AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS REQUIRING TERTIARY LEVEL BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT WITHIN INCLUSIVE HIGH SCHOOL SETTINGS

by

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Abstract

This study investigated the experiences of two adolescent youth with significant emotional and behavioural challenges receiving a tertiary level of positive behavior intervention support (PBIS) within an inclusive secondary school setting. These perspectives were collected through semi-structured, open-ended interviews and analyzed using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) methodology. Research shows that providing individualized emotional and behavioural support promotes appropriate behavior development among students within a positive learning environment (Flannery, et al., 2014; Feuerborn, Wallace & Tyre, 2013). Students struggling with learning appropriate conduct may require a wrap-around system of intensive and individualized behavior supports in order to succeed in high school (Lane, et al., 2013). This study examined the effect of emotional and behavioural support through the Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) model Child and Youth (C&Y) Team as a tertiary level of PBIS care within NB education system's inclusionary schools for students with such need. The study's significance to the field of behavior support research and education includes the provision of student perspectives—largely missing from the literature—on the efficacy of implementing PBIS in an inclusive provincial high school.

Dedication

To the two young women who accepted the opportunity to participate in this research endeavour: thank you for your time, your experiences, and your courage to share your stories.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Significance of the study

High school graduation is an anticipated outcome for each student in the public school system as they embark on their school career. However, for many Canadian students this will not happen because they will disengage from school by the time they reach Grade 10 (De Wit, Karioja, & Rye, 2010). In 2009-2010, according to Statistics Canada, just under seven percent of female students and more than ten percent of males across the nation dropped out of high school (Statistics Canada, 2011). Disengagement is a phenomenon in the public school system that is often a precursor to the decision to drop out. A primary research interest of scholars, educators and policy makers alike continues to be the quest for a better understanding of the factors related to how and why students, especially those who receive individualized and intensified behaviour support, become disengaged.

The New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) recognizes, in its Inclusionary Schools Policy 322 (NB DEECD, 2013), that every student is capable of learning, and that "inclusive public education is individualized according to student strengths, needs and best interests" (p. 4). This policy states that a key to inclusionary practice in schools is the "removal of barriers to learning" (NB DEECD, 2013, p. 4) and among the barriers identified are issues stemming from resolving inappropriate behaviour in an inclusive classroom setting. Providing students who struggle socially and behaviourally with the opportunities to learn appropriate skill sets for cooperatively engaging in a variety of educational settings is possible through the implementation of a framework of behaviour intervention support aimed at prevention

and remediation of unacceptable conduct. The focus of this study is on exploring how plausible behavior intervention is in an inclusive education context. The construct of an ideal learning community has been presented by some scholars as one that provides a holistic public education that equips its students with the opportunity to continue developing into mindfully involved and responsible citizens (Katz & Sugden, 2013; Morcum & MacCallum, 2012; Graham & Harwood, 2011; Paliokosta & Blandford, 2010). This province's Education ministry concurs with the belief that ideal learning occurs in community, stating that "Inclusive Education practices are not only necessary for all students to develop and prosper but also critical to building a society that is inclusive of all people and their basic legal, civil and human rights" (NB DEECD, 2013 p. 4).

Typical classrooms in an inclusive public education system ought to include same-aged students who have not been grouped based on academic and behavioural abilities (Liasidou & Antoniou, 2013; Morcom & MacCallum, 2011). Students in these classrooms are expected to engage in pro-social behaviour and to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, ensuring that a positive learning environment is maintained for all individuals present. When these expectations are met, all students in this common learning environment are afforded the opportunity to reach their utmost potential, by learning and developing into active citizens, alongside their peers. Regarding students as 'citizens of their classrooms' is a key contributor to the realization of a complete education, and the development of a working definition for what constitutes active and informed citizens in inclusive classrooms is included in this study. The Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation (APEF, 1998), a collective of educators from the

Atlantic Provinces that serves as an educational authority for Atlantic Canada, lists some general graduation outcomes that are expected to be met by secondary school students by the end of grade 12, in each of the Atlantic Provinces' curriculum documents. Among these expectations is the development of "active and informed citizens who contribute in a pluralistic and democratic society" (APEF, 1998, p. 6). The ability to engage in participatory decision-making in the best interests of the individual and the collective is an important quality of students who are active, engaged citizens of an inclusive community. This quality is not only expected of them by the time they graduate, according to the relevant curriculum documents, but it may also be an essential tenet by which successful inclusionary systems can be measured.

For youth who need emotional and behavioural support in their learning environments, evidence-based strategies and interventions are available that offer support while allowing them to remain in school and learn pro-social behavior. Positive Behaviour Intervention Support (PBIS) is a three-tiered framework of evidence-based behaviour education and support, modeled on prevention, driven by data collection, and measured by evidence of success (Bohanon et al., 2012; Fallon, O'Keefe, & Sugai, 2012; Feuerborn, Wallace, &Tyre, 2013; Flannery, Fenning, Kato, & McIntosh, 2014; Lane, Oakes, Menzies, Oyer, & Jenkins, 2013; Mitchell, Stormont & Gage, 2011; Reinke, Stormont, Clare, Latimore, & Herman, 2013). Along the PBIS continuum, the provision of tier three, or tertiary support, involves consideration of the student's strengths, projected emotional and behavioural development goals and includes a wrap-around service delivery model encompassing supporting agencies and community presence

(Bohannon et al., 2012; Davis, Durand, Fuentes, Dacus, & Blenden, 2014; Feuerborn et al., 2013; Gann et al., 2013; Solnick & Ardoin, 2010).

Education systems in Canada and the United States have been seeking means to improve on their schools' methods for supporting students who struggle with mental health needs and academic success (Eber, Weist, & Barrett, 2016; NB EECD, 2015). Providing appropriate and effective mental health services in school environments has been a concern for schools implementing PBIS frameworks with School Mental Health (SMH) services. Canadian and US school districts have devised a system of support service frameworks that effectively supplement school-wide PBIS and SMH in this manner.

Integrated Service Framework (ISF) is an evidence-based model that incorporates mental health and PBIS supports in US school jurisdictions (Duchnowski, 2016). ISF addresses the need for enriching the student outcomes, that are the aim of PBIS and mental health support systems, by bridging the disconnect that occurs within tier two and tier three services due to inconsistencies in data management and implementation structures (Eber et al., 2016). According to Eber et al. (2016), there is a clear need for incorporating community mental health providers in schools so that they can process data in order to assess and implement the appropriate levels of student support where they are required.

School districts in New Brunswick have also piloted and implemented a similar framework, the Integrated Services Delivery (ISD) model, which provides adequate school mental health services within a framework for delivery of positive behaviour supports for students (NB EECD, 2015). ISD is intended to fill the missing components

of early assessment and intervention strategies that students would benefit from by "responding in a timely, effective and integrated manner to the strengths, risks, and needs profiles of children, youth and their families" (NB EECD, 2015, p. 8).

The strategy for incorporating all of these factors must also be complementary to a learning environment that includes a diverse group of the tier three students' peers, typical of today's inclusive classroom. Due to a paucity of evidence in the research, the issue of the effect of individualized behaviour interventions in the secondary school setting, specifically from the perspective of the students receiving this intensified level of support, is in need of examination. The purpose of this study is to seek a richer understanding of and insight into, from the perspectives of students who require such intensive support, how to better engage and support this population.

Research question

An education system's capacity to provide support to students who require an intensive level of support in an inclusionary environment should be a concern for high school educators, support staff, administrators and directors. Among the many challenges arising from dealing with secondary school students who struggle with emotional and behaviour difficulties is the issue of academic and social engagement at school. This is a complex issue and is a significant factor in the subsequent success of these students, functioning within a holistic system (addressing social, academic and emotional-behavioural needs of students) that employs a positive behaviour support framework in an inclusionary high school setting (Green et al., 2012). Considering the high risk of disengagement in secondary school settings, particularly for students struggling with significant emotional/behaviour difficulties, a number of questions may

be raised. How do students develop a sense of engagement through their tertiary level of support in an inclusive secondary school setting? What are the academic and social experiences of the students who receive this intensified level of individualized, wrap-around support within the systemic framework of SW-PBIS and inclusive classroom learning environments? How does an inclusive learning environment differentially affect a student who struggles significantly with internalizing emotional challenges (i.e. anxiety, depression), externalizing behaviour difficulties (i.e. aggressive behaviour), or possibly both? How does the tertiary level of wrap-around support impact these students' academic success, and how do they perceive their social and emotional development in these contexts? These questions are components of the overarching research question that is central to this phenomenological inquiry. More succinctly, I intend to explore and gain a foundational understanding of the following: What are the significant experiences of students who are currently completing their secondary education while also needing tertiary level of positive behaviour intervention and supports within an inclusive high school setting?

Exploring the available research at the confluence of systems of inclusion, PBIS, and the spectrum of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (EBD) along the internalization and externalization continuum within a high school context is the function of the following literature review. Collecting the experiences of New Brunswick secondary school students who require intensified and individualized behaviour support in their efforts to successfully complete high school will be accomplished using a qualitative research methodology using a hermeneutic, or interpretative, approach through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This methodology will allow

me to gather and interpret experiential data in the form of interviews for the purpose of gaining a better understanding of how these support frameworks and intervention systems impact students' development.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Among the current issues in education that resonate significantly, on a local and global scale, is the issue of student engagement, in particular, with regard to students who are actively and often chronically disengaged (Barry & Reschly, 2012; Landis & Reschly, 2011; Larson & Meehan, 2011; Marvul, 2012). This review of the literature includes an investigation of three main bodies of research: the literature related to inclusion, the literature around PBIS, and the literature that deals with the role that behavioural and emotional difficulties play in a population of students who already struggle to engage in and complete secondary school. Students at high risk of disengaging entirely from high school, thereby forfeiting their opportunity to complete a secondary school education, are also typically individuals who qualify for specialized support within a PBIS framework system (Flannery et al., 2014); this population is central to this study. Investigating the effect that the combination of PBIS and inclusionary education systems have on the population of students who require a wrap-around, individualized level of support may contribute answers to the question of how these students might successfully complete graduation requirements. Each of the three main sections of literature reviewed will feature reflections on the resulting challenges faced by secondary schools as they attempt to meet the holistic educational needs of all their students.

Inclusion: Evidence-based equal opportunity for positive learning environments

The question of what inclusion means and represents to a school requires consideration of perspectives from within the educational context as well as from the larger societal context. Students, educators, support staff, and leaders in education systems are all directly involved in the delivery of curricular content and each party's

perspective is valuable to ensuring that the public education system yields responsible and active citizens (Bruin & Ohna, 2013; New Brunswick Department of Education [NBED], 2009). Arrival at a working definition of inclusion requires the use of pedagogical and legal lenses, but one must also consider sociological theories of how people interact and learn from each other. The focus of this section is on first defining inclusion and then establishing three common themes from the literature that serve as key criteria regarding what inclusion represents.

The fundamental objectives of an inclusive education system are delineated in the literature, and these help to establish a working definition that captures the entirety of the approach. Scholarly opinion takes the position that each student has the right to access curricular content in the same mainstream setting, and the right to have any sensory, cognitive and motor barrier removed so that they are able to learn, regardless of their learning styles (Howery, McClellan, & Pedersen-Bayus, 2013; Liasidou & Antoniu, 2013; Morcum & MacCallum, 2012; Ruijs, Van der Veen, & Peetsma, 2010; Weigert, 2012). These authors also stipulated that learning practices ought to "be concerned with developing whole school collaborative networks providing learning support within the context of mainstream classrooms" (Liasidou & Antoniu, 2013, p. 495). Inclusion, then, can be said to encompass the provision of a universal education approach to all students, in their appropriate learning communities, regardless of capabilities. This approach can be seen as impacting the whole of society as all students would, in theory, graduate into society as educated and engaged citizens.

Three prominent themes of inclusive education were evident in the literature reviewed: creating collaborative communities, fostering equality among students as a

socially just system, and procuring a shift in focus from remediating disabilities to adjusting curricula to fit the needs of the learners (Bruin & Ohna, 2013; Carrol, Fulmer, Sobel, Garrison-Wade, Aragon, & Coval, 2011; Dymond, Chun, Kim, & Renzaglia, 2013; Eisenman, Pleet, Wandry, & McGinley, 2011; Goransson, Nilholm, & Karlsson, 2011; Howery, McClellan, & Pedersen-Bayus, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013; Liasidou & Antoniu, 2013; Morcum & MacCallum, 2012; Paliokosta & Blandford, 2010; Rix, Sheehy, Fletcher-Campbell, Crisp & Harper, 2013; Ruijs, Van der Veen, & Peetsma, 2010; Weigert, 2012). Discussion in the literature on inclusionary learning communities is focused on collaborative relationships of students with their peers, students interacting with their educators, and interactive relationships among educators as collaborators overseeing these communities. The first of these to be discussed will be collaborative relationships among students.

Inclusion: Collaborative communities—students among students

A common element in the literature on inclusive educational practices is the need to provide students with opportunities to contribute to the development of a culture of collaborative learning within their classrooms (Bruin & Ohna, 2012; Carroll et al., 2011; Fallon et al., 2012; Goransson et al., 2011; Graham & Harwood, 2011; Liasidou & Antoniou, 2013; Morcom & MacCallum, 2011; Paliokosta & Blandford, 2010; Rix et al., 2013; Ruijs et al., 2010). Understanding the collaborative relationships among students may provide essential insight into social environments within a school and are important perspectives for researchers and educators to pay attention to when devising inclusion policies (Walton, 2012). Necessary to this section of the literature review on inclusion is

evaluation of how school culture, a sense of belonging, and the role of diversity function interdependently.

A school's inclusive practices must be embedded within a school culture, which involves establishing parameters of acceptable behaviour and celebrating differences among students, because diversity is a quality that ought to be amplified rather than contained (Carroll et al., 2011). Successful learning can occur when students participate in and contribute to their social unit, relate well to others and apply self-management skills (Hill & Brown, 2013). Participation from each student is integral to creating the social fabric of the particular school culture. The unique experiences and skills brought forth by the students in the school provide valuable contributions to the collective while each individual engages in behaviour accepted by their group. Hill and Brown (2013) advocated for schools that provide their students with the opportunity to develop their own cultural distinctiveness because these settings become ideal to effect positive behaviour support for every level of need. Considering that there may also be cultural differences among students is an undercurrent in ensuring that each school's definition of its own culture is "flexible and dynamic…changed and shaped over time, across generations and from one setting to another" (Fallon et al., 2012, p. 210). The way in which students interact with each other develops the group's school culture, which in turn, theoretically, regulates behaviour expectations that are then taught to new members as "the nature of reality" (Carroll et al., 2011, p. 121).

Providing opportunities for students to develop a sense of belonging is fundamental when deposing exclusivity within an education system, because it evolves from marginalizing students based on their challenges to validating diversities (Liasidou

& Antoniou, 2013). Armstead et al. (2010) posited that students who experienced this sense of belonging had developed strong motivation to pursue academic and vocational goals, and did so because they felt part of a team with similar aspirations. Similarly, a school community which encourages students to believe in themselves because they feel positive about belonging will in turn nurture the belief in the individual that they can learn (Bruin & Ohna, 2013). Confidence is an essential tenet of achieving success, based on the idea that knowing how one personally contributed to their own success is a strong pillar of establishing the self-motivation to achieve it (Hill & Brown, 2013). This student collective that fosters a sense of belonging among its members does so as a solid unit using positive encouragement, with the expectation that each individual values their own and their peers' success.

A socially cohesive unit of students interacting as citizens of their learning community is a fundamental component of an inclusive learning environment because it fosters recognition and celebration of diversity (Carroll et al., 2011; Morcom & MacCallum, 2012). An atmosphere of appreciation for critical thinking, communication and interpersonal skills is essential within such a diverse collective (Carroll et al., 2011; Katz & Sudgen, 2013; Morcom & MacCallum, 2012). These students connect as interactive citizens within their learning community, an outcome that has been shown to be fundamental to an inclusive learning environment because it fosters recognition and celebration of diversity (Carroll et al., 2011; Morcom & MacCallum, 2012). Schools that provided opportunities for students to develop within a learning collective had consequently also cultivated confidence and self-worth among their students by developing a strong sense of belonging, and therefore had instilled a sense of

empowerment for their own learning (Bruin & Ohna, 2013). Connections among peers can be strengthened when the group establishes that every voice is valued, thus allowing the group to learn the value of interaction and solving problems collectively. Students who participate in this kind of collaboration among peers are more likely to learn interpersonal skills, such as cooperation, which then encourages them to grasp how to belong to their community of peers and consequently develop mutual respect for one another (Morcom & MacCallum, 2011).

Inclusive classes have been shown to enhance social and academic skills within students, as well as generating a greater respect for diversity. In a Canadian study of a secondary school, Katz and Sugden (2013) identified that students who had opportunities to learn in inclusive classrooms scored higher on standardized tests and had improved numeracy and literacy skills in comparison to their counterparts in non-inclusive settings. In this study, evidence-based inclusive practices provided students with disabilities with the opportunity to achieve higher level thinking skills, resulting in significant academic improvement and overall better health. Ruijs and colleagues (2010) rejected dissenting research claiming inclusion of students with and without disabilities would adversely affect either population (Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson, & Kaplan, 2007, as cited in Ruijs et al., 2010). The most recent research conclusively supports the belief that students develop positively in diverse classroom communities, as they are given opportunities to contribute, bond and form caring relationships within their collectives while also achieving academic success (Bruin & Ohna, 2013; Howery et al., 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013).

Inclusion: Collaborative communities—students and educators

One crucial interactive relationship in an inclusive classroom is the educator and student relationship, with academic, behavioural, emotional and social success driven by educators procuring collaborative, holistic learning and development among their students (Graham & Harwood, 2011; Hill & Brown, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013). Effective management of a classroom environment is shaped by educator values and beliefs, and includes respect for individuality as well as confidence in their students' potential for success, which leads students to believe in their own success with socio-academic and emotional and behavioural targets (Bruin & Ohna, 2013; Carroll et al., 2011; Hill & Brown, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013; Morcum & MacCallum, 2011). Students may then become self-motivated to set and achieve these positive goals, establishing a culture of mutually desired success among adults and youth, thus cultivating appropriate behaviour in the school rather than having administrators urgently responding to unwanted conduct (Carroll et al., 2011). A positive student-educator relationship is an important building block of a school culture that weaves socio-emotional and academic student growth as its common thread; it instils values for democratic harmony rather than having all agents merely follow procedures to ensure inclusion and the systematic establishment of a positive behaviour framework. In other words, an authentically inclusive school culture will enhance the growth of each student beyond simply co-existing in a shared environment.

