

**Year 5 (2020) Report:**

**Evaluation of Fifth House Ensemble Music Education Residencies**

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## **Year 5 (2019-20) Progress Report:**

### **Evaluation of Fifth House Ensemble Music Education Residencies**

#### **Introduction**

In 2019-2020, Fifth House Ensemble (5HE) continued their partnership with Loyola University Chicago's Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) and Brian L. Kelly, PhD, of Loyola University Chicago's, School of Social Work. 5HE was formed in 2005 as a mixed-instrumentation performance group. Having produced critically acclaimed projects, the ensemble has collaborated with a diverse array of artists to craft compelling narratives and visuals inspired by musical repertoire ranging from the Baroque to works by living composers. Recognized nationally as a leader in audience engagement in the field of chamber music, 5HE has also led workshops at institutions across the nation and is committed to creating arts-integrated residencies for populations that might not have access to these services otherwise.

As a national and regional leader in collaborative and participatory evaluation and research, CURL provides a perfect methodological fit for evaluating the civic practice model 5HE strives to embed in its residencies. Dr. Kelly brought over a decade of experience in researching the intersection of social work and the arts to the project, with a particular interest in music-based services. The initial focal point of this multi-year project was to develop evaluation methods for arts-integrated and civic practice work in the field of classical music. Few organizations in this field embrace arts integration and civic practice as a central focus of their work. In addition, few organizations in this field use mindfulness and Deep Listening practices in music education opportunities within social service settings. As these areas of work continue to evolve, it is important to develop measures for successful practice for other

organizations interested in developing similar goals. It is equally important to demonstrate successful practice for funders and other stakeholders.

In this report, we originally aimed to examine the implementation of an evaluation model, presented by 5HE teaching artists in the 2020 season of instruction. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting distance and isolation policies mandated throughout Illinois disrupted the in-person classes for 5HE in 2020. In-person classes were initially canceled and then at some sites slowly resumed, virtually. This report, therefore, focuses on both the implementation of the evaluation model and the impact of the transition to virtual sessions. In reviewing the residencies, certain themes emerged regarding the Fifth House teaching approach: 1) the incorporation of systematic reflexivity process; 2) the value of Deep Listening as an integral part of the curriculum; 3) the importance of flexibility in responding to the different sites and circumstances. While the transition to remote learning has been challenging and limited residencies at some sites, the experience of remote learning has also added new techniques for connection to the 5HE toolkit.

## **Background**

### ***Significance***

Practitioners and scholars have increasingly argued for the inclusion of art-based activities in working with a variety of populations (Andrews, 2001; Kelly & Doherty, 2016; Kelly & Doherty, 2017; Konrad, 2019; Huss & Sela-Amit, 2019; Travis Jr., 2019). This approach has roots in several disciplines, including community-oriented forms of social work and social group work practice (Addams, 1909, Glowacki, 2004; Nissen, 2019). This sentiment lives on today as several agencies throughout the Chicagoland area continue to

promote arts engagement for residents, including using the visual arts to promote community mentorship and leadership (Pounds, 2012), and promote empowerment, teamwork, and shared responsibility among young people (Yenawine, 2004).

A recent report commissioned by the Weill Music Institute, Carnegie Hall, explores the potential for music in the juvenile justice system to engage young people's strengths (Wolf & Wolf, 2012). The report notes the potential of music-based activities in the changing and expanding landscape of the juvenile justice system, particularly in light of calls for more humane solutions framed from a holistic, Positive Youth Development approach, which considers young people's physical, intellectual, psychological, and emotional health, as well as their social development in program development and implementation.

Music-based services also show potential for engaging young people's strengths and assisting them in positive development (Baker & Homan, 2007; Parker, Marturano, Lewis, & Meek, 2018; Travis Jr., 2013; Travis Jr. & Deepak, 2011, Wolf & Holochwost, 2009; Wolf & Wolf, 2012). Findings from Dr. Kelly's recent ethnographic (2018, 2017) and audio documentary studies (2015; Kelly & Hunter, 2016) demonstrate that music-based services provide emerging adults with important opportunities for intra- and interpersonal skill development and mastery. The ongoing evaluation of 5HE's residencies adds to the growing body of research on social services and the arts, specifically by exploring the use of music-based services with young people and women experiencing homelessness and other forms of unstable housing, and young people experiencing incarceration.

### *Development of Conceptual Model*

#### **Rationale for Evaluating the 2019-20 Residencies**

In review, Year 1 (2015-16) resulted in the development of the conceptual model, where TA adaptability (i.e., flexibility, role adaptability, and meeting participants where they are) relates to participants' experiences of agency, empowerment, creativity, and collective decision making. Year 2 (2016-17) provided an opportunity to assess the usefulness of the conceptual model. Year 2 findings suggest that the model fits whereby TA adaptability does seem to influence participants' experiences of agency, empowerment, creativity, and collective decision making. The use of mindfulness activities (e.g., soundscapes), in Year 2 (2016-17) provided participants with opportunities to become fully present, in the moment, and open to experience, as indicated by their participation and reactions to exercises

Presence and being in the moment are clear traits of mindfulness. Therefore, Year 3 (2017-18) evaluation efforts focused closely on TAs' use of these kinds of activities and how they may or may not influence or enhance participants' experiences of mindfulness, and additionally, how TAs' use of these kinds of activities may or may not influence or enhance participants' experiences of agency, empowerment, creativity, and collective decision making.

Year 3 findings suggest this attention to mindfulness using Deep Listening activities creates opportunities for residency participants to exercise mindfulness, which in turn creates opportunities for participants to experience empowerment, personal agency, collective decision-making, and creativity. The Teaching Artists use Deep Listening activities to create a mindful environment. Year 3 findings also show how 5HE consistently includes agency and participant input in the initial and ongoing stages of the development, design, and implementation of the residencies. These findings highlight how 5HE's collaborative

## The “feedback” model



approach has evolved over the years, particularly moving from an arts-integrated music education approach to one that explicitly considers non-musical concepts such as mindfulness and deep listening. Finally, the evaluation team developed an evaluation tool to be piloted by 5HE during their 2018-19 residencies.

Year 4 (2018-19) residencies provided important opportunities to implement the evaluation tool and explore 5HE’s increased attention to the use of Deep Listening in each residency. The evaluation tool was piloted during the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 residencies at multiple agency locations. With Deep Listening activities incorporated into each residency, 5HE and the evaluation team wanted to see how further immersion into Deep Listening impacted participants, TAs, and the overall residencies. Out of this work, a new feedback model was presented in the Year 4 report which consolidated previous conceptual models and considered new uses for Deep Listening activities and residency development and implementation.

In this new model, the evaluation team suggests that TAs' implementation of Deep Listening exercises with participants not only shapes and influences participants' experiences with the Deep Listening activities, but that participants' experiences with the Deep Listening activities also shapes and influences TAs capacity to adapt within the residencies. A mutually reflexive exchange occurs.

The findings in in Year 4 report pointed to the evaluation and assessment tasks for this Year 5. They included:

- The testing of a new tool that was built into 5HE's existing lesson plan design for the Spring residencies of 2020.
- 5HE and the evaluation team needed to more fully consider how often to administer the tool during a lesson.
- The facilitated discussion in general, following the Deep Listening activity, needed to be amended to consider TAs' workflow and participants' experiences.
- Debriefing sessions immediately following residency lessons emerged as useful in several ways, including clarifying key themes and best practices for administering the tool without negatively impacting the participants' experiences in the sessions themselves. In light of these findings the evaluation team proposed a new conceptual "feedback" model.

