

Pioneer Leadership Program

“Transforming Students to Inclusively Lead and Serve the World”

CCI Project Proposal

Youth Mental Health and Physical Activity in the Denver Metro Area

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1. Issue Summary

Two thirds of our group grew up in Colorado and all of us were in someway involved in physical activities throughout our childhood and into adolescence. We found significant value in our athletic experiences and recognized them as an instrumental part in our childhood development. We felt that routine physical activity correlates positively with physical and mental states for an individual. The idea of moving around several times a week, working with a team to accomplish a common goal, and developing a strong work ethic were crucial to our upbringings. Because of this, we were taken aback when we became informed of the alarming trends associated with adolescent mental health and youth physical activity in Colorado the past few years.

This may be surprising given the generally healthy nature of Colorado but there is no way around it: Colorado teens struggle to maintain a stable mental mindset. In addition to this mental health struggle, youth physical activity is no longer a central focus of our culture. Fewer and fewer kids are participating in sports and those who do participate are quitting earlier than their predecessors.

According to a study conducted by the BMC Public Health evaluating the relationship between sports participation and youth developmental outcomes for socially vulnerable youth, “sports participation was positively related to pro-social behaviour, subjective health, well-being, and sense of coherence at both measurement” (BMC Public Health, Super, p. 1). Kids exposed to some form of physical activity have an increased amount of benefits such as mental, physical, and emotional.

In these areas/pockets, there are not as many parks or bike trails. On the macro level, think of mountains, skiing, camping, hiking, biking, but thousands of people in Colorado go their whole lives without stepping foot on a mountain. There is enough land for all communities but not everyone is given an opportunity.

In the book, *The Community Leadership Handbook*, author James Krile discusses the importance of framing ideas, building social capital, and mobilizing resources in order to create community change (Krile, Curphy, & Lund, 2010). All of which help maintain a focus on giving everyone an opportunity.

Framing ideas is defined as “helping a group or community recognize and define its opportunities and issues in ways that result in effective action” (Krile, Curphy, & Lund, 2010). For us, it should be relatively easy to frame ideas considering we are addressing an issue that impacts the youth population and generally people are hypersensitive to issues that affect kids. To create buy in from communities and convey the importance of this issue we could present facts that display the alarming adolescent suicide numbers in Colorado. The emotional effect of these stats should make it easy to convince communities that something needs to be done in order to directly impact Colorado’s youth population and proposing a method related to youth participation in sports will convey how to create that impact.

Krile defines building social capital as the “leadership competency of developing and maintaining relationships that allow us to work together and share resources in spite of our differences” (Krile, Curphy, & Lund, 2010). This step could be very important to us if we are trying to reach the urban and underprivileged parts of Denver. As DU students we have little to no exposure to these populations and therefore, likely have little impact on them and limited

access to their resources. By establishing relationships with stakeholders that already have a foothold in these communities we can take advantage of social capital. For example, we have already met with The Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver which has over 20 locations in the metro area. This is an organization that could connect us to populations we are not familiar with and help us create a lasting impact.

The final competency that Krile emphasizes is the idea of mobilizing resources or “engaging a critical mass in taking action to achieve a specific outcome or set of outcomes” (Krile, Curphy, & Lund, 2010). For us, it will be essential to mobilize resources since we will likely be more influential if we can get more people involved. Our critical mass consists of coaches, teachers, parents, volunteers, or community leaders. All of these people have a direct and everyday impact on Colorado’s youth and mobilizing them will directly lead to the success of our project.

Mental health in Colorado communities is being negatively impacted by a decline in physical activity in youth and adolescent population. A decline in mental health is evident, seeing that there has been an increasing amount of youth with anxiety and depression and an increase in the amount of youth suicides in Colorado. Physical activity participation is lower than it has ever been, and we have seen through studies conducted by Scott Paluska (amongst others) that activity is directly correlated with mental health.

