FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation: Great Stories Club
2019-2020

Prepared For:
American Library Association

Prepared By:
Planning, Implementation & Evaluation (PIE) ORG

For questions about this report, please contact:
Dr. Jay Wade, Evaluation Director
PIE Org: jay@pieorg.org
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Executive Summary

The American Library Association’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Great Stories Club (TRHT GSC) engages libraries, community partners, and underserved teen audiences to read books and participate in discussions of social justice and racial equity. The program supports local communities in racial healing and narrative change efforts that address present inequities linked to historic and contemporary beliefs in racial hierarchy. The program seeks to bridge embedded divides and generate the will, capacities, and resources required for achieving greater equity and healing, particularly in the lives of young adults facing personal challenges such as detention, incarceration, addiction, academic probation, poverty, and homelessness. The goal of this program is to help youth participants connect with stories they identify with, reflect on issues of social justice and racial equity in modern society, and begin to change their personal narratives and challenge common assumptions about youth, race, and societal expectations. The program worked to achieve these goals by facilitating book club discussions and racial healing circles with local libraries and community partner programs. The TRHT GSC consisted of three specific rounds of program implementation, which are highlighted in the table below.

Table 1. TRHT GSC Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round</th>
<th>Libraries</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
An integrated analysis of key findings and recommendations for future iterations of the program is provided below; the data is a summary of surveys, interviews, and site visits of program youth participants, directors, and community partners, across all TRHT GSC rounds.

Impact

- **The TRHT GSC program effectively helped youth participants reflect on and better understand issues of racial injustice and social inequity.** This finding was consistent across all rounds. For example, Round III survey data showed that 76% of youth participants, community partners, and library project directors “agreed” that the program supported greater understanding of these issues. Interview data also showed that youth participants’ understanding increased over time, typically through effective book selections (100%) and strong program implementation.

- **Youth participants were able to shift their perspectives and identify with characters and situations in the texts, across all rounds.** This finding was consistent across the entire project. Per the library project director, community partner, and youth participant surveys in Round III, there was an overall average of 67% on these items. There was also supporting evidence from interviews and site visits, which showed that youth participants were able to apply this knowledge to their own lives and act with empathy for others.

- **The shift to true “narrative change” occurred;** however, the data was only explicit in Round III. For example, library project director, community partner, and youth participant surveys indicated that narrative change occurred (69% average), and this was also echoed in qualitative interviews. Because “narrative change” consists of a shift in behavior and action, however, it was less frequent than changes in knowledge or attitudes, which is consistent with most social science research. This finding was likely consistent across rounds but was clouded by the change in evaluation partners, methodology, and tools.

- **Youth participation in the program increased interest in reading across all rounds of TRHT GSC.** For example, Round II (90%) and Round III (75%) found that youth participants were more engaged with and interested in reading as a result of the program; qualitative data from the pilot also supported this finding.

- **Library staff experienced a parallel process**—library project directors, through TRHT GSC work, reflected on issues of bias, racial inequity, and social justice with their library staff and increased their understanding of these issues.

- **Strong, sustainable partnerships were formed** as a result of this program. Many libraries and community partner sites reported the prospect of future collaboration and program work as a result of the TRHT GSC experience. This was only reported in Round III due to specific data collection protocols that centered on this issue.

- **Racial healing circles were powerful experiences** and supported youth participant reflection and dialogue on key issues of racial and social justice.

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1 See Evaluation Methodology section for more details on the changes in evaluation partners and its effect on the evaluation effort.
Implementation

- **The program was implemented with fidelity across all rounds.** Final report data from the pilot, Round II, and Round III found that library sites implemented the required number of books, with the appropriate audiences, and, where possible, implemented racial healing circles. ALA gave 130 awards to 113 individual libraries and their communities (99 libraries received one grant, 11 libraries received two grants, and 3 libraries received three grants). These awarded libraries enacted 769 discussions and 126 racial healing circles with an average TRHT GSC attendance of 12 youth participants.

- **Library project directors were prepared to lead** the TRHT GSC discussions and reported confident execution of the program due to the ALA orientation, supporting materials, and strong community partnerships. The data here was consistent across all rounds.

- **Relevant personal experiences, historical examples that related to the books, ALA-provided discussion questions, and the racial healing circles** were key activities and strategies that supported positive program impacts. This was consistent across rounds. Also consistent was the finding that no single activity or strategy worked in isolation—it was a combination of multiple types, aligned to the contextual needs of each site, that spurred positive program impact.

Future Considerations & Recommendations

- **Robust program guides and lesson plan materials.** While library project directors were confident in their abilities to implement the program, feedback from all rounds of data noted that a more robust set of lesson plan materials would have bolstered their efficiency and efficacy. This was consistent across all rounds of data collection.

- **Facilitate library project director communication and collaboration.** Specific to Round II and III, library project directors reported a desire to effectively communicate and collaborate with other libraries to share ideas, best practices, and lessons learned. While some mechanisms existed (i.e., a listserv), library project directors were either unaware of or unengaged with those mechanisms and desired more explicit promotion and sharing across sites.

- **Incentives/time for attendance and reading.** While most programs ran smoothly, some sites in Round III specifically, struggled with consistent attendance and reading. They suggested that the program offer incentives to encourage attendance and/or allow for a long programming period between discussions for youth participants to read. Other suggestions included using time within the meetings to read aloud or individually to ensure completion of the text.

- **Youth Leadership.** This program offers a strong opportunity for youth to lead discussions, cultivate responsibility in the group, and take action toward issues of social justice and racial equity. As a result, this program could focus on more youth leadership opportunities and embed them within the detailed lesson plans. This could also support the attendance/reading issues.

- **Larger stipends for racial healing professionals.** Specific to Round III data, sites mentioned that the $1,200 stipends were not sufficient to bring racial healing professionals to their sites.
to facilitate a circle. This was particularly true for more rural destinations that did not have local, experienced racial healing circle facilitators.
Program Description

The American Library Association’s Great Stories Club (GSC) is a reading and discussion program that gives underserved youth participants the opportunity to read, reflect, and share ideas on topics that resonate with them. Since 2006, ALA has made 1,400 Great Stories Club grants to libraries, reaching more than 42,000 young adults in 49 states and 2 US territories. With funding received from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF) in 2017, ALA developed new series/themes that connect ALA’s longstanding Great Stories Club literary programming model to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation’s Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) efforts. Launched by the Kellogg Foundation in 2016, TRHT is a comprehensive, national, and community-based process to plan for and bring about transformational and sustainable narrative change, and to address the historic and contemporary effects of racism. ALA is one of the 100 voluntary National Partner Organizations, along with 44 scholars, that participated in the 2016 TRHT design phase. From October 2017 to August 2018, ALA collaborated with humanities scholars, programming librarians, racial healing practitioners and others in the development of three new reading and discussion series inspired by WKKF’s TRHT process.

Each Great Stories Club series on Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation engages libraries, community partners, and underserved teen audiences to read books and participate in discussions about identity, racial equity, and social justice. The program supports local communities in racial healing and change efforts that address present inequities linked to historic and contemporary beliefs in racial hierarchy. The program seeks to bridge embedded divides and generate the will, capacities, and resources required for achieving greater equity and healing, particularly in the lives of young adults facing personal challenges such as detention, incarceration, addiction, academic probation, poverty, and homelessness. The goal of this program is to help youth participants connect to stories they identify with, reflect on issues of social justice and racial equity in modern society, and begin to change their personal narratives and challenge common assumptions about youth participants, race, and societal expectations.

Core program components include library partnerships with community institutions that reach underserved youth participants (i.e., alternative high schools, juvenile detention centers, after school programs) and an orientation workshop that engages library project directors in dialogue facilitation training, model discussions about the selected books and humanities themes, and the Kellogg Foundation’s racial healing circle methodology.

The program curated books to reflect the diverse identities and experiences of young adults and facilitated conversations and activities about book themes centered on identity, racial equity, and social justice. Sites read four books for each program iteration. The book discussions were guided by questions developed by humanities scholars. Most program series included a racial healing circle(s), ideally led by racial healing circle co-facilitators who received training from consultants to the W.K.
Kellogg Foundation. The racial healing circles were designed to more deeply explore issues of race, injustice, and personal narratives.

In 2018, ALA piloted the TRHT GSC program in 25 libraries. Following the pilot program, ALA rolled out TRHT GSC nationally in 2019 – 2020. The national launch included two program grant periods with a menu of three thematic selection themes. Round II provided a total of 70 grants to libraries to support TRHT GSC programs with the Finding Your Voice or Deeper than Our Skins themes. Round III awarded 35 grants to libraries to offer Growing Up Brave themed programs. The programming period, series themes, and associated books are summarized in the table below.

### Table 2. TRHT GSC Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Round” and # Libraries</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TRHT GSC (Pilot): 25 sites participated and the programming period took place from May 2018 – October 2018</td>
<td>Growing Up Brave</td>
<td>The Hate U Give, Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal March: Book One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRHT GSC (Round II): 40 libraries participated and the programming period was March 1, 2019 – December 30, 2019</td>
<td>Finding Your Voice</td>
<td>The Poet X, I Am Alfonso Jones, Gabi, A Girl in Pieces, Piecing Me Together, American Street, Anger is a Gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRHT GSC (Round II): 30 libraries participated and the programming period was March 1, 2019 – December 30, 2019</td>
<td>Deeper than Our Skins</td>
<td>Between the World and Me, The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano, Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices, The Shadow Hero, Mother of the Sea, Always Running: La Vida Loca. Gang Days in L.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THRT GSC (Round III): 35 sites participated and the programming period was October 1, 2019 – March 30, 2020</td>
<td>Growing Up Brave</td>
<td>The Hate U Give, Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal March: Book One, Shadowshaper X: A Novel, The Sun Is Also a Star</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A list of all pilot, Round II and Round III libraries is found in Appendix A.

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2 Program Description was slightly modified from ALA website: http://www.ala.org/tools/programming/greatstories/about and the TRHT GSC Pilot Evaluation Report.
Evaluation Methodology

This final evaluation utilized a mixed methods approach, integrating survey data, interviews, site visits, and document reviews of previous evaluations. The TRHT GSC program had three phrases of implementation: a Pilot phase and Rounds II and III. Another evaluation team was responsible for the Pilot and Round II evaluation work. PIE Org was hired at the end of Round II and start of Round III. Because of the change in evaluation partners, there was limited data collection in Round II and only the final evaluation report available for review from the Pilot. As a result, Round III data was the most robust and is therefore highlighted more consistently throughout the report. Where possible, the data from the Pilot and Round II is also integrated. Below is a review of the specific data collection tools that were leveraged and integrated within this report.

**Pilot Data**
- Pilot Evaluation Report (Appendix B)

**Round II Data**
- Round II Project Director Survey Findings (Appendix C)
- Round II Final Grant Reports (Appendix D)

**Round III Data**
- Participant Feedback survey (Appendix E)
- Project Director survey (Appendix F)
- Community Partner survey (Appendix G)
- Round III Final Grant Reports (Appendix I)
- Site Director & Community Partner Interviews (Appendix J-K)
- Site Visits (Appendix L)

All of these data collection tools were analyzed and integrated to answer the questions, highlighted below, which guided the evaluation work.

**Impact**
- How effective was TRHT GSC in inspiring narrative change for youth participants and expanding their understanding of personal and structural racism and human equity?
- In what ways has the self-perception of youth participants and library workers as agents of change shifted over the course of their TRHT GSC experience?

**Implementation**
- Was the program implemented as intended?
- What are strategies, activities, and content that engage youth participants, support their participation in program sessions, and build meaningful relationships among youth participants and facilitators?
• How were the racial healing circles implemented and what was the youth participants perception of them?
• What was the structure and practice of community partnerships for assisting youth participants in their process of racial healing?

**Future ALA Supports**
• What can be improved in future TRHT GSC iterations for youth participants and library workers?

First, this report highlights an integrated analysis of all tools, across all rounds of programming, around the key evaluation questions of impact, implementation, and ALA supports. Then, the appendices of this report summarize each of these data collection tools individually, across all rounds of TRHT GSC implementation.
Integrated Analysis
Impact, Implementation & Future ALA Supports

Introduction

This section integrates findings from the multiple data collection tools and methodologies leveraged across all rounds of the TRHT GSC. This section analyzes them comprehensively to answer the questions that guided this evaluation. The data collection tools and methods integrated in this section are outlined below and also summarized in the report appendices.

**Pilot Data**
- Pilot Evaluation Report (Appendix B)

**Round II Data**
- Round II Project Director Survey Findings (Appendix C)
- Round II Final Grant Reports (Appendix D)

**Round III Data**
- Participant Feedback survey (Appendix E)
- Library Project Director survey (Appendix F)
- Community Partner survey (Appendix G)
- Round III Final Grant Reports (Appendix I)
- Site Director & Community Partner Interviews (Appendix J- K)
- Site Visits (Appendix L)

Additional findings outside of the evaluation questions are also highlighted. First, impact is discussed, followed by implementation and recommendations for future programming.
Impact

For staff and youth participants, how effective was TRHT GSC in shifting narrative change and expanding their understanding of personal and structural racism and human equity?

This question is two-fold—asking about both understanding of personal and structural racism, as well as personal “narrative change” around these same issues. All of the data collected from the various tools consistently and clearly shows that TRHT GSC expanded understanding of structural racism and human equity. Library project director survey and final report data from Round II showed that 76% of youth “increased their understanding of social equity”; the pilot report frequently noted that the program helped youth participants improve their understanding of social and racial inequities. Round III data from youth participants, library project directors, and community partners also bore out this finding, highlighted in the figure below.

Figure 1. Round III Knowledge & Understanding

TRHT GSC impacted knowledge and understanding of racial equity and social justice issues, with an overall average of 76% across surveys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have a better understanding of structural racism and inequality</th>
<th>I was able to reflect on issues of race and justice</th>
<th>I understand how the themes of the book apply to my own life</th>
<th>This book helped youth increase their understanding of social equity</th>
<th>This program gave the youth a better understanding of racial and social equity</th>
<th>Knowledge &amp; Understanding Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant Survey</td>
<td>Project Director Survey</td>
<td>Community Partner Survey</td>
<td>Total Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data here shows that, youth participants (74% average), library project directors (80%), and community partners (95%) reported that youth participants gained a better understanding of racism and society equity, with a total average of 76% across all surveys. This is further supported by the fact all three parties also reported that the books were appropriate selections and the discussions were engaging—which is also echoed in Round II and pilot data. Thus, the TRHT GSC program structure consistently supported deep reflection on and understanding of these key issues.

. . . Once they realized Malcolm X’s story was similar to theirs, once that connection is made, all of the sudden the walls come tumbling down and people will share their thoughts and ideas and things that have happened to them. . .”
The second part of the evaluation question focuses on youth participants “narrative change”, or the ability for them to see themselves in these structures, and feel empowered to change their self-perceptions of what it means to be a young person living in a world with racial inequities. There was evidence that this occurred, per the quote above; however, the survey data around “change” was consistently lower than items about understanding and general reflection, which suggests that the transition from knowledge to action was more difficult for youth participants. This finding was consistent across rounds of TRHT GSC—the pilot report found that youth gained knowledge and shifted perspectives; however, they reported that “narrative change” did not occur. In the Round II library project director survey, knowledge of social equity (76%) was lower than “narrative change” (44%). These differences are also highlighted consistently across the Round III survey data, as demonstrated in the figure below.

Figure 2. Round III Knowledge vs. Action

The Round III data shows that the program had specific impacts on youth participants, and was able to support them to reflect on and understand issues of structural racism and equity; however, the ability to facilitate “narrative change” was harder. On average, youth participants (61%), library project directors (64%) and community partners (85%) reported lower on these items, with an overall average of 69% across surveys. There is evidence that “narrative change” occurred; however, the data is clear that the transition from knowledge to behavior was more difficult.

This finding is common in social interventions—knowledge and attitudes must change first, which lays the groundwork for the more difficult task of behavior change (Fredricks, Nafzger, Smith & Riley, 2017). Research consistently shows that more targeted programming over time is needed to instill lasting behavior change, which is aligned to TRHT GSC findings (Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010).
Overall, the data shows that TRHT GSC clearly lays the groundwork for youth participant “narrative change”—data across all rounds of programming found that the project shifted knowledge and attitudes and began the shift towards behavior. With more programming over time, it is very likely there would be more pronounced narrative change.

**In what ways has the self-perception of youth participants and library workers as agents of change shifted over the course of TRHT GSC?**

This evaluation question is directly related to the first. Self-perception was indeed a key impact of the program, as demonstrated by survey and interview data. For the pilot, the evaluation report stated that the book club discussions helped youth participants see “themselves in relationship to their families more so than before” (Appendix B, p.18) and that self-perception occurred but varied across sites. Round II library project director survey data did not directly ask about changes in self-perception. Round III survey data also found that self-perceptions changed, per the figure below.

**Figure 3. Round III Self Perception**

![Self-perception changed (67%); however, not as much as knowledge or understanding](image)

The figure above shows that, on average, youth participants (64%), library project directors (64%), and community partners (85%) all reported change in youth participants self-perception, with a total average of 67% across surveys. This was also a key interview finding—library project directors noted that youth participants changed their perception of themselves, and the world they lived in, as a result of the program. In many instances, tying the themes of the books to the personal lives of the youth participants, as well as to relevant current and historical events, helped youth participants “see” themselves and their communities in the texts.

“It gave me a lot more empathy toward people. . . . A lot of times people just want to judge other people. ‘You get in trouble all the time.’ But sometimes they’re just going through
something and they feel like they have to do something. So, it just helps me have a little more empathy toward people.”

A shift to action and behavior change was not as strongly present in the data. There were, however, concrete examples of youth participants applying their learning from the TRHT GSC and acting as an agent of change within their groups or communities. Powerful examples are highlighted by Round II final grant quotes below.

“I think the group members also gained a lot of empathy for and from each other. One person was dealing with coming out as non-binary which meant other group members needed to examine their own internalized homophobia.”

“By implementing a Great Stories Club at the Youth Empowerment Center, we created an insulated environment where a group of young Black teens were free to express their views about prejudice, discrimination, and racism in all its forms…. the racial healing circle was not something that the teens have engaged in before, and the experience seemed to be transformative for them.”

These examples were small in scale but powerful. There was not strong evidence to support ongoing change action; however, at the micro level, youth participants applied their learning to support each other and become allies in issues of diversity and inclusion. This data is also consistent with the pilot findings.

Other Impacts

This program also facilitated important impacts beyond the knowledge, self-perception, and behavior change of youth participants. For example, this program helped build community, promoted engagement with reading and books, facilitated partnerships, and supported a parallel process with library staff. Examples of each of these impacts are provided below.

Reading

Surveys and interview data showed that youth participants reported more positive attitudes towards reading. The pilot evaluation report found that “through reading engaging books that reflected the lives and character of young participants, their interest in reading was sparked or regained” (Appendix B, p. 16). Similarly, Round II data found that 90% of youth were engaged with reading and book club discussions. Round III data was also clear on this point, per the figure below.
Participant focus group data, from site visits, supported the survey data.

“Reading is not just something that takes up your time, but it’s something that can help you get more knowledge. It’s something to get into, it’s just like if you join a club at school or a sport, or something. It’s something that helps you with socializing and being able to resonate with other people. Being able to do something that others enjoy.”

“When I first got here I did not enjoy reading. I put my foot in the ground a lot when it came to reading. And then they talked me into it and I tried reading and I like it more than I did before.”

**Building Community**

Perhaps the most consistent finding across all TRHT GSC programming was that the program structure brought youth participants, libraries, and community partners together to build a “compassionate space” where youth participants could explore difficult topics of race, equity, and social justice. This process helped youth participants and adults build meaningful relationships with each other and supported community-building within the program. The pilot evaluation report and the Round II final grant reports all highlighted how youth participant and library project directors built a community with each other and that this community structure supported youth participants sharing their personal experiences with social and racial inequities, and developed friendships within the group. Round III survey data was also robust around this finding, per the figure below.
The figure above shows that youth participants and adults both reported meaningful connections with each other. The qualitative data further supported this and provides meaningful context to these relationships. See the quotes below, from the pilot and Round II evaluations, for further evidence:

“...Almost all of them [the youth participants] said that what they liked about this group [the TRHT GSC] was that it gave them a place to come together and an opportunity to share ideas with diverse people. Also, they got to feel that ‘togetherness’ and have inside jokes.”