Borrowing from Rogoff's theory on individual, interpersonal and community planes of development, Morcom and MacCallum (2011) asserted that inclusive education encompasses students learning from teachers, from each other, from "historical traditions

and materials and their transformations" (p. 1327). According to these authors, teachers have been effective in their roles by scaffolding student participation, first through explicitly teaching the routines in classrooms, followed by providing opportunities for students to collaborate with one another. Scholars of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) have been advocating for the role of the educator to evolve from authoritatively managing behaviour to recognizing that each student has a valuable democratic part to play in their classrooms (Katz, 2012; Katz & Sugden, 2013). In this instance, educators are members of the school culture with their students, as they function more as guiding facilitators than directors in the classroom.

Establishing a community of students who embrace and respect equality between each other has been integral to a successful inclusive system, provided that educators contribute to this learning environment by ensuring that all learning levels are engaged and challenged within this unit (Morcom & MacCallum, 2011). Research has indicated that inclusive schools are effective when both students and teachers embrace equality and diversity as a powerful force for instilling these democratic values within their social unit (Graham & Harwood, 2011; Howery et al., 2013). Accordingly, inclusive practices of this sort have been deemed successful because educators prioritized the interests of the students over reaching systemic goals (Rix et al., 2012). When schools provided opportunities for students to develop within a learning collective alongside their teachers, the students demonstrated a strong sense of belonging to these communities. This may have a profound effect on students' sense of empowerment for their own learning (Bruin & Ohna, 2013).

Self-motivation among students is reputed to be foundational in order for a classroom and school to operate successfully as a unit. The result can be a common plan of all individuals achieving their individual goals (Armstead et al., 2010; Bruin & Ohna, 2013; Hill & Brown, 2013) with teachers removing any existing barriers to their learning. When asked about their experiences in high school, students have identified factors related to their personal success that include knowing they contributed to the collective by having "genuine pride in having a job, in doing a good job and derive from it a feeling of belonging, of having an identity as a contributor" (Bruin & Ohna, 2013, p. 1091). Students who had been struggling with appropriate behaviour and remaining in school have benefitted from carefully designed intervention plans implemented with teacher guidance that had incorporated development of their own personal goals with strategies to essentially improve self-management skills (Hill & Brown, 2013). In these situations, behaviour management becomes less of an educator responsibility and more of a responsibility among students because engaging positively is necessary to achieve their personal academic and social development goals.

Inclusive policies have been highly effective when educators and students work collaboratively rather than strictly in traditional instructional arrangements (Eisenman, Pleet, Wandry, & McGinley, 2011). Paliokosta and Blandford (2010) sought explanations as to how school communities interpreted the formulation of inclusion policies. Their interpretative case study of three schools yielded a key observation from the Special Education Needs Coordinator of one participant school about how important the interactions between teachers and students were to the implementation of inclusion.

He remarked that even though a student may attend a particular teacher's classes, he did not feel that the student was automatically included,

> cause [sic] although he is within the lesson the fact that he can't interact with the teacher means that he's excluded from anything valuable that happens, so there's a physical presence of the child enrolled, but in fact, there is no educational inclusion taking place (p. 183).

Teacher and student must interact collaboratively so that instruction is differentiated, and learning styles are serviced in a classroom in order for academic and socio-cultural inclusion to exist; otherwise, a classroom is only a physical co-existence within a shared environment, historically referred to as integration (Hill & Brown, 2013).

Educators and students have both reaped benefits from an inclusive classroom environment, provided that their relationship is collaborative and focused on an overall positive, holistic development for each individual in their learning community. School-based interventions that target students' personal and social success will increase the efficacy of education (Carroll et al., 2011) and thereby also improve the learning environment (Hill & Brown, 2013). Students with improved self-monitoring and self-management skills have been purported to enhance their school community as respectful and cooperative citizens, and are also more likely to succeed with remaining in and completing school (Morcum & MacCallum, 2011). Educators who ensure that academic and social growth occurs among diverse learning levels in their classroom communities may be most effective as teachers when nurturing a democratic and collaborative atmosphere (Bruin & Ohna, 2013) so that all aspects of development are shared and owned by each student and adult.

Inclusion: Collaborative communities—educators among educators

Educators are central to the functioning of an inclusive classroom, and education systems have shifted from bringing in special education experts as consultants for teachers towards a collaborative effort among all teachers (Hill & Brown, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013). This collaboration among educators requires "a collective understanding of what is needed to support a child in their learning" (Rix et al., 2013, p. 386), and program planning ought to start with consideration of the student. Educators require time for developing individual and shared professional expertise, particularly for designing individualized behaviour interventions as a team (Eisenman et al., 2011; Hill & Brown, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013; Paliokosta & Blandford, 2010). An inclusive school culture that provides standards-based education is possible when educators are involved in solving the issues associated with the significant direct behaviour support needs that ensure that all students feel included (Carroll et al., 2011). Given the collaborative opportunity this approach provides, educators may create learning environments that encourage learners to interact and develop social skills, build empathy through helping each other and develop a sense of belonging within the inclusive classroom (Morcom & MacCallum, 2011). Effective communication between educators about ensuring these types of inclusive environments are consistent in all classrooms may be plausible when such a professional collaboration considers both academic and behavioural development throughout educational planning.

Collaborative planning among educators has been identified as a fundamental element for designing effective academic and behavioural interventions for students who require this support (Eisenman et al., 2011; Hill & Brown, 2013). Implementing

interventions through a team-based model entails a joint ownership of student learning among the educators involved (Eisenman et al., 2011; Hill & Brown, 2013). Reinforcement can be considered to be key to an inclusive classroom and school as these strategies account for diverse support needs for students. Eisenman et al. (2011) had established, in their grounded theory research, that general educators felt more confident in providing for a diverse student population with collaborative model delivery, which reduces the likelihood of teacher burnout because it strengthens teacher capacity.

Behaviour support at the tertiary level requires a similar convergence of specialist knowledge and willingness among educators to engage in team-based strategy plans (Hill & Brown, 2013). Graham and Hardwood (2011) studied inclusive schools that were able to overcome behavioural challenges by having teachers work in small groups supervising students through guided learning of appropriate social skills in common interaction areas. The principal of one school remarked how there was a significant change in teacher attitude after collaborations were initiated toward encouraging buy-in from all staff:

> …somebody used to think, 'That kid's not in my class, I don't have to worry.' And it's interesting, because now the teachers will come to us and say, 'I'm aware so-and-so is having problems in the playground...Is there any way that I can arrange for him to come to a quiet area for a few weeks, and bring a friend, so that we can establish a friendship? (Graham & Hardwood, 2011, p. 145).

Educators in this narrative had recognized the potential learning to be had when collaborating as professionals for the purpose of solving behaviour issues. Collaborative problem solving practices among these teachers had created solid

bonds between professionals, and even resulted in correcting co-workers in conversations about stigmatized students who struggled behaviourally.

Inclusion: Collaborative communities—educators and support teams

Inclusive schools with learning support teams provide assistance to subject teachers in their efforts to create a diverse learning environment among students in their classrooms. These are known as Learning Services Teams (LST) in Alberta (Howery et al., 2013), and Education Support Services Team (ESST) in New Brunswick (NB DEECD, 2014). Although they bear different monikers, the team composition typically consists of school administrators, education or learning support teachers, school guidance personnel, and various subject-specific leads, ranging from literacy and numeracy to technology (Howery et al, 2013; NB EECD, 2014). Both provinces transitioned from a special education department model, which focused on servicing special education needs of specific student populations, to supporting teachers in delivering curricular access to all learners. This is referred to as a collaborative model (Katz & Sugden, 2013) which promises to use the curricular expertise of subject teachers and the Learning Support Facilitators (LSF) in Alberta and the Education Support Resource Teachers (EST-R) in NB as a collaborative co-teaching team to identify students with "diverse academic, and behavioural/emotional needs" (Howery et al., 2013, p. 290). In a collaborative framework of this sort, teachers benefit from being involved in making decisions for programming, according to Katz and Sugden (2013), and this builds their confidence and ability to be effective in supporting inclusion while delivering curricula in creative ways when collaborating with

their LSF in Alberta or EST-R in New Brunswick. These scholars also recommended that support educators and subject teachers can be effective by working together in sub-groups, thus networking the whole school to support learning in all classroom contexts (Katz & Sugden, 2013; Liasidou & Antoniou, 2013). While recent research on the collaborative model frameworks in the secondary school setting provides evidence of its efficacy in this context (Eisenman, Pleet, Wandry, & McGinley, 2011), these authors refer to the need for more research that provides evidence of the effects of implementing collaboration in high school settings.

Inclusion: Social justice and equality

Another recurrent theme in this body of literature is the idea that each student in their democratic learning environment is an equal and valuable participant, who contributes to the process of enhancing the quality of their learning and achievement, all of which is relevant to social justice and human rights (Bruin & Ohna, 2013; Katz & Sudgen, 2013; Liasidou & Antoniou, 2013; Morcum & McCallum, 2011; Paliokosta, & Blandford, 2010). Swedish scholars surmised that "inclusion became a quest for creating a whole, which from the outset, was based on these factors: (1) children are different, and (2) these differences are considered as assets rather than liabilities" (Goranssson et al., 2011, pp. 542-3). This can be seen as a pursuit of achieving an inclusive social unit, creating a community as a whole; one that is comprised of individuals with diverse qualities valued as assets that contribute to the social unit in their own unique way. In essence, this unit is complete because of the individuals who are the members of this unit. Scholars from Sweden, Norway, Cypress, Australia, the United Kingdom and North

America all appear to share a strong sentiment against hierarchical social constructs that emphasize fixing deficits within an individual rather than creating an atmosphere of respect for every student in every learning environment, and providing all students access to education without discrimination (Dymond et al., 2013; Liasidou & Antoniou, 2013; Graham & Harwood, 2011; Howery et al, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013; Morcom & MacCallum, 2011; Paliokosta & Blandford, 2010; Ruijs et al., 2010). These scholars provide evidence that all students of similar age groups in an inclusive classroom develop and succeed significantly better than students in classrooms that are not as diverse, through the process of designing their own identity as a community.

Despite this evidence, Katz and Sugden (2013) caution that "a large number of students with disabilities continue to be excluded from the regular classroom" (p. 2). Similarly, Morcom and MacCallum (2011) referenced Vygotsky's theory of atypical development that proposed that segregating students socially to focus on academic deficit remediation is an exclusionary practice and further exacerbates developmental delays in behavioural, social and academic realms. In these situations of exclusion, social development with their peers is sacrificed in order to allot the extra time needed to grasp concepts these students are already behind on. Morcom and MacCallum (2011) suggest that there is significant value in allowing students to choose the peers they work with in inclusive classes. This contributes to collaborative and cooperative learning, which is underpinned by democratic values and social justice. In an inclusive setting, students developed a value system based on appreciation of diversity and mutual respect, onto which they built a collaborative and caring learning environment that was their own, enhancing a holistic spectrum of social and emotional-behaviour development. Such

social and behavioural improvements, in turn, yielded better opportunities for academic success (Fallon et al., 2012). Improved academic performance fostered by social and emotional growth also encourages continued engagement, which in turn positively affects the likelihood of pursuing improved performance all the way to successful completion of high school.

Inclusion: The systemic construction of inclusionary settings

This section could also have been named “Fix the Curriculum, Not the Learners”. The systemic features of inclusionary education can be discussed using Graham and Harwood’s (2010) discourse on the accessibility of success for all students, which takes into consideration their behaviour and academic development needs. This approach also aligns with the practice of adjusting curricula to conform to the best fit for the learner, one function of UDL (Howery et al., 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013; Weigert, 2015). Graham and Harwood (2011) argue that it is necessary to “address both the barriers to (conditions) and capacity for (criteria) participation” (p. 139) for inclusion to be truly successful. These scholars recommended a shift from focusing on fixing an individual’s abilities, which are defined as the criteria of access, to adjusting the features of their environment, which are known as the conditions of access. The ultimate goal, then, is to address both the individual’s capacity as well as the conditions of the environment as complete components of access to academic and social development. This elimination of barriers to learning is echoed by Katz and Sugden’s (2013) use of UDL’s three block structure for supporting inclusive instructional practice for social and emotional learning using systems that allow educators to collaborate with students. Using the analogy of a child trying to reach a book on a high shelf, Graham and Harwood (2011) alluded to the

height of the child and any strategy used to access the shelf being the criteria of access, and the height of the shelf being the condition of access. Successful inclusion as a system provides the child with an opportunity to access the shelf and inclusive classroom communities may provide the metaphorical ladder for every learner as the accessibility solution.

Curricular learning goals ought to be achievable by the student if they are to be considered inclusive (Goransson et al., 2011). Concomitant with this point is that learning occurs when a student feels pride in accomplishing a task that is perceived as well done, and as a consequence, the student derives a sense of belonging as a contributor to their learning community (Bruin & Ohna, 2013). Furthermore, according to Rix et al. (2013), there is merit in offering the option for a student to engage in a new learning activity with peers rather than investing extra remedial time elsewhere to reinforce a concept for that student to learn. Current Western pedagogy seems to place emphasis on teaching curricula at the expense of students who require more time or reinforcement, resulting in the disengagement of these students, who then leave school in secondary years when they fail to grasp the curricular content (Graham & Harwood, 2011). These scholars suggested that perhaps a shift to equipping youth with fundamental social skills and confidence will ultimately foster a self-governing classroom culture, and prepare students to be socially adept citizens. Subsequently, when these inclusive environments were coordinated so that the focus was placed on allowing peers to learn together in the classroom, these same students had demonstrated improvement in their academic development (Katz & Sugden, 2013).

In determining how successful an inclusionary system is, Weigert (2015) pointed out that the phenomena of assessment for and of learning must also be considered when determining the method for measuring what students with disabilities have learned. In her research, she considered the UDL principle of removing sensory, cognitive, and motor barriers for students so that they may access curricula and have the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities in all formats, just as their peers without disabilities do. This author describes assessments as maps of learning progress that ought to be accessible to every learner, while ensuring that students with sensory or cognitive processing issues may be able to grasp question items and consequently demonstrate their learning of the subject matter. Test performance, as Weigert (2015) argues, ought to provide critical and constructive insight on every aspect of each student's achievement, yielding conclusive evidence of student success. Thus, a successful inclusionary system also features an assessment program that is accurate in measuring academic outcomes for each learner by ensuring that these methods of assessment are accessible to diverse learners (Weigert, 2015). With this in mind, a successful inclusive classroom may encompass a number of UDL aspects of the learning process: providing multiple modes of content, allowing for multiple means of expression, and encouraging multiple dimensions of engagement. Finally, "by broadening means to accommodate learner variability, UDL assessments reduce or remove barriers to accurate measurement of learner knowledge, skills, and engagement" (CAST, 2014, p. 8).

An inclusive collaborative community, according to Paliokosta and Blandford (2010), is about "a balance between individual needs and the needs of the majority, the active participation of pupils, a state of affairs or an ongoing process and its relation to

exclusion" (p. 179). Furthermore, Rix et al. (2013) described incorporating an interconnected networking system of services that provides a community of students with the appropriate supports and strategies for learning to ensure healthy development and wellbeing in their school. Referred to as a community of provision, collaboration within this unit includes consideration of "space, staffing, students, support, strategies and systems" (Rix et al., 2013, p. 390), and how the interconnectedness of each of these components may be instrumental in the support of student learning.

Inclusion: Conclusions

Inclusionary settings are comprised of a variety of collaborations, relationships and success factors among students, educators and educational teams. Effective collaboration starts with classroom plans that place student needs first and include the students, teachers, and leaders of education systems. These plans should be determined by a collective understanding of the student's learning needs (Rix et al., 2013). Resonating throughout this body of research into inclusive schools are references to a sense of community that celebrates each individual's unique contribution to their environment (Howery et al., 2013; Katz & Sudgen, 2013; Morcom & MacCallum, 2012). Inclusive learning communities appear to exist most effectively in stratified networks of educators who ambitiously endeavor to remove barriers, not only for the students within the smallest unit of the system—the classroom—but also for each other. "This inclusive school culture exudes a sense of belonging, where all children are accepted and valued" (Carroll et al., 2011, p. 121). The collective is as unique in diversity as each of its members, with members contributing as equals, making daily progress towards goals, and ultimately ensuring that the community achieves a common goal of seeing students

complete their secondary education. Ensuring that these students are provided with the necessary tools to meet the objectives of academic and social curricula, and are also given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in accessible formats, is central to what an inclusive learning community truly represents to students and educators.

Positive behaviour intervention support frameworks in secondary schools

Positive Behaviour Intervention Support (PBIS) is an empirically supported, data-driven, three-tiered framework of behaviour support designed to encourage and promote pro-social behaviour and also facilitate positive, meaningful behavior change for students who struggle with engaging in positive behaviour expectations (Farkas, Simonsen, Migdole, Donovan, Clemens, & Cicchese, 2012; Simonsen, Myers, & Briere III, 2011; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). PBIS is a systems-level approach to preventing social, behavioural, and emotional problems in schools (Feuerborn, Wallace, & Tyre, 2013; McIntosh, & Bennett, 2011; Reinke et al., 2013) and functions as a framework of interventions along a graduated continuum of behaviour support, similar to response to intervention (RTI) (Cheney, et al., 2010; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011). RTI and PBIS are both fundamentally based on the practice of integrating assessment and intervention so that student achievement is maximized and behaviour issues are minimized. While RTI focuses on identifying students with learning disabilities for the purpose of meeting their individualized learning needs, PBIS targets students who struggle with their behaviour. Both frameworks use data to monitor and identify students who struggle, and adjust the intensity of chosen evidence-based interventions according to the needs of those students (Haraway, 2012). This section of the review of literature will define and provide some

understanding of the key components of evidence-based PBIS strategies, specifically within the high school setting.

