternoon and evenings and weekends. Young women will also be provided with opportunities to develop their support system with assistance from staff within the service and they will also be given opportunities to stay with various members of this support system during the weekend. This will be a one-stop shop type service with further education, WINZ, GP, sexual health and mental health services (e.g., counselling and holistic healing), plus maternity and services for teen mums all offered at appropriate times during the young woman's stay.

Ideally this service will offer a six session personal development in reach programme into the YJR as a prerequisite for entry into the transition house. This is to build relationships with the young women to assist them with leaving the residence. Throughout the duration of the supervision order and time in the house the young women will develop further plans for the future so that they will have a stepping stone for their next steps and are better placed to achieve a successful transition into young adulthood and into adulthood.

6.5 Summary

This discussion has considered the key findings from the reflections of the participants in this project. It has provided insight into how these young women ended up in the YJS and which social issues were present in their lives that intensified the likelihood they would be involved in the system. The progression of the development of their sense of self and the reason this is important to the practice of social work within the youth justice field was discussed. The impact of residence on the

lives of the young women focused some light and revealed the positive impact residence can have on young women. It highlighted that residence does have a positive impact on the lives of young women. Transition back into the community was examined, the concerns highlighted by participants around their transition were at the forefront of the analysis. Lastly, a discussion was provided exploring possible implications for social work practice within the youth justice system, as well as in residence and for transition back to the community. This dialogue highlighted the key points that were already happening within practice and aspects that could improve and enhance the experiences of young women within residence and their journey back to the community.

Chapter 7 Conclusion and Recommendations

7.0 Introduction

The objective of this project has been to understand the experiences of young women who have had previous involvement in YJR and were transitioned from residence back to the community. There was a strong focus on understanding how sense of self and positive self-identity were developed by the young women through their experiences within the YJS. By having an understanding of the female experience within the youth justice system it is hoped that the system will be become more responsive to the specific needs and over all contexts of female youth offenders. Secondly, it is hoped that more intentional and purposeful balance can be achieved between the "justice" and "welfare" tension within youth justice so that young women who exit this system are in the best possible position to create positive futures for themselves and their families. This chapter will summarise what has been understood from the findings of this project, directions for future research, the limitations and benefits of the research, and finally present recommendations for social policy and social work education.

7.1 What was understood

From this research several ideas have been understood that are important for social work practice within the YJS, social work education and social policy. The findings also provide unique knowledge that is important as they relate to female young offenders and society.

Residence is a catalyst for change and has significant importance to the development of the young women within the project. All of the participants reported that their experience having been placed in

residence impacted their lives for the better. The loss of freedom, the opportunity to be taken out of toxic family environments and the chance to rebuild family relationships with the support that residence provides are all evidence of the positive effects of YJR. During this time the participants expressed the importance of the staff in residence taking the time to build meaningful relationships with them so that they could make the most of the opportunity within this environment. However, participants suggested that more could be done within residence to allow for positive self-development and development of sense of self. It does need to be acknowledged that risk management, containment and safety and security are important parts of daily operations in YJR. These parts of residence are managed by the legislation, policies, and conventions that have been mentioned in the literature review. As is evident from both the literature review and from the findings, more work needs to be done to establish how residence can support the positive self-development of young women within the YJS.

The transition phase of the YJS is the time that young women have the highest motivation to change and build upon the changes they created in residence. Transition is an area that we could doing better. All of the participants in this project shared that transition was a particularly difficult time, because they felt they received very little support. The main argument that participants made was that transition plans were made up of activities that they had never shown a capacity to be able to achieve consistently, they all felt that they were "being set up to fail" and that they would not be able successfully complete the plan. These transition plans were another opportunity to provide positive development of self-identity and sense of self. The participants suggested that activities during transition should provide new and continued opportunities to develop their sense of self with on-going

support from positive peers and family. For those who could not return home for varying reasons the idea of a transition house was suggested by the participants. This transition house has the potential to be a great asset to the YJS and could function as an extra layer of support before returning to the community. An example of how the transition house could work is provided in section 6.3.3, however more research is required to understand how this could be achieved.