“The Club for them has become something deeper and more meaningful than just an extra ‘school activity’; it has become a sanctuary and safe-space and communal meeting of minds allowing them to step outside the bounds of social expectations and obligations, and be their more authentic selves.”

“The library is gaining a reputation as a place that can be known as a safe space to talk about race.”

Thus, this program was successful at facilitating significant relationships among and within the program, which likely allowed for youth participants to meaningfully engage with the material in a compassionate, non-judgmental space. In many cases, these relationships will continue beyond the program, suggesting wider ripple effects of the TRHT GSC.

**Partnerships**

“The great stories club has strengthened our partnership with [organization] where on a regular basis I meet with (their staff), and I share any new upcoming contests or programs or events that are going on and because of our participation and success with the Great Stories Club, [organization] has secured some of their own funding . . . (to) pay for STEAM-based programming in . . . libraries and they will transport kids and also have it open to the public and neighborhood kids can also participate.”
“Due to the success of these meetings and the engagement of the teens, we had planned three teen-driven out of school meetups, one additional reading/discussion meeting, and one additional racial healing circle to take place through May 2020. Though we weren’t able to hold these programs [due to COVID-19], we did make progress in working with the teens and their school to plan them. It is clear that the interest in extending the program through the end of the school year shows a willingness and an emphasis on both the part of the library and the partner school to learn and grow with a racial equity and inclusion mindset, and the knowledge gained through this program that such a mindset is an invaluable approach for the youth participants and the community.”

This idea of community building was not just between youth participants and adults, but also between libraries and community partners. The Round III interview and site visit data supported the idea that the TRHT GSC’s collaboration component deepened relationships between community partners and libraries, and in many cases, these relationships hope to expand to other programs and future collaborations. This data was consistently highlighted across all rounds of programming.

Library Impacts

“They’re also a diverse group of students many of whom are BIPOC and/or LGBTQ, while most of the staff are white and don’t identify as queer. [Staff and youth participants] commented multiple times about how these books speak to them and that the discussions have opened [staff] eyes to new ways of seeing the world.”

Finally, library project directors reported in both interviews and final grant reports that they experienced a parallel process of reflecting on and internalizing issues of racism, equity, and social justice. This finding was consistent across TRHT GSC programming rounds. By facilitating the TRHT GSC program, library project directors reflected on their own biases, about structures within the library, and created space for staff to grapple with issues of racism and injustice.
Implementation

Was the program implemented as intended?

Yes, there is strong evidence that the program was implemented as intended across all rounds of programming. The ALA final grant report data shows that sites implemented the program with fidelity—sites read the required number of books, held a robust number of book discussions, had consistent program attendance of over 10+ youth participants, and, where possible, implemented the racial healing circles.

Table 3: Program Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Pilot</th>
<th>Round II*</th>
<th>Round III</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>113**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books Read</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>1,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Healing Circles</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Attendance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12^</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Round II data reflects only 64 responses; **multiple libraries participated in multiple rounds of TRHT GSC; ^ indicates averages in Total column

In addition, data across rounds consistently showed that not only was the program implemented with fidelity, but also with quality. In the pilot, data found that library project directors “noted that the resources and training were quite helpful in implementing the model and helped them feel prepared” (Appendix B, p.20). Round II library project director surveys found that 91% felt prepared to lead and implement the program and that 90% of the youth participants were engaged throughout TRHT GSC. In Round III, library project directors felt prepared to lead (100%) and reported that youth participants were engaged throughout the process (79%) via appropriate book selections (91%). Similarly, in Round III, community partners reported that the “implementation of this program went smoothly” (100%).

The only issues in implementation were racial healing circles and attendance/buy-in from youth participants. In Round III specifically, many sites reported that it was difficult to locate a certified racial healing facilitator, and that the stipend was not sufficient for paying for facilitator travel. In addition, data across all rounds noted that attendance and buy-in from youth participants was difficult. Incentives for attendance and/or reading would support consistent student attendance and more time for reading would allow for more buy-in to the discussions. Allowing for youth leadership opportunities within the program, was also a potential way to consistently engage youth participants in the TRHT GSC. For example, a youth participant could be responsible for facilitating a group discussion and/or a group of youth leaders could lead all discussions for a specific book.
What are strategies, activities, and content that engage youth participants, support their participation in program sessions, and build meaningful relationship among youth participants and facilitators?

There was no singular strategy or activity that facilitated engagement with youth participants; rather, it was a multi-pronged approach that supported engagement and participation. Data across all rounds of TRHT GSC found that a blend of the following strategies, aligned to the contextual needs of each site, were the most helpful.

**Strategies & Activities**

- **Personal & Relevant Experiences.** Library project directors were successful when they were able to tie the book themes to the personal experiences of youth participants. By linking the book themes to youth participants' lived experiences, library project directors were able to help them “see” themselves in the text and internalize how issues of race and equity were relevant in their own lives. In addition, library project directors shared their own personal experiences with these issues, and encouraged youth participants to do the same.

- **ALA Lesson Plan Materials.** The ALA lesson plan materials, including literature-based discussion questions and racial healing circle prompts were a helpful foundation for library project directors. Most library project directors used these materials and questions as a base from which to build the TRHT GSC discussions.

- **Current & Historical Events.** Another helpful strategy was tying the book themes to current and historical events. By contextualizing the book themes to current issues, such as police shootings, and historical figures like John Lewis or Malcolm X, the library project directors were able to show how these themes emerged in the larger American context, and demonstrate how themes of racial injustice and inequity existed in the past and remain current in this day. Historical based activities were the fifth rated “helpful activity” in the library project director survey, but were consistently highlighted within the interviews.

- **“Other”** Other activities were the second highest average “helpful activity” on the library project director survey. Movies, journaling, and guest speakers were the most mentioned “other” activities and interview data confirmed their importance to the program.

How were the racial healing circles implemented and what was the youth participants’ perception of them?

Data was consistent across TRHT GSC programming that racial healing circles were an important component of the program. Interview data found that all library project directors reported that the racial healing circles were impactful; and the circle observation found that there were deep conversations around issues of social equity. In addition, 89% of “racial healing circles were effective in helping youth participants on their understanding of society” and 89% of youth participants “actively participated in the circles” according to the Round III community partner surveys. The only issue with the circles was finding a lead facilitator for them. Many organizations struggled to
locate experienced racial healing circle co-facilitators and instead had to implement them on their own, based on the orientation training.

What was the structure and process of community partnerships for assisting youth participants in their process of racial healing?

“Our partner in the TRHT GSC, helped with recruitment and, as needed, counseling. As stated above, their contributions were invaluable. We had a variety of community partners, and each one did a marvelous job! . . . Speaking personally, as the co-facilitator at each session, I cannot overstate how powerful it is for teens to be treated as equals by such admirable, successful adults. And I did not expect, but loved, how much each community leader shared his or her personal story with the teens. I think this, combined with their enthusiasm for the books, made each session of the TRHT GSC truly unique and amazingly powerful. Each one of the partners thanked us for making them part of this experience, and they would all be happy to work with us again.”

The relationship between community partners and libraries were a critical facilitator of program impact. Without successful collaboration, programming would not be possible. The data consistently showed that these partnerships were equitable and fruitful across programming. In the pilot, 88% would partner with the library again on another project and 67% planned to continue racial healing work within their organization. In Round III, community partners reported that “the library site was a strong partner throughout this project” (100%), and that “the role and expectations for this work were clear” (95%). As a result, 100% of the community partners reported that “the implementation of this program went smoothly.” Similarly, library project directors were generally pleased with their partnerships. In fact, as stated in the above section, many organizations plan to continue to partner together and offer future programming as a result of the TRHT GSC partnership. Interview data showed that clear expectations, consistent communication, and personnel stability were critical for a successful partnership.

Future ALA Supports

Data was also collected to ask how ALA could better support future iterations of this program. The following evaluation question guided this inquiry:

What can be improved in future TRHT GSC iterations for youth participants and library workers?

Data across all rounds of TRHT GSC consistently highlighted the following recommendations to improve future programming.

- **Opportunities to observe another TRHT GSC book club or have a mentor with previous program experience.** It would be helpful to see a TRHT GSC book club in action or “to have a mentor or somebody that has that experience that you could just call up.”
• **Provide a more detailed set of lessons plans so that the program is more turnkey.** Though library project directors mentioned that the implementation guide was a useful resource, there were still requests for more specific lesson plan materials such as a “[lesson plan] guide for a one-hour class, what we might do with one chapter or each of the books, or actual learning activities.” One of the community partners suggested that it could be helpful to have a workbook to use with the youth participants, in order to be able to support the book club outside of the regular meetings. This includes ideas about specific activities and resources to use related themes/activities.

• **Resource and/or questions for different levels of engagement.** As was mentioned in the implementation section, it could be helpful to provide additional and/or easier questions geared toward youth participants who are at different reading levels or who haven’t read the books. Additionally, the youth participants have different levels of motivation to participate and engage, based on their context, which is helpful to understand when program planning.

• **Active listserv or other ways to communicate with other libraries.** Many also wanted spaces to communicate and collaborate with others—an area to share ideas and challenges and receive feedback from peers. A listserv was the most common suggestion for this type of share-space, indicating that multiple library project directors were unaware of the existing project listserv.

• **Incentives/time for attendance and reading.** Youth participants struggled to fully read the books and attend the TRHT GSC consistently. As a result, sites suggested that the program offer incentives to encourage attendance and/or allow for longer times between discussions for youth participants to read. Other sites suggested included using time within the meetings to read aloud or individually to ensure completion of the text.

• **Larger stipends for racial healing professionals.** Specific to Round III data, sites mentioned that the $1,200 stipends were not sufficient to bring racial healing professionals to their sites to facilitate a circle. This was particularly true for more rural destinations that did not have local, certified racial healing facilitators.
References


# Appendix A: Pilot, Round II & Round III Sites

## Table A1. Pilot Sites

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<th>Pilot TRHT GSC Sites</th>
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<td>Juneau Public Library (Juneau, AK)</td>
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<td>Omaha Public Library (Omaha, NE)</td>
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<td>Richland Library (Columbia, SC)</td>
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<td>Central Rappahannock Regional Library (Stafford, VA)</td>
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## Table A2. Round II Sites

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<td>Fresno County Library - Fig Garden Branch, (Fresno, CA)      Elizabeth Public Library (Elizabeth, NJ)</td>
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Appendix B: Round I Evaluation Report
Authors

Dominica McBride, PhD
Founder and CEO, BECOME

Rita Fierro, PhD
Consultant

Alicia Anderson, MS
Project Manager and Consultant

Keisha Farmer-Smith, PhD
Senior Consultant

Emily Neumann
Graphic Designer
Table of Contents

Executive Summary 4
Introduction & Context 8
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Results 13
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Appendix B 36
The Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation initiative (TRHT), was developed and supported by the WK Kellogg Foundation, and designed to confront the harm, fractures, and barriers faced by people of color due to racial divisions and structural oppression. Children who face these detrimental impacts are born into an environment where they are forced to navigate its tumultuous terrain, leaving psychological and often indelible scars. These wounds come from both interpersonal slights as well as structural harm by systems (e.g., criminal justice, education). The TRHT seeks to “jettison the belief in a hierarchy of human value,” thus creating an environment that is more conducive to the health and well-being of all children. The American Library Association (ALA) invested in this initiative through its own lens of library science and expanding a love of literature and learning. Marrying the goal of the TRHT with the strategy of literature, ALA built on its existing Great Stories Club (GSC) program model designed especially for, and with, youth struggling with issues such as addiction, poverty, academic probation, or incarceration to focus on race through the TRHT framework – the TRHT GSC.

In partnership with BECOME: Center for Community Engagement and Social Change, ALA evaluated its pilot TRHT GSC project across 25 sites (libraries and partner organizations) to explore areas for improvement and determine its impact on racial healing, supporting narrative change of youth participants, and building capacity within the sites to implement the program.

The TRHT seeks to “jettison the belief in a hierarchy of human value,” thus creating an environment that is more conducive to the health and well-being of all children.

Components of the pilot TRHT GSC project included:

1. **Facilitated sessions**
   - Facilitated book discussions used books that reflect the diverse identities and experiences of young adults. The book discussions were coupled with suggested discussion questions specific to each reading.
   - A racial healing circle was led by a professional and skilled racial healing facilitator. These sessions are designed to support the emulation of an optimal and just social reality where people recognize and respond to the humanity in one another.

2. **Grassroots partnerships with community organizations that serve high-need youth**
   - The purpose of this component is to provide young people with vital connections to sites and other nonprofits that can be important to success after detention, graduation, or during other periods of change.

3. **Capacity building for library project directors to facilitate book discussions.**
   - At these workshops, library project directors were provided training in facilitation skills and a racial healing circle experience.
To evaluate the pilot project, the following activities were completed:

- Interviews with 11 library project directors
- Surveys of 3 library project directors
- Interviews with 3 racial healing facilitators
- Surveys of 9 community partners
- Review of staff reflection logs and youth responses from 22 sites that uploaded data
- A focus group with 8 youth participants
- Informal small group interviews with 10 youth participants

Findings

Overall, the most notable changes for young people were increased interest in reading, expanded support, and disclosing sensitive or traumatic experiences and thoughts.

There is no evidence that the program as a whole had an impact on youths’ narrative change as it relates to society. However, library project directors reported that reading materials selected contributed to encouraging youth to explore issues of race, class, and identity in a safe, well-structured, and respectful environment.

Library project directors reported that youth participants in their TRHT GSC experienced moments where they saw the capacity for narrative change in their own lives as well as opportunities for building intersectional equity in their schools and communities.

Racial healing circles also had the consequence of challenging adults’ preconceptions about youth and understanding their lives more. What library project directors learned about the youth’s lives deepened their own understanding of the youth.

Library project directors for the sites felt that they experienced an increased capacity to be effective not only as the TRHT GSC program implementers, but also in their other work as library professionals and educators.

“It’s like everyone is a piece of paper with two sides and when there is enough ink on one side the weight of it bleeds through to the other side and that side is also changed.”
- Participant

Recommendations

Participating libraries should understand the mechanisms of change and what needs to happen initially and in the long-term for sustainable shifts in personal identity and narrative. The figure below presents a model for the process of change, rooted in the lessons learned and logic of the pilot libraries for the TRHT GSC model.
Additionally, the program staff should operate with an expanded view of community partnerships. While the community partners were initially designed to help students reach their next phase of growth or solve current issues, some library project directors learned over time that they can be agents of change in their communities. Through partners’ increased awareness about insidious racial dynamics, they can use their role to further racial equity as well as better serve the young people.

With regard to training and capacity building, the program should keep:

- **Training on facilitation**
- **Racial healing circle participation**
- **Discussion questions**

The program should add:

- **Theory of change/principles** - Sites need to understand the mechanisms of change for the racial healing circles and narrative change, personal identity, etc. If they understand these essential elements, most can infuse them in programming from the beginning and make more progress.
- **Deeper dialogue and understanding** - Conversations should focus on racial equity, racial healing, structural racism and discrimination, and the ways in which each of us contributes with our own power, privilege, and biases. Some library project directors did not have a robust understanding of structural racism and racial equity, nor were they able to describe the underlying theory of change for the racial healing circles.
- **Tutelage and discussion around being an ally** - Implicit bias is common due to the human condition. It is especially prevalent for European Americans who state they are not racist or are “color blind.” One library project director described her own journey through the program, initially believing that she was not “racist” and learned through the process that she too had blindly adopted racist language and ideology. This type of training should be incorporated into the workshop with a focus on ongoing critical self-reflection and what it means to be an ally to people of color.
- **Time for developing strategy** - This includes strategies for programming (e.g. time, staff substitutes, building other staff members’ capacity), community capacity building, and sustainability of work.
TRHT GSC Interim Evaluation Report
Introduction & Context

The history and present context of the US is characterized by racial divisions and structural oppression, creating barriers for the success of people of color. Children are born into this environment and are forced to navigate its tumultuous terrain, leaving psychological and often indelible scars. These wounds come from both interpersonal slights as well as structural harm by systems (e.g., criminal justice, education). The Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation initiative (TRHT), developed and supported by the WK Kellogg Foundation, was designed to directly confront the harm and fractures of this pernicious situation. The TRHT seeks to “jettison the belief in a hierarchy of human value,” thus creating an environment that is more conducive to the health and well-being of all children.

The American Library Association (ALA) invested in this initiative through its own lens of library science and expanding a love of literature and learning. The mission of ALA is to: “provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of library professionalism in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.” Marrying the goal of the TRHT with the strategy of literature, ALA built on its existing Great Stories Club (GSC) program model designed especially for, and with, youth struggling with issues, such as addiction, poverty, academic probation, or incarceration to focus on race through the TRHT framework – the TRHT GSC.

Program Description

Components of the pilot TRHT GSC project included:

1. Facilitated sessions
   - Facilitated book discussions used books that reflect the diverse identities and experiences of young adults. The book discussions were coupled with suggested discussion questions specific to each reading.
   - A racial healing circle led by a professional and skilled racial healing facilitator. These sessions are designed to support the emulation of an optimal and just social reality where people recognize and respond to the humanity in one another.
For the pilot implementation, three books were provided:

**The Hate U Give**
by Angie Thomas

A novel focused on the effects of police brutality and its impact on communities of color, shown through the psychological journey of an African American female protagonist who loses a friend to murder by a police officer.

**Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal**
by G. Willow Wilson, Adrian Alphona

A graphic novel centered on a superhero that is a teenage, Muslim, female and her unfoldment of her powers and confidence.

**March: Book One**
by John Lewis, Andrew Aydin, Nate Powell

A graphic novel about the civil rights era, nonviolent training, and experience of overt and often violent racism shown through the life of John Lewis.

The goal of the book discussions is fostering youth engagement with critical questions of identity and personal narrative within the framework of human equity and structural racism. Through a desired enhanced consciousness, the young people would gain a sense of agency and see a role for themselves in shifting structural racism within their communities and beyond.
The evaluation partner for this initiative is BECOME, which is a nonprofit organization with a mission to nourish communities affected by poverty and injustice and to help make their vision of a thriving community a reality. We do this through program evaluation and research, capacity building, facilitation, strategic planning, and community organizing.

Purpose of Evaluation

- Identify indicators for capacity, support, and buy-in for narrative change and racial healing as part of the work of sites as agents of community innovation and change.

- Understand the effectiveness of the hybrid model of the GSC and the TRHT in terms of:
  - Fostering youth engagement with critical questions of identity and personal narrative within the framework of human equity and structural racism.
  - Building library project directors’ capacity to manage and facilitate the hybrid model and further see themselves within structures of human equity and structural racism.

- Learn the strategies, activities, processes, and content (i.e., books) that work well for supporting narrative change with participants and integrate lessons learned into future iterations of the TRHT GSC.

- Disseminate implications and recommendations for sustaining the work in the field.

- Understand the level of institutional impact of these efforts on ALA.
# Evaluation Questions

Out of this charge, several evaluation questions (along with sub questions) were developed that guided the pilot evaluation and this interim report:

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<tr>
<th>Overarching Evaluation Questions</th>
<th>Interim Report Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>How were the racial healing circles implemented?</td>
<td>Was there capacity, support, and buy-in for narrative change and racial healing as part of the work of the pilot sites, as it related to the TRHT GSC project?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was the perception of youth participants in the racial healing circles?</td>
<td>Was there buy-in and capacity in a more general sense (e.g., interest in pursuing racial healing facilitation/training and applying it in non-TRHT GSC settings)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>For staff and youth, how effective was the TRHT GSC in shifting narrative change and expanding an understanding of personal and structural racism and human equity?</td>
<td>How effective was the TRHT GSC model in terms of:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Fostering youth engagement with critical questions of identity and personal narrative within the framework of human equity and structural racism?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Building the pilot sites’ capacity to manage and facilitate the TRHT GSC model and see themselves within the structures of human equity and structural racism?</td>
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<td>To what extent has the self-perception of young people and library project directors as agents of change shifted over the course of the grant program period (May 2018-April 2020)?</td>
<td>What strategies, activities, processes, and content worked/didn’t work well for supporting narrative change with participants?</td>
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<td>What are strategies, activities, processes, and content that engage youth and support youth participation in all four sessions (in their library) of the TRHT GSC?</td>
<td>What, if any, impact did participating in the project have on the site’s relationship with community organizations (their partner organization and/or other(s) if applicable)?</td>
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<td>What were the most helpful strategies in building meaningful relationships with the youth participants?</td>
<td>What recommendations does BECOME have for the national implementation of the TRHT GSC?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What was the structure and process of community partnerships for assisting youth in their process of racial healing?</td>
<td>Do sites generally plan to participate in the next round of grants? What are the factors driving that decision?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is needed within ALA and beyond to support the sustainability of this work in sites?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What can be improved in future iterations of the program for young people and library project directors?</td>
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Methods

To answer the questions, the following activities were completed:

- Interviews with 11 library project directors
- Surveys of 3 library project directors
- Interviews with 3 racial healing facilitators
- Surveys of 9 community partners
- Review of staff reflection logs and youth responses from 22 sites that uploaded data
- A focus group with 8 youth participants
- Informal small group interviews with 10 youth participants
- Observation of program sessions (N=2)

Artwork created by Washington County Free Library’s TRHT GSC
The two main components of the facilitated sessions were the book discussion series and the racial healing session. Book discussion sessions were implemented in a variety of ways, depending on the structure and routine of the library or partner institution (sites) and the purview of the library project director. For example, one library partnered with a work program and THRT GSC was a key component. Another TRHT GSC was integrated into a school’s routine. Programs varied by frequency of meetings, time in session, and consistency of attendance.