## Methodology

This year was seen as a transition year for the evaluation and reflective process as 5HE looked to more fully incorporate those processes internally, without the future participation of outside researchers as facilitators and convenors of the evaluation process.

The aim of this year was for Loyola Research Fellows to participate and observe the 5HE residencies at Deborah's Place, a homeless supportive housing program for single

women; Ignite, a homeless housing and social service program for homeless youth; and Cara Chicago, an employment and social enterprise program for low income, marginalized individuals aiming to reintegrate into the workforce. In addition, the researchers were to facilitate focus groups of the TAs from these three sites and the Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative School residency subsequent to the residencies. The research goal was to assess the implementation of the New Lesson Plan/Evaluation Template. The instructors using the new Lesson Plan/Assessment template would debrief at the end of each session with a goal of moving Fifth House to a sustainable self-evaluation process.

## What We Found

### Cara Chicago

Fifth House implemented the modified lesson plan and evaluation practices piloted in Year 4 at Cara Chicago, a non-profit employment agency that assists individuals impacted by poverty in finding and maintaining quality employment, with a focus on “rebuild[ing] hope, self-esteem, and opportunity.” In addition to the evaluation and debriefing techniques piloted in Year 4, the Cara residency included tailored lesson plans and evaluations specific to Cara Chicago’s objectives and goals. Furthermore, debriefing sessions included 5HE TAs, CURL fellows, and leaders/staff from Cara Chicago. The incorporation of Cara Chicago’s unique objectives and the agency’s participation in debriefing sessions provided a critical perspective into the 5HE model, specifically how the lesson planning and evaluation tools can be adapted to the demands of different residencies.

In the beginning of 5HE’s residency at Cara Chicago, TAs utilized two different sets of themes: the Fifth House themes identified by CURL in prior reports and Cara Chicago’s core competencies. Cara Chicago’s core competencies included: professionalism, leadership,



team building, communication, and decision making. While the debriefing sessions began to focus primarily on evaluating the mindfulness model, Cara Chicago's themes were often discussed and connected to the CURL-identified themes. The intertwining of themes was facilitated by the participation of Cara Chicago leadership and staff members. Often the debriefs would discuss how the CURL and Cara Chicago themes were interconnected. For example, Cara Chicago's theme of leadership connected to CURL's theme of agency. Debriefs would include a discussing of participants expressing agency and Cara Chicago staff would make crucial connections between acts of agency and vital leadership skills for the workplace.

Another unique feature of the Cara Chicago residency was a sense of tension between the agency goals and 5HE's purpose. Cara Chicago presented a unique culture that emphasized accomplishable and recordable goals and outcomes, something that often was in tension with the more artistic and mindfulness approaches utilized by 5HE. However, this tension became a critical component of the relationship. Many participants expressed relief and joy at the different pace and approach of 5HE, with many referring to it as a much-needed break from completing job applications. Moreover, Cara Chicago staff commented on the change in participants following 5HE's sessions. Cara Chicago staff who participated in debriefing sessions felt that they had a deeper understanding of participants and were thinking of new ways of interacting with the more troubled participants. Thus, 5HE's presence was a positive influence for staff and participants, enhancing and enriching everyone's experience.

Throughout the post-residency focus group, TAs who worked at Cara Chicago brought up the influence of staff participation and the ways their participation opened the space, thus deepening the TAs understanding of the dynamics of the room. Based on Cara Chicago

staff input, TAs were able to adapt and personalize some of the activities to specific participants. The adaptable dynamic exhibited at Cara Chicago may be due to 5HE's unique characteristics and group culture. During the post-residency focus group, one of the TAs commented on how unusual it is for classical musicians to be adaptable and flexible due to the rigid nature of their training. Through this line of thought, it became apparent that 5HE made a purposeful selection in hiring adaptable and flexible musicians, who could eventually fill the TA role. In many ways, 5HE created a deliberate organizational culture of adaptability, which helped TAs make changes to the Cara Chicago residency to enhance participants' experience.

Another critical change of the Cara Chicago residency was a shift of focus from activities to participants in evaluating themes. At the beginning of the residency and debriefing sessions, CURL fellows utilized the evaluation tool to guide the discussion, which divided the analysis of themes by specific activities. Over time it became ineffective to evaluate themes based on activities, and the discussion naturally shifted to focusing on participants' experience of themes throughout the whole session. In this new format, specific activities were still discussed, however, they were often grouped by themes apparent in the participant experience. This change contributed to a richer understanding of the participant experience throughout the 5HE session. During the focus group, one TA argued this change was due to the TAs recent training in Deep Listening. The training shifted the residency and sessions to focus on the participant experience of deep listening, rather than examining each activity as isolated components of the deep listening experience. The shift from activity-focused analysis to participant-focused analysis contributed to a more holistic and

comprehensive understanding of the overall session and how participants interacted with the 5HE method.

Additionally, TAs became more comfortable leading the debriefs and confident in their ability to highlight themes over the course of the residency. When CURL fellows began attending residency sessions, TAs relied on the researchers to lead the debrief and highlight the themes. However, as TAs became more comfortable with the themes, they began to lead this component of debriefs. Over the course of the residency, TAs were able to internalize and effectively implement their evaluation process. During the focus group, TAs brought up how CURL fellows were crucial to the debriefs because they often brought different insights and perspectives to the space. However, CURL fellow involvement in the debriefs became less important to the TAs and Cara Chicago staff discussion and understanding of the session process over the course of the residency. Both parties gained confidence in their abilities to debrief and evaluate the experience, demonstrating a critical internalization of the evaluation model and effective implementation of the evaluation model.

Cara Chicago has cancelled all in-person services with the advent of Covid-19 restriction in March of 2020 and those restrictions remain currently in place, therefore residencies have not been scheduled for 2021.

#### [Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative School](#)

Nancy B. Jefferson Alternative School (NBJ), serves incarcerated youth within the Cook County Department of Juvenile Justice, has partnered with Fifth House Ensemble (5HE) for six years. However, the 2019-2020 year and COVID-19 pandemic revealed unique challenges and successes for the 5HE model. CURL fellows were unable to observe or attend

sessions at NBJ due to the facility restrictions, therefore findings and themes were identified from two focus groups comprised of 5HE Teaching Artists conducted post-residencies.

The fall residency was complicated by the Chicago Public Schools' teachers strike, resulting in the loss of approximately 25% of sessions. The reduced number of sessions resulted in pressure to make up missed sessions. Additionally, the teachers at NBJ were concerned about the weak academic rigor of 5HE and upcoming standardized tests, resulting in a focus on common core standards. TAs felt supported by the teachers but felt that it took multiple sessions for the teachers to understand Deep Listening and the connections the practice has to academic learning goals. The increased pressure, from concerns of academic rigor and missed sessions, reveal the impact of outside pressures on TAs and the restricting nature of the school's curriculum. TAs expressed feeling like they were trying to "check all the boxes" and "teaching to the tests;" sentiments captured throughout the residency debriefing sessions.