It is because of these statistics that we feel that as a society, we need to develop a way to increase physical activity in a way that will improve mental health in our youth. We are lucky to have met with organizations like Girls on the Run, that have developed curriculums that do this

for a specific population. We think there is room to build upon this effective model and expand its population to include a larger range of youth with a focus on both boys and girls.

Much of this problem can be attributed to increased specialization in youth sports. When children are in middle school, they are pushed to put all their time and energy towards a singular sport. This means private lessons and club teams, both of which are very expensive (Jayanthi 1). This also means playing one sport all year round. It is very difficult for those with lower incomes to keep up with this type of training, so they often drift away and move to things that hurt their mental and physical health such as drugs and alcohol.

This is the reason our problem is focused on a lack of “play,” or desire for children to just get outside and be active without any affiliation to a team or organization. We think that this could provide an outlet for the other part of issue, youth struggling with mental health. We know that in order to counteract this destructive issue, we need to stick to a common communal goal and make change.

There are a wide range of statistics supporting the concern for mental health in Colorado. According to the Colorado Health Institute, “In 2017, Colorado recorded 1,175 deaths due to suicide – the highest number in the state’s history. In recent decades, there has been an upward trend in the rate of death due to suicide: In 2017, Colorado lost 20.2 people per 100,000 residents to suicide, up from 14.1 per 100,000 in 2000” (Suicides in Colorado, 2018). Mental health issues are a growing issue for the general public in Colorado, especially for adolescent youth. According to the same organization, suicide is the leading cause-of-death of the 10-24 year old age group in Colorado. These two statistics highlight the ever-growing concern for the mental health of young people in our state. This daunting reality of mental health issues is that they can

potentially arise from multiple sources from a child's life. Sources can be from home, school, social life, and or media status. How can someone begin to resolve the issues facing the youth regarding mental health when there are too many places to begin? Our group believes that physical activity is an effective method in dealing with mental health issues, especially when dealing with the youth population.

BMC Public Health is an open access, peer-reviewed journal tasked with researching the epidemiology of disease and strives to understand multiple aspects of public health. A research study conducted by this group examined the relationship between sports participation and youth developmental outcomes, such as behavior, sociability, academia, and subjective health. The researchers administered two identical questionnaires within a six-month interval from four different youth organisations. In total, 283 socially vulnerable youths, an average 14.68 years old, participated at baseline and 187 youths after six months. At the end of the study, the researchers describe the experiment at a success because they found a positive relationship between sports participation and pro-social behaviour, subjective health, well-being, and sense of coherence (BMC, 2018). The importance of this study is that it highlights the positive impact physical activity has on the state of mind and development of adolescent youth. Kids who are involved with sports not only do better socially, academically, and emotionally, but also live healthier and happier than those who don't. Mental health issues that face the adolescent population can stem from anywhere part of their life, however, this study demonstrates that physical activity is a universal tool has effective results in treating mental health issues.

To supplement these statistics, we also talked to many individuals involved in the issue locally. Starting with the most important perspective involved, which is the adolescent population affected by mental health issues. This is the group primarily affected by mental health

issues and lack of resources to combat it, with one option being physical activity. While talking to Kim Poast, Chief Student Success and Academic Affairs Office with the Colorado Department of Higher Education, she discussed the perspective kids possess in this day of age with access to social media and technology. The youth population is exposed to the chaos of the world with phones and technology being a major conduit for that exchange. Nowadays, kids have access to the internet in which they gain unrealistic expectations of what society expects from them, which can be detrimental to the development of their mental health. We believe that physical activity will provide a medium in which the youth can disconnect from that chaos.

Another perspective could be stakeholders in the community whose mission is to combat the ever-growing problem of mental health in the US, especially in Colorado. According to a study posted by the *Mental Health America*, data Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration show that 19.55 percent of Colorado residents are living with some kind of mental illness, the third-highest rate in the country.