A young man who participated in the program shared this sentiment in his reflections after reading *The Hate U Give*, and it serves as an appropriate metaphor for the multi-layered effects, dynamics, and potential of the TRHT GSC. The program serves as the ink and for various library project directors, racial healing facilitators, and sites. The ‘weight’ varied depending on strategy, person, skill, and rapport with the young people.

The following subsections focus on the core components of the model and are organized by overarching evaluation questions referenced above, with the analysis guided by the interim evaluation questions where relevant.

**The TRHT GSC Programming**

The two main components of the facilitated sessions were the book discussion series and the racial healing session. Book discussion sessions were implemented in a variety of ways, depending on the structure and routine of the library or partner institution (sites) and the purview of the library project director. For example, one library partnered with a work program and THRT GSC was a key component. Another TRHT GSC was integrated into a school’s routine. Programs varied by frequency of meetings, time in session, and consistency of attendance.

“It’s like everyone is a piece of paper with two sides and when there is enough ink on one side the weight of it bleeds through to the other side and that side is also changed.”
-Participant
The racial healing circles were implemented as 90-minute sessions, where the book content was used to move the youth into a deeper conversation about their own lives via storytelling in pair-shares. While there was some variation on the implementation of this model, most racial healing facilitators invited students to reflect on times in their lives when they were courageous and to listen deeply to the stories of others. The format of racial healing circles consisted of guiding questions and pair-shares where individuals discussed the answers to the questions in dyads, alternating which person spoke and which person listened deeply to their partner. One session did not have pair-shares because there were only two youth attendees. This session involved an open discussion about the book topics between the students and the racial healing facilitator.

Racial healing facilitators noted that the adults were more reluctant, especially ones like juvenile justice facility guards, who were there to monitor youth in detention facilities. Library project directors mentioned that teachers were sometimes skeptical of the racial healing format and did not allow their students to come. The only barrier that was identified in great detail was the rate of attendance, as the only racial healing circles that were harder to implement were at two sites in which there were only two youth in each circle. It was difficult for youth to disclose in such a small group in the presence of several adults including authority figures within their institutions. A similar dynamic was observed in a TRHT GSC session observed by TRHT GSC evaluators for a site in which the town mayor and councilman were invited to participate in a discussion of The Hate U Give. Including the library project directors and adults from the partner institution there were seven adults present. Though there were ten youth participants in the discussion, they did not participate freely in the presence of the adults. Though library project directors reported that in an earlier session with a different group of youth participants where all adults were present, the students were engaged and freely participated in the book discussion.

Several library project directors mentioned that students were unusually open and contributing richly, that they were surprised to see youth either stay or want to stay longer, and that youth were more respectful and open to each other than they had ever been. One library project director noticed that during the racial healing circle, the youth directed jokes and jabs at one another that were very common in other TRHT GSC meetings.

Racial healing circles also had the consequence of challenging adults’ preconceptions about youth and understanding their lives more. This consequence can be extrapolated to the TRHT GSC goal of relationship building. Many library project directors commented on learning something about youth’s lives that they would have never imagined, such as a group of youth were on a bus for three hours every morning to get to school, or that youth were struggling with their families being undocumented. One library project director at a detention facility shared the remarkable experience of realizing that the most “difficult” youth had significant trauma in his life:

I have to say that a student, who is a Native American student and he’s, oh I mean he’s a tough cookie. He’s been here a long time. There’s no place else for him to go. He’s burnt all these bridges and he really opened up and talked a lot [in the racial healing circle] about some of the pretty traumatic exper-
Overall, library project directors reported that the reading materials were well-selected and contributed to encouraging youth to explore issues of race, class, and identity in a safe, well-structured, and respectful environment. The book clubs created several opportunities for youth to touch on different aspects of narrative change and express their experiences of racism. However, the sentiment in the quote to the left was shared by various sites and the effect of the program in large part depended on the library project directors’ level of skills and awareness in the areas of racial healing, equity, and youth.

As most youth in the TRHT GSC program were people of color, library project directors of European descent thought youth were becoming more introspective when they were expressing their experiences with personal racism, but it was not clear from youth reflections whether this was true. It is likely students were able to express these experiences that they were very aware of to begin with once there was a safe-enough space to do so. The focus group with youth confirmed this. For instance, a participant shared, “they think we don’t understand what racism is - we understand what racism is, we deal with it all the time. And we deal with it as kids. As for structural racism, students increased their awareness through the reading of *March: Book One* and *The Hate U Give*, which, together provided opportunities to see both how much has changed and how much has not.

As for a shift in narrative, both in terms of personal identity and the roles they take on in relation to the world (e.g. victim, hero, perpetrator), there is no evidence that the program as a whole had an impact on youths’ narrative change as it relates to society.

A few library project directors reported that youth participants in their TRHT GSC experienced moments where they saw the capacity for narrative change in their own lives as well as opportunities for building intersectional equity in their schools and communities. These moments widely varied.

Some program participants experienced these moments while discussing the books in comparison to their lived experiences, specifically *The Hate U Give*. Others reported that art-based activities aligned with *Ms. Marvel* and *The Hate U Give* supported self-reflection in this way.

Several library project directors and racial healing facilitators also shared that other participants began to exhibit buy-in for narrative change and racial healing later in the program process, during the racial healing circle.
There was an example of a slight narrative change in one group: after a long conversation with her classmates of color, a European American youth realized that saying the n-word, even in a song, was problematic, because of her role in society. At the beginning of the group, she had taken a different stance.

Overall, the most notable changes for young people were increased interest in reading and they received expanded support from adults in a safe environment where they could disclose sensitive or traumatic experiences and thoughts. The figure below presents a model for personal narrative and identity change, rooted in the lessons learned and logic of the pilot sites for the TRHT GSC model. The outlined components are where the data indicated change for the students.

**Effect on Youth: Increased Interest in Reading**

Aligning book themes with participant experiences created a powerful dynamic. Through reading engaging books that reflected the lives and character of the young participants, their interest in reading was sparked or regained. One library project director and stakeholder noted:

> All of the boys responding to the survey and saying how they all read more now and enjoy it because of the club. We are so thrilled they got to participate and that through the course of the club they have grown into readers. We have witnessed this firsthand and it is affirming to have them acknowledge this as well.

Feedback from both youth and library project directors indicated that many program participants strongly identified with the content and storyline of The Hate U Give. When stakeholders were invited to share the materials and activities that were most impactful in the TRHT GSC, this book was mentioned most. Youth expressed that they were able to identify with the story of Starr and Khalil and the struggles that they faced at school and in their larger community.

Several library project directors noted that the length of the book was an early barrier. However, engagement support strategies such as group reading out loud and review of key passages within the TRHT GSC sessions helped youth participants experience the book and express their thoughts and feelings. One student noted, “I gained my sense of loving to read back.”
Feeling a sense of respect from the library project directors and other students allowed many young people to develop bonds with one another. The book discussions, especially around The Hate U Give, helped deepen relationships between adults and their young participants and build community among the youth themselves. One library project director remarked:

*In the course of talking casually amongst themselves I heard a student comment on how this book group really gave them a sense of community. I asked a few follow-up questions, asked what they meant, asked if it was something about this peer group or what. In the end we talked about community in general and at the school in particular. What became clear is that the students in this particular program do NOT have a sense of community, and in fact harbor a significant jealousy of other programs within the school that do have community. Almost all of them said that what they liked about this group was that it gave them a place to come together and an opportunity to share diverse ideas with diverse people. Also, they got to feel that ‘togetherness’ and have inside jokes.*

Both program participants and library project directors expressed the importance of rapport-building games and activities that complement the program themes. It is important to note that the TRHT GSC programs that regularly utilized rapport-building activities with youth reported strong participant engagement during the session. Examples include establishing a regular "check-in/check out" activity; using simple scenario questions like when youth were invited to share “if they had one superpower what would it be?”; and art-based activities built on the key themes expressed in the literature.

**Effect on Youth: Deepening Relationships with Group**

What library project directors learned about the youth’s lives deepened their own understanding of the youth. Creating safe space where young people can share their feelings, think critically about the intersections of race and equity, and develop strategies that they would utilize in supporting community change is complex. Some library project directors reported that supporting and maintaining safe discussion space was a challenge when there was variation in participant attendance. Others expressed difficulty with establishing safe and brave space inside of organizations and institutions with highly structured policies and procedures (such as juvenile correctional facilities or group homes).

Those that were successful in creating this saw significant shifts within participants. In various groups, they discussed difficult and vulnerable issues, such as losing loved ones to suicide, disclosing their sexual orientation, and being a victim of sex trafficking. One library project director shared that:

*Even in a very limited time (we only had an hour) they were able to get the kids to the point of saying what hate they give the world. It was powerful to hear them openly acknowledge their prejudices. It was also powerful to hear the student from the lowest socio-economic background speak up loudly about how much discrimination she feels in her life even while surrounded by her classmates.*

While these changes are powerful and integral, it appears that more needs to be done to achieve sustainable narrative change and shifts in personal identity. However, there were promising strategies used that can be expanded.

**Effect on Youth: Becoming More Vulnerable and Disclosing Personal Narrative**

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While these changes are powerful and integral, it appears that more needs to be done to achieve sustainable narrative change and shifts in personal identity. However, there were promising strategies used that can be expanded.
The extent of shift around self-perceptions as agents of change varied but was more apparent for the library project directors and affected by their level of awareness and big-picture thinking.

Changes for Youth

As mentioned previously, there was no evidence that the program had an impact on youths’ narrative change as it relates to society. Findings from the pilot program show that in art activities and conversations at the end of the program youth saw themselves in relationship to their families more so than before, particularly with those who had siblings. Many young people commented that their guidance could help their younger siblings not follow in their footsteps.

Library project directors who were trained in the TRHT GSC model stated how rewarding and beneficial participation in this program was for themselves and the young people they served. One library project director began to recognize her own implicit racism:

I think it really made an impact on me, especially....with subtle things that I didn’t even know that I like I always say, “Oh get your cotton-picking butt in here and get to work,” and that’s racist. I didn’t know that I was completely unaware. You know there’s just so much kind of built into our language that is offensive to other people. And honestly I had no idea- I really didn’t. I never ever thought of myself as a racist person but maybe I am, you know. I just didn’t know it because they said.... our skin they’re different colors, but everybody’s alike inside we are the same hopes, dreams; but now what I learned was no we’re not all alike. Society looks at us very differently and those are things that people have to be aware of and make up for, and you know use some self-reflection... to see if maybe you’ve just adopted these ways of you know speaking or acting or whatever and without ever even thinking about them probably knowing about them.

While there were some important shifts in awareness, like the above statement, there is still a need for deeper understanding among many of the library project directors around structural racism, racial healing, and narrative change. There were varying degrees of narrative shift within library project directors. Six library project directors from the pool of those interviewed noted the difficulty with exploring narrative change and racial healing when the adults identify as an ethnic group that is different from the student program participants (specifically African American youth and a European American adult library project director). Youth sharing their different experiences sometimes enhanced the awareness of their European American library project directors who learned much more about their lives and the struggles the youth experienced.

Also, for some sites and community partners, library project directors who were not trained in the TRHT GSC model contradicted and questioned structural racism and the TRHT GSC model. Their lack of awareness in this area caused challenges to program implementation and, for two sites, overt disruption in student progress. For example, for one site, a substitute staff member facilitated a group session when the library project director was not available and contradicted the TRHT GSC’s values and did not respect the voices of the participants.

To what extent has the self-perception of young people and library project directors as agents of change shifted over the course of the grant program period (May 2018-April 2020)?

The extent of shift around self-perceptions as agents of change varied but was more apparent for the library project directors and affected by their level of awareness and big-picture thinking.
One library project director suggested that the number of sessions were insufficient for significant change around self-perception and that the program should consider expanding to more strategically incorporate this element or create expectations around short-term outcomes.

Changes for Staff

Some library project directors felt that they experienced an increased capacity to be effective not only as the TRHT GSC program implementors, but also in their other work as library professionals and educators. There was a significant range of how they applied their awareness and knowledge towards being agents of change. One library project director implemented components of the TRHT GSC model with adult members of a local church.

Another library project director shared that they used some of the icebreaker and rapport-building activities from the training to support youth programming at other library branches in their community. In both instances the library project directors reported using excerpts and accompanying activities from the literature used during this cycle of the TRHT GSC. Another library project director engaged the guards at a school in reading and discussing the book, and another asked the mayor and chief of police to read and engage with the youth around the books. Due to reading the books, the chief of police expressed that he developed more empathy for boys of color and

What are strategies, activities, processes and content that engage youth and support youth participation in all four sessions (at their site) of the TRHT GSC?

The library project directors and racial healing facilitators identified key principles of the TRHT-GSC programming that were necessary for the young participants to feel comfortable and more fully engage in the discussions as well as increase the likelihood of sustainable impact for narrative change. The key principles to be treated as essential elements in each cycle are

- Include participant input in programming.
- Create a brave space a safe emotional space for vulnerability.
- Build relationships among the group members.
- Respect and include all voices in the discussion.
- Choose books that reflect participants’ lives.
- Have library project directors engage in critical self-reflection.
- Build other library staff and partner capacity for racial equity.
- Ensure sufficient time for self-disclosure, connection, and deep dialogue.
The following tactics helped increase youth engagement, continuity, and passion for and contribution to the TRHT GSC. Guidance was provided in terms of program structure, strategies for delivery, activities, and processes.

**Program Structure**

**Design**
Library project directors found the overall the TRHT GSC design particularly useful and effective in eliciting the aforementioned changes with youth and themselves. Examples included:
- Having a trained and skilled visiting racial healing circle facilitator facilitate at least one session.
- Inviting young people from diverse communities to meet, read, and express their thoughts together.
- Supporting early interaction and communication between the TRHT GSC library project director and their community partners. This support of strong relationship building helps to ensure a cohesive well-developed program for the youth.

**Tools**
Library project directors noted that the resources and training were quite helpful in implementing the model and helped them feel prepared. Many also developed their own tools that others may find helpful in supporting engagement and creating brave space. Examples of tools that facilitators found helpful included:
- Providing library project directors with a diversity of resources and activities that aligned with the selected literature as well as making sure that adult library project directors are well-trained and supported.
- Many library project directors and youth recognized that the discussion questions for *Ms. Marvel* and *The Hate U Give* were engaging and well-developed feedback tools.
- Developing clear TRHT GSC group agreements or boundaries that every young participant helps design and agree to follow, and reinforcing these agreements at each session to support safe and brave space.

**Strategies for Delivery**

**Facilitation**
Quality facilitation of the groups was necessary in creating the outcomes that have been achieved through this pilot. Good facilitation is characterized by inclusion, flexibility, and rapport-building. Examples of this included:
- Library project director sharing their own experiences with structural inequality
- Coming back to the text when students were off-track
- Allowing youth to contribute to the decision-making about activities to do or where the conversation would go: “Do you want to go deeper or stay on the surface?”
- Maintaining a pattern and flow to each of the TRHT GSC sessions - as one library project director shared "the repeating format helped them ease into the discussion and into the book."
- Maintaining a safe, judgment-free, and brave space where conversations about difficult and complex topics could be held.
- Having some flexibility in the program sessions - so that conversation topics and discussions could flow naturally and organically. Also, if suggested program activities didn't work - having the flexibility to shift to a different activity.

**Hosting**
Hosting is an art of making others feel welcomed and comfortable. It also helps to create an inclusive environment while attracting people to return. Examples of effective hosting practices included:
- Showing genuine concern for their continued attendance
- Incentives: Having snacks every session; asking youth to choose their snacks for the next session; bringing journals and pencils (at sites where food is not allowed); giving out certificates at the end; bringing youth “presents” like magazines and other books from home
**Activities**

**Art**
Art-based activities were engaging and allowed for expression through creativity. Examples included:
- Doing the mask activity was great for students with writing or drawing barriers, journaling, vision-boards, pixel art, drawing, 6-word memoir at beginning and end, videos, collage, t-shirt making, poetry (Tupac or Shakespeare game)

**Reflection**
Creating space for reflection and relaxation helped both participants and library project directors expand learning and helped build comfort in a new space. Examples included:
- Intentionality around the closing activity
- Doing the privilege walk; putting thoughts in a Mason Jar; meditating; 10 minutes to meditate, or let their minds wander, or celebrate a friendship.
- Some library project directors appreciated the evaluation as a self-reflection activity

**Historical**
Some found that using other materials and the books was an opportunity to teach history in an engaging way. Examples included:
- Bringing in additional reading (e.g. speeches, historical photos, guest speakers)

**Informational**
The use of activities also was an opportunity to facilitate experiences around the library (e.g. a tour of the library).

**Processes**

**Discussion Questions**
Most library project directors commented on the value of the discussion questions in helping to connect the reading to the youth’s lives. One library project director chose the questions that most connected to the events of the prior weeks to help engage students.

**Disposition**
Confidentiality, consistency, and playfulness—like using a stuffed SpongeBob SquarePants as a talking piece

**Relevant Questions**
Asking students to identify the way in which real events connected to the issues in the books

**Ineffective Strategies**
For strategies that did not work, library project directors stated that they needed to do more engagement and rapport building before attempting to explore difficult topics related to racism, sexism, or inequality. Two library project directors indicated that they needed to connect earlier to their racial healing facilitator before that session to help build rapport before convening the racial healing circle. This could have possibly impacted the fluidity with which the circles were implemented and allowed the library project directors to feel more prepared to explore difficult topics with participants. Youth completing the feedback forms and surveys had very little constructive criticism to share about the sessions except for suggestions to increase the workshop session time and duration and reduce the amount of reading required.
Other barriers to effective implementation included:

- Utilizing substitute facilitators or individuals that do not have rapport established with the youth. This included allowing individuals to facilitate the group who do not value or have not been trained in racial healing or equity. One library project director reported difficulty with partnering with the classroom teacher when running the sessions. The library project director for this program shared that the teacher was critical of concepts of racial equity and openly expressed this on several occasions to the youth. It might be useful to ask community partners to review the mission and vision of the TRHT GSC model and to ask them to sign a partnership agreement around supporting session discussions and topics.

- Expecting all young people to have completed all the reading prior to the TRHT GSC meeting session is not realistic. There needs to be more group reading time and/or review of key thematic passages built into the sessions. Also, the library project director should be trained on how to meet young people at their different reading levels and build from that point. Some youth participants had difficulty completing the novels and therefore were reluctant to participate in some of the accompanying activities.

- Four of the sites reported that attempting to read three books was too much content to review and digest with young people in a six-week program. Eight of the adult library project directors and multiple youth indicated that increasing the sessions, or session time, would be a valuable improvement to the program.
What was the structure and process of community partnerships for assisting youth in their process of racial healing?

Community partnerships are an integral component of the TRHT GSC model and to the success of the young participants. This component also has untapped potential around community change. Thus, there should be more attention and strategy around this piece, based on the experiences, or lack thereof, of sites and community partners.

There were various types of community partnerships and partnership structures, from churches to city mayors. The community partner survey respondents included representation from a church, three schools, an after-school program, criminal justice/social services, a mentoring agency, a foundation, and a township.

Community partnerships and the prestige of an ALA-funded program grant allowed sites access to institutions that were usually quite hard to engage, like alternative schools and detention centers. Several library project directors said that without the legitimacy that ALA funding provides it would not have been possible to approach partnering with these institutions. Even once accessed, there were often internal challenges (e.g. teachers not letting students attend a book discussion, changes in scheduling, skipping for holidays, and summer break). There was limited support internally in most institutions around agreements on the priority of the book club and which structures of time and space could be safeguarded to protect the work. There is an untapped opportunity to deepen these partnerships at each site.