One particular anecdote stood out to TAs from the fall residency that occurred during the students' final performances. TAs described the day as hectic and chaotic due to the students finishing their graphic scores and nerves about performing their pieces. At one point, the classroom teacher interrupted the preparations to assert that this was an opportunity for students to step up for themselves and take charge of their education. The teacher highlighted how the chaotic environment would be mirrored in college and professional settings, and that students should view this a learning moment to prepare for those experiences. The leading TA of the session was emotional following this experience because they finally felt supported by the teacher and appreciated the teacher connecting the experience to future experiences the

students may encounter. Despite the outside pressures throughout the Fall residency, TAs were able to adapt and continue to make meaningful connections with students and teachers.

The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the 5HE spring residencies, as the spread of the virus resulted in the subsequent government shutdown of non-essential activities. 5HE administrators and TAs were tasked with modifying lesson plans in order to meet remote learning standards for those residencies that would eventually proceed, as in-person meetings and sessions remained suspended.

The spring residency at NBJ brought additional challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic. 5HE TAs were able to conduct three sessions in-person before NBJ was shut down to all visitors due to COVID-19. TAs thus conducted sessions via online means, including Google Meet, and continued to work on Deep Listening and graphic scores. Following the shutdown, NBJ teachers did not have teaching plans or upcoming projects, resulting in TAs having more freedom and flexibility to explore Deep Listening with students. The reduced pressure from the demands of the curriculum and course material became a positive for TAs, who could focus more on the mindfulness and artistic aspects of sessions, rather than connecting the practice to rigid course material.

One anecdote from the spring residency stood out to multiple TAs. During one of the in-person sessions, TAs were leading the group in an exercise called the bowl gong. In this exercise, participants are instructed to listen to the sound of the bowl gong and when they can no longer hear the sound, they would retrieve the mallet and then pass it to someone else. The selected person would then strike the bowl gong to begin the sound again. The exercise is especially powerful, because participants engage in Deep Listening to hear the sound of the gong and then share the responsibility with others of creating new sound. TAs discussed how

the exercise incorporates vulnerability for participants and builds community by sharing the instrument.

During this particular session, TAs identified a new student and had to resist the urge to select the student to hit the gong. However, eventually one of the other students selected the new student to hit the gong, thus bringing the student into the group. The new student then selected one of the guards to hit the gong, which was surprising given the troubled nature of the relationship between students and guards. 5HE TAs historically have had issues with guards throughout their residencies and sessions. Guards were a disruptive and intrusive presence in sessions, often speaking loudly during mindfulness and Deep Listening exercises and pulling students from the classroom unexpectedly. When the student had selected a guard to participate, TAs were concerned with how the guard would react, however the guard participated in the activity resulting in a stronger sense of community within the facility. The student demonstrated vulnerability and empowerment when selecting the guard. During the focus group, TAs elaborated that the bowl gong activity creates a “chain of connection” and cultivates a sharing of power. Additionally, when TAs asked participants how it felt to receive the mallet, students stated it felt like, “getting a sword of honor” and felt good to share, especially since students are not permitted to share items with each other. This experience demonstrated the powerful impact of DL on the students and guards at NBJ.

After the spring residency, 5HE TAs began a year-round residency conducted online. The focus group was completed approximately halfway through the longer residency. The TAs, rather than spending the whole residency with one class, would spend three weeks with each pod at the facility. The sessions were particularly challenging because students were strictly confined to pods during the pandemic and TAs found it difficult to build rapport

online. However, the online format to sessions proved to be a strength throughout the residency. TAs were able to interact with more students at NBJ due to the rotating pod structure, thus expanding the reach of 5HE at NBJ. Additionally, students were starved for interaction and activity due to the strict confinement to their pods, TAs found the students were more willing to engage with Deep Listening practices throughout the residency. Students also were more cooperative with TAs and each other during sessions, resulting in a more inclusive and active presence from students during sessions compared to pre-COVID sessions. In addition to the 3-week rotating sessions with all the pods in the building, 5HE also continued a typical 9-week rotation (in what they are calling an *intensive session*) with 1 pod per session. In these intensive sessions students more deeply explore Deep Listening within the context of their classroom curriculum. The increased engagement, cooperation, and reach of 5HE contributed to the experience being transformational for TAs and students.

An unintended, but fruitful consequence, of the shift to virtual learning due to the pandemic, allowed 5HE to work in much greater capacity at NBJ this COVID year. Normally, 5HE would not be able to staff NBJ residencies multiple days of the week due to conflicts with their rehearsal schedule as well as the time for the commute to other programs running concurrently.

In addition to the pandemic, the residency was conducted during the summer uprising for Black Lives Matter following the murder of George Floyd. TAs were intentional and deliberate in speaking to the unique circumstances and trauma associated with the pandemic and police brutality. The space became a place for students to process racial trauma within Deep Listening and mindfulness of the 5HE model. Students were able to share insights on their experiences through Deep Listening and expressed that the sessions helped improve their

moods. TAs found the experience to be transformational and felt the sessions had a significant and meaningful impact on students by creating an environment of mindfulness using Deep Listening.

The findings of the focus groups with TAs, highlight the perseverance they had in connecting with youth through the virtual medium. Additionally, the residency highlighted the unique ability of the 5HE model to customize their practices to the unique needs and demands of the agency, including challenging sites like NBJ. The unique demands and restrictions of NBJ revealed the adaptability and flexibility of TAs, including the ways they were able to personalize the model throughout the residency's many changes and challenges. Throughout the focus group, TAs expressed the strengths of the online format and their increased reach within NBJ, demonstrating the ways the model could be implemented in other unique settings. Overall, the NBJ residency highlighted the adaptability and flexibility of the 5HE model and the meaningful impact of DL on students.

### Ignite

Ignite saw a decline in participants from the fall to the spring session. TAs reported that the fall session had "some really consistent members," and that the second session had "the most inconsistency we've ever seen." It seems that could have been the result of a timing mismatch between Ignite and the Fifth House. TAs observed that there were a number of new youth at Ignite who came in just before the scheduled session, and they were going through the process of getting assigned caseworkers. As a result, there was often a timing conflict between a Fifth House session and a meeting that youth were having with their caseworkers during that time. TAs in the focus groups reflected that in future sessions they would work with Ignite in order to ensure that there were no such conflicts.



The goal for the Spring residency was to produce music tracks, inspired from different ideas and themes from participants. At the Ignite spring session, there was only one individual who participated in each session, making it difficult to establish consistency from one session to the next. TAs reported on how lesson plans were altered in some cases, mainly due to low participation. Given these limitations, the TAs still focused on “new tools,” tracking mindfulness, empowerment, vulnerability, creativity, collective decision making, and agency. The TAs reflected that even with the limitation of the Spring session where the students were only in 5HE sessions intermittently for 15-30 minutes at a time (versus the usual two hour ) the tracking of these specific goals were still “really helpful.” In particular, the TAs described their success in tracking the development of creativity in the one individual who regularly attended the abbreviated sessions. Both TAs and participants agreed that, when implemented and utilized, the Deep Listening exercises were helpful in motivating participants to create performance ideas. One TA remarked that “when the students did show up, I felt that they were positive and empowered, especially when lead to learn stuff on things that they related to”.