For this project we have met with multiple organizations, some of which are already working to address this issue. Our first meeting was with Molly McPhee, Director of Health and Outdoor Education for the Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver. In this meeting Ms McPhee informed us about the background of Boys and Girls Club noting that there are 20 sites across the metro area and the annual fee for each child is only \$2. This helped us to realize that one of the reasons Boys and Girls Club has been so successful in addressing this issue is because of how incredibly accessible they are to children of all demographic backgrounds. With that in mind it is important for us to consider how accessible our project will be in the future. If we truly want to be successful and reach the people we are trying to reach, we need to ensure that our project creates a tool that can be used easily and effectively in all areas of the city.

When we asked Ms. McPhee about the mental health side of Boys and Girls Club, she stated that most of the children involved in Boys and Girls Club generally have good mental health because of all the protective factors that surround them. Nonetheless, The Boys and Girls Club has begun incorporating Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into their volunteer training. The idea behind this is to better prepare volunteers to identify and address emotional issues displayed by kids within the program. This is a tactic that has been previously utilized by another stakeholder that we met with which was Girls on the Run.

Girls on the Run is a program that has proven the benefits of exercise and has established a curriculum predicated on this idea. While the name suggests that there is an emphasis on the running aspect of the program, the organization has created a unique way to address mental health issues. With the curriculum they have created, girls learn the value of exercise while also discussing the importance of values such as teamwork, confidence, and community. Essentially, the girls that participate in this program gain valuable advice regarding mental health without even realizing that they are doing something besides running.

The idea of creating a curriculum was new to us and interesting to consider. Although we likely will not work with Girls on the Run in the future, it could be valuable for us to analyze their curriculum and see if we can create a similar curriculum that works in a different setting.

Rather than simply list three specific projects that we have considered, we think it would be more beneficial to give you a general outline of a plan that can stem off into a multitude of projects. The first part of said plan involves meeting with experts in the field of mental health and physical activity (this could include social workers, physical educators, or professors) to

develop a curriculum that can be implemented to the youth. We want to ensure that our program is effective, but we do not enter an area that we are not educated in.

Once we feel comfortable with a curriculum that both promotes physical activity and addresses youth mental health, we think it would be great to work with a program like the Boys and Girls Club, as it provides access to children, ample time, and an effective space for effectively using and testing our curriculum. During this stage, we could be open to feedback and make any necessary changes to better our curriculum.

If this stage produces effective results, we would love to work with elementary and middle schools and their afterschool programs to fully implement this curriculum. The goal would be to reach out to areas that might not be exposed to the bevy of physical activities that Colorado has to offer. As we have learned in our beginning research, despite Colorado being seen externally as an active state where the general public constantly is skiing, hiking, and mountain biking (to name a few), there are many areas where these activities are not accessed. We look forward to developing a curriculum that will give these children an opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for the state they live in through activity. If we could do this, then we would be extremely satisfied.

With this being said, we are still incredibly open to new ideas and know we will have to adapt to any challenges that come along the way. In no way, shape, or form is this a definitive plan; there is still a lot of work and understanding needed to respond to our issue. But we are prepared to put the effort in and create the best program possible for our situation.

References:

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2. CCI Proposal

Cover Letter:

Purpose and Summary:

Over the course of this year we will be heading a year long service project that focuses on the impact of exercise on mental health, particularly as it relates to adolescent students in the Denver Metro Area. We have realized there is a notable connection between mental health and involvement in physical activity and we would like to address this issue. Over the past few months we have discovered the reducing numbers associated with youth participation in sports and the positive correlation associated with physical activity and mental health. Given that adolescent mental health seems to be a pressing issue in Colorado, our group decided that we would address it by promoting physical activity. We will tackle the issue by implementing a curriculum for youth after school programs that do not have strong activity options with high rates of youth mental health issues.

Stakeholders:

Over the course of this quarter we have had the opportunity to meet with various organizations and individuals to gain insight into this issue. These organizations include: Boys and Girls Club, Dallas Davis, Children's Hospital, and Girls on the Run.

- Boys and Girls Club provides kids with a safe, supportive, fun and enriching environment that inspires and empowers the kids.
- Dallas Davis is the head of community outreach for the Colorado Rockies. The Rockies organization and Dallas emphasizes the idea of getting active at schools throughout Colorado.