Community institution would partner with TRHT GSC again

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 88%</th>
<th>No: 12%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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Community partner intends to continue racial healing work within their organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes: 67%</th>
<th>No: 33%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Additional feedback included:

- The program was viewed as an asset-based tool for connecting with young people in the community and other youth serving organizations.
- The partnership helped to form strong positive relationships between community groups, adult staff and students.
- Increasing the session, or session time, would help students to feel like they were a valuable part of their larger community.
At the program culmination youth were more likely to continue visiting the library and working with the library project directors who acted as TRHT GSC library project directors. Library project directors mentioned an increase in youth using their libraries because of the grant. The TRHT GSC program also piqued the interest of other students at partner organizations and they began asking questions about the program, the books, and racial healing.

On two occasions sites reported that community partners utilized the TRHT GSC materials with other members of the community - one with adults at a local church and another with youth who were not part of the TRHT GSC.

Three library project directors noted community interest in highlighting or showcasing the art projects, activities, and experiences of young people in some way.

There were some library project directors who created deep integration with the program and the partner. In one instance a high school library program paired the TRHT GSC with a summer work program which offered TRHT GSC participant’s community service and work opportunities where they could receive a small stipend. During a focus group with youth from this program participants shared that this additional opportunity was incredibly engaging.

At a site where Big Brothers Big Sisters was the partner, pairing youth with their “Big” and integrating the book and activity became a way for them to build their relationship and thus created a win/win/win for the library, partner, and participant. In these examples, there was a stronger foundation to achieve the original purpose of partnership (e.g., being conducive to success or help in a life transition), given the depth of integration.

At the site that partnered with the township and included the mayor and chief of police, they exemplified using the program as a springboard for all stakeholders being an agent of change and created macro-level potential. Through partners’ increased awareness about insidious racial dynamics, they can use their role to further racial equity as well as better serve the young people.

Regardless if the purpose was micro (around the young person) or macro (structural change), one conclusion became clear through these varying perspectives – the old adage of “it takes a village.” Seeing the community partnerships as a way of creating a “village” around youth and the goal of community level racial healing and equity will help future sites be more deliberate, communicative, and strategic with and through the community partnerships component.

What is needed within ALA and beyond to support the sustainability of this work in sites?

Capacity building is the foundation of the TRHT GSC, providing the knowledge, guidance, and resources needed to implement the model well.

Some library project directors reported that the model was effective and supportive to them developing and structuring the program. They also shared that the trainings, technical support, curriculum, and evaluation tools helped in the successful administration of the program. Many expressed that the trainings offered were also
valuable to supporting youth engagement. Several library project directors noted that this was their sites’ first time participating in the program. Multiple library project directors stated that these were tools that they would not have had if they had not participated in the program opportunity. Books, worksheets, group discussion questions, and experiential activities were all useful to building positive group dynamic, supporting a safe and brave learning space, and helping young people to align main themes from the books with their lived experiences.

Five library project directors who ran the TRHT GSC program expressed the complexity of partnering and exploring concepts of structural racism and equity with youth of color as European American adult allies. They expressed that, though difficult, this experience was incredibly worthwhile and rewarding. They also shared that they learned something new about themselves as they grappled with these concepts within the group. One Library Project Director remembered:

*We had very powerful sessions last spring that involve students and staff. In the [TRHT] GSC, all points of view and experiences are honored and respected, so the [TRHT] GSC helps remove the hierarchy and allows us to interact with each other at the same level.*

It is important to note that several library project directors expressed difficulty with fully implementing program activities and plans during the TRHT GSC. Some of these challenges centered on the need to build rapport and help participants feel comfortable enough to join in conversations and activities. Other challenges with implementation aligned with the time and number of sessions. In two instances, challenges with implementation occurred because of the structure or rules of the partner organization hosting the club. One library project director reported that “it was difficult to coordinate and plan with the racial healing facilitator.”

The images below present the sum of the capacity needed for achieving narrative change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In session</td>
<td>Working with youth</td>
<td>Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>Program materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frequency</td>
<td>Racial healing experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel</th>
<th>Partnerships</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical self-reflection</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The majority of library project directors indicated that they plan to participate in the next round of grants. Only two indicated that they would not be able to participate.

**Factors That Support Continued Participation**

- The ALA sponsored trainings, video conference series, and visiting practitioners for technical support
- The opportunity to work with different youth serving community partners
- Having additional funding and tools to offer high-quality, innovative programming to young people
- Running a program that aligns with the school/library/community partner mission and vision
- Building excitement and engagement with the program participants
- The support of supervising administrators to prepare for and implement the program properly

The two sites declining to renew their grant arrived at this decision because of two different issues. One explained that the program was positive; however, the library has a policy of not applying for grants that small. The project director at this library also shared that an exception was made for this cycle but would probably not occur in the future. The second site stated that they had difficulty working with their community partner and would want to change partners before reapplying for the grant.

In addition to these reasons to consider for improvements, there are opportunities for iterations, improvements, and expansions in the areas of TRHT GSC programming, overall programming, community partnerships, and capacity building.

**Factors to Maintain and Improve TRHT GSC Programming**

The program implementors noted strategies that worked particularly well that should either be reinforced or added as essential elements to program implementation:

- The book selections, especially The Hate U Give, were engaging and inspired a revitalized or even initial interest in literature and reading.
Use good discussion questions.

Use multimedia (e.g., supplemental video or media that tie the content to greater contexts and lessons).

Facilitate activities with participants (e.g., creating art).

Pre-teach/discuss some of the material before reading and book discussions.

Read aloud (note: some students either did not read the books or did not have sufficient literacy).

Use various engagement and facilitation structures (e.g., paired share, group discussion).

Materials: Create a list of activities that have been done with students in the pilot, so TRHT GSC programming for each site will be easier and faster to prepare.

Healing circles: Keep doing them! Two hours minimum if possible, and more frequent.

Overall structure: Have conversations with administration on what is needed to support the TRHT GSC, and how to make-up sessions when they are canceled. Stress the importance of completing the whole series.

Publicity/Legitimacy: Increase publicity, popularity helps buy-in from teachers and staff.

Funding: Increase flexibility on how funding can be used. For one school getting books was essential, because the school would have never done so. For another, the school could have provided books and they would have preferred to have those funds for an additional racial healing circle.

Program cycle: Shift program cycle to fit the school year so that summer break doesn’t disrupt the group – many had whole new groups by September, or significantly fewer youth.

Paperwork: Reduce paperwork, streamline process.

To support expanded capacity building for narrative change and racial healing, program planners should consider developing a best practices/capacity building toolkit to share with library project directors and visitors to the ALA Great Stories Club website. These best practices page would highlight events, activities, and programs that expand the mission, vision and goals of the TRHT GSC work into the larger community.

Community Partnerships

The purpose of the community partnership component is to support the success of the young people after incarceration, graduation, or during other periods of change. This component was well-liked by both library project directors and respondent community partners. They were able to create a mutually beneficial partnership towards supporting the young participants in their life journey.

Moving forward, the program should promote an expanded view of the purpose and service of community partnerships and provide resources for sites about how to engage various types of community partners.

The program should also emphasize and reiterate the importance and potential of community partnerships. One institution did not have community partners, and this was a significant missed opportunity for student growth and success. Also, given the TRHT GSC book discussions need additional institutional, community, and familial support for narrative change and long-term shifts, community partners can be an integral part of achieving sustainable change.
Several library project directors commented on how critical this funding has been to gain access to partner institutions and youth facilities that are typically quite closed. ALA support also brought legitimacy to creating space for conversations that are extremely relevant to youth’s lives.

Tips for engaging partners
Sites that made progress on building or furthering their relationships with other community organizations and leaders reported how they were able to promote changes and their working alliance. They recommend to:

+ **Cultivate communication.** Be in communication with the partner about the purpose of the program and the books they are reading. Create a Community Partnership Agreement for each partner that includes the mission and agreements towards service to the youth participants as well as racial equity and healing.

+ **Provide the books to the partners.** Partners who also read the books gained insight into racial equity and the injustice the young people were experiencing. For example, the chief of police developed more empathy for boys of color and what they experience when stopped by the police.

+ **Create opportunities for interaction with youth.** While some partners were deeply engaged with the young people, other partners had more distance. Creating opportunities for the participants and partners to interact (be it within the principles of change discussed above) bolstered more social cohesion and understanding. Allow partners to participate in additional, separate discussions and racial healing circles, as many adults understood youth’s lives more after they told their experiences in the racial healing circles.

+ **In the training, create time and space for developing strategy for various community partners.**

Training and Capacity Building
ALA has been effective at building the sites’ capacity when sites already have staff with a certain level of awareness of racism and human inequity. To be most effective going forward, ALA may consider creating an assessment tool to discern the best match for sites and the program. There are some critical questions that sites must ask themselves and that ALA must ask of sites if they are to fully engage with the TRHT GSC:

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- Does the site and personnel have enough time to dedicate for each session and the frequency of sessions needed to have vulnerable and deliberative dialogue around the issues, in additional to allowing students time to read the books?

- Do we have the right team (personality, motivation, diversity) in place who should implement this model with the population of focus?

- Is the team motivated to develop awareness and critical consciousness, do the hard work around internal racism and implicit bias, and provide a safe space for the young people to disclose and heal?

- Is this the right time for my team if the motivation is not present for those who will interact with or make decisions that could affect young people?

- Do at least two people have the skills (or at least the motivation and resource to build them) on our team or within our partnerships to provide trauma-informed, healing-centered facilitation? Note: there needs to be a back-up person who can facilitate a session if the main library project director is absent.

When designing the process for building capacity in the next iteration of the TRHT GSC, consider the above model in planning and structure.
Recommendations for Training Workshops

Several library project directors praised the training they received through ALA. The most valuable components of the training were: the facilitation components, racial healing circle participation, and the discussion questions.

Even with these strong components, the following additions are recommended to support the program to be more cohesive and consistently effective across sites.

+ **Align theory of change/principles and curriculum.**
Sites need to understand the mechanisms of change for the racial healing circles and book discussion in fostering narrative change and building personal identity. If they understand these essential elements, most can infuse them in programming from the beginning and make more progress. Once there is a cohesive framework of how to reach our goals, all programming materials and structure should be revised for the project to be more effective in having an impact on how youth and adults see themselves in relation to structural racism and their own narrative change. For instance, book discussion questions can be revised specifically for the goal of narrative change.

+ **Facilitate deeper dialogue around racial equity and intersectionality.**
The training can engage participants in more conversations about their own experiences of racial inequity, racial healing, structural racism, and discrimination and the ways in which each of us contributes with our own power, privilege, and biases. This experience can help inform how they facilitate youth. Some library project directors did not have a robust understanding of structural racism and racial equity, nor were they able to describe the underlying theory of change for the racial healing circles. As a result, there were lost opportunities to question both their own racism and sexism or their students’ racism and sexism.

+ **Provide specific tutelage and discussion around being an ally.**
Implicit bias is common due to the human condition. It is especially prevalent for European Americans who state they are not racist or are “color blind.” One library project director described her own journey through the program, initially believing that she was not “racist” and learned through the process that she too had blindly adopted racist language and ideology. This type of training should be incorporated into the workshop with a focus on ongoing critical self-reflection and what it means to be an ally to people of color.

+ **Designate time for teaching strategies and support.**
Library project directors would benefit from deeper conversations with other participants problem-solving different challenging areas: program challenges (students not interested in the book or the activity), scheduling (time, staff substitutes, building other staff members’ capacity), partner buy-in (internal sabotage, community capacity building), and continuity (sustainability of work). Integrate in training specific ways to allow youth to participate in the TRHT GSC design and adapting to youth preferences and needs.

+ **Expand training to include community partners.**
Consider inviting key community partners to this training so they too can build capacity around their critical self-reflection, implicit bias, and process for racial healing and equity. Building community capacity through the TRHT GSC model.

+ **Create specific tools for youth in institutional settings.**
Library project directors and racial healing facilitators might also benefit from a workshop that focuses on working with vulnerable youth placed in institutional settings like foster homes or correctional facilities. The rules, policies and procedures and such facilities should be reviewed along with the TRHT GSC structure prior to meeting with the youth.

+ **Develop a community of practice.**
The library project directors could benefit from the creativity and lessons learned from other sites and community partners. While the listserv is a current platform through which to facilitate such a network, consider building on the online discussion format, both through video (e.g., Zoom video conferencing) and a social media group.
Appendix A:

Zion-Benton Township High School
TRHT GSC - Case Study
PION-BENTON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL (ZBTHS) FACILITATED TWO TRUTH, RACIAL HEALING, AND TRANSFORMATION GREAT STORIES CLUB PROGRAMS (TRHT GSC) FROM JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2018 FOR YOUTH BETWEEN 14 AND 17 YEARS OF AGE. THE LIBRARY PROJECT DIRECTOR UTILIZED THE DESIGN OF THE PROGRAM ALONG WITH ADDITIONAL ASPECTS THAT ARE NOT TYPICAL OF TRHT GSC EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING A SUMMER WORK PROGRAM IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION. BOOKS USED IN THIS PROGRAM FOR READING AND DISCUSSION INCLUDED THE HATE U GIVE BY ANGIE THOMAS, MS. MARVEL BY G, WILLOW WILSON, AND MARCH BY ANDREW AYDIN AND JOHN LEWIS. YOUTH THAT PARTICIPATED IN THE ZION-BENTON TRHT GSC SHARED THAT THE PROGRAM PROVIDED JOB TRAINING SKILLS, COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES, AND WERE PAID A SMALL STIPEND FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SEVERAL PLANNED WORK ACTIVITIES. FROM THE TWO GROUPS, 12 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN A FOCUS GROUP ON NOVEMBER 16, 2018. FOUR PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED AS YOUNG MEN AND EIGHT IDENTIFIED AS YOUNG WOMEN. ALL PARTICIPANTS APPEARED TO BE YOUTH OF COLOR.

THE FOCUS GROUP BEGAN BY COLLECTIVELY CONSTRUCTING GROUP AGREEMENTS. THE AGREEMENTS THEY SHARED INCLUDED SPEAKING ONE AT A TIME, BEING YOURSELF, SHARING SUPPLIES, NOT SAYING NEGATIVE THINGS ABOUT OTHER’S COMMENTS, STAYING OPEN TO LISTENING TO OTHERS, AND THE VEGAS RULE – WHAT IS SAID IN THE GROUP STAYS IN THE GROUP. FOLLOWING THAT, PARTICIPANTS WERE INVITED TO DESIGN THEIR BOOK COVER WHILE LISTENING TO MUSIC. SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS CHOSE TO EXPLAIN THAT THEIR BOOK TITLE MEANT TO THEM. THEIR TITLES SUGGESTED THAT THEIR BOOKS WERE “unfinished”, THAT THEIR STORY IS COMPLEX AND INTERESTING, AND OTHER SUGGESTED THEIR STORY WAS ABOUT MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES.

TWO LIBRARY PROJECT DIRECTORS WERE ALSO INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN INTERVIEWS THAT ASSESSED THE IMPACT OF ITS SESSIONS ON STUDENTS’ UNDERSTANDING OF NARRATIVE CHANGE, PERSONAL AND STRUCTURAL RACISM, AND HUMAN EQUITY; TO ASCERTAIN HOW COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS ARE BEING UTILIZED AND FUNCTIONING, AND TO EXPLORE WAYS TO IMPROVE IMPLEMENTATION, INCLUDING GAINING FEEDBACK ON PILOT EXPERIENCE.
Identifying with the book characters was observed as a strength by the library project directors that were interviewed. They both suggested that seeing themselves in the characters empowered the teens to explore and create truth narratives. One library project director explained that *The Hate U Give* provided a “model for them because this is a narrative of about younger black woman; it’s about the narrative about a young black family, and I think the students can relate to it.” Finally, the other interviewed library project director included that, “it gives voice and opportunity to hear diverse voices in books that maybe were not incorporated into a traditional curriculum and I think that’s very important.”

During the focus group, youth expressed that the program gave them an opportunity to socialize. Four students shared that they really liked meeting new people. One young man shared that he was shy and didn’t know anyone prior to the program. The student next to him agreed. She stated that she got to meet new people in the program as well. They also mentioned that they had fun going on trips, acting silly together, and acting as a team, suggesting that the program goal to offer emotional benefits by reducing feelings of depression and isolation, and encouraging empathy through peer-based discussion groups was a strength at ZBTHS. Additionally, all of the young men agreed that the program helped them meet new people, gave them new resources, and helped them to navigate to school and community better.

One of the ways in which participants have been able to find commonalities to build relationships with each other may have been through exploring their own identities and the characters in the books. For example, participants explored commonalities when sharing personal experiences that resonated with the characters in *The Hate U Give*. Several participants shared that they or their family members had experienced negative interactions with the police and two of the young women identified strongly with Starr, the main character, who had experienced similar interactions.

One student shared that her story was called *Jada’s Life Full of Adventures*. She drew a beautiful book cover with hearts, flowers, happy faces, and lots of color. All of the young men agreed that the program helped them meet new people, gave them new resources, and helped them to navigate to school and community better.
Challenges

A weakness that the Zion-Benton TRHT GSC participants stated was their lack of engagement with some of the literature of characters, particularly in the book, *March*. The lack of relevancy to their lives may have made them less likely to read it. As one participant said that they had a hard time reading *March* because it happened a long time ago and her peers nodded their heads in agreement.

When asked if they identified with *March*, almost every participant shook their head no and five participants expressed that their story was not relevant at all to the story of *March*. One participant shared “Yeah we didn’t like that one so much.” Another student said, “I am tired of hearing about Dr. Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, and Rosa Parks. We have our own story and our own issues to deal with nowadays.” Another participant concluded, “like we said before the past is the past. We learn about that stuff in school every day.”

Library project directors should consider strategies to deepen personal exploration of universal themes that are central to the TRHT GSC mission and vision. Some participants had a difficult time describing themes such as structural racism and human equity. Furthermore, the majority of the students (8) felt that the participation in the TRHT GSC did not influence the way that they interpret racism or inequality. For instance, a participant shared that “they always think we don’t understand what racism is - we understand what racism is, we deal with it all the time. And we deal with it as kids.” Several other students explained that they had a firm understanding of racism and prejudice prior to the program from personally experiencing it in their communities and schools.

TRHT GSC Core Themes

Library project directors should consider strategies to deepen personal exploration of universal themes that are central to the TRHT GSC mission and vision. Some participants had a difficult time describing themes such as structural racism and human equity. Furthermore, the majority of the students (8) felt that the participation in the TRHT GSC did not influence the way that they interpret racism or inequality. For instance, a participant shared that “they always think we don’t understand what racism is - we understand what racism is, we deal with it all the time. And we deal with it as kids.” Several other students explained that they had a firm understanding of racism and prejudice prior to the program from personally experiencing it in their communities and schools.

Theme: Racism

Participants had different opinions about personal and structural racism. Participants gave most of their examples from *The Hate U Give* to explain personal racism. Several students shared that they see racism in the way that police and other law enforcement officials treated Khalil, Starr, and the protesters. Participants agreed that the racism explored in *March* was unique from the racism in *The Hate U Give*. One participant shared that structural racism meant that there were rules to follow and to obey and that the rules were approved of, but they were still racist. A different participant shared that racism was in your face, stating that, “the black people couldn’t do everything that white people could do.” Another student shared that that type of racism was in the past - “we don’t have to deal with stuff like that anymore.” However, one participant disagreed by asserting that black and brown people continue to deal with that type of racism now.

Theme: Sexism

During the focus group, male and female participants appeared to identify differently with the characters, but expressed a strong understanding of sexism, specifically through Starr’s character in *The Hate U Give* and Kamala in *Ms. Marvel*. For instance, one participant said that “Seven was allowed to do things that Starr wasn’t,” which
was met by agreeance with several female participants nodding. When the males in the group were asked if they saw any examples of sexism in the lives of the characters, one said they saw examples while reading *Ms. Marvel*. The other boys didn't acknowledge seeing or talking about any concepts of sexism. Likewise, the male focus group participants indicated that they did not identify with the characters in terms of facing challenges. Despite that, they agreed that they identified with the way that Ms. Marvel and Starr set and achieved goals.