School-wide PBIS (SW-PBIS) is driven by a school's established set of expected behaviours, for which the school's climate and culture are taken into consideration (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Fallon et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014). Despite the call for more research in the high school setting, there is already sufficient evidence that SW-PBIS is effective for secondary school settings when the framework is implemented with fidelity in terms of allocating resources, time and patience with regard to establishing this system as part of the school's daily operation (Bohannon, et al., 2012; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Flannery et al., 2014; Majeika et al., 2011; Stormont & Reinke, 2012). Tier one of PBIS reduces problem behaviours through prevention and is believed to be effective for 71% of high school students. Of the 29% of students who require more assistance to learn positive behaviour, some will respond to secondary level or tier two supports, but the remaining 10-15% of students will need a more intensive, wrap-around level of support (Simonsen et al, 2011). This intensive, tertiary level of behaviour support requires a comprehensive, standardized system of data collection, interpretation and management that provides a starting point for designing an individualized program and considers student strengths as well as their needs (Reinke et al., 2013).

There are three critical components of SW-PBIS evident in the literature reviewed: systems, practices, and the outcomes of data (Bohannon et al., 2012; Farkas et al., 2012; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; Simonsen et al., 2011; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Each component plays an essential role in the effective implementation of the three tiers

of behaviour education and support. Explanation of these critical components within the context of each tier will be described next.

Universal tier level support

Effectively establishing the systems component of SW-PBIS involves building the network of school wide leadership teams that consist of administrators, educators and support staff, as well as district level coaches and facilitators, who meet regularly from the initial stages of implementation through to systemic checks of success and progress (Flannery et al., 2014; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). This comprehensive scholarly description of school leadership teams portrays it as the essential force behind building the SW-PBIS framework, starting from the implementation of the universal level of behaviour education and support.

Tier one support is a universal level of preventative and proactive behaviour support, which is explicitly taught to all students through direct instruction in a clearly defined, positively-stated, expected set of behaviours that are in harmony with the school's culture and climate (Bohanon et al., 2012; Fallon et al., 2012; Farkas et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Goh & Bambara, 2012; Mitchell, Stormont & Gage, 2011; Reinke et al., 2013). The school's leadership team designs its effective and positive framework of encouraging productive and appropriate behaviour through the promotion of the expected behaviour by actively supervising and rewarding those who engage in them, and consistently responding to inappropriate conduct by re-teaching the expectations (Cheney et al., 2010; Fallon et al., 2012; Simonsen et al., 2011; Stormont & Reinke, 2012). In practice then, the components of PBIS at the universal level involve the establishment of a set of expected behaviours, with consideration for the school's

climate and their objectives for improvement, and the stance that these behaviours are taught to all individuals in the school in classroom settings as well as during unstructured times (Bohanon et al., 2012; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013).

Throughout the implementation of SW-PBIS at the tier one level is the school leadership team undertaking an on-going collection and analysis of several types and functions of data, which Simonsen and Sugai (2011) term "indicators of outcomes, fidelity and social validity of tier one implementation" (p. 6). Data collection begins with the first stages of implementing a PBIS framework within a school: evaluation of school readiness and how much professional training the school needs to prepare for adopting PBIS using the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET; Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, Todd, & Horner, 2005), facilitating the training process for faculty assembled as the PBIS leadership by frequent checks through the Team Implementation Checklist (TIC) (Bohanon et al., 2012; Farkas et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011; Stormont & Reinke, 2012), and finally guiding the school in establishing its goals based on its needs and the objectives set for projected status of an established PBIS school with these two school assessment instruments. The School Wide Information System (SWIS; May et al., 2000, as cited in Lane et al., 2013), an electronic database that organizes logs of behaviour in a standardized format, is used to track office discipline referrals for behaviour infractions that would warrant interventions pending severity and frequency of these behaviours (Hawken, 2011; Lane et al., 2013; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011). Data collection, analysis and management are at the core of the school's positive behaviour management system; it establishes a baseline of the school's readiness for implementing a PBIS framework.

This universal level of behaviour education and prevention is typically effective for 80-85% of the students in schools (Debnam et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011; Reinke et al., 2013), but Simonsen et al. (2011) state that this level is effective for 71% of high school populations. Screening and assessment of all students using a system of instruments will be discussed as an essential proactive approach to identifying students for second tier level of support in the next section.

Secondary tier level support

Students who struggle with engaging in pro-social behaviour are at increased risk for developing Emotional Behaviour Disorders (EBD) (Lane et al., 2013; Mitchell, Stormont, & Gage, 2011; Owens, Holdaway, Zoromsky, Evans, Himawan, Girio-Herrera, & Murphy, 2012; Wills et al., 2010). These students may need explicit instruction on what is appropriate behaviour, so it is crucial that opportunities for supervised practice of these new skills are provided within the target settings, including structured prompts for appropriate behavior with frequent and positively reinforced feedback (Anderson, Turtura, & Parry, 2013; Fallon et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011).

The secondary level of support, tier two of SW-PBIS, is a set of evidence-based interventions for the targeted group of students who require additional behaviour support through positive re-teaching of the set of expected positive behaviours that may prevent an escalation of misconduct (Farkas et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Simonsen et al., 2011). This level of behaviour support features "rapid access to intervention that is continuously available, low-effort teacher implementation facilitated by a team-based approach, and frequent monitoring of progress to determine the effectiveness of the intervention and/or need for further support" (Mitchell et al., 2011, p. 242). Tier two,

evidence-based, small group interventions that are effective are either skills instruction (teaching social skills), contingency/consequence based such as a behaviour education program (BEP) and Check In/Check Out (CICO) (Hawken, O'Neill, & MacLeod, 2011; Simonsen et al., 2011), or a combination of the two (Anderson et al., 2013). Such interventions must be aligned effectively with the function of the problem behaviours (Reinke et al., 2013). Research indicates that in the event that a student's behaviour shows no improvement, the specific intervention may need to be replaced by another secondary level intervention rather than intensifying the level of support. If the latter is incorrectly appropriated, this may negatively affect the response of the student and cause them unnecessary frustration and setbacks (Anderson et al., 2013; Reinke et al., 2013). It is essential, therefore, to determine why the behaviour occurs by implementing specific evidence-based data collection procedures assessing the function of the behaviour (Solnick & Ardoin, 2010).

Conducting a Functional Behavioural Assessment (FBA) to determine the purpose of behaviour may guide school teams in selecting an appropriate intervention at tier two (Gann, Ferro, Umbreit, & Liaupsin, 2014; Hawken et al., 2011; Lane et al., 2013; Mitchell et al., 2011; Reinke et al., 2013; Wills et al., 2010), and involves four key steps: collecting data, formalizing a hypothesis about the behaviour, testing the hypothesis, and establishing which intervention best suits the behaviour modification (Solnick & Ardoin, 2010). This process requires time and typically continues until a hypothesis is proven accurate and with the end result of successful behaviour improvement (Gann et al., 2014; Solnick & Ardoin, 2010).

Students may require either the maintaining or intensifying of a secondary level of behaviour support (Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Once a functional analysis of behaviour has been conducted, school teams may decide on the specific intervention to implement. Recent research on the effects of BEP and Check-In/Check Out (CICO) strategies on selected groups of students who had been displaying lack of engagement in classrooms concluded that this type of intervention yields significant benefits for most students in the studies (Hawken et al., 2011; Simonsen et al., 2011). However, these scholars concurred that while the BEP and/or CICO program worked for participants whose behaviour was off-task for the purpose of attention-seeking, students who were off-task as a means of avoidance did not respond to this intervention. This is a pivotal point to consider in delivering PBIS programs, and it is crucial for support teams to recognize that one single tier two intervention will not work for all students; therefore, it is essential to determine whether or not an intervention is an appropriate match for a student (Anderson et al., 2012).

The foundation for implementing tier two support systems comes from the SW-PBIS leadership team which ought to include individuals with specialized skills and experience in working with emotional and behaviour issues (Bambara et al., 2012; Simonsen et al., 2011). Their role is to screen and select students who require this level of behaviour support, implement and monitor intervention programs, and finally, manage data on the efficacy of these interventions (Anderson et al., 2013; Bohanon et al., 2012; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Fallon et al., 2012; Flannery, et al., 2014; Hawken et al., 2011; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; Simonsen et al., 2011). One particular subset of the individuals involved is the BEP team, termed “a critical mix of individuals” (Simonsen et

al., 2011, p. 35), featuring a BEP coordinator (paraprofessional or counsellor with behaviour training) which may include a behaviour expert panel of counsellors, a psychologist and a social worker, school administrators and others who have extensive knowledge of PBIS systems (Simonsen et al., 2011).

Once students are identified for tier two support, the SW-PBIS team selects and implements appropriate intervention programs for these students, such as the BEP/CICO interventions already mentioned, and subsequently monitors students for progress or any persisting struggles as the programs continue (Anderson et al., 2013; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Implementation of these BEPs involves students in the program being required to check in daily with the BEP coordinator to prepare for each day and to monitor the students' progress in the task of learning appropriate behaviour skill sets (Hawken et al., 2011).

In terms of the data component, identifying students who are not responding to the universal supports employed at tier one is a key role for these teams, and this is done through the use of screening procedures, teacher submitted referrals, review of student cumulative records and patterns of office referrals through the SWIS (May et al., 2000, as cited in Anderson et al, 2013; Lane et al., 2013; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Incorporating evidence-based screening instruments is strongly recommended as an empirically sound method of determining the outcomes of universal behaviour supports, which help to identify certain students who are not responding to universal level efforts and, consequently, may require tier two supports and interventions (Anderson et al., 2013; Cheney et al., 2010; Fallon, et al., 2012; Farkas et al., 2012; Haraway, 2012; Hawken et al., 2011; Kalberg, Lane, & Menzies, 2010; Lane, Kalberg, Menzies, Bruhn, Eisner, &

Crnobori, 2011; Lane, Menzies, Oakes, Lambert, Cox, & Hankins, 2012; Lane et al., 2013; McIntosh & Bennett, 2011; Mitchell et al., 2011; Simonsen & Reinke, 2011; Simonsen et al., 2011). Anderson et al. (2013) and Lane et al. (2013) make the point that, because all students are involved in the process, this behaviour screening method of selecting students for certain interventions is the most reliable and timely way to do that, often at the earliest signs of behaviour concerns.

Systematic screening instruments share specific criteria outlined in the literature reviewed for this section. These instruments are often teacher-completed rating scales such as the Behaviour and Emotional Screening System (BERS; Reynolds, 2004), and the Social Emotional Assets and Resiliency Scales (Merrell, 2011). These can be either brief screeners such as the Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS; Drummond, 1994), and the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS; Gresham & Elliot, 1990), or are multi-gating procedures, like the Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (SSBD; Walker & Severenson, 1992). The SSBD entails three stages of identifying students with significant behaviour problems, and is deemed by scholars to be the gold standard of all behaviour screening scales (Lane et al., 2010). Lane and colleagues (2010) caution that there are not as many instruments that are effective in screening for internalizing behaviour as there are for externalizing behaviour, and concluded in their study on the use of the SSBD and the SSRS in high school settings that these two instruments are valid and effective in identifying students with internalizing as well as externalizing disorders.

A significant portion of the literature on PBIS indicates that approximately 10-15% of students will require a tier two level behaviour intervention, and according to

Simonsen et al (2011), 29% of students will require such additional behaviour supports in a high school context (Bohanon et al., 2014; Debnam et al., 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011; Reinke et al., 2013). This part of the population will be discussed in the next section.

Tertiary level of PBIS: Students requiring wrap-around support

Practices for SW-PBIS behaviour support for students who do not respond to secondary level intervention are more intensive and require higher frequency progress monitoring than secondary level supports, as they are individualized according to the student's inventory of strengths and needs (Bohanon et al., 2014; Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Flannery et al., 2014; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Lane and colleagues (2013) add that these interventions are supplemental to the universal supports provided to the whole school, and require the use of functional based assessments which determine if the function of behaviour is seeking attention, avoidance, or sensory reinforcement (Solnick & Ardoin, 2010). These scholars posited that tertiary level support would typically apply to a population of students with certain specific risk factors such as transiency, poverty, substance abuse and those students dealing with mental health struggles. The focus of instructional strategies for these students is on explicitly teaching replacement behaviours and reducing the undesired behaviour (Fallon et al., 2014; Mitchell et al., 2011) through applying "consequence strategies that provide functionally appropriate reinforcement for replacement behaviour[s], increase reinforcement for desired behaviours and prevent or reduce [the] reinforcement currently maintaining problem behaviours" (Simonsen & Sugai, 2013, p. 9). Reinke et al. (2013) characterized tier two as "less intensive and more feasible and tier three as more intensive and highly individualized" (p. 161). Simonsen and Sugai (2013) contend that the individualized interventions begin with assessing the

function of a behaviour, factoring in any environmental adjustment and its effect on it, followed by appropriating antecedent strategies when planning individual positive behaviour support plans.

Data collection and determining outcomes in terms of assessing a student's repertoire of skills and behavioural needs include a FBA and a Functional Analysis Procedure (Solnick & Ardoin, 2010); both serve to identify and establish the function of an unwanted behaviour through observations, hypotheses testing and re-testing of behaviour function. This procedure of collecting behaviour data is heavily supported empirically as a starting point in addressing tertiary level support (Anderson et al., 2013; Debnam et al., 2012; Ennis, Jolivette, Swoszowski, & Johnson, 2012; Gann et al., 2014; Goh & Bambara, 2012; Lane et al., 2013; Majeika et al., 2011; Mitchell et al., 2011; Reinke et al., 2013; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013; Solnick, & Ardoin, 2010; Wills et al., 2010). The functional analysis of a student's behaviour equips SW-PBIS teams with essential environmental data, both indirectly via student records and behaviour rating scales and directly when observing "frequency, duration, and/or intensity of antecedents, behaviors, and consequences" (Solnick & Ardoin, 2010, p. 154), which is required to decide the type of individualized intervention support that is needed (Debnam et al., 2012). According to Goh and Bambara (2012), the individualized positive behaviour support plan (IPBS), which is an FBA-based, comprehensive behaviour support strategy encompassing replacement of unwanted behaviour with replacement positive behaviour, is effective in teaching these students appropriate skills in "typical school settings" (p. 279). Studies observing IPBS in action, in order to establish the efficacy of FBAs in an inclusive high school setting, provide important evidence of positive behaviour

modification. In one such study by Majeika et al. (2011), these scholars completed a functional assessment of a high school student's off-task behaviour and established an intervention that effectively produced on-task behaviour in the participant's English classroom, providing empirical evidence that tertiary level support in an inclusive high school classroom is feasible.

An important consideration of collecting, analyzing, and processing student data to generate tertiary interventions is to ensure that there are measures of social validity among the students involved and all individuals delivering the intervention plans (Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Performing a FBA and creating each student's intervention plan is also viable in multiple environments so that learned appropriate behaviours may be generalized to more than one classroom environment, as would be the case for high school settings (Gann et al., 2014; Whitford, Liaupsin, Umbreit, & Ferro, 2013).

Support teams for tertiary level supports may vary across schools and also with each individual student case, since the interventions are student-specific, and based on identified target behaviours (Goh & Bambara, 2012; Lane et al., 2013; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013). Student-centered planning at the high school level involves assembling a team of subject teachers, education support teachers (who may act as mentors), a FBA facilitator (who collects data on student behaviour across educational settings) (Ennis et al., 2012; Gann, et al., 2014; Majeika et al., 2011; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013) and parents or acting guardians (Maggin, Zurheide, Pickett, & Baillie, 2015; Vannest, Davis, Davis, Mason, & Burke, 2010; Whitford et al., 2013; Williams, Noel, Jones, & Gansle, 2012). Lane et al. (2013) and Fallon and colleagues (2012) suggest additional consideration for a

wrap-around constellation of outside agencies such as mental health and community-based support in addition to the above-mentioned SW-PBIS and home collaboration.

Positive behaviour intervention support frameworks: Conclusions

An evidence-based and empirically sound framework for supporting appropriate behaviour integrates applied behaviour analysis, inclusion and student-centered plans that encourage all individuals within a school to be pro-active and engaged citizens of the school culture. The SW-PBIS framework is grounded in these practices and features planned interventions to reduce and improve on problem behaviours (Goh & Bambara, 2012). The focus of the PBIS framework is on identifying a specified set of behaviour expectations that are taught and encouraged on a school-wide basis. This is a universally applied initiative that is preventative in nature and believed to be effective for 71% of high school students (Simonsen et al., 2011). Some students may need more reinforcement, however, and support for learning these expected behaviours is made available for this part of the population, estimated to represent 29% of high school students. The cluster of students not responding to these universal or targeted initiatives, often due to the possibility of emotional-behaviour disorders, will require individualized strategies for learning pro-social behavior designed according to each student's needs and strengths (Reinke et al., 2013). Tertiary level interventions are "more intense and highly individualized" (Reinke et al., 2013, p. 161), and require a comprehensive collection, on-going analysis, and management of direct and indirect behaviour data to design and implement a student-specific system of interventions. The system of behaviour support includes a network of support agencies, home, and school, consistently and persistently

collaborating to ensure that the interventions are implemented with fidelity so that the student is supported and guided to experience success.

Among the challenges surrounding SW-PBIS is the dearth of empirical evidence about SW-PBIS at the secondary school level and the existence of even less evidence for specific intervention strategies and practices for the tertiary level of behaviour support. To begin with, some educators in secondary schools tend to believe that all students should know how to engage in the expected behaviours, a common misconception that may incur delays in faculty buy-in for implementing PBIS (Flannery et al., 2014). Another challenge is the size of high schools, as large numbers of students and faculty can affect communication between educators, particularly in terms of meetings, and the development of routines for the students involved in the intervention programs (Bohanon et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014). Whatever the barriers that accompany SW-PBIS at a secondary school, the body of evidence reviewed in this section maintains that the implementation of a tiered behaviour support framework, aimed at assisting schools in identifying and supporting students who require a system of positive behaviour and emotional support, is an empirically sound strategy.