This project has added to the existing knowledge about female youth offenders. From the experiences of the female youth offenders who participated in this project it can be seen that the YJS does not adequately meet the needs of this target population. This is evident from the findings and discussion in regard to their experiences before residence and during their transition back into their communities. The focus within youth justice of risk and responsibilisation provides a very narrow scope in which to assess and engage with the young women in the system. The emphasis on the risk the young women are to themselves and the community creates a limited view of the individual which allows for the offending behaviour to be seen in isolation while at the same time it gives way for heavy attention to be paid to the justice side of the paradigm within youth justice. However, in actuality, the offending behaviour is the last part of a much bigger picture that needs to be put into the context of the young woman's life as a whole. Many of these young women are survivors with significant trauma backgrounds who have many strengths and have shown enormous resilience to make the best out of difficult situations that are often missed with this narrow risk-based focus. It can be concluded that within the social worker's practice there needs to be a purposeful and intentional effort to create a balance between the justice system and welfare to allow for a full understanding of the various drivers behind female youth offending so that proper and meaningful engagement

and interventions can occur. It has been suggested that a social-ecological perspective is one way to potentially broaden the scope and provide a view of the whole context of female youth offending. This has the potential to allow for greater balance and to provide opportunities for their positive development and for their transition into their future.

7.2 Directions for future research

The findings of this research indicate the YJS struggles to manage the dual focus of accountability and welfare, which ultimately has an impact on the positive development of self-identity and sense of self and well-being outcomes for the young women within the system. During the course of this project there were several other potential research projects that arose that will be interesting to explore and report on. The first is to repeat the same study extending the participant criteria to include those who continued to offend into adulthood that resulted in corrections involvement and sentences in prison. This could then lead to a comparison of the experiences between those who successfully left the youth justice system and those who continued their offending behaviour and became involved with the Department of Corrections. This comparison could build on the findings and knowledge about female youth offenders.

The second is exploring the positive development of self-identity of young women throughout their journey through the YJS and into adulthood. The majority of young women who come into contact with youth justice spend most of their adolescence in the system. This means that their sense of self is largely developed from within the system. Researching and understanding this aspect of the lived experience of young women and how it was impacted by the YJS as

well as how the system assisted young women to develop their sense of self and identity could provide valuable information about female youth offenders.

The last area of potential future research is about transition houses. This could facilitate an understanding about how a transition house could work, how the wrap around services could be implemented, so it optimized and understanding what best practice within a transition house could encompass. Exploring what this environment could look like, and how other services, such as, addiction services that utilize this kind of environment could provide important information. The concept of a transition house, one that is available for young women who cannot or do not wish to return home is an important concept that requires further investigation. Due to the evidence about inadequate transition it is vital to ground the transition houses in evidence-based practice to ensure the house is providing an appropriate service that meets the needs of a young person.

7.3 Limitations

The limitations of this research have been broken down into two areas, specifically, sample size and time constraints.

Sample size is one of the limitations of this project, having a sample size of six to eight participants meant that information was being collected from a small pool of an already limited target population that has been restricted to the geographical location to recruit potential participants from the limited ideas presented in the project. Since the participants who have participated in this study have come from major cities in the North Island, New Zealand, it would be interesting to

include participants from rural areas to understand their experiences of YJR and transition back to the community.

Secondly, due to the short time frame in which the researcher had to recruit the participants for the study, the use of Key Informants as a method of recruitment was not as successful as initially hoped. What should have been taken into account was the processes and procedures that community organisations have in place for allowing research to be undertaken with the clients that they serve. This can take time. The clash between the two different time constraints (the recruitment period versus the time for the approval of the research by community organisations) made it difficult to utilise this recruitment method adequately. If there had been more time to recruit the participants for the project this tool could have been used more effectively.

Third, the time constraints for this project had an impact on the ability to complete the interviews for the full eight participants who comprised the sample. Due to the complications with participants not turning up for interviews after two attempts at rescheduling, this information was not able to be collected. If more time had been allowed for the data collection more potential participants could have been recruited to fill the remaining spaces that were available for the participant interviews. Having more time could allow for the recruitment of a larger sample size so that additional data could have been gathered from a more diverse population within the target group.

7.4 Benefits and advantages of the research

There are several benefits and advantages of this research. The first is that the project targeted a difficult to reach and not commonly

researched population. This contributed an opportunity for a perspective on the YJS that included information about residence and transition from a vulnerable population who are not often available to speak to. Allowing space for these young women to share their stories provided an opportunity to empower them and give voice to their experiences during a challenging time in their lives. The second is the use of social media as a recruitment tool, this is a relatively new recruitment tool. It was an effective method for recruiting a difficult to reach population. This project could contribute to the knowledge about the use of social media as a participant recruitment tool.