**Theme: Human Equity**

When asked to discuss human equity several students had difficulty responding to the phrase and shook their head no when asked if they understood what equity meant. One young woman asked, “is equity similar to equality- having the same resources?” to which the focus group facilitator nodded yes and stated that equality and equity are very similar. Several students stated that both the *Ms. Marvel* and the *March* stories had strong stories about equality and equity. One student stated that in *March*, the walkers and protesters were fighting for human equity and for their right to have equal rights. Several students nodded their head in agreement. One other student said, “It’s like they were being beaten, hit, and punished just for wanting their basic human rights!”

**Areas for Improvement**

Two suggestions shared by participants were the economic challenge of making it to the program and language. One participant expressed the desire to earn a larger stipend and two other participants said that at times they had a hard time getting to the program due to lack of travel funds. Additionally, some students had difficulty describing vocabulary close to the TRHT GSC humanity themes-specifically structural racism, narrative change, and equity despite sharing personal experiences and themes from the books that illustrate these core themes. The focus group facilitator expressed having to pause to discuss language which may indicate that the program should allow time to make sure participants understand the vocabulary.

**Extending time**

Program participants suggested creating more time for the group. Several students recommended extending the group during the school year while other participants nodded in agreement. Similarly, both library project directors that participated in the interviews mentioned they would like the program to be longer. One stated that, “I wish we had more time because there was more that we could do, more questions to ask, more topics to explore.”

One participant shared that his book title was called *Choosing the Right Path*. On his book cover he has the image of himself with a curly Afro standing in front of two paths. One path had an image of books and school, while the other path had an image of some friends hanging out on the street and a video game console. He shared that his life story was about trying to make the right choice to go down the right path.
Fostering a brave space

Increasing participation was desired by both interviewed library project directors. They both suggested using a partnering strategy to increase participation in discussions. A library project director described the strategy as “having them talk with their partners before talking to the larger group in case they’re on the quiet side.” Important to note, many of the responses from participants included nodding during the focus groups. The lack of verbal communication may suggest that the students may not have felt they were in a brave space to speak up.

Referring back to the group agreements created by the participants may provide insight as to what they expect from the group and each other. Their agreements included speaking one at a time, being yourself, sharing supplies, not saying negative things about other’s comments, staying open to listening to others, and the Vegas rule – what is said in the group stays in the group. Holding themselves, library project directors, and community guest accountable to agreed group guidelines may improve their comfort and trust especially while discussing difficult concepts and identities.

Further exploring what the youth participants need to transform the space from a safe space to a brave space may be helpful. This may include exploring their boundaries and making sure the goals of the program align with theirs. An example of a way in which participants may feel safe, but not brave is demonstrated in the way male participants believed they were safer by refraining from dialogue. One interviewed library project director affirmed this by sharing that, “unfortunately they have been conditioned that if they stare at the table and they don’t say anything they won’t get in trouble and they’ll make it through the next 47 minutes. And gradually, I hope we will get them out of that conditioning and help them recognize their voice and how important it is and how necessary it is.”

Conclusion

The TRHT GSC program not only provides youth the opportunity to, in their terms, “get out of the house” or “having something to do during summer” but also discuss books, key intersectional issues around race and equity, develop positive relationships, and gain work experience.

Overall, the Zion-Benton TRHT GSC contributed to improved literacy and positive attitudes toward reading for the participants. For example, one student said that the program allowed her to read and learn about the past. Furthermore, when asked if they would have read the books on their own time, only two participants raised their hands as a yes, while other students shook their head no. One student said “but we did get paid to read the books” then further explained, “well we got paid to read and discuss the books and I really enjoyed that. I think the program should have stories, but make them shorter and make them more relevant in current to what we’re dealing with today.”
Appendix B:

Theory of Change Draft
TRHT GSC Theory of Change

The participants in the TRHT GSC program become powerful agents of change by affirming human equity through storytelling and being valued in the context of structural inequity.

Participants experience narrative change, becoming empowered, self-reliant, and autonomous; thus becoming powerful agents of change. Program staff and stakeholders develop deeper understanding of their own roles as agents of change in the context of social equity.

Human Equity Through Storytelling

Participants and stakeholders read relevant books and engage in discussion, reflection, and literary analysis to connect the text to life. Through privilege assessments for staff, and access to outreach for youth, they experience enhanced awareness of social inequity.

Being Valued

Participants experience being valued by being heard and respected. High need youth are placed at the center of the program. Program staff deepen their understanding of high need youth. Participants and stakeholders build relationships and they receive access to support networks.

Powerful Agents of Change

Participants experience being valued by being heard and respected. High need youth are placed at the center of the program. Program staff deepen their understanding of high need youth. Participants and stakeholders build relationships and they receive access to support networks.
Appendix C: Round II Library Project Director Survey Findings

Overview

Library facilitators completed this survey at the culmination of each book club discussion. The survey was completed online. In this report you will find demographics followed by key takeaways. An analysis of each specific survey question then follows. Finally, a summary of key findings and suggestions for improvement are found at the end of this document.

Demographics

The survey was completed 78 times by a total of 34 participants. These respondents were affiliated with 32 different libraries:

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<tr>
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<th># of Responses per Library</th>
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Sites
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<tr>
<td>Visitacion Valley Middle School</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Development Initiative (YDI, Inc.)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Books
The following books were read as a part of the book clubs and included in this analysis:

- Always Running
- American Street
- Anger is a Gift
- Between the World & Me
- Dreaming in Indian
- Gabi: A Girl in Pieces
- I Am Alfonso Jones
- Mother of the Sea
- Placem. Me Together
- The Poet X
- The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano
- The Shadow Hero

92% of respondents felt that the book was an appropriate selection for the youth in their group.
Key Findings

- Overall, the program was received well by both the participants and the facilitators and provided a rich environment for youth to explore social equity.

- Teachers were well trained and prepared to deliver the program, however there was a desire for more resources such as an online forum where facilitators can share ideas and resources with each other, and some type of resource bank or materials prepared specifically for the chosen books.

- The effects/impact of the program appeared to go beyond social equity. The program model gave participants benefits such as learning how to listen better, pushing themselves out of their comfort zone, and practicing self-expression, among others.

- Aspects of the program which didn’t work were often centered around teen preferences, not necessarily key components of the program.

- Areas that didn’t work across the board were not having adequate time, having large groups of students, and book content that was too complex or unrelated to a certain age groups.

- The survey itself was long and repetitive; a more direct and pointed survey may be needed to get a better understanding of specific program improvements.

Analysis

Section A

The following questions were presented with open-ended text response boxes. Data for these items was summarized by grouping similar responses together and reported based on these thematic groupings.

Q1 Describe how this book was introduced and discussed with youth participants

- Activities surrounding the theme
- Summarizing the book or the author
- Having participants read (partial or full) followed by discussion
- Current events and/or real-life connections related to the book
- Contextualizing the book within history/culture

Q2 Describe any group activities, conversations or themes that worked well when discussing the book (e.g. art activities, worksheets, thinking questions, games, guest attendees, etc.)

- Reflections
- Guest speakers (in some cases, the author themselves)
- Discussions connecting the books; themes to real life
- Journal keeping, letter writing
- Art exercises (photography, writing, drawing, dancing, collages)
- Competitions
- Probing questions
Q3 What activities, conversations, or themes would you change now that you have implemented them?

- More time to explore topics
- Books or activities that bring the topics to the student's age/experience level
- Activities beyond discussion (field trips, writing exercises, etc.)
- More information/preparedness on certain book topics
- Guest speakers/facilitators
- More art related activities

Q4 How did you prepare (yourself and youth) for the discussion of this book?

- Re-read the book
- Prepped with the co-facilitator
- Research topics, history, context of the book
- Watched online related videos
- Review materials from GSC training
- Looked for visual resources
- Reviewing and prepping discussion questions

Section B

The following questions were presented as multi-select options (items) where participants could select which items were most relevant to the question at hand. Each question had a follow-up question which allowed for participants to expand on their previous responses.

Q5 What strategies worked well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosting</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for strategies that worked well:

- Connecting the stories to the participant’s lives and current events
- Providing a safe space for youth to explore and respond to prompts/discussion
- Relating to historical context
- Letting youth take ownership of the discussions (facilitating, not leading discussion)
- Holding discussions away from the library

Q6 What activities worked well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art-based activities</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational Activities</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical/history-based activities</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for activities that worked well:

- Active engagement through art-making
- Letting youth reflect, open up, and discuss how the book relates to them
- Connecting with the author
- Exploring cultural components/affirming cultural identities
- Written and verbal reflection
- Healing Circles
- Guest speakers (including video)
Q7 What processes worked well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant questions (e.g., those related to current real-life events)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition (confidentiality, consistency, playfulness, etc.)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for processes that worked well:
- Showing and exploring relevance in real life
- Letting youth lead discussions
- Sharing personal stories
- Developing trust and safe space for discussion
- Keeping conversations light and fun, sometimes including games

Q8 What content worked well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Themes and motifs related to the book</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant historical content</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for what content worked well:
- Anything students could connect to (art, speakers, current events, personal stories)
- Empathizing/discussing character journeys as they relate to their own
- Using the book as a “jumping off point” into deeper discussion around social justice
- Self-expression (journaling, art projects)
- Learning about the author’s personal journey
- Book themes and their relation to history (past and current)
- Discussion

Q9 What components of the program worked for exploring dimensions of narrative change?

- The book selections were relevant and effective
- Exploration of relevant topics happening today and in the lives of the youth
- Reading circle
- Sharing and listening to classmates speak: being able to relate and empathize with others in similar situations
- Giving a platform to explore race, gender, class with youth who don’t have other outlets

Q10 What strategies did not work well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosting</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for strategies that didn’t work well:
- Forcing ALA’s discussion questions—prefer to let discussion emerge from youth
- Mandating students read a section for each session (students read at different speeds)
- Having large groups is difficult getting everyone’s feedback
- Book content didn’t work for some (reading level, unable to relate, not into poetry, etc.)
- Lack of time made full preparation difficult (hosting and facilitating)
Q11 What activities did not work well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical/history-based activities</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational Activities</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art-based activities</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for activities that didn’t work well:
- General reception to certain activities (journal writing, historical activities)
- Historical information uninteresting – prefer current events

Q12 What processes did not work well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant questions (e.g. those related to current real-life events)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition (confidentiality, consistency, playfulness, etc.)</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for processes that didn’t work well:
- Discussion questions didn’t always capture interest
- Difficult to relate to current events
- Open events not as effective as healing circles (groups were too big)
- Kids not always open to share personal experiences among peers
- Book topics weren’t of interest to some kids

Q13 What content did not work well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant historical content</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes and motifs related to the book</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provide an explanation for content that didn’t work well:
- Difficult to relate to the character’s story
- Student’s not reading the book in its entirety made discussion difficult
- Book content was generally disinteresting to youth (stopped reading)

Q14 What components of the program did not work for exploring dimensions of narrative change?
- Difficult text for some (including teachers) and not relatable to ages of some of the youth
- Large groups that didn’t allow for some to participate, or not enough time to get through the book
- Reading discussion questions were often too complex
- "Going directly off the book. I would recommend going to certain passages of the books and going over it and tying that into their lives in order for them to participate."
Q15  What do you think youth participants liked most about the discussion of this book?

- Being able to identify with a character in the book, validating their experiences
- Learning about, hearing from, and connecting with the author
- Sharing with others through different activities, hearing what their peers think, making connections with others
- Meaningful discussions about powerful topics that were prompted by the book (religion, family, police brutality, gangs, oppression, etc.)
- The graphic novel format
- Getting involved with the characters and stories in the books

Q16  What do you think youth found most relevant and useful to their lives in the discussion of this book?

- How to listen to others and look at both perspectives of any situation
- Discussion about religion, body image, and LGBTQ identities
- Being listened to, heard, and taken seriously by adults
- Learning valuable life lessons like taking responsibility for your actions, how to overcome fears, what friendship really is, pushing yourself out of your comfort zone
- Learning about and practicing self-expression
- Learning about, relating to, and being interested in current events
- The use of words and language – expand their expression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth remained engaged during the discussion of this book</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This book helped the youth to increase their understanding of social equity</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This book helped to change the personal narratives of the youth</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section C

The following questions are a mix of open-ended response boxes and multi-select options and are meant to understand program readiness and desired supports going forward.

Q17  What more is needed to help support youth engagement in the TRHT GSC??

- Additional teaching material & resources (videos, artwork, images). Music/songs/poetry paired with each book
- Discussion points in advance
- Online forum for discussion
- More time
- Slightly easier text

Q18  What training did you complete to facilitate this book discussion(s)?

- GSC trainings
- ALA workshops and webinars
- Looked at questions before discussions
- Met with partners
- Great Stories Club Training
- Civil Rights – Civil Society at Nashville Public Library
- Facilitation training through county library
- Chicago trainings and workshops
- TRHT workshops (a variety of them)
- Great Stories book club training
- Read books
Q19 How prepared did you feel to facilitate this book discussion(s)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>N=</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepared</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Prepared</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Prepared</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficiently Prepared</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q20 What other training would you like to have received?

- Be able to share ideas and strategies with other librarians
- Breakdown of themes and deeper training on the topics
- How to incorporate standards
- Training on what to do when the teens won't read or talk, and on adapting the questions for English language learners
- More time discussing different activities such as arts-based learning
- More practice leading discussions

Q21 What was your most memorable experience from the discussion of this book?

- Observing students express themselves and get excited about the books and the topics, becoming engaged
- Students leading discussion themselves
- "When one of the teens told me that this book ‘finally’ helped [him] understand [his] feelings of invisibility and how you can both stand out and feel invisible, at the same time."
- Seeing new friendships form among classmates from different backgrounds
- Hearing teens relate the book to their own lives
- Being able to help students appreciate the value of books
- Seeing students digest new ways of thinking/seeing/relating about contentious social topics

Q22 What (if anything) would you change for the next book discussion?

- Have a guest speaker
- Do a recap of previous discussion
- Terms and definitions
- Give students more questions to think about as they read
- Prepare discussion points and share in advance of starting the club
- More art aspects (storyboarding, painting) and ways to move around
- Field trips
- Longer sessions

Q23 Additional Thoughts/Comments

- "Food does bring the teens. They are appreciative of the availability of snacks and drinks."
- "Excellent outreach grant for libraries serving at-risk teens."
- "I do believe that we may never know the full benefits of the seeds that we are planting with these books and the fact that the residents can take these books home with them. Truly believe in the benefits of bibliotherapy."
- "Students are creating a WIKI page for our Great Stories Club website and this will be finished later this summer/fall."
- "I love this program and it has become a vital part of my library’s Outreach programming. It has helped establish positive relationships for the library with all our partner organizations and the individuals involved."

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Summary

Program Efficacy
Overall, the program was well received by both the participants and the facilitators and provided a rich environment for youth to explore social equity. Approaches designed to achieve program results such as healing circles, art-based activities, historical activities, reflections, discussion questions, etc. were touted throughout as being highly effective. In open questions that didn't guide respondents in any specific direction, such as "Describe any group activities, conversations or themes that worked well when discussing the book", participants pointed to these established methods as being the effective approaches in their book clubs.

When asked what methods didn't work, for example, "What activities did not work well for supporting how youth participants see themselves related to social inequity?" - the response options were the activities prescribed by the program such as informational activities, reflections, and arts-based activities. The option "Other" had the highest percentage response in all cases, indicating that the prescribed programmatic approaches were highly effective overall, and were ineffective only in cases where the activities were geared towards a very specific group of youth.

Preparedness and Training
Facilitators were well trained, participated in trainings that were offered by ALA and also pursued their own needed preparation for the book club. Most all of them stated being either prepared or very prepared for the program, however supports that may be helpful and improve their preparedness could include an online forum where facilitators can share ideas and resources with each other, and some type of resource bank or materials prepared specifically for the chosen books. Additionally, it may help to provide extra trainings on how to implement the methods on the ground for situations such as dealing with reluctant teens, incorporating standards into the curriculum, learning a wider variety of arts-based approaches and generally letting facilitator participants collaborate and share ideas amongst each other.

Benefits and Areas for Improvement
The effects/impact of the program appeared to go beyond social equity, but gave participants benefits such as learning how to listen better, pushing themselves out of their comfort zone, practicing self-expression, among others. Approaches that seemed to work the best among all groups were giving students a safe space to explore difficult topics, using art to explore themes, and facilitating discussion where students were given the opportunity to lead. In general, kids loved connecting - to the book, to the author, to the characters, to each other. These aspects created a meaningful base for exploring difficult topics of racial equity.

When discussing areas that didn’t work well in the program, most of the time participants pointed towards things that are centered around preferences among teens, not necessarily components of the program that didn’t work widely. For example, certain teens not liking to do certain art activities, being disinterested in a certain topic or thinking it was "boring", or feeling it wasn’t relevant enough to their lives. While certain aspects were stated as not working by some (such as the art exercises), they were noted as working the best for others.

Areas that didn’t work across the board however, were not having adequate time, having large groups of students in some cases, and having book content that was too complex or unrelated to a certain age groups.

Overall, responses indicated that the program is of high quality and very effective. The survey itself appeared long and repetitive and a more direct and pointed survey may be needed to get a better understanding of needed program improvements. Responses dropped off as the survey progressed and in many cases respondents pointed to previous responses to answer questions (i.e. "see previous response"), indicating repetition in the prompts.
Appendix D: Round II Final Report Summary

Introduction

This document highlights aggregate Round II final report submissions from the TRHT GSC Round II grantees libraries. All data comes from final reports submitted to the American Library Association (ALA), per grant requirements. Overall, data showed consistent implementation and impacts across sites.

Program Implementation

- **Libraries:** A total of 64 libraries participated in and submitted final grant reports for the second round of the TRHT GSC program.
- **Events:** 534 events were held across all libraries, for an average of 9 per site.
- **Attendance:** An average of 12 youth participants were at each TRHT GSC event.
- **Readings/Discussions:** There were a total of 367 book discussions across libraries, an average of 6 per site.
- **Racial Healing Circles:** There were a total of 60 circles conducted across sites, an approximate average of 1 per site.
- **Books:** Sites read, on average, 3 books during the round. The most frequently read texts were *The Poet X, I Am Alfonso Jones, American Street, Anger is a Gift, Between the World and Me, The Revolution of Evelyn Serrano,* and *Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices.*

Impact

Libraries were also given open-ended space to talk about the goals and impact of TRHT GSC. All libraries (100%) reported critical program impacts, which were thematically analyzed. In addition, libraries set their own goals (i.e., diverse attendance, high engagement/discussion, deep exploration of race and equity) and all libraries reported progress and/or achievement of these self-directed goals.

- **Engaging with Race & Equity.** The TRHT GSC book clubs and racial healing circles helped youth participants and staff create an open dialogue and grapple with difficult issues of race and social injustice. In many instances, library staff provided specific examples of how youth participants discussed sensitive topics in a safe and welcoming environment.

  “I think the group members also gained a lot of empathy for and from each other. One person was dealing with coming out as non-binary which meant other group members needed to examine their own internalized homophobia.”

  “By implementing a Great Stories Club at the Youth participants Empowerment Center, we created an insulated environment where a group of young Black teens were free to express their views about prejudice, discrimination, and racism in all its forms…. the racial healing
circle was not something that the teens have engaged in before, and the experience seemed to
be transformative for them.”

- **Participant Voice.** Many libraries reported that youth participants were empowered to
develop their own “voice” on issues of racial justice and equity and appreciated feeling “heard’
by the adults facilitating the program.

“No only were these teens able to speak on controversial topics, which was one of the goals,
but I saw their confidence grow from the first meeting to the last. In the first couple of
meetings I really had to pull the answers out of them and make it clear to them that I wasn’t
going to judge them or disregard their opinion because they are kids. They grew more
comfortable with speaking their opinions, something that even adults struggle with, and by
the end they were openly discussing and debating with no input from me. Some of these
participants come from a background that doesn’t allow them to speak as freely and openly as
the Great Stories Club did and it was remarkable to see”

“The single most powerful thing we can offer young people in our programs is the reminder
that adults care about them and want to hear their voices. The Great Stories Club succeeds in
doing that.”

- **Creating Community.** The TRHT GSC discussions connected the library to youth participants
that they would not otherwise serve and allowed for the youth participants and library staff
to engage with and befriend one other. As a result of TRHT GSC programming, youth
participants continue to engage with the library and see it as a welcoming community space.

“Many of the youth participants who participated became more regular library users as a result
of the relationships that were formed with me, the librarian and other library staff. Youth
participants would drop in to say hello, get information, check out a book, or use other
supplies we have on hand.”