Student emotional and behaviour struggles as obstacles to engagement in secondary school

Students in secondary school who are not responsive to universal supports designed to meet academic and emotional-behavioural development needs are considered to have significant emotional/behaviour difficulty (Anderson et al., 2013; Feuerborn, Wallace, & Tyre, 2013) and will tend to exhibit school refusal as a result of disruptive behaviour and internalized, depressive and anxious symptoms (Wood, Langer, Clark,

Lynne-Landsman, Wood, Eddy, & Ialongo, 2012). Engagement is considered by some scholars to be one of the key outcomes of education (Green, Liem, Martin, Colmar, Marsh, & McInerney, 2012), and it has been shown to be an essential factor in the circumvention of adolescent issues, such as school avoidance and dropping out (Barry & Reschly, 2012; Green et al., 2012; Landis & Reschly, 2011; Larson & Meehan, 2011; Marvul, 2012). Disengagement from school carries significantly poor educational and social implications for students, such as a high risk of academic failure (Allison, Nativio, Mitchell, Ren, & Yuhasz, 2013; Wood et al., 2012), dropping out of high school and consequently experiencing unemployment, criminal activity, and substance abuse (Barry & Reschly, 2012; Cheney et al., 2010; Cole, 2011; Landis & Reschly, 2011; Maynard, McCrea, Pigott, & Kelly, 2012; Mitchell et al., 2011).

Emotional and behavioural problems, arguably the roots of societal and academic issues mentioned (Perle, Levine, Odland, Ketterer, Cannon, & Marker, 2013), can be characterized by either externalization of behaviour (under-controlled) or internalization (over-controlled) of symptoms, and tend to impede the fluidity of learning in school environments (Cheney et al., 2010; Lane, Kahlberg, Lambert, Crnobori, & Bruhn, 2010; Lane et al., 2013; Reinke et al., 2013). For the purposes of this review, an examination of internalizing and externalizing behaviours will result in a definitive understanding of these two types of responses, identifying the impact that these disorders have on student engagement, and finally, an outline of empirically sound methods for identifying the population of affected students who may qualify for interventions that would enable them to experience success within a school system of inclusionary settings and a SW-PBIS framework.

Internalization of emotions in secondary school youth

Internalizing behaviour is defined as using excessive control as a response style (Lane, et al., 2010), exhibited by social withdrawal, and includes anxiety and depression (van der Voort, et al., 2013). Referred to as secretive in nature because emotions are directed inward (Lane et al., 2010), these behaviours are more difficult to identify when observing students who are not responsive to universal, school-wide behaviour supports (Allison et al., 2013; Lane et al., 2013). The propensity to avoid social situations impedes the regular development of social skills and emotional recognition among this population of youth; instead they tend to regulate negative emotions inwardly through self-criticism, and further exacerbate the prevalence of their internalization of negative emotions (Perle et al., 2013). If these issues begin when students are children and continue throughout their development into adolescence, without school and home involvement, extreme manifestations of internalized behaviour such as suicide may result (Lane et al., 2010). Van der Voort, et al. (2013) offer a comprehensive explanation of this inward-focused emotional response, detailing how behavioural inhibition and parental sensitivity are predictors of a child developing internalization symptoms later in adolescence. Although there are several characteristics and disorders associated with the internalization of emotions, for the purposes of this study only anxiety and depression will be discussed, as they are among the most common (Allison et al., 2014).

Anxiety is associated with fearfulness and feelings of worry and among the most common disorders associated with it are generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), separation anxiety disorder (SAD), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), social anxiety disorder (SOD), and specific phobias (SP).

Anxiety is recognized in the literature as the most common mental health issue among children and adolescents (Allison et al., 2014; Halldorsdottir & Ollendick, 2014; Leone et al., 2013; Miller, et al., 2011). In addition to previously described affective symptoms, Canadian scholars Miller et al. (2011) offer support for measuring four distinct areas of anxiety symptoms: tenseness and restlessness (physical); feeling anxious about coping with unfamiliar situations (van der Voort et al., 2014), and striving for perfectionism (harm avoidance); fear of humiliation and public performance fears (social anxiety); and separation anxiety/panic. "Youth with high anxiety are well known to be prone to phobic reactions to school as a result of inflated perceptions of threat related to separation from parents, social evaluation, or academic difficulty" (Wood et al., 2012, p. 352).

Depression, on the other hand, is aligned with feelings of hopelessness and sadness, with a prevalence rate of 7.6% among Canadian adolescents (Leone, Ray, & Evans, 2013). Youth with depression may appear to lack energy and interest, may have little or no motivation, experience difficulty with concentration, and demonstrate an avoidance of school, which is also consequently linked to school absenteeism (Leone et al., 2013; Wood et al., 2012). Suicide is the second leading cause of adolescent deaths in the United States, and is a higher risk among youth suffering with depression (Allison et al., 2014).

Depressive and anxious symptoms in students who project frustrations and stress inward are among the most significant when considering how to assist students with internalizing behaviours. Students with depressive and anxious features who experience outward frustration and additional sources of stress may further internalize their emotions and withdraw from social situations. Considered as excessive control of emotional

responses (Allison et al., 2013; Lane et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2013), students who struggle significantly with these require specific evidence-based interventions that have been empirically supported as effective for internalizing behaviour. Research cautions about implementing specific interventions that are proven to work for students with externalizing behaviour, as these programs are not effective in attuning internalizing issues (Simonsen et al., 2011), and therefore ought to be avoided in these situations.

Externalizing behaviour in secondary school youth

Externalizing behaviours are referred to in the literature as under-controlled conduct problems, which appear in the form of aggression and use of coercive means to manipulate and threaten peers (Bornstein, Hahn, & Suwalsky, 2013; Cheney et al., 2010; Feindler & Engel, 2011; Lane et al., 2013; McMahon, et al., 2012; Owens et al., 2012; Page & Smith, 2012; Pokhrel, Sussman, Black & Sun, 2010; Reynolds & Repetti, 2010; Williams, Noell, Jones & Gansle, 2012; Wyatt, 2010). Youth who engage in this set of outwardly directed behaviours are identified easily by educators in school settings because of the overt disruption to the learning environment and subsequent office disciplinary referrals that also serve as documented indicators of inappropriate conduct (Lane et al., 2010). Essential to defining what these externalizing behaviours are is some investigation of the characteristics of the various complex forms of aggression that materialize into misconduct and affect students afflicted with the propensity to direct frustration outwardly.

Physical, verbal, and relational aggression are externalizing symptoms, cited in the literature as being either the proactive means of achieving a variety of self-serving goals, or serving as reactive and defensive functions (Feindler & Engel, 2011; Imtiaz,

Yasin & Yaseen, 2010; McMahon et al., 2012; Ojanen & Findley-Van Nostrand, 2014; Page & Smith, 2010; Reynolds & Repetti, 2010). This body of literature classifies aggression into three categories: physical aggression which includes the act of attacking another person with the intent to inflict serious injury; verbal aggression, such as issuing threats; and relational aggression manifesting as the manipulation of relationships such as socially excluding individuals to inflict emotional harm. Aggression is not considered an emotional reaction but a "behavioural response to an internal state" (Imtiaz et al., 2010, p. 99). Individuals' propensity for aggressive behaviour may be influenced by their previous exposure to violence in their family or community settings.

Feindler and Engel (2011) fielded an analysis of aggression interventions to highlight the crucial components of the anger experience, and provided a comprehensive explanation of aggression. They concluded that individuals who use aggression as acceptable management of adverse situations tend to have poor social skills, low empathy, and, since they struggle with processing emotional arousal, misconstrue seemingly benign social cues as hostile. This leads to poor problem solving skills and justifies an aggressive reaction as a protection of ego, and a refusal to lose the power struggle. Furthermore, they asserted that there are social, emotional and cognitive components of aggression that are effectively managed through physiological, cognitive and behavioural factors within the experience of anger.

Whereas physical aggression overtly establishes dominance, relational aggression is mainly an indirect, more furtive strategy to manipulate relationships using hostility in order to establish intimacy and popularity among social units (Ojanen & Findley-Van-Nostrand, 2014; Pokhrel et al., 2010; Reynolds & Repetti, 2010). Like both physical and

relational aggression, bullying can be confrontational and clandestine in nature (Allen, 2010; Pokhrel et al., 2010). Relational aggression in the form of bullying has been referred to in school settings as ongoing acts that are "often insidious, with only egregious instances becoming apparent to students and adults in a school" (Allen, 2010, p. 200).

Ojanen and Findley-Van Nostrand (2014) provided an analysis of aggression among adolescents that demonstrated that agency (desire for self-interest and dominance) and communion (need for relationships and intimacy) were two goals that fuel the propensity for using either physical or relational aggression. This longitudinal study provided evidence of adolescents learning over time that physical aggression, while it can establish dominance in a group, tends to alienate their peers as they get older. However, using relational aggression continues to establish and maintain their status, dominance and popularity within their social units. This research by Ojanen and Findley-Van Nostrand (2014) corroborated previous evidence that showed that the notion of closeness and the sense of belonging existing among peers were achieved when aggression was used by the aggressors to protect the group from outside threats (Page & Smith, 2012; Reynolds & Repetti, 2010; Wyatt, 2010).

Aggression is justified among youth in violent neighborhoods as a reactive or protective factor in dealing with violence and threats to their safety (MacMahon et al., 2013; Reynolds & Repetti, 2010; Wyatt, 2010). McMahon and colleagues (2013) concurred that youth living in dangerous communities may resort to violence as a coping mechanism for protection from harm or because they see aggression as an acceptable behavioural vehicle to warrant safety. Conversely, these scholars found that self-efficacy

was a critical trait that combined with low impulsivity to serve as a protective factor for youth in these neighborhoods, and went on to promote pro-social behaviour among the individuals who displayed these two characteristics.

Externalizing behaviour can then be summarized as including a repertoire of disruptively impulsive and under-controlled behaviours, executed through either covert or overt means. Adolescent youth may have a variety of protective factors that justify resorting to managing any propensity for aggression and violence. There may be risk factors to consider that put youth in a position to require support in experiencing success socially, emotionally and academically. In both situations, educational implications for students with externalizing issues include consideration of the issue of student engagement and its effect as a lifeline for these students, not only for survival in the school system, but for their successful completion of secondary school.

Implications for school engagement

"Educators and policy makers must consider school completion *with competence* in academic and behavioral domains to ensure that students have the skills necessary to become contributing and successful members of society" (Landis & Reschly, 2011, p. 721). Engaged students develop a sense of belonging by building strong and positive relationships with peers and adults at school (Barry & Reschly, 2012; De Wit, Karioja, & Rye, 2010), which may provide students with intrinsic motivation to complete high school. Barry and Reschly (2012) and Green et al. (2012) concluded that school engagement encompasses academic, affective, and behavioural realms that require constant monitoring of indicators when determining the specific types of intervention required for rectifying engagement issues among disaffected students. An investigation

of literature on the factors of student engagement ought to consider some theoretical explanations of why students lose interest and withdraw from school.

School refusal behaviour is one such issue and may be predicted if anxiety is evident; this form of absenteeism is often an extension of the negative regard that students may have toward education (Green et al., 2012). Consequently, this situation may be a likely indicator for dropping out of school entirely. A drop in attendance tends to occur when students transition into larger school settings, as in the case of entering secondary school (De Wit et al., 2010), resulting in one in four students in the United States not graduating (Marvul, 2012), and between a third and a quarter of Canadian students withdrawing prior to completion of high school (De Wit et al., 2010). Student attitude toward school is a significant factor in whether an adolescent completes secondary education (Barry & Reschly, 2012; Landis & Reschly, 2011), and student engagement can be measured by academic, behavioural, and cognitive indicators (Landis & Reschly, 2011; Marvul, 2012) with affective engagement identified as an internal indicator by Barry and Reschly (2012) and Green et al. (2012). Providing intervention and support for students who struggle with engaging in school has proved to be a challenging task for schools as well as scholars, based on the paucity of evidence of preventative strategies (Barry & Reschly, 2012). However, consensus among scholars maintains that a possible hope is found in the connections between students and teachers, particularly at the secondary school level (Barry & Reschly, 2012; De Wit et al., 2010; Larson & Meehan, 2011; Marvul, 2012; Tyre, Feuerborn, & Pierce, 2011).

Screening and identification

A systematic screening system directed at identifying students with, and at risk for, emotional and behaviour disorders is recommended by researchers as a proactive and data-based method to ensure that behaviour and emotional needs are met (Anderson, et al., 2013; Cheney et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2011; Lane et al., 2013). As discussed previously, screening instruments involve the use of validated, reliable, and norm-referenced measures that are administrable by teachers and that can rate all students. The following are some recommended screening instruments to assess for students at risk for EBD: the Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS; Drummond, 1994) and the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS; Gresham & Elliot, 1990). These are brief screeners that may be completed three times per academic year (Lane et al., 2010). The Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (SSBD; Walker & Severenson, 1992) is completed in three stages and assesses student behaviour for significant behaviour problems (Anderson et al., 2013). It is considered a multi-gating screener and referred to as the gold standard of screeners among scholars, designed to assess students for both internalizing and externalizing behaviours (Lane et al., 2010) in structured and non-structured settings (Haraway, 2012). The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) also measures both externalizing behaviours and internalizing disorders, and, as with all of the previous screeners mentioned, is administrable to high school aged students (Perle et al., 2013).

In addition to adopting these universally administered, data-based, and proactive screening instruments that are used to assess all students, schools ought to incorporate the practice of analyzing academic and behavioural screening data to get a more complete

picture of how academics and behaviour are interconnected (Lane et al., 2013). With the inclusion of office discipline referrals as another component of data, schools are able to piece together a systematic collection of data that represents an empirically supported and reliable method of identifying the students who require additional interventions at both tier two and tier three levels of support (Lane et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2013). Students who are being considered for wrap-around support services through frameworks such as the ISD model in New Brunswick, or the ISF in US school districts may be provided with an evidence-based assessment of their emotional and behavioural needs through the use of the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment (CAFAS; Hodges, 2000, as cited in King & Hodges, 2013), an instrument that King and Hodges (2013) have stated carries a substantial body of scholarly support on its efficacy as an assessment and screening tool.

Student emotional and behavioural struggles as obstacles to engagement: Conclusions

Research suggests that internalizing and externalizing behaviours are not mutually exclusive, since individuals may present characteristics along a continuum between these two strands of behaviour (Perle et al., 2013). These issues compound the struggles students have with learning appropriate behaviours, grasping social interaction cues, and consequently achieving academic success. These students are thus inadequately prepared for graduation, and as a result will likely not be set up for post-secondary success. Similarly, evidence that internalizing behaviours may develop into externalizing behaviours if treatment has been omitted, points to the necessity of school interventions that adequately identify and intervene with these youths (Perle et al., 2013). Reliable methods for identifying each of these students is critical in providing support for those

who require it, and this is done with fidelity and accuracy when implementing a systematic screening system within a three-tiered SW-PBIS framework (Lane et al., 2013). As school systems attempt to rectify the phenomenon of dropping out, which often results from a lack of support and success, they ought to approach student engagement in a manner that eliminates risk factors and nurtures protective factors such as a sense of belonging among all students (Barry & Reschly, 2012; Logan-Greene et al., 2011). In doing so, they may provide their students who struggle with emotional and behaviour challenges with opportunities to become resilient and active citizens of society.

The question considered by this research, then, is: What are the significant experiences of students who are currently completing their secondary education while also needing tertiary level of positive behaviour intervention and supports within an inclusive high school setting?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Rationale for interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA)

IPA was the qualitative approach used to collect experiential data from two youth participants in this study. Since each participant offered her own unique perspective, collecting this qualitative data using an IPA methodology would address the value of their particular experiences and how they each understood the phenomena they are sharing about. Collecting these experiential data using IPA would consider the interpretation of the particular experience while valuing the unique human perspective when analyzing the phenomenon under investigation.

Scholars on phenomenological methodologies recommend maintaining an element of flexibility in order to preserve the authenticity of contributions made by the participants and their unique experiences (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborne, 2007; Wagstaff, 2014; Wertz, 2005; Yardley, 2000). In the search to explain any phenomena of interest, garnering knowledge ought to be an open dialogue with individuals who experience that phenomenon. Yardley (2000) posited that,

> truth, knowledge and reality are actively created by the communal construction and negotiation of meaning, both in our daily life and academic endeavours…there can be no fixed criteria for establishing truth and knowledge, since to limit the criteria for truth would mean restricting the possibilities for knowledge (p. 217).

As our search for knowledge as researcher and participants unfolds in a communal dialogue, we may find a unique opportunity to engage in listening to youths' perspectives on their life experiences.

Along this path to knowledge, participants in an interpretative phenomenological analysis play a valuable role in the direction of the interview schedule as their insight may take the discussion in different directions that may enrich the collection of experiential data (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Osborn, 2007). Wagstaff (2014) concurs on the value of the participants' role in the interview, highlighting how gaining a richer understanding of phenomena because of the idiographic nature of phenomenological inquiry is a key benefit of adopting a reflexive and creative approach within the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology. In this manner, the participant and researcher interact along an interpretative learning curve to seek a deeper meaning of the experience as it formulates along the investigation. Ultimately, two components of IPA, combined phenomenological and interpretative, or hermeneutic, insights, are essential to bring the researcher to as close an understanding as possible of the participant's experience. Thus, it leads to the conclusion that "without the phenomenology, there is nothing to interpret; without the hermeneutic, the phenomenon is not seen" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 37).

Research design

My quest in this qualitative research was to seek enriched knowledge and understanding of two youth who are experiencing struggles with their pursuit of success in high school, and to "make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world" through the IPA tradition (Smith & Osborn, 2007, p. 53). This was done by using a semi-structured, open-ended interview schedule (Appendix D) as a guide to collect the experiential data. Developing rapport with each young woman was of utmost importance in conducting the sequence of questions and probes, so consequently, the order of

questions varied according to the flow of the conversation in each interview (Appendix D). Due to the personal nature of these conversations, keeping a certain degree of flexibility during each interview ensured that participants were at ease in the conversation.

It was pertinent to me as a researcher to consider infusing interpretative theory and phenomenology, to provide the most unique and suitable method within qualitative research methods to appreciate the participants' view of their consciousness of the world as they experienced it in their natural, everyday life-world context (Alase, 2017; Bevan, 2014; Finlay, 2012; Henriques, 2014; Maya & Onwuegbuzie, 2015; Smith et al., 2009). IPA allows us to collect and capture these "lived experiences of research participants into a sensitive psychological expression" (Alase, 2017, p. 9). Applying the approaches recommended by Smith et al. (2009), and by Alase (2017) of combining both critical theory (Guba, 1990) and interpretive paradigms (Burrell & Morgan, 1979) within the IPA tradition guided the analysis of this data.

