

## CFPS Work Group Update- Awakenings, June 2021

**Program/Initiative Name:** Awakenings / Parks and Recreation

**Lead Staff:** Gwen Peterson

**Program/Initiative Description:** 2021 Program/Initiative Update, Progress and Performance Narrative

- Community First Public Safety (CFPS) initiative Awakenings is developed as a violence prevention/early intervention strategy.
- Youth participants are empowered to identify their own trauma and its consequences, while building a tool kit that promotes individual resiliency and healing.
- 40 additional individuals broken up into cohorts of youth between the ages of six and thirteen are identified by Community Youth Workers and/or CFPS partners based on established risk factors.
- The program structure includes bi-weekly group meetings that incorporate newly developed mental health curriculum as well as traditional youth engagement strategies designed to build or strengthen relationships and trust between youth participants and our staff. Youth participants will also have weekly one-on-one sessions with staff.
- Contracted mental health professional will provide guidance on program development, staff training, data collection and evaluation methods, as well as qualitative measurement tools.

**2021 Update:** (2021 Program/Initiative Update, Progress and Performance Narrative (Jan 2021 – May 2021))

# of Participants	43
Start Month July 2020	25
# of Goals/Skills Completed	44
# of Households Served	64
Attendance in School	36
# of Successful Program Completions by Youth	41

Survey Results            TBD

# of Suspension From School            13

**City of Saint Paul 2021 Budget:** (Full 2021 Program/Initiative Budget)

Total Spending Budget - \$328,328

**YTD Spending:** - \$122,212

## **CFPS Awakening Initiative Group Program Narratives**

### **Group Facts and Participant Progressions**

**Group 1 – None of the participants in this female group, all 8 years and younger live in a home with their biological mother or any adult female.**

**STICKY FINGERS** – CS – age 8, Bi-racial female. Has built a reputation as someone who takes things from friends, family members, and the homes of others. Began taking things from other participants within the group. The group participants informed the CYW that they believed that she was taking their personal belongings. When the CYW spoke with her and asked her if she was in fact taking items from the other group participants, she laughed and eventually admitted that it was true. Consultation with the Mental Health Professional (MHP) suggested to have the group participants tell her how it made them feel when she takes things from them. After initially laughing at the participants, eventually she became embarrassed. There have been no more missing items amongst the group participants.

**HUNGER GAMES** – NN – age 8, Multiracial female. On a regular, she shows up to group as disruptive and oppositional. The CYW works with her perpetually on self awareness and correction. Usually, after correction, she can process the communication. This day was different. She entered group asking if there would be food today. When informed no, she could not focus long enough to process information shared with her, more so than usual. She was verbally threatening to the other group participants and just being plain mean. When the opportunity presented itself one on one, the CYW asked her to talk to her. She refused. The CYW informed her that unless she was able to stop her behavior, she would be asked to leave the group. She changed her mind and agreed to talk. The CYW asked her how was her day and to tell her about it? How was school today? She replied that she didn't eat today. The CYW gave her a snack and encouraged her to tell her when she is hungry so

she can help her. Consultation with the (MHP) suggested asking the group what are some things that we need to live.

**Group 2 – All of the participants in this male group ages 10 – 13 live in a single parent family home as the primary household**

**HOMEWORK AVOIDER** - CD -age 13, Bi-racial male. Behind in school assignments while attending school online, expressed how he hated going to his mother's home. Consultation with the (MHP) suggested asking why which revealed his preference to stay up late to play video games at his grandmothers. CYW met one on one, made a pact with him to catch up on his homework assignments. Fully caught up online, begins in-person school next week.

**GANG LEADER** - LS – age 14, White male. Self Identifies as a gang leader, becomes disruptive and antsy when bored. CYW made a deal that he could get up and move around the room if he continued to participate in the group discussions. CYW brought a local ex-gang member in to speak to the group, during which he stayed fully engaged. Consultation with the (MHP) suggested that if you take something away, it should be replaced. CYW met one on one and asked if he would be interested in a job. He is employed at a local rec center in his first job for the past 5 months. No longer spends his discretionary time with his former gang members. Parent and employer share positive comments on his work ethic and demonstrated responsibility.

**Group 3 – All of the participants in this group, ages 10 - 13 have experienced personal interactions with the police within their homes**

**ANGRY RUNNER** – JB – Age 10, AA male. Enjoys participating in competitive sports. But responds in anger when embarrassed during competition in sports. Becomes disruptive, strikes out, runs out of the space, and occasionally harms himself. When he runs out of the space, he refuses to return or if he does return, he is disruptive to the activities and participants. Consultation with the (MHP) suggested the use of a Hot Pass. CYW met one on one and discussed his behavior and introduced the Hot Pass and how it works. Came to an agreement that he would be allowed to leave if he promised to return. Now when he appears to become angry, the CYW will ask if he needs to use the pass. Working with him on using his words and not being reactive. He has not stormed off in anger for the past 3 months.

**AVID USER** - GH – Age 12, AA Male. Quite often came to group smelling of smoke. Shared and supported by others that he can smoke at home. Parents smoke as well. Inconsistent participation, but disruptive leader when present. CYW refused participation in group if smell or use of smoke was detected. He continues to return to group and this goes on for about a month. Consultation with the (MHP) suggested not to give up on him and ask him what activities he would like to do in the group. He began showing up with no signs of

usage and in fact sharing that he had it on his person and asking what to do with it before being asked. CYW asked him what his interests are and now he is a consistent participant and a leader of activities with no physical signs of smoke usage. CYW continues to address his usage overall.

#### **Group 4 – All of the participants in this male group have an IEP**

**PROSPECTIVE ARSONIST** – JH – Age 8, AA male. Struggles with comprehension of written and verbal communication as well as reading. When corrected or redirected, becomes embarrassed, angry, strikes out aggressively towards others and storms off. Has attempted to burn down his home on two occasions. Consultation with the (MHP) suggested to work with him on the basic building blocks of reading. CYW met one on one with him and explained that it was ok to be angry and agreed to label his storming off as a small break where he can reset. The CYW identifies his behavior, suggests a small break, joins him on the break to assist him in breathing exercises until he feels reset enough to rejoin the group. Now once a small break is suggested by the CYW, he is able to reset himself without assistance and rejoin the group on his own.

**WALLFLOWER** – NY – Age 11, AA male. Bullied quite often, passive, shy, quiet, allows others to speak and make decisions for him. Fights when he 's fed up. CYW met one on one with him. Encouraged him to speak louder, be assertive and reminded him that he has a voice and that it is just as important as every one else's voice. Use his words to let others know what he feels. Bullied by another group participant, he resorted to his habitual response of retreating and whining. CYW reminded him of using his voice and being assertive. He confronted the bully, told him how what he had done to him made him feel, and asked for an apology. He received the apology. He is now more outspoken concerning his feelings and has not been involved in a fight for the past 8 months.

**Group 5** – Under construction with the new CYW hire in March 2021. Hamline Midway and North End are potential locations for this group. Engagement and program promotion have included contact with approximately 15 youth. 2 youth have been recruited into the group to date. The group is scheduled to begin in June 2021.

**Group 6** – TBD with hire of CYW expected by September 2021.