- Children's hospital runs a pediatric mental health which provides a full range of behavioral and mental health services for children and adolescents.
- Girls on the Run uses a fun, research-based curriculum that creatively integrates running to help adolescent girls grow into their limitless potential.

Statistics:

1. There has been a 13.3% increase in adolescents that reported a major depressive episode in the last year of 2017. A major depressive episode is a period of two weeks or longer in which a person experiences certain symptoms of major depression (National Institute for Mental Health 2018).
2. The top ten states with the highest suicide rates in 2017 were largely in the rural West, but the rates have risen in nearly every state over the past 20 years. In 2016 the average rate throughout the US was 8.4 deaths per 100,000 adolescents and has increased to a rate of 10.5 in 2019 (John Dailey 2019).
3. In 2019 Colorado has had the 6th highest rate of deaths by suicides in adolescents aged 15-19 at a rate of 20.4 deaths per 100,000 adolescents (America's Health Rankings 2019).

Expectations:

When we began our project, we found that all of us have a deep passion to create a change in our community. Through this shared passion our group will be able to take our project that much further. But we recognize passion alone cannot create change, it is necessary to make this a sustainable project. By creating a curriculum we believe this will allow for our work to continue beyond this year long project and even beyond us. Much of the time this year will be dedicated to work with stakeholders to create the curriculum, while the later part of the year will

be committed to working with an array of schools throughout the Denver Metro Area to implement the curriculum.

Narrative:

In doing this CCI we recognize that 6 different people will have clashing personalities. It is best to acknowledge these personalities and identify possible conflicts between the group before even beginning our project. Our team consists of 6 members. There are 5 men and 1 woman in the group. The age range of our team is 19 to 20 years old. All of us lived together last year and knew that we would get along well and could withstand working with one another for a year long project. Our major concerns with working with one another was being able to focus on the task at hand when we gathered rather than messing with one another as well as getting work done on time.

When looking at insights colors, there is a good balance of all colors in our group. Our group truly plays by the idea of all colors all the time. Matt Nichter is a red and yellow. He keeps the group on their toes as well as always provides a unique and different viewpoint on ideas. Brian Larson is a green. He keeps us all civil and helps us address problems that may arise between group members. Lucas Alessi is a blue and a red. Lucas brings insightful and well thought out ideas to the table. He helps everyone stay organized and on task. Robel Desta is a green. Just as Brian does, Robel also helps keep harmony among group members when things may not be seen eye to eye. Slater Podgorny is a yellow. He brings a positive attitude to our group as well as an optimistic outlook when things may not be going as planned. Karen Walker is a red. She helps our group stay organized as well as keeps people accountable. Overall, with these 6 unique and distinct personalities, we have been able to identify a problem and hone in on a more specific aspect of the problem that we can address.

Initially, our group identified that there was a decline in youth sports participation. All of us are active individuals and have been throughout our lives. As youth, we all participated in sports teams and understand the valuable lessons and support system teams can offer one. They help build one's character as well as instill values such as determination and teamwork from a young age. With this shared passion and understanding, we decided that we would make a good group for our CCI project that could create change within our community.

Our goal initially was to encourage youth to become more physically active. We were going to go about doing this by creating more accessible physical activities at schools. After beginning research about youth sports participation, we came across many well documented statistics that showed a strong correlation between athletics and mental health. Informing ourselves about the connection between exercise and youth mental health, we thought that our CCI may be more meaningful if we combined youth mental health and exercise.

Our group is now addressing the problem of youth mental health through the use of physical exercise. As mentioned previously, after learning more about the correlation between mental health and physical activity, we now have been able to make our problem more specific. After conducting a plethora of meetings with many different stakeholders from different backgrounds, there was one common theme: all of these professionals felt as though the problem we were choosing to address was worthwhile and realistic for a group of 6 college students to undertake. We have debated many ideas as to what may be the best way to encourage youth to be active in order to prevent mental illnesses. As a group we have come to the conclusion that our best idea is to create a curriculum and make the curriculum public for anyone to use.