Participants and recruitment

There is a paucity of experiential evidence in the form of adolescent perspectives on systemic support, and so my search for detailed perspectives of youths who deserve a voice was the central force behind this research question. Following institutional approval from the UNB Research Ethics Board, the Anglophone School District South (ASD-S) Superintendent was contacted through email and a formal letter of permission to proceed with an External Research project and begin participant selection (Appendix C). This was done using a purposive, criterion-based sampling strategy (Alase, 2017; Creswell, 2014; Creswell, 2007; Creswell, 1998; Smith et al., 2009) with the fundamental

homogeneity of youth receiving an individualized level of support provided through the ISD framework. The ISD Child and Youth (C&Y) Teams incorporate the empirically supported instrument, Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS; Hodges, 2000, as cited in King & Hodges, 2013) into their screening system for students that would have been recognized by school-based ESS Teams as not responsive to universal and secondary levels of interventions available in their PBIS framework (NB EECD, 2016). Youth who are deemed to be in need of this individualized support are then assigned to a C&Y Team clinician who meets with them at their schools to give them the opportunity to remain in school while also getting therapeutic support.

I contacted the NB ISD C&Y Team clinical coordinators directly to communicate this research and ask that they share this opportunity with students who were connected to a C&Y Team clinician in the ISD program and provided them with Letters of Information and Consent forms (Appendix A). After several meetings over a course of seven months with one clinical coordinator, I had contacted a second coordinator who had subsequently reached out to ten clients. The final sample size of two participants aligns with Smith et al.'s (2009) model for a small and concentrated focus that provides a "detailed account of individual experience" (p. 51) and is consistent with Alase's (2017) minimum size. These two students were both receiving individualized clinical support from the ISD framework C&Y Team for the duration of their high school experiences.

Participants both signed Letters of Child/Minor Assent (Appendix B) prior to each interview to confirm their expression of interest in sharing insight on how their experiences of an inclusive SW-PBIS learning environment has worked for them in New

Brunswick's Anglophone School District South (ASD-S) high school setting. Since both students were in their own charge, there were no parental consents to collect.

Data collection procedure

Each participant was interviewed in an independent and individual setting using semi-structured, open-ended questions (see Appendix D) that ranged in duration from 30 to 50 minutes. The first interview took place in person at the office location where the student and clinician met for therapeutic appointments. This was done at the request of the participant and arranged by the clinician. The interview was audio-recorded using the Voice-Memo recording application on my personal iPhone, which is compatible with my personal mac book laptop. Both are password protected. A brief introduction prior to the interview included the signing of the consent form by the participant while also establishing rapport between the interviewer and interviewee; this was not recorded.

The audio file was played back immediately following the first interview in its entirety for the first time. On that same day, I listened to the file for a second time and then began transcribing the audio file into a word document on the third time. The process to ensure that all audio data were transcribed verbatim into a word document took approximately ten hours over a period of seven days. This word document was read through as the audio file was played back another three times to capture every pause and conversation detail that had occurred between the participant and me. Once the interview was completely transcribed, I then changed all name references throughout the interview to pseudonyms as part of the agreement to maintain confidentiality and participant identity protection.

The second participant agreed to an interview arranged by the same clinician who had collected the signed consent form prior to the interview and had sent it electronically to my university email account. This student expressed strong preference for a telephone conversation in lieu of meeting in person; this was also recorded using the same technology as for the first interview—Voice Memo Recording Application on my iPhone. The procedure for this interview transcription followed the same format as the first one: listening to the audio file immediately after the conversation occurred, completely capturing the interview verbatim and then adjusting names with pseudonyms to protect the participant's identity. The transcripts were both stored electronically as files containing pseudonyms replacing all names in my password-protected personal mac book laptop and this security measure continued throughout the next stage of textual analysis.

Data analysis

The procedure for data analysis of this IPA study followed the guidelines outlined by Smith et al. (2009). The following categories were instrumental in combing through both interview transcripts for common themes to emerge: abstraction, polarization, contextualization, numeration, and function of themes. Abstraction occurred with organizing clusters of data in the form of phrases, sentences and stories into sections of super-ordinate themes. Relationships among some themes emerged based on their differences, referred to as polarization of data. Organizing a participant's experiences in a time-line helped to identify some "key life moments" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 98) for their contextual value within the participant's narrative. The frequency of particular words or phrases were tracked and considered as themes, which is referred to as numeration of data. Analyzing the complexity of how a participant addresses

experiences was instrumental in organizing emergent themes according to the function of themes. This analytic process of looking at the significance of each phrase, idea, and story provided a comprehensive method of arriving at a set of emergent themes. Determining the relationship among the emergent themes and how each of these are associated with the overall phenomenon in question is the process known as the hermeneutic circle (Smith et al., 2009), and is central to an IPA study.

The IPA process ensured that the researcher journeyed along a thorough hermeneutic circle, explained by Smith (2009):

> It is concerned with the dynamic relationship between the part and the whole, at a series of levels. To understand any given part, you look to the whole; to understand the whole, you look to the parts…[this] speaks to a dynamic, nonlinear, style of thinking (p. 28).

This guideline includes approaching the participants' experiences through a series of vantage points in order to begin making sense of their individual experiences. Throughout this process, it was important to also consider the silences, omissions and inferential evidence that were embedded within the experiential data to produce a holistic phenomenological analysis (Smith et al., 2009).

Trustworthiness and validity

Qualitative research provides such a diversity of methods with "multiple viewpoints" (Yardley, 2000, p. 218) that it is challenging to establish validity by evaluating it by the same criteria of standards and measurements that is used for quantitative methods (Alase, 2014; Creswell, 2004; Smith et al., 2009). As a tradition under the qualitative umbrella, phenomenology itself also offers a significantly broad

scope of approaches that are based on individual lived experiences and interpretation of these perspectives (Yardley, 2000). In order to respect the diverse and unique nature of the qualitative data collected in this IPA research, a flexible approach incorporating Yardley's (2000) criteria, as cited in Smith et al. (2009), for assessing validity and trustworthiness was used. These criteria are: sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance. Included in this section as a component of transparency is the IPA researcher's epoche, or bracketing of the prior experiences and knowledge of the phenomena being studied (Smith et al., 2009).

The research demonstrated sensitivity to context through the use of purposive sampling to ensure homogeneity between participants. Building rapport with each participant was a focus at the onset and throughout each interactional conversation, which included genuine verbal and nonverbal probes and gestures to encourage the participant to feel at ease in sharing experiences (Yardley, 2000). Verbatim extracts from this data were used throughout the analysis and, for some results, prompted further research on the topics discussed (for example, Non-Suicidal Self-Injury) to extend a fresh perspective on the study. Finally, ethical obligations to participants of ensuring confidentiality through letters of information and consent to participate were completed prior to collecting the experiential data (Yardley, 2000).

As a measure of commitment and rigour, the process of establishing the emergent themes involved the use of several layers of interpreting each participant's experiential data. The result of exploring the data using this layered system of interpretation was a thorough understanding of participant experiences as represented in the superordinate themes and their respective nested subordinate clusters.

Coherence of this study was measured by evaluating the extent to which this interpretative analysis of the secondary school students' experiences with wrap-around services fits with addressing the proposed research question. The stories of the two young women had provided this research the opportunity to articulate how they each experienced empowerment and isolation as significant experiences along their therapeutic journey.

The research process, including participant selection and interview details, was documented to ensure transparency for readers and consumers of the research. Once the interviews were transcribed, all necessary personal information was redacted and all names were changed, a copy was sent to each participant in a sealed envelope. This was hand-delivered by the researcher to the clinician's private office. Each sealed transcript was enclosed with a brief letter addressed to the participant using their pseudonym. Both participants were asked to send any feedback and concerns to the researcher's email address. Neither of the participants replied, which was interpreted to mean that there were no objections or intended changes to be made by the individuals; it is also worth considering that participants had not read the transcripts.

As a further measure of transparency, an audit trail documented the analytical process of arriving at the emergent themes. This included documenting original transcripts from interview audio files, and organizing the interview data into a series of charts in which themes were re-worked and re-grouped to a final collection of main superordinate and subordinate themes.

Key to assessing transparency in qualitative research is a type of disclosure referred to as reflexivity. The researcher acknowledges a certain degree of influence that

previous experiences may have on the process of collecting and analysis. This is discussed as epoche, or bracketing as a researcher of the IPA methodology.

Epoche

The IPA researcher's role includes bracketing or excluding one's own personal biases throughout the data collection process to ensure the participant is able to disclose personal claims and concerns "on their own terms" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 42). While the researcher intended to suspend preconceptions of the phenomenon in question, it is necessary as a measure of reflexivity and transparency to offer disclosure of the past experience as a support teacher and the decision to embark on this investigation. These details were excluded from the data collection and analysis process, but exist in the researcher's own life-world.

My personal experiences with the phenomenon of students requiring individualized emotional and behavioural support while pursuing success within an inclusive secondary school setting began when I accepted a tutoring position at a New Brunswick middle school in 2002. I continue to collect more experiences as a professional through my current role as an Education Support Resource Teacher at a high school since 2007. Now, as an EST-R, I notice working in classrooms with heterogeneous group of learners provides these struggling students with the opportunity to have two educators (subject teacher and EST-R support) while they are exposed to what appropriate conduct looks like.

As a professional involved with the system of care provided for students struggling with internalizing and externalizing emotional and behaviour, I have observed how youth (including those in-care) with these issues struggle with interactions among

their peers in various settings at school. I witnessed the positive effects that the ISD Framework C&Y Teams in their provision of services to students connected to the Child and Youth Team. There are also youth who fall short of success even with a support system in place.

After listening to the experiences of these two participants, I realize the common thread between their stories is the desire to have someone hear about their struggles with coping in the inclusive learning environments. These two youths provide perspectives of individuals with significant aversion to staying in class—and in school--among peers who fail to understand life with significant anxiety each school day. They both express disappointment in their peers decidedly judging them and being insensitive to mental health issues.

I have witnessed this phenomenon in classrooms that promise inclusion as an EST-R. In an hour of instruction, we, as teachers who intend to deliver differentiated curricular outcomes, most often fail to notice the students who slip away from attention. "The teacher didn't even realize I left" (AJ) are words of a student experiencing an emotional crisis, said with haunting emotional conviction expressed through the disbelief in her voice. I wonder how often this may occur in learning environments that are mandated to align with the inclusion policy. "Teachers should pay attention to that" (AJ). This is worthy advice from an individual who has experienced abandonment from her friends because of her NSSI scars, which are also an embodiment of her experience with mental illness.

My curiosity around understanding anxiety disorders that manifest in the form of self-harm has introduced me to research that provides insight on the reasons for self-

harm. I have seen students in high school with a history of self-harm from middle school struggle significantly to succeed socially and academically while attending school without missing a day of attendance. I have also worked alongside students who struggle with attending school each day because their self-harm precludes them from wanting to be there, as is the case with the two youth participants in this research. I believe my grasp of this specific phenomenon has deepened because of this investigation, and therefore has provided me the opportunity to direct my support as an enlightened support teacher.

The final criteria of validity and trustworthiness is the impact and importance of this research. The intent of this study was to include the provision of rich phenomenological data to the existing literature: students who accepted the opportunity to share their personal stories stepped into the roles of experiential experts on living their lives in the world they live in, and the researcher's goal was to share the expert views as important contributions.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

Results

Participants in this study are referred to as Ann and AJ (pseudonyms). In each interview, I genuinely felt that we had had a conversation—albeit with a purpose (Smith et al., 2009). Both participants shared similar emotional and behavioural situations, including anxiety disorders and a history of engaging in Non Suicidal Self Injury (NSSI). While this set of criteria was not required for participant selection, engaging in NSSI as an externalization of anxiety presented a relevant similarity between these two female youths. The homogeneity between the participants of this study is recommended for seeking quality of experiential data rather than quantity of participants when conducting IPA research (Alase, 2017; Creswell, 2007; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Smith et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2006). Furthermore, the two youths as participants fit the recommended criteria of having "similar lived experience of the phenomena being studied" (Creswell, 2013, p. 155).

Kleinman (2007) and Hooks (1994) recommended that researchers consider what is not said along with what is said among the experiences shared in an interview. This advice was valuable throughout the transcription process in this study, particularly noting pauses, silences, and emphases on certain phrases that 'spoke' beyond the literal text. Smith et al. (2009) emphasize the critical role that interpretation and phenomenology play in IPA research, and the importance of re-visiting subtle inferences when interpreting experiential data.

The first interview with Ann was in person and I followed a planned format of questions; the second interview with AJ was a phone conversation, which was cut short

due to an urgent personal matter that the participant had to attend to. These two conversations had fulfilled their purpose (Smith et al., 2009) by providing the researcher with rich insight into life as a youth, as a girl, and as a human. Three themes and two levels of subordinate themes emerged from their experiences as I listened, transcribed, and then read as I listened again.

Theme 1: Empowerment

Insight into adolescent experience in this study was provided by two young women who both shared accounts of trauma in addition to finally be at a point in their lives where they felt that they are now competent to self-direct and self-manage. This phenomenon was evident in both participants' experiences. Having the opportunity to self-govern in this manner meant that the youth could be empowered as an independent individual ready to keep developing into her own person. Empowerment emerged as a superordinate theme through analyzing how each participant realized her own sense of autonomy that was also recognized by adults and peers in her life.

Development of autonomy

The development of autonomy was evident often in the participants' descriptions of their competencies, which were infused into their accounts of strengths, commanding control and creating a sense of belonging for others.

Celebration of strengths

A collection of moments shared by both participants resonated with a sense of strength and a humble celebration of self-worth, evident in recognizing their own competencies. Ann's self-identified celebration of strengths included academic skills and

interests beyond school, both of which she conveyed with confidence, such as applying logarithms to seek a solution in order to occupy her mind as a form of escape. Literacy skills were among Ann's strengths and they also provided her with an outlet for creativity through expression, something she described as often being an escape to "my books and my writing". She went on to say:

> I enjoyed math cuz it took my mind off things like I could just work at formulas and do it… But I liked to be able to read. I read all the time. I wasn't in school a lot. I left a lot, but… I got through it. I was smart enough as a child to, I could miss all of it and still pass tests, so it was weird…

In keeping with that theme, she shared that:

> My favourite was English cuz it was a good way to express myself in my work…I was a pretty wordy kid, and I'd like to show off the words I knew.

AJ spoke of leisure time that included creativity and hands-on, artistic activities. "I like to scrapbook and take polaroids and go to the beach" she said, and this preference was implied in her description of courses available at the school she attends:

> They have really nice courses there like stuff you can they actually will benefit you like, there's culinary and sewing and like all that stuff.

AJ expressed another aspect of her strengths, interests and creativity here that, if applied in an academic context, might have been a positive factor for motivation to become or stay engaged.

These words indicated how both young women took pride in their interests and abilities, and this was evident in the enthusiasm with which they spoke of these competencies. The chance to engage in creative expression also served to build their sense of strength and self-worth. It is apparent that a sense of overall empowerment may come from various places within an individual, including their creativity through expression or offering a different perspective on academics.

Commanding control

Both women shared a sense of commanding control as the sole agents of their individual situations over the course of their personal journeys. Despite some events that may have been detrimental to their situations at any point in time, the decisions made by each young woman came from within her own internal locus of control that over-rode any interfering or dissenting opinion. Each woman had expressed moments in early childhood that were indicative of her lack of confidence and having little or no control over her own sense of security and they both indicated a point at which they seized back the control.

Ann's reference to her childhood implied that she had had moments of feeling like there were no solutions to problems in her life, and that was reflected in her reference to her favourite books:

KT: Is there a particular type of book you'd enjoy reading?

AN: I like fiction a lot. Mostly like series. Like Artemis Foul, and Mayward.

KT: What about those books you feel really grabbed you?

AN: I think it was cuz they were about kids who could take charge and do things, and I felt that I couldn't do that as a child so I think I really connected with them.

Reference to her unfavourable memory of childhood here suggests that conditions surrounding her home and social settings were void of control over her situations; Ann's control is symbolized by her identifying with children accomplishing goals in her preferred books. Ann realized now that she is autonomous and has the power to achieve on her own terms, resulting from the control that came from being able to eliminate classes she had associated with social anxiety. This is evident in her statement, "Yeah after eighth grade I never did gym again, I didn't want to (chuckles)" as well as in her sense of independence that was evident in accessing therapy sessions:

KT: So do you know anyone that has a boat?

AN: Yeah, but it's not really up to them to do that. And my mom, she can't enter the states so she's pretty well stuck on the island. She was barred when I was a kid. And so for me particularly it's hard cuz I have to kinda outsource rides to get anywhere.

Ann is solely responsible for travelling to and from her therapeutic sessions, and stated that the onus is on her, not on others on whom she may be able to rely, for alleviating the challenges she encounters. This sense of perseverance developed from early experiences when adults were unable to provide her with needs, and it is evident that these are no longer obstacles for Ann.

A similar element of confidence and control within AJ is detected in this critique of mandatory policies that she felt constrained her. AJ describes an idea that would solve her frustration with lack of academic choice that would apply for all students:

> You can tell they're lacking ideas for that, you literally go through documents and like erase words and stuff. I learned that when I was like 10…they have really nice courses there like stuff you can they actually will benefit you like, there's culinary and sewing and like all that stuff, but you don't get to do that until like grade 11 and 12, which I think is dumb, I think you should be able to choose at least one course per semester in grade 9 and 10 too, just like a fun course to do.

Taking control of their own choices resonated as an undercurrent with both young women throughout the discussions of their interests and abilities and their perceived strengths. This aspect of developing autonomy will also be connected to the phenomenon of having autonomy recognized by others when each participant experienced opportunities to negotiate situations with adults that alleviated stress and anxiety.

Creating a sense of belonging

Caring for others and longing to create a sense of belonging permeated both conversations with participants, and included references to having feelings of responsibility for others. For example, AJ's dog had gone missing prior to our interview, and the concern about her pet's safety had been an underlying stressor throughout our conversation, which indicated that she had a strong sense of responsibility for the well-being of this animal, which she seemed to view as her child. It was evident in her words that AJ believed that she was everything to him:

He’s just a little, he’s a [breed redacted], and he doesn’t like it when I leave and I left him last night with my boyfriend because I want to go to my friend’s house, and I can’t bring him there but I can’t leave him alone at night so I just thought it would be fine, and no he wasn’t--he freaked out and he jumped out the window, so…

The strong attachment and love she feels towards her dog demonstrated how he is everything to her:

KT: Are you ok?