Out of those discussions regarding the COVID-19 in-person restrictions, 5HE successfully crafted remote residencies which led to increased attendance of the youth and some new curriculum content. These remote residencies allowed for 2 major changes. The first was increasing attendance from clients. The attendance went from 1 person a session to having 4-6 participants every week. The second change has been the content. When 5HE first started working with Ignite (which then called Teen Living Programs), one of the main goals alongside musical composition was entrepreneurship and job readiness training. By using Deep Listening curriculum integrated into Ignite’s iSkills programming, students were able to

interact with these learning goals for the first time and we've seen tremendous success with client engagement in sessions and even beyond the sessions themselves. SHE is looking to continue iSkills integration next year and work closer with job readiness trainers at Ignite as well.

### Deborah's Place

The Spring session at Deborah's Place, originally scheduled to begin in March 2020, was canceled due to the advent of COVID-19 in-person restrictions in Illinois. At that time, Deborah's Place did not have the digital infrastructure and protocols in place for their residents to be able to participate virtually. However, in the Fall of 2020, such a system was in place and the Fifth House session was conducted virtually.

While the ultimate impact of this shift to remote learning may not be felt for some time, much can be learned about the adaptability and effectiveness of Deep Listening exercises from the remote sessions that were held. TAs working with Deborah's Place spoke about how the staff there were willing and able to increase the number of computers for participants to use for remote sessions, as well as the space to ensure that the individuals were properly distanced. Space was also helpful for the exercises themselves, many of which encourage physical movement.

The Deborah's Place residency lesson plans focused on the creation of "text scores." Text scores are the final product for these residencies and are pieces of music that aren't represented with notes on a staff, but rather by using words to instruct how to make specific sounds that result in community music-making that is highly improvisatory. The main questions that TAs ask are:

- What idea or experience inspires a thought for you?

- What do you want to communicate about it? (This representing the participants' "big idea".)
- How might you imagine helping someone else to share that same experience?

TAs led participants in creating Deep Listening pieces where dreams, thoughts, past experiences were used to create text scores to be shared with the group. So, this process normally starts with a Story Circle activity around a particular prompt. Many of the ideas for the text scores were inspired by the Story Circle discussions of the earlier sessions. In one specific case, the circle included a discussion about how individuals interact with their communities. This then turns into a "how to get people to live in your shoes" type of music composition. In terms of structure, the shift to remote learning brought specific concerns such as creating deep listening pieces that "can be amplified even in a digital space," as one of the TAs remarked. Participants at Deborah's Place still expressed appreciation at the ability to have this space, regardless of form, with one individual stating "just to be heard is motivation enough."

The later sessions consisted of the same types of 'warm-up' activities that were used to begin prior sessions, where TAs would lead by playing scores from their respective instrument, by posing thought-provoking questions to the group such as "What is your inside and outside color?" These activities were meant to guide reflections on how an individual is feeling on that day. Throughout this time, COVID-19 complications and restrictions still remained fresh on the minds of many, with one participant commenting about how they felt about Christmas approaching "with the pandemic happening." The final session and performance, a "Deep Listening Jam," consisted of body movement exercises, followed by

the performance of text scores from different Deborah's Place participants which had been created throughout the residency.

At this time, new remote residencies have not been scheduled for Deborah's Place. This is due to other Deborah's Place locations, namely the Patty Crowley Apartments, having cameras or microphones on their computers for women to communicate with 5HE TAs. The residency that was described above was with women of the Rebecca Johnson Apartments. It is important to note that women from Patty Crowley have been tuning into 5HE Daily Deep Listening streams which are held every weekday from 10am-10:30am and Deborah's House staff have reported that residents have been participating with activities in that medium. 5HE projects having a new residency opening there in Summer 2021.

#### Discussion: Lessons Learned and Going Forward

In looking over the past year, certain themes emerged regarding the Fifth House teaching approach: 1) the incorporation of systematic reflexivity process; 2) the value of Deep Listening as an integral part of the curriculum; 3) the importance of flexibility in responding to the different sites and circumstances; and 4) the advent of remote learning and communication due to the need to physically distance due to COVID-19 brought challenges and possible new opportunities for connections.

#### *Incorporating a systematic reflexivity process*

At the conclusion of Year 4 of this iterative evaluation process, one of the tasks suggested for the 5<sup>th</sup> year Spring residencies was the testing of the new tool (see Appendix 1) and incorporating a TA post session debriefing process. In the discussions in the focus groups and in the observations of the debriefing sessions, we see the incorporation of this process.

For example, at Cara Chicago the researchers noted that over the course of the residency, TAs

were able to internalize and effectively implement their evaluation process. Both parties gained confidence in their abilities to debrief and evaluate the experience, demonstrating a critical internalization of the evaluation model and effective implementation of the evaluation model.

At Ignite, TAs reported on how lesson plans were altered in some cases, mainly due to low participation. Given these limitations, the TAs still focused on focus on “new tools,” tracking mindfulness, empowerment, vulnerability, creativity, collective decision making, and agency.”

In addition, the research focus groups of TAs facilitated by the researchers and workshops conducted in the course of this project also became a place for TAs to reflect about their work and share their experiences. TAs mentioned that these sessions were an opportunity to share their teaching experiences and share insights together, which because of their individual performance schedules were otherwise, if at all, fragmented in individual conversations.

### ***Deep Listening as an integral part of the curriculum***

Year 5 explored Deep Listening as an integral part of the curriculum. The incorporation and use of Deep Listening was successfully reported at all sites. In particular, focusing on the implementation of Deep Listening at Cara Chicago and Nancy B. Jefferson, both whose programming has been traditional and restrictive, are especially illustrative of the impact of the Deep Listening.

In discussing Fifth House sessions with Cara Chicago during the focus group, TAs described how the training shifted the residency sessions to a focus on the participant experience of Deep Listening, rather than examining each activity as isolated components.

TAs felt that the shift from activity-focused analysis to participant-focused analysis contributed to a more holistic and comprehensive understanding of the overall session and how participants interacted with the 5HE method. The shift had an impact also on the staff who participated in the sessions as well, enabling them to see aspects of the program participants that they had not been able to understand before.

At Nancy B. Jefferson, there was initial pushback from the CPS teachers who wanted a traditional curriculum that that they could see was directly tied into their lesson plan. A TA described that initially she felt that the CPS teachers were “less willing to take a chance” on Deep Listening work. But as they observed deep listening, they became more comfortable and saw the connections to their lesson plan.

All the TAs at Nancy B. Jefferson were very enthusiastic about the application of Deep Listening and meditation, aspiring for it to be the foundation of their instructional approach. A TA described an instance of how Deep Listening and meditation impacted on the dynamic between students, integrating a new student into the class.

Finally, a boy gets up, takes the mallet (an instrument with a gong), hands it to that kid. And when he did that kid cracked a smile that I have- I couldn't believe, - It was just so beautiful. And he went up, and then after that he was part of it, ...I've never seen a kid just get included you know- basically jump started his ability to be a part of that group probably by a week or two. You know, just- just to be handed something, to say yes, ... you're here, I recognize you. We see you.

The TAs also described another instance, in which the dynamic changed between one of the guards and the students.