The stakeholders that helped us create this vision were representatives from: Girls on the Run, Boys and Girls Club and Children's Hospital Colorado. Boys and Girls Club expressed that

they would be interested in working with us directly. They said that they could see us creating our own after school program within their organization. At first, we were not initially sure how we could do this. After speaking more with Girls on the Run, we sparked an idea that we could create an analogous curriculum to the one that Girls on the Run has created. Girls on the Run is an after school program that runs 10 weeks throughout the school year. Their curriculum helps young girls believe in themselves while developing a strong self-esteem through running. This is similar to what we were envisioning our curriculum to do. Some differences in our curriculum is that the physical activity would not be solely running and we would make our curriculum open to boys and girls. After speaking more with a stakeholder from Children's Hospital Colorado, we gained access to medical professionals who may be able to help us create a curriculum. These professionals have dedicated their lives to creating programs that engage children with mental illnesses while also helping them heal. All in all, these three stakeholders were vital for us to narrow down our problem as well as figure out a realistic way we could address it.

As a group we feel confident that we can make an impact and help address our issue. Our mission is "Bettering youth mental health through the use of physical exercise". We are not going to be sure of the mental status of the youth that may be using our curriculum. The participants may need help coping with their mental health issues or they may not have a mental illness at all. It really depends on the individual. Our hope is that with our curriculum a youths mental health will be better than it was before going through the curriculum. As a group, our goal is to do all in our power to help address this issue. Whether this be strictly through informing and educating parents about the strong correlation between mental health and physical activity or creating a curriculum that is used for years on end throughout the state of Colorado.

As referenced prior, there are a few organizations that we can foresee ourselves working with. The main organizations that we hope to partner with are; Children's Hospital, Girls on the Run, Boys and Girls Club and the Rockies. The Children's Hospital has a Mental Health Program that works with both in-patients and out-patients. Many of their patients are fighting against various health conditions and this affects both their mental health and their ability to do physical activities. While this connection may not lead to direct partnering throughout the year, they are an organization that can help us create a curriculum, as they are experts within this field. Girls on the Run is an organization that works directly with adolescent girls and has created a running program in the hopes to empower girls. Girls on the Run already has a curriculum that they created, so in working with them we hope to learn from their experiences and gain advice on how to create a curriculum of our own. Boys and Girls Club is the main organization that we hope to partner with throughout this year. It is our goal to create a curriculum and we foresee the Boys and Girls Club as an organization that we can work with to implement and tailor the curriculum from the feedback we get through Boys and Girls Club. We are still in the process of establishing a relationship that would foster this opportunity and allow it to come to fruition. Lastly, the Rockies are a unique organization that we have had the opportunity to meet with. Many professional organizations work with schools and afterschool programs to promote physical health and getting active. This is how we foresee the opportunity of working with the Rockies. We want to work with them to improve youth activity by encouraging adolescents from all backgrounds, to simply get active! Furthermore, later in the year we hope that we can create a video with some of the Rockies players; with the goal being to promote physical activity at schools as the Athletes are looked up to by many of the kids.

The overall goal of our CCI project is to face the impact of exercise on mental health, head on. One possible way to approach the lack of physical activity and youth mental health, is by creating a curriculum that we can implement for a youth after school program. We plan to create this curriculum side by side with our stakeholders and partners. In collaborating with stakeholders that are extremely knowledgeable in this area will allow us to create an ideal and effective program. Our goal behind the curriculum is for it to be relatable, impactful, and consistent. When others can relate to a topic that is relevant in their lives they are more susceptible to listening and hearing out what someone has to say. Through this we hope to make an impact on as many kids as we can. That being said in order to do so we must be consistent. When talking to possible stakeholders, and asking them, what ways we can best get across to students, they have all said something along the lines of building consistency within in our curriculum and the work we do at schools. We must ensure that the curriculum we create is very involved. We want the curriculum to not only combat mental health through physical activity but also to be a way to help the adolescents reach their potential. After our curriculum has been created we plan to work with different organizations, such as Boys and Girls Club to test it and adapt it to the feedback we get. Finally our last step in our project is to implement this tailored curriculum into schools that may not have good after school activity options or. Our goal is to have the curriculum completed by early March. By having the curriculum completed by this time, we will then move forward with finding a different organization to test it. Our group hopes to begin testing the curriculum late March and finish testing in April. That being said right after testing is finished we will refine our curriculum again, and take it directly into schools with a variety of economic backgrounds. Once we're in contact with schools, we will work with them on how best to implement this curriculum. This could be in a variety of ways: an afterschool