AJ: Yeah, I’m, guess I’m alright I’m just if I can’t find him *it’s gonna be really, really hard.*

KT: Of course.

AJ: *yeah.*

What AJ said about her dog explicitly includes addressing the animal as her child, and what can be interpreted throughout these statements is that she believes this relationship is among the most important in her life. This was particularly evident in the emphasis of her voice, represented by the italics above.

Current relationships were discussed as positive associations which suggests that AJ believes in caring for others, and appreciates being cared for, and she was also reflective of a time in her past when she felt her friends were drawn to be around her:

…all through middle school I was the type to have like a big group of friends, you know what I mean… And I was always like, I dunno people liked me cuz I was just like, I was like joyful, and like, always positive.

For Ann, her story about buying things for her friends at an early age could be construed as a desire to have friends and be liked and it also conveyed a sense of wanting to share and making sure her friends had what they wanted:

> When I was younger, I think kids only hung out with me cuz I always had money. So I'd buy a lot of stuff for them.

Despite being cynical about her peers' friendships, reflected in her opinion of why they were around her, Ann's caring nature resurfaced in her discussion of an adult she admired for his sense of empathy and compassion:

> AN: [Name withheld] was always just really willing to help. You could talk to him about anything, he's just a great guy.
>
> KT: So what do you think you have in common with this person?
>
> AN: …I like to help people too. I think of myself as someone willing to help probably because of the experiences I've been through and I wouldn't be able to get through them without people who are willing to help… so I think that's why I admire him so much cuz he made me feel safe and comfortable.

Ann was given an opportunity to work with much younger kindergarten students at school as an alternative to attending one of her classes. This seemed to give her a sense of wonder about being able to take care of children as a livelihood while also having and caring for children of her own.

> When you get home you don't really have patience anymore to deal with your own children, so I think if I had kids I might not want to be in that

> field. But it really depends because I'm sure with some people it's fine, I think it's just with the people I've known.

This provoked my speculation about how Ann regarded her own childhood in terms of having her needs met as a child, and about whether or not this reflection on adequately caring for others may be an attempt to address neglected childhood needs.

Developing a sense of belonging seemed to foster their acceptance of people and this resonated with both women through these expressions of caring about others, and extending an invitation for others to feel belonging. This also suggested that, while each participant may have experienced unsuccessful and unstable relationships, they both made reference to current partners and friends with whom each of them experiences a sense of belonging.

Recognition of autonomy

Each young woman shared experiences associated with empowerment through realizing her own sense of autonomy. When this was also recognized and validated by adults and peers in their lives they seemed to further appreciate their sense of independence and autonomy.

Recognition from adults

Ann had described in her account what empowerment meant for her; a sense of feeling responsible and accountable for her own achievements as well as how this was reinforced when it was recognized and validated by those she esteemed, such as teachers:

> They'd say I was good at writing, that I was smart, I liked the teachers a lot… They were impressed that I could miss so much school and still get

> the best grades so they took a liking to me… At one point one of my teachers tried to get me to write an article for [name redacted] newspaper, but I never did it, but it was nice of her to push me towards that anyway.

AJ identified two teachers at her school who made her feel comfortable and safe in her description of the learning environment:

> Ah, my two it's actually a great coincidence it's actually my two, um, teachers in the alt site that I go to um, MR. X and Miss Y [names changed] ... And they have food and stuff there for the kids, and like it's like, from lunch time til the end of the day… Um, and that's where Mr. X and Miss Y are.

The descriptions offered here is about the teachers and the preferred environment that she associates with comfort and safety—food, a short time frame expectation to tend to academics, and a low student population—and that provided her with the conditions for achieving socio-academic success.

Being heard/understood.

Being heard and feeling understood by adults was enhanced when they were given the opportunity to negotiate with others to establish preferences. This is evident in how positive and enthusiastic each young woman was through non-verbal cues such as voice intonations in conversations and text language (current generational vernacular) following the realization that their preferences were recognized and accommodated.

Both Ann and AJ agreed to participate in the interviews, which I had interpreted as expressing intent to share their experiences. Ann's first statement was "I think it's really cool that you're doing this". She was appreciative of the chance to be heard. AJ's

enthusiasm to confirm our phone conversation may be implied through the use of the happy face emoji throughout preliminary text messages while we were negotiating the terms of our meeting:

> KT: Hi AJ? My name is Kiki, Diann [name withheld] gave me your number, I wonder if you may confirm I have the right number? Thank you.
>
> AJ: You do!
>
> KT: Great! May I give you a quick call tomorrow or Monday to introduce myself over the phone? I'm very interested in hearing about your experiences with the CY Team.
>
> AJ: Yeah!
>
> KT: Awesome. Thanks AJ. Which day is better for you?
>
> AJ: Doesn't matter [happy face emoji]
>
> KT: Hi AJ, apologize for not getting back to you. How about I give you a call Monday? Let me know a good time? Thanks so much!
>
> AJ: 12 on Monday?
>
> KT: That's perfect. Have a lovely weekend, AJ. Thanks again :)
>
> AJ: No problem [two consecutive happy face emoji's]

At the beginning of our phone conversation, AJ's responses changed from a somewhat melancholy tone to enthusiasm after I had verified that this was the interview we had arranged. She commented, "Cool. Um, this is for the thing, right? OK, I wasn't sure! [laughs]". AJ's question indicating that she was interested in confirming that this conversation is the intended one we had discussed. Her tone was positive and jovial,

adding a chuckle at the end of "wasn't sure". This marks the point of the conversation where her answers were more enthusiastic with a happy lilt: "OK!" "That sounds good!" "Yeah, for sure!" AJ had indicated interest and agreed to participate, but expressed that she was only comfortable enough to participate in a phone interview in lieu of an in-person meeting. This may be interpreted in two ways: one is that obliging AJ's preference afforded her the opportunity to voice her experiences on her terms; the other is that AJ successfully avoided a situation associated with anxiety. Both interpretations may be regarded as AJ maintaining a level of autonomy.

Both young women appreciated being given an opportunity to voice their perspectives as a youth pursuing success in school and life beyond it, with provisions that their terms of participating were respected.

Engagement with peers

Within the theme of feeling empowerment are the decisions made by participants for adrenalin/thrill-seeking or for pleasure and amusement with their peers, which may be interpreted as having a sense of belonging. After experiencing years of social rejection, Ann described finally connecting with her peers in grade 11 because everyone "started smoking weed, and that changed out different groups". Ann expressed that the small school population limited the choice of peers with whom one could associate, and how despite the social ridicule she had endured with these peers, she would have preferred to attend the school where her network of friends lived, but this was logistically impossible:

> AN: I think it probably would have been better if I went to a different school.
>
> KT: Is that right?

> AN: I always wanted to switch schools so bad cuz I had friends in other schools, but…such a weird situation with [place redacted]. The closest town is in the States, so that's where I've always hung out was in the states but I couldn't switch schools there because I don't have my American citizenship so I always wanted to go to school over there, but…

AJ's dysfunctional social connection was truancy with her partner at the time during her middle school years, something she alludes to in the statement "…I go…sometimes to my ex-boyfriend's house…cuz he just lived down the road…so I'd leave school and go there." For this young woman, this must be considered in tandem with her history of having a network of friends who appreciated her at one point:

> …people liked me cuz I was just like, I was like joyful, and like, always positive and stuff, but I have completely have changed, so I'm kinda, nobody really wants to be around me I guess.

This description of herself when she had a large group of friends conveyed melancholy but seemed nostalgic as well, which was evident in the tone of her voice during the conversation. AJ recalled that she had once been someone people really enjoyed being around, and there was a sense of ownership around the change she referred to; she was not placing blame on anyone or any event, but that she had "completely changed", and because of that the group of friends were no longer there.

It seemed essential for the individual to be the primary agent of making autonomous decisions as a means of maintaining a sense of empowerment, despite the dysfunctional intentions, as with certain acts of rebellion that both participants shared in their experiences with peers.

Theme 2: Isolation

Isolation was another prominent theme that emerged from conversations with each participant. Both women sought solitude as a comfort in various locations and also experienced feeling socially isolated from people in their lives. Experiencing isolation encompassed feeling invisible, communicating situations of abandonment, and peer alienation stemming from their engagement in self-harm.

Seeking solace/solitude

Safe zones

One of the first questions asked at the beginning of both interviews was about things one liked to do during leisure times and anything they considered fun with friends outside of school. Both women described outdoor activities involving the beach; Ann recalled that she enjoyed swimming in the bay despite the cold temperature of the water as well as finding cliffs, and AJ also mentioned the beach as a place she would go to in her spare time. Ann referred to her friends not taking part in the swimming and cliff climbing while they were at the beach together.

Safe zones were also physical locations that both individuals valued as essential for chosen moments of solitude. Ann's reference to the library occurred frequently in conversation when asked about safe zones, the place she felt most comfortable, or where she would escape to if she felt she had to exit the classroom. AJ referred to her boyfriend's home while in middle school, and then the alternate site during secondary school when she had returned following her hiatus for mental health reasons. It is noteworthy to consider that the choice to refrain from attending school while tending to

her mental health needs may also be considered a chosen safe environment, which was outside of the school.

For both women, their homes were in close proximity to the school, and this played a role in their low attendance rates and disengagement throughout their school years. For both women, their homes also represented a spot that fostered negative memories and emotions: Ann felt unable to have friends over due to her parents' atypical social choices, and she would fail to get proper rest for school days; AJ referred to her choice to spend much of her time living at her partner's house and that also being a place she felt the need to escape from and return to school. This internal conflict arising from the home being close and used as an escape but then offering a negative environment was common with both youth.

Escape

Peer ridicule played a significant role in both participants' experiences in seeking escape from learning environments while at school. This desire to escape situations at school evolved into feelings of disdain for peers for their judgemental nature, and both participants identified the phenomenon of "cliques" that they both rejected and chose to avoid because they felt they did not share a sense of belonging. Gym class was often the environment that Ann would seek escape from because her peers "would make fun of me. I just didn't want to be there. I figured if I could do what I could do with my attendance then I didn't need to be there all the time anyway." AJ cited her English class as the location where peers ridiculed her appearance to the point that she felt shame, humiliation, and then abruptly fled:

> They were yelling stuff across the room like saying stuff like I dunno about underneath my bracelets and stuff and it caused me anxiety so I left, and I went to the bathroom.

AJ experienced a desire to escape from individuals she trusted in this class—for example, her boyfriend at the time—but also from peers for whom she expressed a strong sense of disdain.

> I find that there's a lot of cliques at the high school…so, like I dunno there's just a lot of, there's like preps and then there's like, just like I find them—the preps—they're really, really—I don't like being around—if any of them walk in the room I just I get uncomfortable. And I feel like, I dunno, just uncomfortable—really—around them. A lot of the students there—cuz there's a lot of judgemental kids.

A significant sense of isolation resonated through each experience shared by these two young women who conveyed a very strong desire to avoid socio-academic settings they were required to share with peers whom they both perceived as severely judgemental. This was a strong and recurrent issue throughout both conversations.

Solitary aggression

Non Suicidal Self Injury (NSSI) was identified by both participants as a phenomenon that they had both engaged in throughout their lives up to and including entry of secondary school (grade 9). Each young woman referred to her acts of self-harm with significant pauses while addressing the incidents for the first time, and while Ann seemed mindful to address the NSSI as "my behaviours at school", AJ used the term "self-harm" without much hesitation. Ann disclosed little about what would precipitate

her self-harming, other than alluding to escaping class and school situations; this leaves one only an opportunity to interpret what was not said, based on her references to negative social experiences. AJ's reference to seeking tools for the purpose of self-harming was explicit: "I'd go to the dollar store and buy pencil sharpeners…and I'd go back to school if I got stressed out and I would self-harm there". She would go on to address these as tools that she needed to maintain her control over being able to follow through with her intent to self-harm: the school pressured her to return and AJ did so "but like I would like bring my razor blades with me". While AJ felt a certain attachment to the instruments she had used to keep NSSI as a coping mechanism, Ann may have felt a similar closeness and attachment to NSSI in that she shared little about it and may be guarding this by withholding these feelings. What little Ann had shared implied she preferred not to share. Perhaps, in her case, tools were not a component of self-harm. Instead, Ann referenced her sparse eyebrows as a target of social ridicule when discussing how peers failed to grasp the concept of some people, namely her, having complex lives.

Rejection

Alienation and abandonment, body shaming due to NSSI scars and the stigma attached, and enduring humiliation in socio-academic settings were extremely isolating experiences; a worthwhile angle is to consider these as forms of rejection from significant adults as well as peers.

Alienation/abandonment

The participants both discussed situations that suggested the absence of parents at certain key points throughout the shared experiences. Ann's frequent escape from school

to her house planted some speculative doubt about if her parents were home to intervene and re-direct her back to school or even to provide comfort. Ann had mentioned her mother as being instrumental in arranging required paperwork for a counsellor to resume therapy; yet there was no mention of her father. Ann's current process of getting to and from her counselling sessions requires a long travel distance, including border crossings, but she embarks on these trips alone:

> My mom, she can't enter the States so she's pretty well stuck on the island. She was barred when I was a kid. And so for me particularly it's hard cuz I have to kinda outsource rides to get anywhere.

AJ disclosed that she had spent significant time at her boyfriend's home while in middle school, which would raise some level of scepticism about the extent of involvement of her parents in her life, particularly when the school had contacted her mother about her unexplained absences.

> They [school administration] would freak out and tell me to come back, like they would call my mom and be like, 'Get her to come back here' or whatever.

AJ would have to have been contacted by her mother in order to know the school was aware of her truancy, and this may suggest a level of parental awareness of AJ's attendance being a significant issue as a middle school student, but AJ did not explain any further parental involvement or reaction.

Feelings of abandonment were expressed when she described her situation of loss of friends she once had that reinforced this sense of being invisible:

AJ: I slowly lost all my friends, I've, I only have, like three right now. And all through middle school I was the type to have like a big group of friends, you know what I mean?

K: Mhm.

AJ: And I was always like, I dunno people liked me cuz I was just like, I was like joyful, and like, always positive and stuff, but I have completely have changed, so I'm kinda, nobody really wants to be around me I guess.

This statement describes a situation from AJ's past that involved friends she used to have and with whom she felt attached at one point. It is notable that AJ accounts for this loss in the first person rather than holding her friends accountable for becoming so distant.

Mental health stigma with NSSI

AJ was open right at the beginning of our interview with sharing the account of her time spent in hospital, which included ninth and tenth grades, as crucial for her mental health to be tended to without being concerned about attending classes. Her interpretation of social stigma around NSSI is a poignant reflection on personal experience and is a summation of the alienation, isolation and rejection that both she and Ann have had to endure while living with this mental illness:

> I just don't get the stereotypes around mental illness. Like if it's just like anxiety and stuff: people get that. But the minute you add something like self-harm or something on to it or being hospitalized, they completely turn the other direction.

Similarly, Ann referenced several instances of peers taunting her about her appearance, and in particular, with reference to an instance of shame associated with NSSI infliction.

She had offered some detail about a facial feature, which was not explicitly identified as NSSI, although it could be argued as either a characteristic of anxiety as well as an expression of self-harm behaviour: "I would pick at my eyebrows, and they'd be patchy, and [pause] they thought I was weird." AJ's NSSI scars were along her wrists and arms, and subsequently "I wore bracelets like from my wrists all the way up my forearm". AJ's reaction to her peers loudly shaming the scars on her arms was evident with the emphasis she placed on the last two words: "…cuz in middle school, people are *fucking mean*." This is a remarkable comment when considering the age of middle school students, but also the conviction and passion that AJ places on the message explicitly stated from her own personal experience.

Health and Physical Education class was among Ann's most dreaded classes, not only because of her low interest in physical activity but because it also served as a challenging learning environment based on how Ann felt about herself in comparison to the other girls. In particular, she said, "I wasn't comfortable with the older girls, I didn't know them very well and I felt like they were better than me somehow". Ann's experience with humiliation extended to include areas outside of the school:

> Most of the kids made fun of my clothes and stuff, and they'd like throw snowballs at me when I was walking home from school. And they'd put dead bugs in my hair...[chuckle] they were strange!

It is noteworthy that Ann was able to reflect on the behaviour she had to endure with a winking sense of wisdom, despite the level of cruelty evident in the description.

Feeling invisible

Along this sub-ordinate thread were the feelings of invisibility as a component of isolation discussed by both participants. Remarkable to note here is the polarized contexts between the two young women, with Ann seeking it:

> I liked to go to the library. …I didn't like being around other kids really. Nobody else really went in there, I could go in there all day, and be alone. I ate lunch in there, I did everything in there! [laughs]; I'd be the only kid in there, all the time. The librarian was in there sometimes, but she didn't really bother me, so it was nice to have a place like that.

Ann repeatedly referred to her experiences of being left alone as a welcome result of peers ignoring the library, and appreciated that the librarian allowed her to be in there, to simply existing without much contact. To Ann, this uninterrupted existence was the foundation of where she felt safe.

Conversely, AJ exuberantly objected to it:

> Like the teacher didn't even realize that I left [pause] like he didn't even like--it wasn't even on his like--I dunno--I just feel like teachers should like pay attention to that. *But he didn't.*

AJ's voice was heavy in tone and emphasis with this last sentence referring to the teacher, who was unaware of the situation that had caused significant emotional crisis for her. The combination of ridicule from AJ's peers and not being acknowledged by her teacher translated into her not feeling valued as a member of the collective in that classroom.

Theme 3: Therapeutic journey

The two young women had a common thread of embarking on a therapeutic journey with subordinate themes that could be arranged in chronological order. Both participants still access clinician support, and each young woman was able to trace back to her first encounter[s] with therapy as a slight mismatch in personality with clinicians. The therapeutic journey these two individuals have shared about their young lives has revealed remarkable instances of how much impact anxiety has on a child, what trauma does to an individual, and participants' views on how to address the C&Y Team ideal.

History of trauma

AJ had directly referenced a history of trauma, and the measure of emotion in her voice when she spoke of it was especially remarkable in this passage:

> KT: So when did you get connected to the C&Y Team, AJ?
>
> AJ: Ummm…well, I just started to self-harm that year.
>
> KT: Mhm.
>
> AJ: Aaaand…this is gonna sound super weird, cuz I was so young at the time, but I was in like a really abusive relationship, like it was, like I look back at it now and I'm like, holy crap, like what was I doing with my life, like…I walked into it basically, like I just *I don't know*…and I started to do that [self-harm].