“The Club for them has become something deeper and more meaningful than just an extra
"school activity"; it has become a sanctuary and safe-space and communal meeting of minds
allowing them to step outside the bounds of social expectations and obligations, and be their
more authentic selves.”

“The library is gaining a reputation as a place that can be known as a safe space to talk about
race.”

- **Parallel Processes.** Libraries also reported that the programs had a strong impact on their
staff. Through the program, staff experienced a parallel process to the youth participants and
were able to reflect and think deeply about systemic issues of racial and personal biases.

“I feel this Club of young people has become my family. So many of my own assumptions,
bias, and attitudes have been challenged and changed. The hugs, and tears and truths we’ve
shared mean more to me than I can convey here.”
Appendix E: Round III Youth Participant Survey Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this survey was to better understand Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Great Stories Club (TRHT GSC) participant experiences. Youth participants were encouraged to complete the survey following the completion of each book during their participation in the TRHT GSC program series. First, key findings are detailed, followed by a description of respondent demographics, an analysis of survey results, and a review of how youth participants perceived each book.

Key Findings

- Youth participants enjoyed program participation (79%), gained knowledge and reflected on issues of race and inequity (76%) and began the process of internalizing these issues to their own lives (59%). They also built relationships with adults (67%) and other youth participants (61%).
- Internalizing this knowledge to personal experience and active “narrative” change proved more difficult for youth participants than knowledge gain and general reflection. This suggests that more programming is needed to facilitate strong narrative change.
- *X: A Novel* (4.1) was the highest rated book by youth participants; *The Hate U Give* (3.8) was the lowest rated book but this low rating was likely due to its difficult content, as this book was highly rated for its spurred reflection on social justice and racial inequities. Library project directors also rated it as the most effective book discussion.

Analysis

A total of 104 responses were recorded, representing 11 sites. Six books were offered for the program; sites chose 4 to read and discuss, with *The Hate U Give* being the most widely read among respondents (see Table E2). 68% of respondents stated having been to at least three book club sessions. Ages of respondents ranged from 11-18, with the majority (65%) being between 14-17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table E1: Participant Survey Libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danbury Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Southern University Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mabel C. Fry Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami-Dade Public Library System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence Public Library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
San Francisco Public Library  14  
Sloper Library 33  
Sonoma County Library 12  
Traverse Library 5

**Table E2: Participant Survey Books Completed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Hate U Give</em></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Sun is Also a Star</em></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal</em></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>X: A Novel</em></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>March: Book One</em></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Shadowshaper</em></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table E3: Ages of respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were presented with a set of statements about their experience in the program, and asked to respond to them on a Likert scale where: 5 = “Strongly Agree”; 4 = “Agree”; 3 = “Neutral”; 2 = “Disagree”; and 1 = “Strongly Disagree.” The responses were rank ordered in Table E4 from highest to lowest average.

**Table E4: Likert responses (rank ordered by highest AVG)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>AVG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed participating in book club discussions</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend this to a friend</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed reading this book(s)</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to reflect on issues of race and justice</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of structural racism and inequality</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand how the themes of the book apply to my own life</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am more interested in reading</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, youth participants enjoyed the experience, the books, and would recommend the book club to a friend. They felt strongly that they could better understand racism and inequity and reflect on these topics in the group. The remainder of items fell in the mid-range of three, and the fewest number of youth participants stated being able to reflect on their own experiences with racial injustice. Using “4” as a cutoff marker the data shows that youth participants enjoyed reading, discussions, reflected on race and injustice, and gained knowledge around these topics; however, this knowledge gain was not translated into action in equal measure. This suggests that discussions served as a strong starting point for reflection and knowledge but internalizing this knowledge to personal experience and active “narrative” change is more difficult. This finding is consistent with most youth programming research, which demonstrates that knowledge and attitudes are easier to change the behavior, which usually requires long-term, targeted programming to change (Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010).

The following table shows the total average for each item, by book. Areas highlighted in blue indicate which book had the highest average for that survey item.

Table E5. Participant Survey by Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>The Hate U Give</th>
<th>March Book 1</th>
<th>X: A Novel</th>
<th>The Sun is Also a Star</th>
<th>Ms. Marvel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am more interested in reading</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I built a meaningful relationship(s) with an adult</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I built a meaningful relationship(s) with other youth participants</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed participating in book club discussions</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed reading this book(s)</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of structural racism and inequality</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I reflected on my own experiences with racial injustice</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I understand how the themes of the book apply to my own life</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to reflect on issues of race and justice</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend this to a friend</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overall, *X: A Novel* had the highest total average (4.10) followed by *The Sun is Also a Star* (4.01). The lowest averaged books were *The Hate U Give* and *March: Book One*.

Interestingly, *The Hate U Give* was the second highest rated item on “I was able to reflect on issues of race and justice” and the library project directors noted that *The Hate U Give* was the best book for group discussions. As a result, the lower rating for this book may be due to its difficult content—as it pushed youth participants to truly grapple with social justice and racial inequity.

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3 An ANOVA was run to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the total averages of each book. Results showed that there was a significant difference between books at the .05 level (p=.029). A Bonferroni post hoc test was run to determine which books were significantly different from one another and results showed the difference lied between only *X: A Novel* and *The Hate U Give*. 
Appendix F: Round III Library Project Director Survey Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this survey was to better understand Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Great Stories Club (TRHT GSC) library project director experiences. Library project directors were asked to complete the survey following the completion of each book in their TRHT GSC program series. First, key findings are presented, followed by a breakdown of respondents, and an analysis of the close-ended and open-ended sections of the survey. These results largely matched the analysis of library project director surveys in Round II, which is found in Appendix D.

Key Findings

- Library project directors felt prepared to lead book club discussion (100%) and reported that the books were appropriate for their youth participants (91%).
- Similar to the youth participants, library project directors reported more knowledge gain and reflection around issues of race and injustice (80%) rather than internalized narrative change (64%).
- Library project directors reported humanities-based discussion questions and “other” activities such as movies, guest speakers, and journaling as the most supportive activities to engage youth participants.
- The data shows a disconnect between youth participants and library project director perceptions. Library project directors ranked The Hate U Give as the most effective book club and X: A Novel the least effective; youth participants had these flipped with The Hate U Give as the least effective and X: A Novel as the most.

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4 Round II surveys were created and administered by Become and analyzed by PIE. The survey from Round II is similar, but not the same as the Round III survey. The Round III survey was changed to improve response rate and provide more concise, outcomes-focused language.
Analysis

A total of 80 responses were recorded, representing 29 sites (see Table F1 for breakdown of sites and number of responses per site). Six books were completed and discussed (see Table F2).

Table F1: Project Director Survey Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic County Institute of Technology</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attleboro Public Library</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore County Public Library</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batesville Public Library</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billings Public Library</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Center Secondary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danbury Library</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garfield County Public Library District</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Southern University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau Public Library</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsport Public Library</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Public Library</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mabel C. Fry Public Library</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monrovia Public Library</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morley Library</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk Public Library</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince William County Public Schools</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence Public Library</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Peter Public Library</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Public Library</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skokie Public Library</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table F2: Library project directors Books Completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hate U Give</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X: A Novel</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun is Also a Star</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadowshaper</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March: Book One</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were presented with a set of statements about the program, and asked to respond to them on a Likert scale where: 5 = “Strongly Agree”; 4 = “Agree”; 3 = “Neutral”; 2 = “Disagree”; 1 = “Strongly Disagree.” The responses were rank ordered in Table F3 from highest to lowest average.
Overall, the library project directors were prepared to facilitate and reported that the book was an appropriate selection for youth participants in their organizations. Most indicators ranked above a four average, and those ranking in the three range were centered around youth participants outcomes such as increase in understanding of social equity and changing the way they see themselves in the world. Similar to the participant survey, library project directors also rated youth participants’ knowledge gain as greater than their internalizations and “narrative change” furthering support that one round of this may not be sufficient for youth participants to truly internalize their experience and apply it in their lives.

Library project directors were also asked to rate the following activities on the following scale, to indicate how important each activity was in reaching the goals of the program: 4 = “This was critically important”; 3 = “This was a helpful driver”; 2 = “A little bit”; 1 = “Not at all.” Definitions of these activities are found in Table F4 below and responses were averaged and rank ordered in Table F5.

### Table F3: Library project directors Likert responses (rank ordered by highest AVG)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>% Agree/Strongly agree</th>
<th>N=</th>
<th>AVG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This book was an appropriate selection for the youth participants in my organization.</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt prepared to facilitate the book discussion(s).</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth participants were engaged throughout the discussion of this book.</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am interested in receiving more training around these discussion(s).</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This book helped youth participants increase their understanding of social equity.</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This book helped change the way youth participants see themselves in the world.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Library project directors were also asked to rate the following activities on the following scale, to indicate how important each activity was in reaching the goals of the program: 4 = “This was critically important”; 3 = “This was a helpful driver”; 2 = “A little bit”; 1 = “Not at all.” Definitions of these activities are found in Table F4 below and responses were averaged and rank ordered in Table F5.

### Table F4. Activity Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
<td>Questions provided by ALA: “Discussion Questions” written by Susana M. Morris and Book-Inspired Sample Prompts for Racial Healing Circles. In the context of book clubs, discussion questions refer specifically to the non-racial healing questions, although both were helpful for library project directors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book reflections</td>
<td>Journal writing; personal reading reflection and open-ended, unguided reflection on book Questions that help connect the books to real life events and/or to the youth’s lives; current events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/historical based activities</td>
<td>Researching/discussing events that provide historical context to the books (e.g. Civil Rights Movement or Black Panthers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table F5. Library Project Director Activity helpfulness (rank ordered by highest AVG)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>% Helpful Driver</th>
<th>% Critically Important</th>
<th>Helpful Driver/ Critically Important N=</th>
<th>AVG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant questions (e.g., those related to real life events)</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Others</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion questions</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Reflections</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History/historical based activities</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informational activities</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art-based activities</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other responses for helpful activities:
- Movie viewing & related videos (n=6)
- Journal writing (n=4)
- Meeting outside experts/guest speakers (n=3)
- Outside reading resources related to the book (n=3)
- Physical component while talking about books (n=1)
- Racial healing circles (n=1)

Relevant questions, discussion questions, and “other” had the highest level of importance to library project directors. Art-based activities had the least amount of importance applied. In open-ended responses, library project directors were able to provide examples of how every activity was helpful; however, some were noted to be more meaningful than others. Relevant questions, guest speakers and the facilitation/discussion question guides were the most commented on, while art-making, informational activities were not emphasized.

To better understand how directors viewed the youth participants impact of each specific book, an analysis was done on items related to youth participants’ outcomes. The following table shows the total average for each item, by book. Areas highlighted in blue indicate which book had the highest average for that survey item.
Overall, *The Hate U Give* had the highest total average related to youth participant outcomes (4.36) followed by *March: Book 1* (4.35); *X: A Novel* was rated as the least effective. These results are directly opposite of the youth participant survey. This may be due to the difference between youth participant “enjoyment” and “effectiveness.” *The Hate U Give* is a great example here—it was the lowest overall rated book by the youth participants; however, it was rated highest as helping them to reflect on issues of social justice and race. Thus, its content, and perhaps its length, may lower enjoyment and overall rating for youth, while it is still an effective driver of meaningful TRHT GSC conversations.

**Open-ended Questions**

The survey also asked a series of open-ended questions; the most salient themes from these questions are summarized below.
• Small group breakouts, following the natural flow of conversation, and creating space for authentic conversation in a compassionate space helped facilitate discussions.
• Library project directors noted that more detailed lesson plan materials, as well as incentives for reading and attendances would bolster the program.
• Library project directors noted that further trainings on racial healing circles and dealing with youth trauma would further support their work with youth participants.
Appendix G: Round III Community Partner Survey Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this survey was to better understand Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Great Stories Club (TRHT GSC) community partner experiences. Partners were asked to complete the survey following the completion of their work with TRHT GSC. First, key findings are detailed, followed by a breakdown of respondents and an analysis of the closed-ended and open-ended portions of the survey.

Key Findings

- Community partners reported that libraries were strong facilitators and partners throughout the program (100%).
- Similar to participant and library project director surveys, community partners also reported that youth participants had higher knowledge gain around race and social justice issues (95%) than internalization of these issues to their own lives (85%). Open-ended comments supported the quantitative data about youth participant knowledge gain around issues of race and social justice.
- Racial healing circles were an important tool to facilitate participant engagement and reflection on issues of race and social justice.

Analysis

A total of 20 responses were recorded, representing 18 sites and 18 partnering libraries (see Table G1. 2019-2020 TRHT GSC Libraries for alignment between site and library).

Table G1: Community Partner Responders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITE</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Juvenile Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facing History</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Verse Writing Project</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls Inc. of Kingsport</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubert middle</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indio Juvenile Hall -Probation Department</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Services Department</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mural Envy, LLC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI Nurses Institute Middle College</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside County of Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Public Affairs &amp; Admin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFUSD school of the arts</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonoma County Office of Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Peter Public Schools District 508</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Zone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traverse City High School; Alternative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Services Department</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yampah Mountain High School</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth participants Restoration Project</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents were asked to reflect on their time with TRHT GSC and respond to a set of statements on a Likert scale where, 5 = “Strongly Agree”; 4 = “Agree”; 3 = “Neutral”; 2 = “Disagree”; 1 = “Strongly Disagree.” The responses were rank ordered in Table G2 from highest to lowest average.

Table G2. Community Partner Likert responses (rank ordered by highest AVG)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>% Agree/Strongly agree</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>AVG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The library site was a strong partner throughout this project.</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role and expectations for this work were clear.</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The implementation of this program went smoothly.</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This program gave the youth participants a better understanding of racial and social equity.</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This program helped youth participants build meaningful relationships with each other.</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The youth participants were engaged in the book club discussions</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The youth participants were able to &quot;see&quot; themselves in the books.</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The youth participants changed the way they saw themselves in the world, as a result of this program.</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All items had high ratings, indicating a strong impact across the expected outcomes. Ranking the highest in the indicator list were items related to program implementation, and lowest were items related to youth participants having the ability to change their perspectives about how they see themselves in the world through relating closely to situations presented in the books.

Community partners consistently provided higher ratings than library project directors or youth participants. Based on interviews and site visit data, this is likely because the community partners have a consistent, longer-term relationship with the youth participants and, due to these relationships, are better able to see smaller changes in youth participant mindsets and behavior.

A total of 10 respondents (50%) convened a racial healing circle and nine of those responded to the following related questions. Overall, the healing circles were considered meaningful, well prepared, and had good participation.
Table G3: Healing Circle Impact – (rank ordered by highest AVG)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>% Agree/Strongly agree</th>
<th>N=</th>
<th>AVG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The racial healing circles were effective in helping youth participants reflect on their understanding of society.</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We were well-prepared to implement the racial healing circles with youth participants.</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The youth participants actively participated in the racial healing circles.</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open-Ended Analysis

The survey also asked a series of open-ended questions; the most salient themes from these questions are summarized below. Overall, the community partners were effusive in their praise for the program and offered few salient examples for program improvement.

“The fascination, curiosity, empathy, and authenticity that this project elicited in the youth participants was inspiring and as a teacher, I feel so grateful to have witnessed it.”

The program helped youth participants “find their voices” and see themselves as part of a community. Youth participants frequently shared their own personal experiences that tied into book themes and broader humanity-based discussion questions. As a result, the program helped youth participants see, grapple with, and change perspectives on broader societal and racial inequities.

Finally, one respondent attended the “Growing up Brave” orientation workshop in October 2019. That participant felt that it was “one of the most eye-opening trainings” they’d ever attended.

“This was the first time I have ever participated in a racial healing circle and it helped me develop so much not just professionally, but personally. Having the opportunity to discuss the important information in the books we would be reading and hearing different perspectives helped prepare me so much for discussions with the teens.”

92% of respondents (n=12) did not attend due to various barriers and stated the following may have helped them in their ability to attend:

- More funding
- Different days/times
- Remote availability for the orientation
- Knowledge the program was available for community partners
Appendix H: Round III Interview Methodology

The goal of phenomenological interviews is to provide thick, rich description of a phenomenon as it is concretely lived and experienced (Finlay, 2012). The phenomenon under study was the TRHT GSC program and how libraries implemented the reading and discussion programs to impact underserved youth participants. A grounded theory approach to evaluation does not prescribe a specific framework to analyzing the data; rather, it allows key themes to emerge from the data organically (Strauss, Anselm & Corbin, 1994). The data from the surveys and final reports was used to quantitatively compliment the emergent interview and site visit findings.

Interview protocols for library project directors, youth participant focus groups, and community partners were created in collaboration with ALA project staff to implement via phone interviews and site visits. ALA selected a sample of sites for interviews and site visits out of the 35 Round III libraries, which included a mix of libraries that had previously participated in TRHT GSC and/or GSC programming, as well libraries new to the program. PIE conducted interviews with eight TRHT GSC libraries and site visits with two TRHT GSC libraries in March and April 2020. The interviews were conducted with library project directors who facilitated the TRHT GSC book club sessions, as well as one community partner. The site visits included a book club observation and youth participants focus group, in addition to the project director and community partner interviews. Each interview, lasting approximately 45 minutes, was audio recorded with the explicit oral consent of each interviewee. After each interview, the evaluator uploaded the recording to a network drive, replayed the interview, and took detailed notes about the conversation and transcribed important quotes. During this process, the evaluation team met regularly to discuss the interview and site visit process and the findings that emerged from the data. The goal of the interviews and site visits was to answer specific evaluation questions, which were created by the evaluation team and ALA project staff.

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6 The TRHT GSC program had three phases of implementation: a pilot phase and Rounds II and III. Another evaluation team was responsible for the pilot and Round II evaluation work. PIE Org was hired at the end of Round II and start of Round III. As such, this evaluation focuses mostly on Round III work, since it was the primary round of data collection with PIE Org. Data from the pilot and Round II phases all had separate reports and the data collected was not robust. As a result of the reporting, data collection, and change in evaluation partners, this report focuses mainly on Round III.
Appendix I: Round III Interview Findings - Impact

Introduction

Interviews with library project directors were conducted with a sample of program sites, identified in collaboration with ALA—see the table below. This section highlights the findings from the interviews with library project directors from ten libraries, as well as one community partner, with a specific focus on program impact, implementation, and future recommendations and support.

Table I1. 2019-2020 TRHT GSC Interview and Site Visit Context and Participant Demographic Description as Reported by Project Facilitators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library</th>
<th>Community Partner Context</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Participation: Required Course, Volunteer, Credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic County</td>
<td>Alternative High School</td>
<td>14-18</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>72% free or reduced lunch; diverse; mix of urban and rural; some homelessness</td>
<td>Required Course during school day; Volunteer during after school program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>Alternative High School</td>
<td>14-18</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>50% Hispanic, 50% Caucasian</td>
<td>Required Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Detention Center</td>
<td>14-18</td>
<td>All Male</td>
<td>Caucasian &amp; Native Alaskan</td>
<td>Volunteer &amp; Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>13-18</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Volunteer and Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morley</td>
<td>After school program at High School</td>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>Mix; mostly female</td>
<td>Biracial, Latinx, Caucasian</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monrovia</td>
<td>Alternative High School</td>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>80% Hispanic</td>
<td>Volunteer and Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk</td>
<td>After school program</td>
<td>14-19</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Mostly White</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rappahannock</td>
<td>Detention Center</td>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>All Male</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Volunteer via reading program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Alaska</td>
<td>Alternative High School; Middle School</td>
<td>14-19</td>
<td>Mix; mostly female</td>
<td>Filipino, Alaska Native, Caucasian, Biracial</td>
<td>Volunteer and Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicomico</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>12-19</td>
<td>Mix; mostly male</td>
<td>African American, Asian, Hispanic</td>
<td>Volunteer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Interviews with Seattle Public Library, Civic Center Secondary School, and Skokie Public Library were attempted, but unable to happen due to scheduling issues and closures related to COVID-19.

8 Credit refers to youth participants receiving a school credit for their participant in the program.
First, this section highlights key findings, followed by a detailed analysis of salient impact themes.

Key Findings

- The library project directors and community partners described numerous impacts on the youth participants, which included having in-depth discussions about race and social equity, family and cultural issues, historic and current events; participating in dialogues and activities which helped shift their perspectives and develop strategies to address conflict; and building meaningful relationships with other youth participants.

- Libraries discussed how the program strengthened their connection to the teen demographic and their relationships with community partners.