program, an in school program, or a need based program. The reason for the different options is because we acknowledge that no two schools are the same and each school may have different needs for the curriculums. Some schools may not be able to allocate the time and money to create an in school or afterschool program, which is why we would want to create the need based program. By creating this alternative need based program we would be able to accommodate schools that are unable to implement a full time program. Through these three different programs we believe that we will be able to satisfy the needs of schools and create change.

We will find ourselves successful if we are able to create, test, and then implement our curriculum into a school of our choosing. In the ‘creation’ stage of our project we will ensure success by getting feedback from our stakeholders. Our stakeholders will help provide a guideline for what our curriculum should look like and cover. This should be completed no later than early March. In terms of the ‘testing’ part of our project we will find success through getting feedback on our curriculum. We hope to get constructive criticism where we can find areas to improve on and strengthen those areas. Wherever we are testing our curriculum, the final feedback we get on it will determine if we were successful or not. This should be completed by late April. The final factor in determining our groups success is the ‘implementation’ stage. As said before, we will be successful if our curriculum is relatable, impactful, and consistent. This portion of our project will lead us until the end of the third quarter. While we were creating this project it was in our groups best interest to create a project that will last longer than just this year. By sticking to our plan and having deadlines to meet, we believe we can create something that will stick in the Denver Metro Area.

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3. Appendices – Stakeholders Interview Summary

Appendix A.

Name of Stakeholder: Kate Labore

Their Title: ROAD Manager

Organization they represent: The ROAD, a program of Jefferson Center for Mental Health

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

The goal of this meeting was to gain insight into the issue of mental health in the surrounding denver area. Kate Labore is the manager of The ROAD, which is a program through Jefferson Center for Mental Health. The ROAD offers drop in programs which seek to assist young adults as they transition into adulthood by fostering empowerment, leadership and responsibility. Talking with Kate initially was very insightful, she offered a very unique perspective as she typically works with kids that are mainly from Brady Highschool, an alternative school. In doing so she has seen the need for the implementation of a curriculum that works with kids going through rough patches of life. She believes that it would be very helpful for all schools to implement an activity based curriculum that focuses on mental health. She has seen the decline in physical activities and sports in teens and believes that this has led to the increase in mental health issues. However, as the conversation continued the answer grew shorter and shorter. I am not sure why this was, she may have been in a rush or something, but did not seem interested at all in assisting us in any form of partnership. Overall, the conversation supported our initial beliefs and confirmed that there is a clear problem within the denver metro area, but a partnership is not foreseeable.

Appendix B.

Name of Stakeholders: Joshua Wong

Their Title: Program Coordinator

Organization they represent: My Outdoor Colorado - Westwood Denver Parks and Recreation

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

Joshua Wong is the Program Coordinator for My Outdoor Colorado (specifically in Westwood) which is a coalition of different organizations with the task of connecting youth with the outdoors through strategic partnerships that provide access to nature education, recreation and skill-building opportunities. Joshua believes that underprivileged youth should have access and the ability to enjoy the Colorado's outdoors. In his experience, he has noticed that there is a disparity of accessibility in different parts of the city or community where its harder to enjoy Colorado's natural beauty, and that equity for all is the biggest challenge we face concerning this topic. There is a lot and that affect the resources underprivileged youth. We also talked about the fact that physical activity has a positive impact on their mental health, no matter how small or minor the activity may be. That is the purpose of My Outdoor Colorado: to connect underprivileged youth to physical activity, especially those who normally would not have access otherwise. In terms of mental health, we understood the lack of knowledge we possess with mental health, since neither one of us are experts on the topic. However, we did talk about adding in some of Joshua's contact who specialize in adolescent mental health issues to see where a potential partnership would lead. Overall, the meeting was a success because we realized we need to understand more of the perspectives, such as one like a mental health specialist, to really gauge the severity of the issues that face adolescent youth.