7.5 Recommendations

In terms of continued research within youth justice more understanding is needed around effective interventions within the social work practice, specifically about working with female young people to ensure their specific needs are met. Even though there is more knowledge about the specific risks and needs of this population, more still needs to be done to understand how to most effectively work with them to ensure a successful intervention particularly around positive self-development. It is hoped that this project will lead to others like it so there will be an increased knowledge base specifically for working with female youth offenders. Given the unique vulnerabilities and risks of this group more attention needs to be given to creating purposeful interventions that are meaningful to these individuals. The more knowledge that is available about female youth offenders the more responsive the services can be for female young people and this will hopefully lead to greater positive outcomes.

In terms of social work education, the findings of this project suggest that an initiative aimed at a more effective management of the risk and

requirements while working with females in the YJS. This initiative should include teaching social work students to effectively and appropriately view the offending behaviour that female young people display and work with it in relation to all of the other systems and environments that the young women are a part of.

In terms of the social work practice the system needs to better manage the dual functions of the system to make sure young women are given the opportunity to develop positive self-identity. A greater understanding of how to best make the most of the environment of residence and how it can contribute to a positive sense of self will be beneficial. In regard to transition and a greater understanding of how to effectively transition young people back to the community is an element within the YJS that requires extra attention for research and practice.

A policy initiative related to transition and how female youth offenders are transitioned back to the community should be considered. The focus should ensure transition plans are custom tailored to each individual and specifically to the needs of each young person. Activities within the plan should include wrap around services that allow for positive self-development, allow them to make amends with their victims, and address their experiences of trauma in a manner that is meaningful to them. As part of this initiative it should include the development of a transition house. The diagram below helps to explain how the idea of a transition house will create change in the YJS.

Diagram 1: demonstrates how the transition house could change the youth justice system
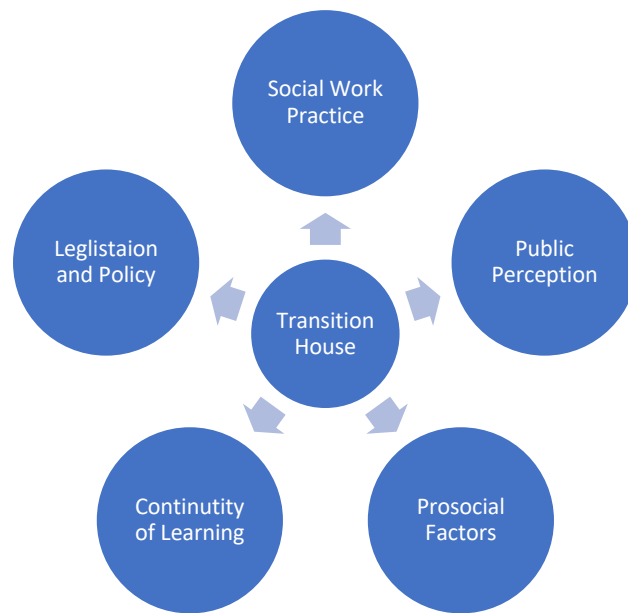
First of all, it will have an impact on social work practice within the system. It will draw attention to practice with respect to how young women are transitioned out of residence and returned to the community, and it will provide alternative options for the transition process. Next, it has the potential to change public perception about the young women who are discharged from residence, it will help to reduce the stereotype and stigma around this group and provide the public with an understanding about the kinds of services and support these young women who are required to return to the community. Next pro-social factors show the on-going and wrap-around support that will be provided for the young women who are a part of this service (see section 6.4.2). Next, it will provide an opportunity for young women to continue to build on the learning and development they experienced in residence in a meaningful way and it will also provide planning and support for those who are ready to leave the transition house. Lastly, this transition house has the potential to change the legislation and policy mentioned in section 3.1 to include a legal and governmental focus about how young women are

transitioned from residence and out of the YJS. The transition house has the potential to provide a steppingstone so that the young women are in the best possible position to transition out of the YJS and onto young adulthood and positive futures they, their significant others and the wider community can be proud of.

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Appendix A Massey University Ethics Approval Letter

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Date: 24 May 2018

Dear Jamie Goodwin

Re: Ethics Notification - **NOR 18/19** - **Voices of Resilience: female experiences in and out of youth justice care**

Thank you for the above application that was considered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: **Human Ethics Northern Committee** at their meeting held on **Thursday, 24 May, 2018**.
On behalf of the Committee I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are approved.