- Libraries detailed ripple effects and unanticipated impacts of the TRHT GSC program, such as having the opportunity to extend themes and components beyond the book club sessions and activities and expanding their knowledge about cultural and historical issues that relate to the books and theme.

Impact

Library project directors shared numerous examples of the impact of TRHT GSC on the youth participants. The most salient examples are described thematically below.

Engaging with Race, Social Equity, and Bias (N=10)

“I think (the book club) helped them think about (issues of race and social equity) differently, especially in terms of advocacy and speaking up, because we talked a lot about that. We would role play, ‘What would you do if somebody called your friend a racial slur?’ What would you say if somebody didn’t want to be friends with you because you were in the LGBTQ community?’ We’d do little scenarios like that came up organically during the discussions.”

The TRHT GSC book clubs helped create an open dialogue for youth participants to grapple with challenging issues related to social justice, race and ethnicity, institutional and structural racism, and bias. Library project directors shared examples of these discussions happening in conjunction with specific books, during conversations related to TRHT GSC themes, and in conjunction with other book club activities.

Current Events and Social Issues (N=8)

“(With our community partner), we did a segment . . . to go with ‘Sun is Also A Star,’ (about) immigration and deportation. I think this book, of all of them, applied most to our kids. Because there are so many immigrants and undocumented immigrants in the school. We did
big charts about, ‘What does it mean to be an American?; What I think Americans are; What my family thinks Americans are; What the media thinks Americans are.’”

Library project directors also described that certain books generated conversations about current events and social issues, some that youth participants were familiar with, and others that were new to them. Similar to other themes, youth participants found ways to connect the experiences of the characters in the books to their own lives or recognize that it was important to understand issues, even if they weren’t directly impacted by them. For example, *Sun is Also a Star* generated conversations about immigration/deportation and the experience of feeling unwelcome, *Shadowshaper* generated conversations about gentrification of cities and cultural appropriation, and *The Hate U Give* led to conversations around code switching and being the victim of prejudice.

**Family and Cultural Issues (N=7)**

“We talked about Ms. Marvel getting in trouble with her parents, even though she’s trying to help others. So, she gets in trouble because her parents don’t understand her. So, we started talking about injustice and if they feel that in their lives. A lot of people wanted to talk about how they get in trouble with their parents (or at school) even though they’re not really doing anything wrong. ... That kind of discussion can be really useful because the teens can express how they feel. That they’re upset because they’re treated unjustly.”

Library project directors described that the book clubs were a catalyst for conversations about intergenerational issues, interracial relationships, intra-family racism, cultural heritage, cultural differences, and religion. This led to conversations where the youth participants were able to relate these issues to their own lives, express their feelings about these issues, and discuss strategies to address them.

**Historical Events and Figures (N=6)**

“There was a profound moment where they made a connection between this grown man who was a civil rights activist and the young man who preceded him and his story growing up outside of Detroit coming out of the foster care system, moving on his own, struggling how to make his way in the world which is very familiar to a good number of them (the book club participants) ...”

Library project directors described that discussions provided introductions to historical figures and events that were eye-opening for the youth participants. This came up in particular with groups that read *March* and/or *X: A Novel*, where they discussed the civil rights movement and learned about the childhoods and backgrounds of Malcolm X and John Lewis. Learning about the troubled background of Malcolm X, for example, was especially resonant for book club members in a male detention center classroom.

**Building Community (N=6)**
“This group is very small, and we have such vibrant, different personalities in it, they have a common language now. . . . It gives the opportunity to be part of a group. All you have to do is read the book and you know what you’re talking about and you’re not going to get judged in that way.”

The program created opportunities for youth participants to meet and build relationships with new teens or deepen existing relationships. The books and the themes provided a built-in subject matter and focus for communication and relationship building and the program provided a compassionate, respectful space for open conversation without judgment. Library project directors described that the youth participants felt braver over the course of the program to participate and share personal anecdotes and discuss important issues.

Library Impacts

Interview data showed that the program also affected library project director youth participant connections, enhanced community partner relationships, and personally impacted both the library project directors and their staff.

**Strengthening Relationships with Community Partners (N=9)**

“The great stories club has strengthened our partnership with [organization] where on a regular basis I meet with (their staff), and I share any new upcoming contests or programs or events that are going on and because of our participation and success with the Great Stories Club, [organization] has secured some of their own funding . . . (to) pay for STEAM-based programming in . . . libraries and they will transport kids and also have it open to the public and neighborhood kids can also participate.”

The program helped library project directors form new community partnerships that have the potential to bring in different perspectives to the discussion and have resulted in strong working relationships and a commitment to offering programs together in the future (e.g. Norfolk, Wicomico, Morley). In many examples provided, the active participation of community partners led to them advocating for the continuation of TRHT GSC after program funding ends.

**Building Community with Youth participants (N=9)**

“Everybody, whether it’s because of their age, their background, their upbringing, because of whatever their current circumstances are, they might not relate to the same story, or get the same thing out of a story that you do or that I do. And when they do share, it’s just amazing, because I learn things and I think of things that I never would have thought of from that point of view. . . . (It’s) a constant reminder, for me personally, that everybody experiences everyday as their own . . .”
The TRHT GSC program helped librarians connect and build rapport with youth participants, including youth participants they would not necessarily serve through their regular programming. As one project director described, “It’s giving us an opportunity to reach communities that normally we wouldn’t.” Similarly, another library project director described “working really hard to build the relationship with the teens,” and “giving (them) my information and (telling) them they can contact me outside of school with anything.”

**Impacts on Library Project Directors**

“The librarians in the youth participants services department, even just hearing about some of the things we’ve been discussing has impacted them and made them think about it, too. And I make it a point to share issues with them about teens, race, and social justice.”

Library project directors described the impact that the program had on themselves and other library staff in focusing more on issues of race, equity, and injustice. Library project directors gained new perspectives about these issues through the lens of the youth participants and the experiences they shared and their reactions to and opinions about the content discussed in the clubs. Some recognized personal challenges in addressing these issues; when they may lack the skills, experience, or background to discuss certain issues they acknowledged the benefits of bringing in diverse experts, community members, or even other staff members to bridge these gaps. Library project directors extended this impact by sharing information and activities with other library staff members and/or inviting them to participate in components of the programs, increasing their awareness of issues of race and equity.
Appendix J: Round III Interview Findings - Implementation

Introduction

Library project directors also discussed implementation successes and issues, including the racial healing circles. The most salient examples are described thematically below. First, key findings are detailed, followed by an analysis of key themes that emerged around implementation strategies and activities, racial healing circles, and common challenges and lessons learned.

Key Findings

- Library project directors identified a combination of strategies for engaging youth participants, which included using the ALA literature-based discussion questions, relating book themes to youth participants’ lived experiences and historical contexts, as well as leveraging outside activities such as read alouds, guest speakers, movies, and art-making.
- Library project directors described two key challenges with implementation:
  - Collaboration and communication issues with community partners,
  - Attendance and reading buy-in issues with the youth participants.
- They offered specific recommendations, such as consistent communication and expectation setting with partners and incentives for youth participation and creating more time for youth participants to read.
- The racial healing circles were meaningful drivers of youth participant reflection and engagement; library project directors who implemented the circles reported that they were beneficial additions to the program that allowed youth participants a space to explore topics of race and equity on a deeper level.

Implementation Strategies

The library project directors highlighted key strategies that supported program implementation, supplemental activities they added within the specific lessons plans, and key challenges to program implementation. These themes are highlighted below.

Facilitation Strategies

- **ALA Lesson Plan Materials. (N=10)** Library project directors valued the resources provided by the ALA and frequently mentioned that the TRHT GSC materials were helpful guides and starting points for all discussions. The discussion questions, in particular, were critically helpful to begin the process. The racial healing circle prompts, were specifically helpful for library project directors because they were open-ended enough to always be applicable and engaging for participants, regardless of how much they’d read.
“I’d use the questions that were given to us. I would go through and be open ended. There’s not a wrong answer. Everybody has their own idea about how they’re interpreting the book. And we try to tie it to other things.”

• **Youth participants lived experience.** (N=9) Library project directors would come prepared with the ALA literature-based discussion questions, which they found helpful for starting conversation; however successful programming also required helping the youth participants make connections between the books and their own lives. Helping them make those connections and bringing in real world examples gives the youth participants a pathway to relate more deeply to the books. It also helps when the youth participants haven’t read the books. Similarly, following the youth participants conversation where it led helped them feel supported, heard, and kept the conversation grounded in their own feelings and experience.

  “I give them options to lead into the story by telling their story.”

  “I try to apply things to real life situations. ‘Can you think of a time where this happened in school that was similar to this?’”

• **Personal Experiences.** (N=6) Library project directors also described that sharing their personal experiences or perspectives with the youth participants, or inviting other adults to do so, helped build trust with the youth participants and encouraged them to share their own stories, in turn.

  “The first two sessions were about building a “circle of trust” with the youth participants. . . . (I) opened up and shared about personal experiences (challenges she had as a youth participants), which helped the youth participants trust me right away and helped with the discussion going forward. I tried to . . . get on their level and they really appreciated that. There was value to just being genuine - showing up in jeans and a t-shirt, sitting in the circle with them, engaging and being silly. We had a natural connection and... got closer . . . as the sessions progressed. . . . They thanked (me) for advice, which was advice based on experiences in my own life.”

• **Following the conversation.** (N=4) Successful programming also required following the youth participants conversation where it led, which helped them feel supported, heard, and kept the conversation grounded in their own feelings and experience.

  “I follow them, and if we keep talking about the book that is fantastic. But when those really more candid conversations happen, it’s been very successful. . . . The spontaneous conversations that have happened have been fantastic. And I’m fairly good at tying that back into something else in the book or something else that’s more related to the theme.”
**Supplemental Activities**

Library project directors shared details about supplemental programming and enrichment activities they incorporated into their book clubs, which are outlined below.

- **Audiobooks and Read-a-louds.** *(N=6)* Several library project directors recommended using audiobooks. Playing audiobooks at sessions can make the titles more accessible for reluctant or lower level readers. It can also be helpful for youth participants who haven’t read the books. Ultimately, audiobooks are more useful for programs that have longer meeting times and/or meet more frequently. Similarly, a few library project directors mentioned that read-a-louds improve engagement and can provide youth participants with a safe way to participate.

- **Author Clips and other Materials Connected to the Book Topics.** *(N=6)* Several library project directors mentioned that showing author clips and using other resources to introduce books is a successful strategy to generate excitement about the books/discussion.

- **Art and Music.** *(N=5)* Librarians shared a range of examples of incorporating art activities, and how youth participants responded. Some youth participants opened up more when they were doing something with their hands while other groups were less interested in hands-on activities. Some library project directors did not have enough time to do any activities beyond the discussions. A few library project directors tried using music playlists, *“to start off with a non-verbal way of introducing the book,”* with varying degrees of success.

- **Special Guests.** *(N=4)* Library project directors that brought in special guests, such as artists, writers, or activists, who could provide diverse, new perspectives on the book themes reported strong activities and youth participants engagement.

- **Movies.** *(N=4)* Many library project directors agreed that it is great to have books that have associated movies. Movies help generate excitement about the books, whether the youth participants have seen the film, or not.

- **Snacks.** *(N=7)* Several library project directors mentioned that snacks helped youth participants maintain their focus and energy during the club.

**Racial Healing Circles**

Library project directors described their experiences of implementing racial healing circles, and shared recommendations, as well as challenges they faced.

“*(There would be a) pause in the circle. This happened to me. This is what I did. ’They really felt they gained something. Some of them held their heads a little higher. . . . Gained confidence. . . . Little tidbits (happened) – sparkles that you can’t really put a name to. ”*

- **Impact.** *(N=10)* All reported that the racial healing circles were an important and useful component of the program. They also reported that the experience at the orientation workshop was valuable for them and discussed how they executed circles with their groups.

- **Facilitators.** *(N=7)* Most library project directors found it helpful to bring in an expert facilitator who would provide new perspectives. A few felt that the rapport built up

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9 Theses guests were separate from racial healing professionals,
throughout the program would allow the library project directors to be more effective implementers of the circles or circle-related activities.

- **More Circle Time. (N=4)** Library project directors suggested that it was beneficial to plan for longer times for the circles and to manipulate the schedule, if possible, so there was more opportunity to build trust with the youth participants and for them to open up. Some also suggested doing circles more frequently, such as at the beginning and end of the book club, and/or after each book.

- **Personal Items & Arrangement. (N=3)** Library project directors suggested inviting youth participants to bring their own personal items to share in the circle, as a way to encourage their buy-in to the racial healing process. Many emphasized the importance of the physical arrangement of the circle, and how that facilitates different groupings of conversations, which the youth participants also responded positively to. These strategies were also emphasized in the ALA racial healing circle orientation.

- **Challenges. (N=4)** Common challenges included time constraints of the book club sessions to effectively implement a circle, restrictions in the detention center setting, such as how the room can be set up, and resistance to the process. One library project director considered not applying due to the racial healing requirement and would have liked more guidance in terms of how to find a facilitator in a more remote area. She also mentioned that the $1,200 stipend was not enough to cover the expenses of bringing in a facilitator from outside of their community.

**Implementation Challenges & Lessons Learned**

*Challenges*

Library project directors highlighted two key challenges to program implementation, which are detailed below.

- **Community Partner Collaboration. (N=5)** Library project directors described issues they had with partner communication and coordination, changing personnel, and competing with other events offered to the youth participants. Communication and coordination issues made it difficult to discuss the vision, goals, structure, and scheduling of the program. Changing personnel within community partner organizations resulted in less support for and investment in the program, placing an extra burden on library project directors to make the program happen. As one library project director explained, “collaboration is a commitment and you can’t always expect things to stay the same.” A few library project directors felt that they could have used more support from the community partners to encourage participation and/or help the youth participants prioritize participation in the book club over other activities that potentially conflicted with the sessions. All of these challenges ultimately impacted participation and attendance.

- **Attendance & Buy-in. (N=5)** Library project directors mentioned that attendance was sporadic due to youth participants’ commitment to other activities and/or to participation being voluntary. This also resulted in challenges around how many youth participants had actually read the books. Library project directors had trouble monitoring the reading. Other reading-related challenges included youth participants’ reluctance to admitting that they’d read the
books, and/or not wanting to read a book that had been chosen for them, necessitating library project directors to work harder to get them excited about the books.

Lessons Learned

Library project directors provided a range of recommendations about the program which are shared below.

- **Realistic Meeting Times.** While more frequent meetings provided benefits for youth participants, it was not realistic for all sites and flexibility here is key. Libraries need to implement meeting schedules that balance the needs of the youth participants, staff capacity, and circumstances of the community partners. Frequent meetings were difficult for some library project directors; they noted that monthly meetings were more realistic and allowed for more reading time in between. Meeting on a weekly or biweekly basis would not be possible for many groups, but tended to yield greater participation and reading completion. Those that met monthly could convene for longer periods of times to ensure more programming.

- **Consistency.** Community partner support and follow through helped spur youth participants engagement—community partners that followed up with youth participants about attendance and continued reading saw the benefits of this. Clubs that were a part of a required coursework or offered credits saw the most engagement. For non-required programs, incentives for reading and/or time to read as a group within the meeting were suggested, as well as setting more specific reading goals with the youth participants.

- **Youth Participant Leadership.** Library project directors prioritized involving the youth participants in the program, beyond just reading and discussing the books. Some of the groups were in alternative high school settings where youth voice and input are already an important aspect of the school culture. One group of youth participants determined the schedule and location of their sessions. Others came up with activity ideas. “Our faculty listens to our youth participants a lot. Even now the programming is whatever they want to do. The zine workshop (a workshop about graphic novels), they came up with that idea.” One library project director who hosted several racial healing circles had the youth participants help set them up and invited youth participants to bring in their own personal items to share in each circle. These contributions helped the youth participants feel a deeper and more organic connection to the program.
Appendix K: Round III Final Report Findings

Introduction

All libraries were required to submit a final grant report to the ALA that focused on close and open-ended questions about implementation and open-ended questions about the impact of the program. A total of 34 libraries completed their final reports for Round III. This section highlights the key findings of these final reports, followed by an analysis of the central themes related to implementation, impact, challenges/lessons learned, and future ALA supports. These results largely matched the analysis of final reports in Round II, which is found in Appendix E.

Key Findings

- The programs were implemented with fidelity. On average, programs read 3 books per site, with an average attendance of 13 youth participants, and engaged in one racial healing circle. The ALA-provided discussion questions, the racial healing circle facilitation questions and supplemental activities of movies, guest speakers, art-making, and current events supported program engagement.
- The impact of the program mirrored those of the interview findings: youth participants critically reflected on issues of racial equity and social justice, built community with each other, and connected the readings to their own lives. Libraries deepened their relationships with community partners, youth participants, and reflected on their own biases and racial blind spots.
- Future iterations of the program could provide more resources and activities to sites, such as promoting the existing listserv or creating other communication channels for libraries to share ideas, and provide clearer communication about the evaluation activities.
Implementation

Libraries were asked to report specific implementation numbers, such as discussion, attendance, books read, and racial healing circles. Results are found in the table below.

Table K1: Program Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of libraries reporting</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of events</td>
<td>352; Average per site = 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Attendance for each TRHT GSC event</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Readings/Discussions</td>
<td>262; Average per site = 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Racial Healing Circles</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of books read per site:</td>
<td>3.4; Most frequently read texts from highest to lowest: The Hate U Give (31) The Sun is Also a Star (25) Shadowshaper (25) Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal (20) X: A novel (16) March: Book 1 (14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that the program was implemented as planned, racial healing circles were completed, and an average of 10 events\(^{10}\) and 7 discussions per site were supported. Sites read on average 3.4 of the recommended 3-4 books.

In addition, the final report asked the library project directors open-ended questions about the implementation process. Below are themes that emerged, which largely match interview findings.

- **ALA Lesson Plan Materials.** Library project directors utilized the ALA provided materials, both the book club discussion questions and racial healing facilitation questions, and reported that they were helpful for program implementation and discussion facilitation.

- **Supplemental Activities.** Library project directors reiterated that activities such as guest speakers, art-making, movies, and integrating read-a-louds, current events, and social-historical issues were helpful supportive activities to facilitate meaningful discussion around race and social justice.

- **Racial Healing Circles.** Not all libraries reported on who ran their racial healing circles; however, of those who did, there was a clear divide. Twelve sites conducted their racial healing circle with an expert trainer and 10 had an expert coming in but canceled due to COVID-19. Seven libraries were unable to locate an expert and two of those ran it themselves. All sites that implemented racial healing circles found that to be helpful drivers

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\(^{10}\) Events included reading discussions groups, racial healing circles, guest speakers, and other TRHT GSC related activities.
of the program; these sites often implemented more than one circle. Many sites, due to COVID, lack of trainer, or site policy (i.e., certain juvenile detention centers) were unable to implement the circles.

**Impact**

The final reports also asked multiple open-ended items about the impact of the program. The central themes from the final reports generally matched those in the interview findings. They are highlighted below.

**Participant Impact**

- **Racial Equity & Social Justice.** All libraries reported that youth participants were engaged in meaningful discussion around racial equity and social justice issues. They discussed diversity, inclusion, systemic racism and were challenged to think critically about these issues. A majority of libraries reported that youth participants were able to see the connections between the books and their own lived experiences.

- **Changing Perspectives.** These deep discussions helped change youth participants’ perspectives of these issues. Libraries noted that the youth participants showed personal growth and changed their views and understanding of these topics. They also showed greater empathy, and were concerned with the future, asking “how can we change?”

- **Building Community.** These discussion groups, and the racial healing circles, helped youth participants build community with one another and with library and community partner staff. They felt supported by one another, learned from each other, and were able to feel “safe” and be vulnerable around each other, sharing personal stories about their how they were judged and judged others.

**Library Impact**

- **Strengthening Community Partner Relationships.** Library project directors reported that through the TRHT GSC program, they were able to develop deeper, ongoing relationships with community partners that they hope to leverage in the future for more programming.

- **Building Community.** Library project directors noted the deep connections they created with the youth participants and how these relationships facilitated more youth participation in the library, encouraging them to join other programs, and gain a greater appreciation for the library and its services.

- **Personal Reflection.** The programs also facilitated a parallel process. Library project directors reported that the program helped them and their staff reflect on their own biases and think more critically about systemic racism and social justice issues.