The italicized words indicate a heightened emotional tone to her voice, and AJ spoke with varied speed and volume according to the content's level of intensity throughout her conversation with me, especially with this intimate disclosure. The details of when this

abuse began were unclear, but as she had indicated, the trauma had climaxed in grade seven, at which point the C&Y Team had connected with her.

Ann's history of traumatic experiences was brought up through inferential descriptions that went further into her past, through her sharing of agency involvement as a child, which would indicate significant issues surrounding her life at home as well as at school:

> Um, the first time I talked to someone in the school, I think I talked to a few people when I was in elementary school…. I figured if I got it [help], my mom should be changing what we were doing and things, I shouldn't be at school talking, just another reason to make me the weird kid, really. When I was a child I always thought that [being a social worker] means that they'd take me away from my family if I told them everything but when I got older and it was more my problem they couldn't take me away.

There was also an implied degree of trauma for a therapeutic clinician to work through with this comment about how long it would take for a connection to be made: "I guess it would depend on how distressing the student was. For me, I was very distressing."

Child & youth team connections

AJ's experience with C&Y Team clinicians included a thoughtful account of her first introduction to the support that was a crucial intervention during her climactic experience with trauma at what she reaffirmed was an early age.

> AJ: So my friend came in [to the bathroom where she fled to] and she made me go down to the guidance office to just hang out there, and just to

> like be safe. And I talked to the guidance counsellor and told her what was going on, and I didn't realize what she was gonna do at the time, but she immediately like got hold of my mom and then called mental health and got me a worker.
>
> KT: Ok.
>
> AJ: So.
>
> KT: And so how long did that relationship last, the worker that you connected with through the CY Team?
>
> AJ: Um, about a year, we didn't really, I didn't really like her that much. She just, she was a nice girl, and she meant well, but we just, her way of wanting to do things was a lot different than me?
>
> KT: Mhm.
>
> AJ: So I just thought I could just, and Diann at the time was actually talking to my worker, and had told her like "I want to take over", like that, thing.

AJ's tone here is respectful of the worker. She mentioned not liking her, but it was more so the case of AJ's interests and focus not meeting the goal, focus and path of the worker's professional outlook for the best route for her recovery. This is an incredibly significant point, as youth who are seeking support in the very early stage of connection very much need to have that sense of connection made before they can actually continue with developing a therapeutic relationship for their recovery journey. Although AJ referred to this relationship in a positive tone, it is clear that there could have been a

better connection on the clinician's part to pay close attention to the youth's interests, in addition to the actual needs that were apparent.

Similar to AJ's experience of desiring a deep connection to the counsellor, Ann had alluded to a counsellor who also seemed to fall short of gauging the momentum of the therapy:

> We'd talk about her cats, and normal things. It was like a break from the classroom. But when she started talking about more heavy things, I didn't really want to do it anymore. It was nice that she wanted to help me, like she went and my mom got her to sign all the forms for me to talk to her again the next year but I told I her I said I don't want to talk to you, I don't want to continue this anymore, so I stopped talking to her at that point.

Ann's journey extended back to her elementary grades, continued to the present, and indicated that she would remain in contact with her C&Y Team clinician for the summer months after graduating from her high school. The description she uses as her path is a comprehensive summation of what worked for her, suggesting scaffolding layers of a multi-modal clinician collaborative:

> I think of it like, I talked to so many people, but it wouldn't have really worked if I didn't talk to someone like that [Tom, name changed] at first, it's like he introduced me into therapy cuz he was so likeable and friendly that it made me want to do it…And I think it helps that it's not just the therapists' opinions and views, they go and talk to their whole team and they all collaborate to help the kid so I think that's what helps a lot. Cuz you know when I just think of therapists I think they could be telling me a

> bunch of stuff that doesn't even make real sense but knowing that they go and talk to other therapists and their co-workers it makes it seem like it's more the right thing to do. And it must be [laughs], so I like that about them.

Ann's summation of this entire process is metaphorically likened to a career of events being connected throughout her school years:

> It's like I keep graduating from these people to get different therapy and I think it's a good way to do it with kids cuz if you go right into it, they're [youth] not gonna want to talk, they are very secretive [chuckles] but if you get them really liking people at first they'll be more willing.

Recommendations from participants

ISD C&Y Team connections can be said to have been lifelines for both women who agreed to engage and participate in this research endeavour. As part of the participants' therapeutic journey, their perspectives on what worked and what could be improved upon are significant conclusions to consider in their roles as direct service recipients. According to both participants, compatibility of clinicians with youth, and frequency, consistency and location of confidential sessions were common threads of what make this framework effective.

They preferred the frequency of the sessions to be at least once weekly; this was contingent on the status of the youth's needs, which may vary according to individual needs. AJ's recommended improvement was for clinicians to tighten their punctuality, whereas Ann's caveat addressed the availability in remote areas:

> I don't know if it was the way it was on the island like it was at every school, but sometimes it wasn't so steady. There'd be weeks that they couldn't come down so maybe if it was steady, a set day every week maybe even more than once a week or twice a week I feel that would be better cuz I know it helped me a lot but if I could've had it more often it would have been better.

Ensuring compatibility between the clinician and youth was a strong message from both students. Ann recommended that clinicians exercise patience when establishing connections with youth, with the utmost importance being that the youth feel at ease and comfortable.

Consistency of location for counselling seemed to be an area needing improvement according to both Ann and AJ. Establishing an agreed-upon location would eliminate or significantly reduce the element of anxiety when anticipating a session. This affects how secure and confidential the sessions are, according to AJ:

> …they don't really have like a designated, like a designated spot for that kind of stuff, they just kind of put you in a room that's free. Either if they could make it like so they went down to the office every time. Or, make it so they had an actual like spot in the school for that. Cuz there's so many kids I know that use that, you know what I mean… So it wouldn't be harmful or like a waste of time or money or space to put a room in there that they could use.

Ann concurred on these recommendations:

> There should definitely be a place in the school for it like they should have an office if they're coming down cuz I know sometimes they put me in the principal's room, sometimes they put me in the library.

Elaborating on how beneficial the availability of services was for her and others requiring therapeutic support, Ann's metaphor to describe the crucial turning point is poignant and thoughtful:

> AN: I don't think I would have gotten help any other way. There's no mental facility on [the island] and there's no therapists. There's not even doctors there all of the time…so I think before that I didn't really understand what was going on with me at all, and like I said it was very validating to finally talk to them, and after I started doing that it felt as if I was working towards something instead of just going in a straight line and doing nothing.
>
> KT: Interesting way to put it.
>
> AN: It's how I see it. It's like flatlining.

Ensuring that students are able to seek refuge from anxiety inducing social situations at school is another component of service delivery that Ann identified as a strength in the current model when she said, "Well, they're very... they try very hard to make the kids comfortable to begin with. They make it a safe place."

Both women shared scepticism about therapeutic involvement during pivotal moments of crises. A turning point for each of them had occurred in conjunction with a peak in mental health crises, which resulted in both women accepting agency intervention. Both women had expressed a certain level of apprehension toward

therapeutic support: Ann had rejected the services of one clinician, and withdrew from sessions; AJ's level of apprehension was evident in her description of the clinician's style and approach being "a lot different than me". AJ's initial involvement with a mental health support worker was the result of a decision made by an intervening school agent rather than on her own, and this can be interpreted as AJ possibly feeling a degree of scepticism toward accepting therapy. Ann's apprehension about therapy had occurred at various moments throughout her connection to C&Y Team clinicians for similar reasons that AJ described. Also because of the invasive nature of therapy, she felt she was not ready for it at that point in her counselling. The notion that these two youths were unaware of the benefits of counselling can be interpreted as their expression of autonomy being dysfunctional to their overall wellbeing. It is also worthwhile to recognize that they both held an element of control over the role of intervening forces with their decision to either accept or reject therapeutic involvement.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This IPA research study provided the perspectives of secondary school students receiving tertiary emotional and behavioural support while attending inclusionary settings in New Brunswick schools. Following a thorough thematic analysis of the interview data, three main themes and seven sub-themes emerged from the experiential evidence provided by the two women who shared student perspectives on the efficacy of emotional behavioural support frameworks delivered at their schools. The ensuing section will discuss the thematically organized experiential data provided by the participants and delve into how to consider the current research results as valid contributions to existing evidence in the literature review. Reflections on my interactions with the two participants as part of the research process will conclude this section as a descriptive journey that provided these two young women with a venue to voice their experiences with daily survival into adulthood.

The theme of empowerment resonated as a significant theme in both participants' personal stories. Autonomy as a subtheme was subdivided into experiences of developing autonomy and having it recognized by others; this was an important collection of experiences described by the two young women. The definition of autonomy used for this study can be augmented by moving beyond simply conceptualizing how the self becomes independent from others, and also incorporating Gilligan's (1982) extension and include female perspectives. According to her, "for women, identity has as much to do with intimacy as with separation" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 98, as cited in Dryden, 2019); if both intimacy and separation are considered components

of establishing identity, autonomy may then be summated to be the equivalent of "balancing and harmonizing an agent's interests with those of others" (Dryden, 2019).

This definition of autonomy seems to fit with Ann's and AJ's experiences regarding empowerment, through recognizing and celebrating their own competencies, and then demonstrating a desire to accept and care for others while hoping for reciprocity in the area of belonging, which includes seeking engagement with peers in order to belong. When these competencies were overlooked (ex. peer alienation), or their voices unheard (feeling invisible), the experiences shared were notably negative; conversely when recognized and validated by others, their feelings of empowerment were reaffirmed. School and classroom culture that celebrates competencies and individual strengths may be fostered by educators through recognition and celebration of diversity (Carroll et al., 2011; Morcom & MacCallum, 2012), respect for individuality and confidence in their students, which cultivates student confidence in their own socio-academic success (Bruin & Ohna, 2013; Carroll et al., 2011; Hill & Brown, 2013; Katz & Sugden, 2013; Morcum & MacCallum, 2011).

Overall, the themes of isolation (the need for connection) and empowerment (the need for voice) including the celebration of successes (the value of strengths) closely resemble the core psychological needs outlined by Deci and Ryan's (2007) self-determination theory (SDT). SDT postulates that if these condition are met within social environments, or specifically relationship interactions, then youth will experience greater psychological wellbeing and a greater propensity towards flourishing and thriving behaviours. Considering that the ISD framework and the recovery model espoused by mental health and addictions places emphasis on these relationship conditions, it appears

that these superordinate themes are particularly relevant to the life journeys of these two female participants. Hence, training for school-based mental health and educational personnel in the field of SDT and associated practices may be particularly important for supporting the recovery journey of youth with significant emotional and behavioural concerns.

It is noteworthy that the theme of isolation emerged as a phenomenon that also existed in polarity: it was evident that participants had sought solace/solitude on their own volition, yet also experienced rejection. Both subordinate themes were also comprised of nested components that provided a basis for how isolation was embodied by the participants' experiences through NSSI. Both young women had discussed experiencing various negative social experiences which then prompted a desire to escape into solitude; sometimes outdoor spaces, as each had a safe zone at school and both referred to a home location as an environment associated with refuge, and also through externalizing their aggression towards themselves through NSSI. Conversely, nested within the theme of isolation as part of experiencing rejection were the phenomena of peer ridicule and humiliation, parental or familial neglect/absence, and peer alienation/abandonment. Analyzing these two subordinate themes led to a possible conclusion that this was a cycle of seeking solitude to escape various forms of rejection and then using escapism as a reaction to the rejection. According to the participants' experiences with rejection, it also became evident that they both responded with significant negative emotional reactions, and both engaged in self-injury.

The phenomenon of NSSI engaged in by both young women had been the behaviour of concern that connected them to C&Y Team services. It became relevant to

extend this study's literature review section on internalization and externalization behaviours to include a concise definition for NSSI and its significance for adolescents at risk. Researchers of NSSI have concurred that it is the intentional and direct destruction of body tissue for purposes that are socially not accepted, but with no intent of suicide. Prevalence rates range from four to 23% of adolescents and young adults and it is associated with seeking relief and calming from psychiatric and/or emotional distress by way of cutting, self-hitting, burning, biting, scratching, bruising and/or banging (Berger, Hasking, & Martin, 2017; Bheamadu, Fritz, & Pillay, 2012; Klonsky, Victor, & Saffer, 2014; Laukkanen, Rissanen, Tolmunen, Klyma, Hintikka, 2013; Lesniak, 2010). Youth with a history of self-criticism are prone to engage in NSSI, which is to express anger in the form of self-punishment (Klonsky et al., 2014), typically on the arms but, according to Laukkenen et al. (2013), areas of cutting beyond the arms are indicative of more serious psychiatric issues.

Empirical evidence recommends providing crisis support in schools (Berger et al., 2017) through integrated intervention programs that focus on strengthening emotional regulation and distress tolerance while building intrapersonal/interpersonal strengths, which are areas that youth who self-injure require a broad scope of therapeutic support (Berger et al., 2017; Bheamadu et al., 2012; Klonsky et al., 2014). Klonsky and colleagues (2014) recommend an emotion regulation framework of treatment, one that has been thoroughly reviewed by Andover and Morris (2014) and Turner, Austin and Chapman (2014). Through a series of positive intervention strategies, this treatment model proposed that focusing on upregulating positive emotions will more effectively increase positive emotions and consequently reduce negative emotions than simply

targeting downregulation of negative emotions (Quoidbach, Mikolajczak, & Gross, 2015). These scholars contended that this empirically supported framework will assist clinical practitioners in increasing long-term happiness among clients who struggle with pro-social behaviours and emotional dysregulation disorders. Laukkenen et al. (2013) cautioned that effective interventions are yet to be proven, and Lesniak (2010) found that physical safety, and emotional support are most crucial and best achieved by addressing the youth with care rather than their injuries.

If appropriate and effective interventions are inadequate or omitted, youth with a history of internalizing behaviours may also engage in externalizing behaviours (Perle et al., 2013). Furthermore, providing disengaged youth, such as Ann and AJ, with learning environments that eliminate risk factors through fostering a sense of belonging would serve as a positive approach to mitigate success for everyone (Barry & Reschly, 2012; Logan-Greene et al., 2011).

The theme of the therapeutic journey consisted of three subordinate themes of history of trauma, C&Y Team connections, and recommendations for maintaining success with a support framework and suggested improvements. The participants both shared a history of trauma that intertwined with anxiety as a significant accompanying component, and the extent to which the trauma and anxiety manifested resulted in therapeutic connections. The manner in which the connections had become established within each participant's needs was similar in that both young women described the relationship between client and therapist being critical in encouraging dialogue and healing among students as clients. They both shared a solid connection with their clinician, and communicated their suggestions to consider consistency in location and

frequency of therapeutic sessions at the school locations. The ISD C&Y Team framework is designed to "respond in a timely, effective and integrated manner to the strengths, risks, and needs profiles of children, youth and their families" (NB EECD, 2015, p. 8) and, according to existing literature, support youth with individualized emotional and behavioural needs who benefit from wrap-around services from mental health agencies among other community supports (Fallon et al., 2012). Ann and AJ have provided this study with a request that peers, educators and other adults listen, celebrate, and engage with them.

Conclusions

In light of the relevant themes that emerged from this study, it is important to consider existing literature on inclusive school culture, internalizing and externalizing behaviour with reference to NSSI, and how effective wrap-around support can be described with reference to the experiences shared by the participants in this research endeavour. Since the purpose of the ISD framework delivery of services is to support students experiencing crisis, how this is done is relevant when considering the accounts of participants as clients of the services. The experiential evidence provided in this research is a substantiating affirmation of how well the C&Y Team clinicians seemed to have supported both young women in this study. To conclude, it would be wise to consider the recommendations provided by these youths who had expressed gratitude for the ISD providing them with the opportunity to foster each woman's life-saving resiliency.

Limitations

There are several limitations to consider with regard to this research in order to accept the findings of the study. As with other qualitative studies seeking voluntary participants, the emergent themes were from the perspectives of each individual experience, and are to be taken as such, rather than as an evaluation of the current framework of socio-emotional and academic support infused within the NB education system.

A key challenge in this investigation was recruiting the youth participants for this study. As a result of system guidelines related to confidentially and professional ethics across educational and health sectors, there was considerable time devoted to gaining the permission needed to move forward with the study. For this investigation, only female perspectives were investigated. Similarly, youth at varying development levels were also not considered given the time frame and access to participant at the time of this study.

The settings and duration of the two interviews fell short of being consistent, and must be considered as limitations since homogeneity among participants is sought by IPA researchers. Both interviews were conducted in different locations—one was in-person and the other was a telephone conversation. The second interview was arranged to be a phone interview as per request of the participant, and due to an urgent personal matter was cut short to thirty minutes, leaving some questions unanswered by this participant.

These are critical details that are essential to consider for any future investigations of the issues presented in this particular study. An interpretative analysis of the experiential data gathered for this study has addressed this research question with conclusions; however, the limitations discussed above are relevant caveats to consider for

readers of this study and for future researchers seeking further experiential evidence from students pursuing academic success while receiving wrap-around emotional support.

Future research

Within the topic of servicing youth with adequate tertiary emotional and behavioural care while pursuing success in inclusive educational settings, there is much more investigation to be done. This study ventured into the worlds of two young women who offered their unique human experiences to be considered as experiential evidence of seeking therapeutic support as secondary school students, and many more experiences are available to collect and interpret. One recommended direction for further investigation would be to extend the participant pool to include experiences of youth who identify as questioning gender identity and sexual orientation, as this is a population of youth who represent a significant percentage of NSSI behaviour (Klonsky, 2014). Since these youths are among students in schools striving to succeed, their voices ought to be heard.

Another direction is to address the experiences of younger students as well as youth who are in care while attending schools and narrowing the scope to include specific investigation of students who engage in NSSI. The voices of these students would also provide valuable insight to ISD C&Y Teams.

A worthwhile approach may consider small sample sizes such as with this study; scholars of IPA have recently substantiated value of experiential evidence with such a low number of participant size (Alase, 2017), and Smith et al. (2009) have even recommend future IPA research to pursue single case studies as future directions for collecting rich experiential evidence. Nevertheless, it must still be clarified that a small number of participants carry some caveats when seeking to establish common themes.