Appendix C.

Name of Stakeholders: Molly McPhee

Their Title: Health and Outdoor Education Program Manager

Organization they represent: Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

The purpose of this meeting was to educate ourselves about our issue by talking to someone who has a direct relation to the matter. Molly provided background on the role of boys and girls club and discusses how it could possibly relate to youth mental health. Through this meeting we gained valuable insight on the topic and learned a lot about Boys and Girls Club and the resources they provide to the community. Molly introduced two very interesting concepts to us that could be valuable to consider in the future. The first idea she referred to as ACEs or, Adverse Childhood Experiences, which discusses how certain experiences impact a child's development and could potentially cause mental health issues in the future. The second idea is Social Emotional Learning or SEL, which is a training mechanism the organization is using for all their volunteers in order to better prepare them to address mental health issues within the club. Based on what Molly talked about and our knowledge on the subject, Boys and Girls Club could provide an opportunity for a partnership in the future.

Appendix D.

Name of Stakeholders: Kim Poast

Their Title: Chief Academic Director

Organization they represent: Colorado Department of Higher Education

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

Our meeting with Kim was short and somewhat scattered but we plan to follow up with her in the future because it seems like she may have many connections that could benefit our project. As a high ranking member of the Department of higher education, Kim oversees a lot of Colorado policy regarding tuition and financial education. She does not have a lot of oversight into athletics but she does have some focus on mental health.

In discussing the relationship between mental health and physical activity, Kim mentioned her daughter's recent involvement in sports and how her outlook has changed because of this experience. Kim stated that her daughter's involvement seemed to directly impact her confidence and mental health. Kim was also quick to support sports because they keep kids outside rather than inside on their phones.

While discussing the mental health issues in high schools, Kim stated that they are obviously very concerning and she attributes the growth in mental health setbacks to increased exposure to news. She said that kids are constantly exposed to chaos and tragedies which could have a tremendous impact on youth development.

Near the end of the discussion Kim provided some of her ideas about what the significant issues are in today's world. Those issues cited were: income inequality, access to youth services, and the chaotic world that kids are growing into.

Appendix E.

Name of Stakeholder: Lauren Pietrek

Their Title: Development and Marketing Director

Organization they represent: Girls on the Run of the Rockies

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

Through this meeting, we were able to gain a better understanding of what Girls on the Run of the Rockies does and how it ties into our CCI Project. Lauren gave us great insight as to what the curriculum that GOTR teaches is all about. In their program, they focus on self, team and community. The main hope is that through this program, girls will realize that they have an equal opportunity to talk, they are able to make and achieve goals and that they have the ability to understand and feel their own emotions. GOTR does not focus a great deal on the importance of mental health in their curriculum. They touch on it briefly in a few of their lessons, but it is not of huge importance in their curriculum. Overall, we decided that we would not be able to partner directly with GOTR. We think that they would be an excellent resource to use if we intend to create our own curriculum that incorporates physical activity and mental health.

Appendix F.

Name of Stakeholders: Chad Pennick

Their Title: Outreach Coordinator for Pediatric Mental Health Institute

Organization they represent: Children's Hospital Colorado

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

This meeting was very insightful. It gave us a new look on our project and the issue of youth mental health as a whole. Chad talked a lot about what they do at Children's Hospital for kids who come in with severe mental issues. He said that they implement a curriculum that

involves stimulating their patients brain, whether that be through exercise or art projects. Our group believes that kids who are active are less likely to develop mental problems and that if they do have a mental issue, physical activity helps them cope with it. Chad 100% supported this idea and said that if the patients he sees had more physical activity in their lives, their mental illness may not have developed into what it is. I think that the points he brought up about drawing and music were very eye opening. These activities give kids coping skills and help them calm down. Overall, I could see our group working with Childrens Hospital either as volunteers in their mental health wing or using them as a resource for creating our own curriculum.