But the other thing that happened that was extraordinary...a lot of times the guards .... we'll always try to include them in the activities, a lot of times will be like, "no, not for me, thanks, though", or maybe they'll- they'll participate at a very basic level. But at one point, one of the guards came up and picked up the mallet (part of a gong instrument), and handed it to .... a student who handed it to a guard. So, the vulnerability there was enormous because he could have gotten shut down. He could have been, like, no, I'm not playing. But the student handed it to the guard, and then after that the guards became a part of the game, too. And I have never- so if you consider Fifth House, teachers, guards, and students, four different groups of people in that room, and we're all playing it. I have never seen an activity build community in that facility where it was so democratic, ever.....?

***Flexibility in responding to the different sites and circumstances***

TA's flexibility in instructional approach is an essential aspect of the Fifth House model and one that has been a focus in past reports. In addition, beyond instructional flexibility, there is a flexibility and dexterity in curriculum design, in the scheduling and physical organization of the sessions.

For example, the Cara Chicago residency included tailored lesson plans and evaluations specific to Cara Chicago's objectives and goals. Debriefing session by 5HE TAs and CURL Fellows, included Cara Chicago staff. The incorporation of Cara Chicago's unique objectives and the agency's participation in debriefing sessions provided a critical perspective

into the 5HE model, specifically how the lesson planning and evaluation tools could be adapted to the demands of different residencies.

Over the years of residencies at Nancy B. Jefferson, the 5HE instructors have faced the challenge of fitting into the fairly rigid teaching plans of the Chicago Public School teachers as well as the restrictions and transitory nature of the detention center just outside the classroom space. In the focus group discussions, this challenging environment has always been an element in the TA's discussion of curriculum. In addition, in the Fall session, with the impact of time lost because of the teacher's strike, the teachers at NBJ were especially concerned about the academic rigor of 5HE and upcoming standardized tests, resulting in a rigid focus on common core standards. TA's felt the pressure but were able to adapt and continue to make meaningful connections with students and teachers.

One particular antidote stood out to TAs from the fall residency that occurred during the students' final performances. TAs described the day as hectic and chaotic due to the students finishing their graphic scores and nerves about performing their pieces. At one point, the classroom teacher interrupted the preparations to assert that this was an opportunity for students to step up for themselves and take charge of their education. The teacher highlighted how the chaotic environment would be mirrored in college and professional settings and students should view this a learning moment to prepare for those experiences. The leading TA of the session was emotional following this experience because they finally felt supported by the teacher and appreciated the teacher connecting the experience to future experiences the students may encounter.

Ignite has been an example of turning a lemon into lemonade. As was described above, initially this past year, there had a low turn-out of participants in the last in person



cycle of 8-week session, just before COVID-19 lockdown. This was a reversal from the full attendance at the previous year's cycle. Reasons for the low turnout were primarily organizational. New participants were being on-boarded, their orientation and initial meeting with case managers often conflicted with the session times, and they were not familiar with 5HE program. With the advent of the COVID lockdown, the situation could have gotten worse. At the focus group discussing the strategies discuss the remote learning, TAs described a turnaround strategy, enthusiastically illustrating an organizational dexterity. TAs conferred with Ignite administration and discovered that youth were having a problem interacting with any program due to the various restrictions put in place because of COVID and the impact on the youth. They reported in the focus group that:

...just getting used to the environment that we're all living .... the amount of stress that we're all under. It's very easy for those particular clients to just shut in and be in their room and that's it. And they don't want to interact even if it's a great program, even if it's in the building...

Out of the discussions with Ignite administrators, 5HE successfully crafted remote residencies. These residencies have led to increased attendance of the youth, by almost 400%, and have tied the Deep Listening curriculum into Ignite's iSkills programming. In the coming year, 5HE aims to work closely with job readiness trainers at Ignite.

### ***Transitioning from in-person to remote interactions***

While the transition to remote learning has been challenging and limited or cancelled residencies at some sites such as Cara Chicago, the experience of remote learning has also added new techniques for connection to the 5HE tool kit.

*Challenges and Adaptations*

In a discussion of remote learning at the focus group, a TA working with the Ignite residency, described the limitation of remote learning on building cohesive groups:

When we were in person, we were doing things like attending their community meetings and things that would happen right before our visits which was great because we were able to integrate into their culture a little bit more. Obviously now we can't do that as much.

Yet, the remote learning model implemented at Ignite has led to more integration with Ignite's programming and has turned around lowing participation rates by students.

At Nancy B. Jefferson, TA's faced another set of challenges. The in-person sessions had been conducted in a classroom. With the advent of social distances at the correction center, not only were the TA's and teachers no longer able to in person at the center, but the youth were restricted to the residency floor, which was organized in living pods. Each pod had access to one computer, with the pod accessing the TAs remotely as a group. In these shorter duration "sampler" pod sessions the TA's has less control on the group dynamics and the interactions during a session could be more chaotic. At the same time, working with the pods and not being restricted to integration into the classroom schedule, has led to engagement with the more youth, with the more flexible weekly schedule cycles successfully utilizing the deep listening and mindfulness approach. SHE estimates that at NBJ alone there have been 159 visits encounters with pod members in the sampler sessions and in 9 week intensive cycles as compared to 18 in-person encounters during a comparable time.

*New tools:*

In the focus group, 5HE teaching artists reflected how in the COVID-19 lockdown, they have many more group interactions and have shared instructional strategies and problem solved together. As the coordinator of the teaching artist program reflected,

I think that the other thing that I really want to emphasize is the thing I said before: is that the fact that we have been doing so much more communicating internally, sharing ideas, being able to workshop with one another..... that has proven to be extremely useful for the benefit of all the participants of all of our programs.

In addition, TAs are thinking about how utilizing remote learning could be the answer to a problem with scheduling coordination they have had to grapple with in the past. The teaching artists, pre-covid shut down, had a national and international performance commitments that restricted and conflicted with a teaching schedule. While this conflict was obviously not the case during the COVID lockdown at most performance settings, the transition to remote has demonstrated a possible workaround to this scheduling issues when in-person sessions resume. TA's are talked about the possibility a hybrid system, in which if a performance commitment interrupts a teaching cycle, the artist could attend a class remotely.

Perhaps the most innovation feature of 5HE response to the COVID in-person restrictions is the establishment of Daily Deep Listening Zoom sessions. These Daily Deep Listening sessions are held every weekday since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020. In these sessions, which are held on Zoom and broadcast to Facebook, 5HE TAs facilitate different Deep Listening activities that are often themed either to existing text score compositions by Deep Listening practice founder, Pauline Oliveros, or composed by 5HE TAs themselves. While these sessions were initially meant as a method for staying in touch with 5HE audiences in a consistent and virtual manner, they have slowly evolved into

pseudo-professional development opportunities for 5HE TAs. Just as focus groups and workshops were mentioned to be beneficial in connecting TAs on teaching styles and methods, the Daily Deep Listening streams have allowed 5HE TAs to connect more than ever on activities and facilitation practices around Deep Listening. The TA coordinator (private correspondence) felt that this has undoubtedly shaped the way that 5HE TAs teach at residency sites and also greatly increased the cohesion of different residency projects across the ensemble and even into artistic performance as well.