Future research endeavours ought to address the paucity of evidence available in the realm of collecting experiential evidence from youth who need their emotional and behavioural needs addressed. Given the novelty of integrated service delivery frameworks in education systems, it is anticipated that these recommendations would provide valuable insight on how the system may enrich the experience of all youth so that the school setting is truly an equal playground.

Implications for education and counselling

Few first-hand accounts of adolescent experiences in high school have been published in the field of research on youth behaviour, and this investigation provides professionals in the education and counselling fields with significant insight on the current efficacy of intervention strategies. The students as participants in this research offered their experiences so that educators and counsellors might recognize how their emotional and behavioural concerns have been addressed through interventions provided by the ISD C&Y Team framework.

The participants in this study both experienced significant anxiety. When students have been given opportunities to provide narratives of their experiences with current classroom climates, they have provided researchers with advice on how to keep students engaged enough, not only to complete school, but to have goals for their future beyond graduation (Bruin & Ohna, 2013).

With this insight, educators and counsellors may be able to address classroom composition with student needs in mind; avoiding class and school was at times a matter of survival for both participants, but adjusting the environment to accommodate sensitivities would warrant measures for preventing these situations. In-school crisis

services are currently offered through NB's ISD C&Y Team framework, and have provided survival strategies replacing the need to leave school for both participants. One participant offered a succinct explanation:

> I don't think I would have gotten help any other way. There's no mental facility on [location] and there's no therapists. There's not even doctors there all of the time…so I think before that I didn't really understand what was going on with me at all, and like I said it was very validating to finally talk to them [C&Y Team clinicians], and after I started doing that it felt as if I was working towards something instead of just going in a straight line and doing nothing.

Because each of these students is unique, their shared stories offer a different perspective that is worth considering, particularly, as discussed by Armstead et al. (2010), when research has concurred with that voice. Individuals with a keen sense of their own needs can best express what these are and whether or not they have been met (Bruin & Ohna, 2013). Both participants have expressed how valuable it was to have therapeutic appointment time scheduled at school; each recommended an increase in frequency of availability of clinician visits, establishing consistency with appointment details, and securing a consistent and confidential location within the building. "[M]ake it so they had an actual like spot in the school for that. Cuz there's so many kids I know that use that, you know what I mean?"

It would be wise to consider this experiential evidence as valid first-hand accounts of how this framework of therapeutic support had worked for them. Educators and counsellors may now be able to approach the phenomena of mental health issues among

students with a heightened mindfulness of their individual needs and with an available ear to listen for their voices.

Research shows that students perform better academically and socially when included in same peer settings, regardless of abilities, based on inclusive practices that align with UDL principles (Katz & Sugden, 2013, Solnick & Ardoin, 2010). Consequently, a key element to consider here from the findings is ensuring that classroom and school culture provide a comfortable environment for each individual within a healthy collective. Isolation from peers and adults, when perceived as rejection, was a prominent theme in the findings, and resulted in both participants demonstrating disdain for judgemental atmospheres. This would imply the need for guidance and modeling acceptance by educators and administrators for a truly inclusive learning environment.

Educators and counsellors ought to consider the particulars of how inclusive settings impact diverse groups of learners according to the student voice, which is greatly missing from scholarly discourse on the topic of inclusion (Armstead et al., 2010; Bruin & Ohna, 2013). The voices of the participants in this study have provided views on limitations of isolating factors: “they were like yelling stuff like across the like classroom at me…they [teachers] realized my anxiety was really bad. And I couldn’t sit in classes for very long” (AJ); and how they have felt empowered by others: “They understood me… they’d know it annoys me to present in front of the class, and they talked to me about my books, and my writing, it felt good when they thought I did good in school” (Ann).

Participants in this study were both students receiving tertiary emotional support in their respective school settings; they have provided a perspective largely missing from research. This research has provided two New Brunswick students an opportunity to bring their valuable perspectives on learning and surviving school life, and their message is to listen to them, accept them, and celebrate them—it validates their place in the classroom, in the school and in the world.

Personal reflection

The path for this research has been a challenging one and, as rewarding as it has been, I have learned valuable lessons in perseverance throughout the process of working towards the conclusion of a research endeavour. Obstacles that I have encountered throughout this journey include those associated with my research as well as personal challenges that demanded my time and energy; at times both worlds collided and required equal priority. This research project has been a significant presence in my life because I chose it, and it is a passion because I experience life with individuals who struggle with mental health issues every day as a teacher, a friend, and a human being. Recognizing resilience in those who experience such adversity is inspiring and it instils in me an appreciation for accepting challenges in the spirit of pursuing success. The two young women I had met for the purpose of completing this research are both a sincere inspiration for me to push through any obstacle. “Through disruptions, research provides not only ways of seeing others but ways of understanding ourselves” (Palmer, Pocock, & Burton, 2018, p. 423).

I originally discovered existentialist phenomenology while studying visual art theories as an undergraduate education student. This approach resurfaced as I realized

that an appropriate methodology to pursue for this research endeavour was interpretative phenomenological analysis. The more I had read about this branch of qualitative research, the more it became apparent that it ought to be the methodology for seeking how to answer the question of how do students who require tertiary level emotional and behavioural support in inclusive high school settings experience success? I feel this research endeavour has provided adequate answers from two students with experience on the phenomenon.

Ann, the quiet sophist and AJ, the ardent; the stories of these two young women who agreed to share their lived experiences for this research are symbolic of who they both are: incredible and memorable. Feeling invisible communicates a silence within an individual that demands to be addressed, and I hope that these two youths feel their perspectives are valid to their own self-worth and as valuable contributions to this study. This research endeavour has made it possible for their voices to be heard. Without their experiences, this research would not have been complete, and without this research, their experiences would be silent to the world. The therapeutic journey that these two young women have embarked upon led them to my call for their experiences. The research world knows them as anonymous participants, but they each know they are: the powerful voices eternalized in this written account of youth striving to succeed in our schools.

Through immersing myself into each of the transcripts for countless hours, I have come to know these young women as two very different individuals who are inspirational for their remarkable resiliency and understated wisdom. May they both feel as inspirational as they have been to this researcher.

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Appendix A: Information and Parental/Guardian Consent Letter

Experiences of Students Receiving Tertiary Behaviour Support in Inclusive High School Settings:
Information and Parental/Guardian Consent Letter

Researcher: Kiki Tanfara, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick.
Supervisors: Jeff Landine, PhD, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick
William Morrison, PhD, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick

Dear _____________[Guardian/Parent]:
I am a graduate student at the University of New Brunswick (Fredericton) working on a research project to complete my Masters of Education degree. The purpose of this letter is to introduce my research project and to request your consent for your child/ward to be interviewed as part of the process of gathering data for this study. This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board of the University of New Brunswick and is on file as REB #2017-006.

The purpose of my research is to listen to the experiences of high school students who have received behaviour intervention support from community, school or departmental services in New Brunswick and draw from their words a picture of their combined experiences. This study will provide valuable insight into how students experience receiving small group and individualized behaviour support while being part of inclusionary classrooms in New Brunswick. Results of this research project will be presented in my thesis, and I hope to share the implications of this study at academic conferences or research forums, as well as with the NB Department of Early Education and Child Development (EECD), including teachers, Education Support Teams and principals.

With your permission, I will ask your child/ward to take part in an interview that will be scheduled at times and locations convenient for child. Each interview will last between 60 and 90 minutes, depending on how much of their experiences they feel comfortable in sharing. A longer time period would be available, should your child/ward and I consider it necessary. Each interview will be recorded and then transcribed. A second interview may be requested to allow participants to respond to the written summary of their interviews.

Transcripts (with identifying information removed) and coded data will be securely stored electronically on my personal password-protected computer. Only the members of the research team listed above will have access to the gathered data.

Results of this study may be published in an academic journal and as a conference paper and may include quotations from each participant's interview. A pseudonym will be used instead of her/his name and every effort will be made to not disclose their identity.

The anticipated risk associated with involvement in this project is minimal, but the final decision to participate in this data-gathering effort is voluntary and is made by each individual. If at any point in the interview your child/ward should feel uncomfortable, he/she can take a break from the interview, choose not to answer some of the questions, or decide that she/he no longer wants to continue at all. Indeed, participants may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. The co-operation of each participant in this project is greatly appreciated; however, there is no penalty of any kind if they choose not to participate.

At the close of this project, a summary of the key outcomes associated with this research endeavour will be made available to participants upon request through the researcher. Transcripts (with identifying information removed) and coded data will be securely stored for potential future analysis, and destroyed after a period of seven years. Results of this study may be published in an academic journal and as a conference paper and may include quotations from each participant's interview.

This letter will serve as a consent form for your child's (ward's) participation. If you have any questions about the research, please contact Kiki Tanfara at (506) 651-4295, or my supervisors: Dr. Jeff Landine, at jlandine@unb.ca or 453-4839; Dr. Bill Morrison at wmorriso@unb.ca or 444-1641. Should you have questions or concerns and do not feel comfortable sharing these with above named, Dr. Ellen Rose, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick, is also available at (506) 453-4600.

Sincerely yours,

Kiki Tanfara

Statement of Consent

I have read the above description of the project entitled Experiences of students requiring tertiary level behaviour support within inclusive high school settings. The nature, demands, risk, and benefits of the project have been explained to me. I am aware that I have the opportunity to ask questions about this research. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and discontinue my child's (ward's) participation at any time without penalty. In signing this form, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies.

____[Child's Name]

____

Signature of Legal Guardian Date

I certify that I have explained to the above named individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study. I have answered all questions that have been raised by this parent/guardian. These elements of Informed Consent conform to federal guidelines and to the University of New Brunswick's policy on the use of Human Subjects. I have provided the participant's parent/legal guardian with a copy of this signed consent form.

____

Student Researcher Date

Appendix B: Information and Consent/Minor Assent Form

Interviews with Students Receiving Behaviour Support in New Brunswick High Schools: Information and Consent/Child Minor Assent Letter

Researcher: Kiki Tanfara, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick.
Supervisors: Jeff Landine, PhD, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick
William Morrison, PhD, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick

Dear ________ [Participant Name]:

The purpose of this letter is to introduce my research project and to request your consent to be interviewed as part of the process of gathering data for this study. I am a Masters of Education student in the Faculty of Education at the University of New Brunswick (Fredericton). This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Board of the University of New Brunswick and is on file as REB #2017-006.

The purpose of my research is to listen to the experiences of high school students who have received behaviour intervention support from community, school or departmental services in New Brunswick and draw from their words a picture of their combined experiences. This study will provide valuable insight into how students experience receiving small group and individualized behaviour support while being part of inclusionary classrooms in New Brunswick. Results of this research project will be presented in my thesis, and I hope to share the implications of this study at academic conferences or research forums, as well as with the NB Department of Early Education and Child Development (EECD), including teachers, Education Support Teams and principals.

For this project I would like to invite you to share your views and perspective as a student on these topics through an individual interview. Participation in this project is entirely voluntary. Individual interviews will be scheduled at times and locations convenient for you and will take between 60 and 90 minutes each, depending on how much of your story as a student you are willing to share. A longer time period would be available, should you and I consider it necessary. Each interview will be recorded and transcribed. A second interview may be requested to allow participants to respond to the written summary of their interviews. Individual responses will be kept confidential, and pseudonyms will be used whenever specific quotes are shared.

Transcripts (with identifying information removed) and coded data will be stored securely in electronic format on my personal password-protected laptop. Only the members of the research team listed above will have access to the gathered data.

The anticipated risk associated from your involvement in this project is minimal, but the final decision to participate in this data-gathering effort is voluntary and should be made by each individual. However, if at any point in the interview you feel uncomfortable, you can take a break from the interview, choose not to answer some of the questions, or

decide that you no longer want to continue at all. Indeed, you may withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason. You also have the right to withdraw any data that you have previously contributed to the study, by asking us to remove that information (contact information is provided above). Your co-operation in this project is greatly appreciated. However, there is no penalty of any kind if you choose not to participate.

At the close of this project, a summary of the key outcomes associated with this research endeavour will be made available to participants upon request to the researcher. Transcripts (with identifying information removed) and coded data will be securely stored for potential future analysis, and will be destroyed after a period of seven years. Results of this study may be published in an academic journal and as a conference paper and may include quotations from your interview. A pseudonym will be used instead of your name and every effort will be made to ensure that your identity is not disclosed.

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Kiki Tanfara at (506) 651-4295, or my supervisors: Dr. Jeff Landine, at jlandine@unb.ca or 453-4839; Dr. Bill Morrison at wmorriso@unb.ca or 444-1641. Should you have questions or concerns and do not feel comfortable sharing these with above named, Dr. Ellen Rose, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick, is also available at (506) 453-4600.

Sincerely yours,

Kiki Tanfara

Consent for Participation

I have read the above description of the project entitled *Experiences of students requiring tertiary level behaviour support within inclusive high school settings.* I have also had the opportunity to ask questions regarding this project. I understand that I am being requested to complete at least one and possibly two distance interview sessions via video or telephone conference calls. I consent to participate in the study as described in the project description letter. I understand that I may withdraw my participation from the project at any point.

Name____
Birth Date _________________________________

Signature of Participant ______________________________
Date _________________________________

I would like a copy of the report of this study. Yes ☐ No ☐
E-mail ____
Or
Mailing address
____

Appendix C: Request for Anglophone School District South Superintendent's Permission

Request for Anglophone School District South Superintendent's Permission

Dear Ms. Zoë Watson,

I am writing to you to introduce myself, my planned research study and to request permission to conduct this study in your District. I am a graduate student at the University of New Brunswick Fredericton, working at completing my M.Ed. in the field of Exceptional Learners. I am also a full-time Education Support Teacher at Harbour View High School. My research proposes to collect and interpret the experiences of high school students who have been receiving tertiary behaviour support within inclusive school environments using personal interviews. This letter is my request for your permission to conduct this research in the ASD-S. I have received approval for this research from the Research Ethics Board of the University of New Brunswick and the research is on file as REB 2017-006.

The purpose of my research is to listen to the experiences of secondary school students between the ages of 14 and 21 who have received behaviour intervention support from community, school, and/or departmental services in New Brunswick, and draw from their words a picture of their combined stories. This study will provide valuable insight into how students experience receiving individualized behaviour support while being part of inclusionary classrooms in New Brunswick. Results of this study will be presented in my thesis, and I also hope to share the implications of the research at academic conferences, research forums, and with New Brunswick's Department of Early Education and Child Development.

I have been working under the guidance and supervision of my faculty supervisor, Dr. Jeff Landine, and also with Dr. Bill Morrison, one of the Executive Directors of the Health and Education Research Group (HERG) of the Faculty of Education at UNB. Since HERG has linkages with the NB ISD Program, Dr. Morrison will be assisting me in making initial contact and communicating directly with the leadership of the St. Stephen Education Centre ISD program prior to selecting four students as appropriate candidates for these interviews.

I am hoping to receive your permission to proceed in contacting the St. Stephen Education Centre ISD Team and subsequently conduct interviews with the students selected. Please contact me with any questions or concerns you may have at

Kiki.Tanfara@nbed.nb.ca, or 506-651-4295. My supervisors may also be contacted: Dr. Jeff Landine, at jlandine@unb.ca or 453-4839; Dr. Bill Morrison at wmorriso@unb.ca or 444-1641. Should you have questions or concerns that you wish to direct outside of my research group, please contact Dr. Ellen Rose, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick who is available at (506) 453-4600.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Very Sincerely,
Kiki Tanfara

UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK
PO BOX 4400
Fredericton, NB
Canada E3B 5A3

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Appendix D: Participant Interview Guide

How are you?

What's it like where you're at?

Tell me a bit about yourself.

How old are you; what school do you go to; what grade are you in?

How is that going for you?

How many students go to your school?

What is/was school like for you?

What would you say you liked most about school?

What changed in grade 9?

What changed in grade 10?

What changed in grade 11?

How do you feel about that?

Describe what the other students are like in your classes.

How many students in your classes? Compare classes with 14 students and classes with 6; which do you prefer?

What would you like to share about any classes you liked or didn't like?

What were the students, people like in your classes?

What can you tell me about friends or anyone you feel close to?

Anything more you can share about that?

Anyone stick by your side through that?

What about classes makes you want to avoid them? What would keep you from going to class?

When you weren't in class, where would you feel more comfortable?

When did you begin to attend the alternate site?

How many students would be at your alternate site when you attended? Was it a big building?

How many classes would you have/Describe what your day is like there? How many students in your classes there?

When did you get connected to the C&Y Team?

Can you tell me a bit more about that?

How did that go about?

How long did that relationship last?

How often did you and your clinician connect?

Where would you meet / Where would you feel most comfortable?

How would you tweak this so it would work better for you?

What about the C&Y Team helped you out, worked for you?

Would you prefer to be notified when your clinician arrives or have a set time to meet each time?

How would the support people from C&Y Team you connected with make you feel they cared about you?

When did you connect with this team, how long did it take for you to connect with a team member/clinician?

Were there any teachers who made you feel safe and comfortable at school?

Describe to me what you do for fun outside of school/describe a fun day with your friends.

What would be your favourite part of that?

Describe where you live (rural/urban?)/Tell me about where you live.

Tell me about the people there.

Do you have someone you admire that you look up to? Can you tell me more about them? What do you both have in common?

Describe to me how people would make you feel important, or special.

Can you think of a teacher who made you feel this way? How did they show you they cared?

Describe something you enjoy doing. What do you like about it?

Describe the place you feel most comfortable at school?

Can you tell me anything else about it?

Where is it located? Is it easy to get to? Would you share this spot with other students?

Curriculum Vitae

Kristijana Tanfara

University of Western Ontario: Bachelor of Arts/social Sciences (Political Science) 1994

University of New Brunswick: Bachelor of Education (Middle Years Adolescent) 2006

Publications:

Proceedings from the 2016 Atlantic Education Graduate Student Conference (2017): Antistasis (UNB) Vol 7, No 1.

Proceedings from the 2015 UPEI Graduate Research Conference "Emerging Scholars:

Illuminating Graduate Research" (2016).

Conference Presentations:

2016 Atlantic Education Graduate Student Conference

2015 University of Prince Edward Island Multidisciplinary Graduate Research

Conference

2017 Atlantic Education Graduate Student Conference Peer Review Committee

2018 Atlantic Education Graduate Student Conference Peer Review Committee