Appendix G.

Name of Stakeholders: Dallas Davis

Their Title: Head of Community Relations

Organization they represent: Colorado Rockies

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

Through Brian Larson's social network, we were able to secure a meeting with Dallas Davis, the Head of Community Relations for the Colorado Rockies: an organization he has been working with for fifteen years. Dallas Davis is a former college football player (CSU) who played alongside Brian's uncle at Fort Collins high school in the 80s and 90s. We met with Dallas in order to learn more about similar organizations that are committed to an increase in youth physical activity. Dallas oversees several community projects including RBI (Reviving

Baseball in Inner Cities), which encourages young children to participate in both baseball and softball. He also works with a large amount of Denver schools, where he personally gives a presentation showing his work. Other than projects like RBI (which is solely brought out by the Rockies organization), Dallas and his team work with Boys and Girls Club and Children's Hospital, who are two potential partners for our group. After speaking with Dallas, we rethought much of our project. He reminded us how much money it takes to get projects like these, and suggested that we should take a simpler approach and utilize established organizations (that are financially secure) to help our cause. Overall, this meeting was extremely beneficial in our learning process and will have a big effect on our plans for the future.

Appendix H.

Name of Stakeholders: Frank DeAngelis

Their Title: Community Speaker

Organization they represent: Former Columbine High School Principal

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

This was an insightful yet touching meeting. Frank DeAngelis is a former coach and principal at Columbine High School. Mr. DeAngelis stands by his strong opinion that youth sports have declined. He believes that sports teach character, leadership, discipline, etc. These are all great qualities that can carry throughout our lives, and sports are a great way to obtain these. In terms of mental health, Mr. DeAngelis mentioned how he believes social media has caused students to become consumed with their self image. If they are not getting the amount of

likes they feel they need, they feel their self image is “not enough”. Mr. DeAngelis was very open about the tragedies that occurred in April of 1999. He provided a lot of information relating to how relationships affect mental health. He firmly believes, after everything that happened in 1999, that if he was to take over as a principal again he would combat mental health issues by creating a stronger knit community, that would lead to more relationships. Overall Mr. DeAngelis was extremely helpful to talk to and will provide great advice as we continue our project throughout this year.

Appendix I.

Name of Stakeholders: Susan Anderson, Jim Spaulding, Mariah Emmert

Their Title: Recreation Manager, Athletics Supervisor, Fitness Coordinator

Organization they represent: Wheat Ridge Recreation Center

Short Summary of content of the Meeting:

Susan Anderson is the Wheat Ridge Recreation Center Recreation Manager, and Jim Spaulding and Mariah Emmert are the rec centers Athletic Supervisor and Fitness Coordinator, respectively. They all believe that youth participation through physical activity is a very different when considering what sport or which age group. In their experience they told me that the rec center usually deals with major sports (i.e. basketball, soccer, football) within the age group of pre-kindergarten to middle school, and kids usually leave their programs once they get into highschool due to more competitive programs. They believe that physical activity they handle

with kids should be “rooted in fun”, which is their slogan. In terms of mental health, ran into the problem of understanding the mental state of those kids involved in their programs due to the lack of resources available to them to deal with such issues. However, we did talk about how they believe in “whole body wellness”, which also includes physical health, along with mental health, being important in adolescent development. They did talk about the mental health resources available within the Wheat Ridge rec center, but how there is a lack of collaboration between themselves and their therapeutic counterparts, due to HIPPA restrictions. Overall, I believed this to be a very productive meeting with the fact that it helped us narrow down what type of age group to look to, and also connected us to other potential stakeholders that could help further out progress in this field.