**Challenges & Lessons Learned**

Key challenges and lessons learned were also noted. These included collaboration with the community partner and attendance/buy-in from youth participants. Creating consistent and frequent
communication, making expectations clear, and holding each other accountable were critical for successful collaboration; without these, programs suffered. In addition, youth participants’ attendance and buy-in was also a noted challenge—library project directors felt that youth participants needed more time and incentives to read. For example, libraries suggested providing youth participants leadership opportunities, such as leading discussions and circles, to facilitate buy-in. In addition, programs that were integrated with classes were more successful at keeping youth participants reading and on-task; incentives for volunteer programs or opportunities to read-a-loud/read during meetings times would support buy-in and participation. For attendance, consistency was key—libraries and partners needed to set and communicate clear, realistic expectations for youth participants. Libraries should be flexible in their approach to meet the needs of their youth participants.

Future ALA Supports

Libraries also reflected on future supports that would help other program iterations. These themes are highlighted below.

- **Provide more resources pertaining to the themes and more ideas for activities.** Library project directors asked for more discussion questions for books where it may be harder to find related resources, suggestions for fun culminating activities, and a “more robust repository of assignments and projects related to each book. Even though . . . every group is unique, . . . we can learn from the successes of others and it might help with planning.”

- **Active communication and collaboration with other libraries.** Library project directors wanted a way to actively collaborate and engage with other libraries. The listserv existed; however, it was not identified as particularly helpful in this regard.
Appendix L: Round III Site Visit Findings

Background

Two site visits were conducted in March 2020 to observe TRHT GSC book clubs, conduct focus groups with youth participants, and interview the library project directors and community partners. Two other site visits, with more diverse youth participants, were also planned in Miami, FL and Skokie, IL; however, these were canceled due to COVID-19. This summary combines observations that were made from the interviews, observations, and focus groups at both sites. The sites were selected in collaboration with the ALA, based on having previous experience with the GSC and/or TRHT GSC, representing geographic diversity, and featuring different programming contexts. One visit was made to the Norfolk Public Library in Norfolk, Nebraska, which partnered with The Zone After School, a community youth outreach center. Norfolk Public Library was chosen due to its rural location and previous participation in the GSC series. The second visit was made to Juneau Public Libraries in Juneau, Alaska, that partnered with the Johnson Youth Center, a juvenile detention center. Juneau Public Libraries was selected because it was a longtime GSC and TRHT GSC participant, due to its detention center context, and work with Native Alaskan youth.

Site Demographics

Norfolk is a small town in rural Nebraska that is 90 miles northeast of Omaha. It has a population of approximately 24,000 residents and is predominantly Caucasian (88%), with about 10-12% of its population being Latinx; and less than 2% of its population being African American, Asian, or bi-racial.

Juneau is the capital city of Alaska, and the second most populous city in the state. It has a population of approximately 32,000 residents and is predominantly Caucasian (69%), with about 10-11% each of its population being Native American or bi-racial; 7% being Asian; and 3% of its population being African American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and other.

Youth Participants

The youth participants at both sites voluntarily participated in the book clubs and their age range was 14-18. The Nebraska youth participants were part of a leadership group within their after-school program. All youth participants elected as “leaders” were invited to participate. The program began with a group of 12 which quickly diminished to 6 consistent youth participants who were present on the day of the site visit. A majority of the youth participants were female (n=5) and all were Caucasian.

The Juneau youth participants are in long-term detention at the Johnson Youth Center; their teacher encourages and supports their participation. Being a part of the book club is viewed as a privilege, and they are very invested in the program. There are currently four male youth participants in the club, a
relatively small historical number. Three of the members appeared to be Caucasian and one was Native Alaskan. Three members of the group have been consistently participating for several months, while the fourth member joined the club in January.

Community Partners

At the time of the visits, both community partners were in a precarious state. The longtime director of The Zone left at the start of the 2019 school year, prompting many youth participants to quit the program. Thus, the leadership group was comprised of a newer set of leaders, alongside a new director working to build trust and rapport with the teens. The buy-in to the book club was impacted by these circumstances and general attendance narrowed over time. Furthermore, on the day of the site visit, the new director unexpectedly quit, causing more upheaval to the program. Fortunately, The Zone had other longer-term program staff that participated in the books club discussions and they had a strong working relationship with the library.

Juneau’s community partner, The Johnson Youth Center was an all-male facility throughout its 20-year history. At the time of the site visit, the center was in the process of transitioning to an all-female facility. This was a difficult and disruptive period for the youth participants and staff at the center; the timeline fluctuated, jeopardizing the boys’ ability to complete academic credits they were working toward. They eventually will be sent to different facilities around the state. The number of youth participants at the center was smaller than usual; they were admitting new residents due to the pending transition. The longstanding relationship between the library and the detention center ensured that TRHT GSC programming continued during this transition.

Overview of TRHT GSC Activities

During their interviews, the library project directors and community partners provided details about the implementation of the program. Both book clubs met on a monthly basis, focusing on a new book for each meeting. The Norfolk book club was facilitated by the Youth Services Assistant of the Norfolk Public Library and took place at The Zone. The Zone’s directors of mentorship and the food and wellness programs were also present and played a supportive role. They did not reinforce the reading between sessions, but expressed during their interview that in the future they would consider offering incentives to encourage reading, setting reading goals with the youth participants ahead of time, and maybe even finding a way to incorporate youth participants into the decision-making of what’s being read. They also mentioned it would be helpful to have additional resources to support book club activities between meetings (as did the Johnson Youth participants Center teacher).

The Norfolk book club meetings were an hour and fifteen minutes long and involved discussing the books and doing extension activities, such as a string art activity in conjunction with The Sun Is Also A Star. One session featured a poetry and social justice workshop with an African American spoken word poet (described further in the youth participant focus group section below). They also had two movie parties and participated in a racial healing circle, led by the library project director, for their culminating session.
The Juneau book club was led by the Juneau Public Libraries Youth Participants Services Librarian who was periodically joined by the Library Outreach Coordinator. The club took place at the Johnson Youth participants Center treatment classroom. The Johnson Youth participants Center’s teacher, who has been the lead teacher of the entire facility for 20 years, was also present and played a supportive role. She reminds the boys to read between sessions, tracks their progress, and incorporates content related to the books/theme into the specific lessons plans, when possible. Their book club meetings take place year-round, and contribute to the detention center’s goals for the youth participants to achieve academic success and develop life skills. Youth participants are able to earn credit toward English/Reading, depending on the number of books they read throughout the year, which include TRHT GSC selections. The book club members had just won their district level Battle of the Books in February, 2020, which they had been preparing for since the fall. Since the book battle is a very important activity for the group, it had been several months since they’d focused on the TRHT GSC material.

Their meetings lasted for 60 to 90 minutes, and primarily focused on discussing the books (using the questions provided by the ALA and additional questions developed by the librarians) and issues that relate to the books and the themes. They do not do extension activities; the teacher prefers to maintain the focus on the discussions and art supplies/materials are limited in the detention center setting. They also did not do a racial healing circle, but the librarians incorporate book and theme-related racial healing prompts into the discussions.

Norfolk Observation

The Norfolk observation took place during the final book club session and the youth participants participated in a racial healing circle, led by the project director. In preparation, she had arranged the chairs in a circle and placed a colored scarf, a piggy bank, three TRHT GSC books, and blank paper in the center. The Zone staff joined in the activity, as did the evaluator, per the requests of the youth participants and staff. The mood was jovial and everyone appeared to have a good rapport with each other.

After introductions, the library project director thanked everybody for their dedication to the book club and explained the purpose of the circle. She reiterated the key themes of the books and asked how youth participants “see themselves in the stories” “We are all individuals but what do we all share?” She then described the circle materials. The bright scarf represented her love of travel; she wore it while on a trip to Morocco with her husband. The piggybank was a family keepsake; her grandmother used to say she used the piggybank to save up for her first house. Next, she asked everyone to pick up the blank pieces of paper and write down two things that represent their true selves. All youth participants, with friendly chatter, engaged in the exercise and folded their papers in the middle.

11 The original purpose of this site visit was only to observe a book club discussion; however, after getting to know the community partners, project directors, and youth participants, the evaluator was actively encouraged to join the racial healing circle at the end of the session and encouraged to share the experience.
Afterward, she introduced the rules of the circle (e.g., be respectful, listen, wait your turn), and posed the first question to the group. “When was the first time you realized your race/gender mattered?” which the group was asked to pair and share. At first, everyone was hesitant and awkward; it was clear that they did not usually break off into pairs. The youth participants asked if they could either talk in a large group or be numbered off so they did not have to choose partners themselves. With a little jostling, the project director maintained that people would need to pair up themselves and get used to the discomfort. With playful moans, they paired off and engaged in conversation. (Interestingly, they shared afterward in the focus group that they appreciated the opportunity to talk to somebody new and suggested that in the future there should be more opportunity to talk one-on-one so that “everyone in the group has a chance to have a voice, instead of just being in a huge group all of the time when people feel like they don’t want to, or can’t share.”)

Each individual in the pairs was given two minutes to speak, and then they shared stories with the larger group. They pointed out that girls “can’t be tough” or have to be more careful when they’re out after dark, and described experiencing negative stereotyped reactions from family about having a friend/significant other who was another race. There was ample discussion about these racial and gender stereotypes and the group linked them back to key themes of The Hate U Give, which, as the circle went on, was clearly the favorite novel of the group. Most in the group expressed frustration about being pigeonholed and felt these stereotypes and comments were unfair; they often portrayed this as older people being out of touch, invoking the popular “OK Boomer” meme.

Next, the group was asked to “share a story where you wanted/needed to feel heard and you were.” The group continued with the same partners and then shared out their responses. The library project director described how in high school, she had lots of piercings, smoked cigarettes, and showed off her tattoos. She often felt smothered by her sister who was a cheerleader and honor roll participant. But in college, they grew to appreciate each other, and when she overheard her sister referencing how “cool” she was, she finally felt seen and validated as a person. Many of the youth participants shared stories about the two Zone staff members, who were identified as critical mentors and supportive parent figures. While their parents often minimized their issues; the staff at The Zone listened, empathized, and gave them an outlet to express themselves and their worries. Many felt that “they are always the listeners” but at The Zone “it’s nice that somebody listens to me.” These descriptions were always broad; the youth participants clearly did not want to share specific details of their conversations. However, their affinity for The Zone staff was palpable.

A final question was posed to the full group, “Share a time you overcame a challenges/false narrative about yourself or the group you identify with.” One participant shared that, because her brother was a troublemaker at school, the school staff projected her brother’s issues on her. Another person shared that he and his friends all joined track but eventually everyone but him quit the team. Even though he was out of shape and had trouble with the events, he stuck to it so that people would know that he could persevere. All of the youth participants bemoaned that teenagers are told to “act like adults” but “treated like children.” They expressed frustration that their generation gets blamed for societal ills even though it was their parents and older generations who left them an unjust,
inequitable society. They felt that the public “feared” teens and that whenever they were in a group, they are followed or eyed by businesses.

After this question, the library project director thanked everybody for their active participation, shared quotes from each of the TRHT GSC books and the circle came to a close.

**Juneau Observation**

On the day of the Juneau observation, they were discussing *The Hate U Give*. At the beginning of the book club, the boys arranged their chairs/desks in a circle and were asked to introduce themselves. This was followed by a lively discussion about winning Battle of the Books, and they all agreed that they were “read out.” Then the librarian asked them about a Key and Peele video clip about code switching, that they had watched prior to the meeting; the librarian had provided it to the teacher in preparation for the discussion about *The Hate U Give*. They had a brief conversation about liking/relating to the clip.

Next, the librarian asked the group to name their favorite book they’ve read (any book), which launched them into a spirited conversation about reading and books they like. “*We should read this book.*” “*That’s a good book.*” They also talked about movies and about how long they’ve been in detention and who’s leaving when. There was a lot of friendly teasing and banter among the boys, and there was clear sense of rapport and comfort between the youth participants, the two librarians and the teacher. They went with the flow, letting the boys talk, and periodically pivoting them back to the book. (The librarian commented later that the club was “shaggier than usual,” and that “We value the relationship over the content.”)

The librarian continued by asking who had read the book *The Hate You Give* (three boys had read it, and the fourth intended to). Then she asked what they thought about the title, which comes from Tupac’s THUG LIFE. They discussed the acronym and the phrase; one youth participants elaborated:

> “The hate you give little infants eff’s everyone. I think it’s really true. When you grow up and you’re given bad stuff, and its population-wide, our generation is going to grow up with problems. And the next generation. And the next generation. You can see how much simpler it was back in the 50s and 60s. . . . Today there’s so many more kids that are in trouble because they’re given hard times and there’s more poverty and its over-populated and there’s not enough jobs to keep up. And everything is processed by robots.”

The librarian interjected that for some people it was easier to grow up than in the fifties, but for others it was harder. She talked about how the “margins” have changed over time as society shifts, relating the discussion to the larger TRHT GSC theme of “growing up brave on the margins.” The librarian steered the conversation back to the book, asking if there was a character in the book they identified with, or that they really liked or really hated. They all agreed that they liked Starr, and disliked Hailey. One participant called her “the definition of white privilege”. Though they didn’t delve further into that concept, the teacher brought up later in her interview that she was very surprised by his statement, as she considers him to be the definition of white privilege, himself.
The outreach librarian then asked where the book takes place. One of the youth participants responded:

“It’s fictional. What it’s pointing out is that it doesn’t have to be a real place. Because it’s more than one place that is exactly like that. It’s an every other town problem that deals with drug dealers and everything like that. There’s always that one area of town that everyone stays away from.”

This led to a discussion about the movie, which a few of them had seen, and the differences between the movie and the book. They liked that there was much more detail in the book than the movie and agreed that the “book was way better than the movie.”

The teacher guided them back to the general theme of “growing up brave on the margins,” asking the boys what they thought it meant and “what is a margin?” They responded:

- “Growing up poor. Bad circumstances. Divorced family. Not a member of the dominant culture. Military family.”
- Another pointed to the margin in a book, “There’s a lot more kids on that part (the margin) than there is in the other place (the middle).”

The teacher continued with some additional probes related to the theme: “Who’s battling for their rights to be fully expressed right now? Think about how the margins are not set in stone, they change. Think about changing values.” At that point, the librarian shared a book of poetry she’d brought that included a poem by Tupac. She asked the boy who hadn’t read The Hate U Give to find the poem. He read the Tupac poem and a poem about basketball to the group and then asked the librarian for her list of discussion questions (During her interview, she mentioned that she always brings in a wide range of questions for the boys to choose from, even if they haven’t read the book.). He chose a question about the word “thug.” According to the boys, teenagers don’t use the word “thug”, and they discussed that an equivalent word would be gangster. Then another boy chose the question, “Why do you think the dad named the kids what they named them?” and proceeded to answer the question, himself.

At that point, they had time for a quick snack (each month, the boys rotate who “hosts” the snack as a way to gain social skills.), and the meeting ended.

**Youth participants Focus Groups**

During the focus groups, the youth participants discussed their reading activity and their response to the books, shared their impressions of the book club and the facilitators, and were invited to make recommendations for the program. The Norfolk group read Ms. Marvel, The Hate U Give, and The Sun is Also a Star. They were not conscientious readers. Most only read Ms. Marvel or The Hate U Give and only one read part of The Sun is Also a Star. They admitted that it was difficult to find the time to read the books and suggested that it could be helpful to have time to read during the meeting. They also suggested that in the future, the book club should be expanded beyond the leadership group to be more inclusive and increase participation and reading activity. Even though they didn’t
read all of the books, they agreed that the selections were good, reported that they enjoyed the discussions, which gave them a chance to hear “everybody else’s point of view,” and were full of praise for the library project director, who made the program “fun, inclusive, and interesting.” They appreciated her ability to help them make connections to the books, even when they hadn’t done the reading.

“She knew that we didn’t read (the books), but she explained it and worked around and understands that some of us weren’t able to read all of the books or finish them, but she made it so that we could all still join in. . . . She talked about situations that happened in the book and asked us what we thought about it. Or how we would have reacted if we were in that situation. She talked about the main purpose of the story and how that would have effected some of us.”

*The Hate U Give* was the most engaging selection for the Norfolk youth participants, and generated the most substantive conversations. They found the book relatable “because it was written from (Starr’s) perspective. (They) understand it more because everyone (their) age is going through that right now.” They also explained that talking about the book, and themes of race and social inequity, in general, was an important introduction to different perspectives and experiences that were more difficult than their own; helped them reflect on examples in their community where people are stereotyped and how to respond with empathy rather than judgment; and provided an opportunity to think about how they can change things in the future. Below are a few quotes from the youth participants focus group that describe their reactions to the book:

“It gave me a lot more empathy toward people. . . . A lot of times people just want to judge other people. ‘You get in trouble all the time.’ But sometimes they’re just going through something and they feel like they have to do something. So, it just helps me have a little more empathy toward people.”

They also discussed the impact of their experience working with an African American spoken word poet during one of their sessions where they had the opportunity to compose their own poetry:

“She read us a piece that she did for one of her classes. And it was really deep. She took point of views from other black women in the community. She made her own (poem) out of it. And she pointed out all of the problems with the stereotypes. And then she had us step into those people’s shoes because she had a bunch of people from back then — situations that happened with people in African American society, and certain people. And we had to step into their shoes and see what they might have been thinking or feeling and write about it.”

The Juneau book club read the same books as Norfolk. In contrast to the Norfolk youth participants, however, they were conscientious readers and had read or intended to read everything. They reported liking all of the books except for *Ms. Marvel*; there was a general consensus that they did not like comics/graphic novels. The Norfolk youth participants had a similar response to *Ms. Marvel.* (Interestingly, their library project director and Zone staff surmised that the youth participants
actually read *Ms. Marvel* because it was a shorter selection, which is an argument for having shorter book selections available. This was echoed in other library interviews.)

The Juneau youth participants responded very positively to *The Hate U Give* and *The Sun is Also a Star*. What resonated most with them from *The Hate U Give* was Starr standing up and speaking out for herself. And from *The Sun is Also a Star*: “Sometimes you’re in the right place at the right time, but sometimes you’re in the wrong place. It can go both ways.”

They shared that what they liked best about the book club was the opportunity to socialize and the access to new books and knowledge.

> “Reading is not just something that takes up your time, but it’s something that can help you get more knowledge. It’s something to get into, it’s just like if you join a club at school or a sport, or something. It’s something that helps you with socializing and being able to resonate with other people. Being able to do something that others enjoy.”

They also shared how the book club impacted their reading and explained that the access to new reading material, in general, was a great benefit, as they have a limited library.

> “When I first got here I did not enjoy reading. I put my foot in the ground a lot when it came to reading. And then they talked me into it and I tried reading and I like it more than I did before”

**Final Reflections**

The racial healing circle in Norfolk was lively, affable, and filled with deep moments of honest dialogue. The youth participants and staff all provided vulnerable responses and there was clear respect and rapport in the room. A specific focus on race and equity, however, was not always present. Given the demographic makeup of the town, state, and specifically the youth participants, there was little conversation around issues of race and social justice; there did not appear to be enough familiarity or exposure to these issues. Due to their lack of diversity, the TRHT GSC program provides, if not racial healing, helpful exposure to issues of racial equity and social justice. Overall, the circle seemed to be more of a reflection on issues of gender, age, and “fitting in” as a teenager, which were worthy discussions but not the key focus of the TRHT GSC. It is unclear if this is sufficient for the TRHT GSC goals; however, it was clear that the discussion was meaningful and appreciated by all the youth participants. Many commented that this session was their “favorite” time in the program, suggesting that open dialogue, reflection questions, and even the feeling of inclusivity of being in the “circle,” were useful conduits for engaging in meaningful conversation about difficult topics.

The Juneau youth participants responded positively to the book club and were very appreciative of the opportunity. They enjoyed reading and talking about the books, having discussions with the librarians and with each other, and owning copies of the books. They seemed reluctant, however, to engage in dialogue about race and social injustice, and were more inclined to focus the conversation on reading and books. This could be attributed to it being a very small group of male youth.
participants who were less open to sharing opinions about difficult issues in front of each other, particularly in a detention center environment. The program is a good testament to the overall book club experience, the importance of reading, the book choices, the theme-related discussions, and the relationships and social skills developed. However, it is not a true reflection of the TRHT GSC model; as they do not do racial healing circles at the site. Their book club discussion informally touched on social equity issues related to the TRHT GSC themes and in the context of discussing *The Hate U Give*. While deeper discussions of race and social injustices were not overly evident in the activities observed, the librarian confirmed that they happen frequently and organically in conjunction with the current and previous GSC books. The librarian also emphasized that the GSC and TRHT GSC themes are an important focus for the youth participants services department to infuse into the library system, as a whole.