Approval is for three years.   If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Associate Professor Tracy Riley, Dean Research
Acting Director (Research Ethics)

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

"Voices of Resilience"

I

NFORMATION SHEET

Kia Ora,

My name is Jamie Goodwin, I am currently completing my Master's in Social Work. Part of my Masters is a research project about female young people's experiences of youth justice.

The purpose of this project is to understand your experiences of being sentenced by the Youth Court to time in youth justice residence and your journey back into the community.

You have been identified as someone who could be interested in this project so I would like to invite you to be a part of it. Before you agree or decline to participate in this research, please read this Information Sheet and ask any questions you may have.

Participant Identification and Recruitment: I asked someone to identify potential participants and advertise this project. They have passed on to you this Information Sheet because you wanted to know more about this project. Your name and contact details was then passed on to me.

To participate in this project you will need to:
- Identify as a female
- Have been sentenced or spent time in a youth justice residence because Youth Court said so,
- Have been discharged from or released from the youth justice system for two years or more, and
- Have had no involvement with the Department of Corrections.
  Participants will be selected from non-statutory agencies not from my agency, which is a statutory agency. If this is you, then you are an ideal participant for this project.

I am speaking to 6-8 participants and you will be gifted a $20 Pak n Save voucher or mobile phone top-up card for giving up your time to be involved in this research project.

The research project may cause some discomfort for you due to being asked about your experiences, but I assure you that whatever you share it will be treated strictly confidentially and you will not be identified. The information you share will be included in my Master's thesis. I will be

reporting in such a way that you cannot be identified. Only my supervisors and I will have access to your information.

Should you experience any discomfort or feel that you need some extra support Youthline having counselling services that can be utilised to support you.

- Youthline Auckland Central, 13 Maidstone Street, Grey Lynn, 09 361 4168
- Youthline Manukau, 145 St. George Street, Old Papatoetoe, 09 361 4168

If you agree to participate in this study, there are three things you will be asked to do. Firstly, attend a 30-minute briefing before the interview so you can ask any questions about this project, complete forms like the Consent Form, and make sure you are still okay to proceed.

If you are then secondly, be interviewed for 60 minutes and answer five questions. I have provided the questions so you know what you will be asked.

Lastly, after the interview I will contact you again so you can go over what I recorded at your interview and typed up (transcript) and give me permission to use your transcript.

What you share with me will be securely stored and password protected. This means the information I collect from you will be saved on devices and in office furniture that can only be accessed by me. I will only provide a summary report of what this research found to those who are interested and requested in writing. You will not be identified in this summary report.

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:
- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study before you have signed the *Authority to Release Transcript Form*;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview;
- Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- No participants or residential facilities will be identified in the project.

Project Contacts
If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact my myself or my Supervisors

Jamie Goodwin – Researcher email:

Gisa Dr Moses Ma'alo Faleolo – Primary supervisor email:

Dr Shirley Jülich – Secondary supervisor email:

What Next?

If you feel like you would like to be part of this study, you can like the Facebook page "Voices of Resilience" where you can see all the information regarding this project and then send me a message through the Facebook page.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Information Sheet and I look forward to hearing from you if you chose to be part of this project.

Regards,

Jamie Goodwin

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 18/19. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Associate Professor David Tappin (Chair), Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz .

Interview Schedule

1. **What brought you into Residence**
- What were you doing?
- What did your support system look like?
- How did you see yourself and what you want to do with life?

2. **What was Residence like for you**
- What were you doing?
- What support was provided in Residence?
- How did your external support system play a role in Residence?
- What was one thing you took away from your time in Residence?

3. **If you could plan your ideal day in Residence what would you do for the day?**
- Create a structured day for your ideal day

4. **What did your return to the Community look like?**
- What did you do?
- How did your support system change from before you went into Residence?
- How do you now see yourself and what you want to do with life?

5. **If you had full control over your transition plan what would you have in it?**
- Create your own transition plan

- That covers everything I wanted to ask. Is there anything you want to add that I did not think to ask?

"Voices of Resilience"

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH
TE KURA HAUORA TANGATA

"Voices of Resilience"

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPTS

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview(s) conducted with me.

I understand that all extracts from this transcript will be anonymised to that I cannot be identified.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.