### **Conclusion**

This report focused on both the implementation of the evaluation model and the impact of the transition to virtual sessions due to COVID -19 restrictions. In reviewing the residencies, certain themes emerged regarding the Fifth House teaching approach: 1) the incorporation of systematic reflexivity process; 2) the value of Deep Listening as an integral part of the curriculum; 3) the importance of flexibility in responding to the different sites and circumstances. Fifth House has clearly solidified and incorporated its innovative teaching approach.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, the advent of COVID-19 restrictions, has successfully tested this innovative approach. While the transition to remote learning has been challenging, the experience of remote learning has also added new techniques for connection to the 5HE toolkit. In addition, using virtual applications such as Zoom and broadcasting on Facebook has allowed 5HE to connect more than ever on activities and facilitated practices around Deep Listening. These connections have shaped the way that 5HE TAs teach at residency sites and

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<sup>1</sup> See the newly published Evaluation Tool and a draft of the forthcoming Design Tool in Appendices 2 and 3 as further examples of the Fifth House's approach.

also greatly increased the cohesion of different residency projects across the ensemble and even into artistic performance as well.

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Appendix 1

Evaluation Tool

# FIFTH HOUSE ENSEMBLE EVALUATION TOOL

Location	
Visit #	
Date	
Teaching Artists	

## MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES - EXPECTATIONS VS OBSERVATIONS

**Themes:** Mindfulness, Empowerment, Vulnerability, Agency, Creativity, Collective Decision-Making, Humor and Play ([definitions and examples](#))

*Activity #1 (Please rename to reflect the specific activity in the lesson plan)*

**Expectations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

**Observations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

List notable experiences below:

- 

*Activity #2*

**Expectations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

**Observations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

List notable experiences below:

-

Activity #3

**Expectations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

**Observations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

List notable experiences below:

- 

Activity #4

**Expectations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

**Observations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

List notable experiences below:

- 

Activity #5

**Expectations**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

**Observations:**

Mindfulness	Empowerment	Vulnerability	Agency	Creativity	Collective Decision Making	Humor and Play

List notable experiences below:

-

## DEEP LISTENING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How did you feel when you came to the session today?

- What was going on before the session started?

How did it feel to participate in the activities?

- What came up for you?
- Where did you go?
- What did you think about?
- Did you feel like part of the group?
  - If so, how?
  - If not, how so?

How do you feel right now after participating?

- Do you feel any to difference before or during the activity/visit?

## PARTICIPANT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Appendix 2  
Evaluation Toolkit



# Evaluating Transformative Arts Programming

An Introductory Guide to Evaluating Arts Programming in Non-Arts Settings



# Purpose of this guide

- NOT a textbook for evaluation, in general;
- NOT an exhaustive how-to guide for the usual skills and knowledge evaluations that are also critical to arts programming;
- Rather, IT IS a map and toolkit - based on our expertise and experience - for the evaluation of arts programming that seeks to lead to personal transformation for participants in non-traditional, non-arts based settings.

We hope it is a guide to you and your program as you begin to make a similar journey. Along the way we will provide you some brief introductions to resources, terms, methods, and goals, as well as links to our work as well as the work/tools of others.

# Who we are and why we hang out together

This guide is a collaborative effort of [Fifth House Ensemble](http://www.fifth-house.com) (www.fifth-house.com) and the [Center for Urban Research and Learning \(CURL\) at Loyola University Chicago](http://www.luc.edu/curl) (www.luc.edu/curl).

Fifth House's "artistic, educational, and civic programs engage theater groups, video game designers, corporate innovators, and folk bands to share stories as diverse as the communities it serves." Given the ensemble's work with community groups of various types, it was natural to partner with CURL who seeks to do transformative research, evaluation, and education by building collaborative partnerships with community groups. "These partnerships connect Loyola faculty and students with community and nonprofit organizations, civic groups, and government agencies."



# Who we are and why we hang out together (cont.)

5HE had been doing basic evaluation of their programming – pre- and post-test surveys for example. And, as professional musicians with years of experience building arts-integrated programming in public school classrooms, they were well-versed in more traditional evaluation work that examines improvements in core academic and arts-based skills. They had gathered anecdotal evidence that would suggest that the effects of their programs went far deeper than skills-based accomplishments, and that these transformations that were previously seen as a by-product of the main objectives of a residency might in fact be of equal or greater importance, but lacked an evaluation framework to measure data on these outcomes. When the ensemble had the opportunity to shift its education work into social service settings, they wished to explore this new territory with an outside evaluator, with personal transformation as a central focus.

Namely, **5HE sought to measure impact of their work in non-traditional settings – homeless shelters, schools in juvenile detention centers, other types of social service agencies, etc. – that seek to provide opportunities to make and experience music that leads to personal transformation.** Through deep listening and other activities, they seek to show the power of making art wherever we might find ourselves. Together, we sought to evaluate and understand that work.

Come join us as we sketch out a toolkit and roadmap for this work based on lessons learned from our own journey together!

# Why even bother with evaluation?

For many individuals and groups working in arts programming (and in many other fields), there is a healthy skepticism when it comes to evaluation. Why bother doing it at all and, why bother trying to measure something as difficult as “personal transformation?”

The answers are similar for both:

- Inform program design
- Show the impact of programming
- Demonstrate the value of the programming to funders and users of the work

These are some of the same goals for evaluating and understanding arts programming that seeks personal transformation. It pushes into new and less well-defined concepts and themes, BUT it is a critical component to help explain why people should be making art everywhere and every day.

# Where to start?

If a group of musicians or other types of artists want to begin this evaluation work, what are some of the key elements needed?

## Mindset

- An openness to self-reflection

- Willingness to be at risk

- Ability and commitment to putting in the needed time to do the work

*Tip: Be sure to “evaluate what you do and do what you evaluate!” – too often there is a temptation to follow an exciting idea about an evaluation topic without actually reflecting on whether the group actually directly or indirectly does work on that topic. For example, a group might provide services to individuals experiencing homelessness but not provide housing. That’s fine but then be very careful to think through any plans to evaluate whether individuals in the program got housing. Otherwise you’ll be trying to evaluate something you have little to no control over. Conversely, sometimes it is easy to overlook the concrete services you do provide and, therefore, you fail to evaluate that work. It may seem obvious but it pays to reflect on this early in the process!*

# Where to start? (cont.)

## Resources

### People

Internal:

Point person for the group and the evaluation effort Team of at least two or more artists to support the work

External (not always necessary but useful addition if possible):

Individual consultant

Evaluation firm

University-based evaluators

*Tip: Talk to others in your network to see if they have recommendations for finding an evaluator. Besides the obvious advice of finding someone that is within your budget, be sure you also find someone that fits with your style and vision – if they can't hear what you're saying at the outset, they won't hear what you're saying throughout the process.*

### Time

#### **Money (to cover staff and artist time and, if desired, an outside consultant)**

Foundations – talk to fellow artists or current funders of programming

Federal/State government – there aren't many but the National Endowment for the Arts might be a possible resource

# Where to start? (cont.)

## A Plan

No, you don't need to have everything decided and laid out! But it is never too early to begin planning and setting goals. Don't wait for everything to be 100% set before you begin to sketch the plans out. It is an iterative process throughout so go ahead and take the first steps. Remember: Evaluate what you do and do what you evaluate!



# Evaluation Methodology 101

## Types of Evaluation

**Formative evaluation:** Answers the question of how things are working. It assesses the strengths and weaknesses of a new program as it is being piloted and rolled out, providing on-going feedback to the project in order to make revisions, and fine tune the program.

**Process evaluation:** Process evaluation assesses how a program worked. It examines how the program implemented the intended goals of the program. It is often considered looking into the “black box” between a plan (programs goals and objectives). It is best done when assessing the program from the perspective and experiences of all those involved in the program, from program planners to staff to program participants.

**Outcome evaluation:** Outcome evaluation is used to obtain descriptive data on a project and to document short-term results. It answers what happened and the immediate effects on the targeted audience.

**Impact:** Impact focuses on the long-range results of the program on the targeted audience. Impact evaluations are rarely possible because they are usually costly, involve extended commitment, and, the results often cannot be directly related to the effects of an activity or program because of other (external) influences on the target audience that occur over time.

# Evaluation Methodology 101 (cont.)

## Methodologies

**Quantitative (think numbers):** Quantitative research focuses on the systematic gathering of numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon. Quantitative data collection methods include various forms of surveys – online surveys, paper surveys, mobile surveys and kiosk surveys, face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, longitudinal studies, online polls, and systematic observations.

*Tip: Here's a very brief webpage and video link (embedded) that describes more about the topic:*

- [Overview of Quantitative Methods](https://cirt.gcu.edu/research/develop/research_ready/quantresearch/1) (https://cirt.gcu.edu/research/develop/research\_ready/quantresearch/1)

**Qualitative (think words and pictures):** Qualitative research is a strategy for systematic collection, organization, and interpretation of phenomena that are difficult to measure quantitatively. Qualitative method is used to understand people's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions. Some common methods include focus groups (group discussions), individual interviews, document analysis, and participation/observations and event documentation (audio, photo, video).

*Tip: Here is a few helpful sources on the topic:*

- [Data Collector's Field Guide](https://course.ccs.neu.edu/is4800sp12/resources/qualmethods.pdf) (https://course.ccs.neu.edu/is4800sp12/resources/qualmethods.pdf)
- [Video: Fundamentals of Qualitative Research from Yale University](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbdN_sLWI88) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbdN\_sLWI88)

**Mixed-methods:** Mixed methods research involves collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data includes closed-end information that undergoes statistical analysis and results in a numerical representation. Qualitative data, on the other hand, is more subjective and open-ended. It allows for the “voice” of the participants to be heard and interpretation of observations. Combining the two allows for a stronger, more valid picture of what happened and how.

*Tip: Here is a helpful and detailed overview of mixed methods:*

- [Mixed Methods Overview](https://cirt.gcu.edu/research/developmentresources/research_ready/mixed_methods/overview) (https://cirt.gcu.edu/research/developmentresources/research\_ready/mixed\_methods/overview)

# Evaluation Methodology 101 (cont.)

## Participants

Clients/consumers/participants

Artists (i.e. those delivering the programming)

Other informants on the “outside” of your work:

- Staff at the host site
- Community members
- Funders
- Others (different contexts mean different kinds of possible sources of information – be creative!)

## Data Analysis

**Qualitative** - [here's a great resource from our friends in the Geoscience field – yes, Geoscience!](https://nagt.org/nagt/geoedresearch/toolbox/analysis_tools/quantitative.html)

([https://nagt.org/nagt/geoedresearch/toolbox/analysis\\_tools/quantitative.html](https://nagt.org/nagt/geoedresearch/toolbox/analysis_tools/quantitative.html))

**Quantitative** – [the Geoscience folks also have this helpful link to quantitative analysis](https://nagt.org/nagt/geoedresearch/toolbox/analysis_tools/quantitative.html)

([https://nagt.org/nagt/geoedresearch/toolbox/analysis\\_tools/quantitative.html](https://nagt.org/nagt/geoedresearch/toolbox/analysis_tools/quantitative.html))



# We've Collected and Analyzed - Now what should we do?

**Further study** – it is perfectly acceptable – and often wise – to continue to do further data collection and analysis. You will see that our project has been going on for over 4 years and is continually adapting and moving forward.

**Feedback loop to inform programming** - Take time throughout and at the “end” to use the findings to inform and improve the programming. How often should this happen? Find a balance between overwhelming yourselves with constant feedback and blindly moving along without an understanding of what is happening.

**Reports and “reports”** – at the end, don't forget to allot time and space to report back on your findings. You will see in our appendices that we have produced technical reports that lay out the methods and outcomes of the work. But don't forget that there are other ways – “reports” – to share the findings – brochures, webpages, artistic creations, and, yes, even guides like this one.

**Presentations** – Finally, don't miss the opportunity to share the good news of your work and the lesson learned. Others can learn from your experience so look to make presentations on your evaluation work to peers and larger networks.

*Do we stop? Now? Ever?*

At some point, you must say “enough is enough” but always push to ask more/different questions. These questions and evaluations lead to a better understanding of your work and, hopefully, a better work product and experience for everyone involved.

# Our Story - A case study that followed this roadmap and produced some tools

## Introduction

We can't rehash every detail of our shared journey but we hope you will find this quick review of our own story helpful in seeing the above process in action. Be sure to take a look at some of the key lessons for doing evaluation that we highlight AND the link to our three, year-end final reports thus far. They are full of helpful detail in our humble opinion.

As we noted earlier, 5HE had already been engaged in evaluation efforts. They were keen to take it in new and expanded directions. This meant talking as a team, reflecting on what path made most sense, and then, after several meetings and lots of coffee for everyone, developing a partnership with CURL. The key here is that 5HE began with what they had planned and moved into a new phase. It sounds simple but those simple steps cannot be overlooked!

# Our Story (cont.)

## Year 1: Development of conceptual model

Using a variety of methods described above (qualitative methods such as observations and focus groups, especially), CURL faculty and students began to work with 5HE Teaching Artists (TA) to not only document the work but to begin to understand the 5HE approach and how it helped to facilitate transformation. In short, a process evaluation (see above) was conducted.

Themes began to emerge such as TA flexibility, the importance of participant's sense of their own agency, and other similar themes that began to capture the core of 5HE programming. This, in turn, helped the team develop our foundational conceptual model for our work in the following years.

[Take a look at the final report for a lot more detail on the outcomes and the methods used](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Nw8itrVBAIEOjtNgFaxSqjgwRJ_pYR6s/view?usp=sharing)

([https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Nw8itrVBAIEOjtNgFaxSqjgwRJ\\_pYR6s/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Nw8itrVBAIEOjtNgFaxSqjgwRJ_pYR6s/view?usp=sharing))

## Key lessons for readers (i.e. others trying to use this guide):

- Why pre/post isn't always the best approach – 5HE was doing a fine job of utilizing pre- and post-test measures. But it was only in taking a step back (and, in their case, doing so with CURL), that the key themes embedded in their transformation work emerged.
- The role/importance of outside evaluators in shaping evaluation – While it isn't necessary to have an external evaluator to do this work, CURL's role as an "outsider" did help to bring new insights and "eyes" to the work of 5HE and, in doing so a new sense of their work emerged.
- The role/importance of 5HE in shaping evaluation – having noted the importance of an outside evaluator, it is equally important to note the crucial role that 5HE played in forming these
- Using evaluation to inform program design – we have talked throughout about the "feedback" loop that is helpful in any good evaluation work. It was certainly the case here as 5HE quickly took on these new insights and themes and used them to shape their work.

# Our Story (cont.)

## Year 2: Testing the model

This second year employed many of the same methods as before – observations, focus groups, etc. The critical difference was that now we had a basic model and themes gleaned from Year 1 and we looked to test them out. “Testing” might sound big and scary but really it was looking to see if the themes and interactions were, in fact, present in the TA and participant interactions. Additionally, we used a pre- and post-residency survey to further explore these themes. In doing so, one theme in particular seemed to play a critical role – mindfulness – and that, in turn, helps to inform Year 3.

[Take a look at the Year 2 final report for a great deal more information](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YCbeo4sybG7YPsncGx26MFsOKhpwlsMD/view?usp=sharing)

(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YCbeo4sybG7YPsncGx26MFsOKhpwlsMD/view?usp=sharing>)

### Key lessons for readers:

- The ongoing iterative process involved in evaluation – As you read the final report, be sure to look for the reality of evaluation work – it is rarely a straight line and, in fact, it involves a great deal of back and forth and even ups and downs. That can seem like a waste of time sometimes but it actually produces a better, richer product.
- It takes time and reflection to better understand models – The whole of Year 2 can look a lot like Year 1 in terms of methods and topics. In reality, though, we needed this year to really begin to explore the themes from Year 1 in-depth. So, don’t always feel the need to rush through the process!
- Patience – It will come as no surprise to anyone that sometimes plans don’t work out as we had hoped. In reading the Year 2 report, you might note that some of the sites weren’t able to fully participate as we had planned. That neither stopped 5HE programming nor did it “ruin” the evaluation effort. “Adaptability” and patience is a key theme for programming AND evaluation.



# Our Story (cont.)

## Year 3 - Greater attention to Mindfulness

As noted in the Year 2 overview, the concept of Mindfulness took on a greater importance. Year 3 took that theme and began to explore how to better utilize it AND begin measuring it. As you read the final report for Year 3, take note of how that concept continued to emerge and how 5HE and CURL made plans to measure it in Year 4. Additionally, CURL was not present in the residency sessions for Year 3 and 5HE took on more of the evaluation coordination. This is a key take away for those who wonder if they can “go it alone.” The answer is “yes, you can!”

[The report can be found here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hWgJYcf5wO4zFRgSFX63QVIFQOE_6CKh/view?usp=sharing)

([https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hWgJYcf5wO4zFRgSFX63QVIFQOE\\_6CKh/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hWgJYcf5wO4zFRgSFX63QVIFQOE_6CKh/view?usp=sharing))

### Key lessons for readers:

- Having noted that CURL as an external evaluator wasn't present via in-person observations highlights the methods that 5HE needed to employ to get the work done. Key among the lessons – the need for 2 TAs in the room and the usefulness (and possible limitations) of using videotaped recordings of the sessions.
- Designing activity-based assessments – 5HE has taken an approach to evaluation that should be emulated. Namely, they have worked creatively with CURL to find ways to weave together activities in the program that also double as evaluation tools.
- Feedback loop and on to a new question – Year 3 resulted in a new “tool” the mindfulness tool. It should be no surprise to anyone that this co-created tool becomes the basis for both programming AND evaluation in Year 4. The feedback loop continues!

# Our Story (cont.)

## Year 4- Exploring the Role of Deep Listening

The Year 4 final evaluation is still being written. Indeed, CURL is still sifting through the data gathered – again via observations and focus groups and the like – to better understand the role of Mindfulness as well as how an activity like Deep Listening can help promote that theme. A key part of the programming was more of the activity-based programming that doubles as programming AND as an evaluation tool.

[Read the Year 4 report here](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c9702aa9b8fe866d611fe47/t/5e5829e0bb5680631120c710/1582836197430/5HE+Year+4+Evaluation+Final.pdf)

(<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5c9702aa9b8fe866d611fe47/t/5e5829e0bb5680631120c710/1582836197430/5HE+Year+4+Evaluation+Final.pdf>)

### Key lessons for readers:

- Post-Session Reflections – even at this stage in our reflection on Year 4, a clear point of conversation for 5HE and CURL is the role of an outside evaluator in helping the TAs at 5HE to see the interactions (and resulting themes) in a new way.
- Outside evaluator (Part 2) – related to the usefulness of an outsider in post-session reflections, is the notion of finding the balance that TAs must strike in acting as the teacher AND part of the evaluation team *while the session is in progress*. More to the point given the topic of mindfulness, the question we are asking ourselves is this: can a TA be fully and critically present in the session if they are also trying to act as an evaluator. Stay tuned for our further reflections!

# Final Thoughts

That is it – we have come to the end of our guide and case study. Hopefully you have found more than a few things to help you in your own journey. Our final advice is simple – don't be afraid, get involved wherever you find yourself, and realize that your journey, like ours, will take twists and turns but lead to a better understanding in the end.

If you have questions about any of this information, feel free to contact us:

For Fifth House Ensemble: Alex Olsavsky - [alex@fifth-house.com](mailto:alex@fifth-house.com)

For CURL/Loyola: Christine George - [cgeorg@luc.edu](mailto:cgeorg@luc.edu)

# Thanks

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# Appendices

This is not an exhaustive list of (and links to) our tools, processes and reports but it will give readers a sense of the work we have collaboratively been doing. Check back as we plan to add more in time.

- [Evaluation Tool on Mindfulness and Deep Listening](#)

([https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ibK5eQ2O\\_JclAs2MojQ-pqYorjgYnKyzE9shj7uj0hY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ibK5eQ2O_JclAs2MojQ-pqYorjgYnKyzE9shj7uj0hY/edit?usp=sharing))

- [Observation Log Example](#)

([https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xQsh\\_iwTyPNUV6c5yTwvnFUGHeWqNT7t](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1xQsh_iwTyPNUV6c5yTwvnFUGHeWqNT7t))

- [Sample Focus Group Questions](#)

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Yc0225SF73TLUTwmHtrSDIyBqEFQh86HNvjfv2qgoOU/edit?usp=sharing>)

- For links to the full annual process evaluation reports and the most recent case studies, visit Fifth House Ensemble's [Social Initiatives webpage](#).

([www.fifth-house.com/social-initiatives](http://www.fifth-house.com/social-initiatives))

Appendix 3

Draft Design Tool



*and Redesigning*

# Designing Arts-Integrated Residencies

An Introductory Guide to Designing Arts Programming in Non-Arts Settings



# Purpose of this guide

- NOT a textbook for project design, in general;
- NOT a template for correspondence, outlines, or lesson plans. Each situation will be different and require different adjustments to find success;
- Rather, IT IS a map and toolkit - based on our expertise and experience - for the design of arts programming that seeks to lead to personal transformation for participants in non-traditional, non-arts based settings.

We hope it is a guide to you and your program as you begin to make a similar journey. Along the way we will provide you some brief introductions to resources, terms, methods, and goals, as well as links to our work as well as the work/tools of others.

# Who we are and why we hang out together

This guide is a collaborative effort of [Fifth House Ensemble](http://www.fifth-house.com) (www.fifth-house.com) and the [Center for Urban Research and Learning \(CURL\) at Loyola University Chicago](http://www.luc.edu/curl) (www.luc.edu/curl).

Fifth House’s “artistic, educational, and civic programs engage theater groups, video game designers, corporate innovators, and folk bands to share stories as diverse as the communities it serves.” Given the ensemble’s work with community groups of various types, it was natural to partner with CURL who seeks to do transformative research, evaluation, and education by building collaborative partnerships with community groups. “These partnerships connect Loyola faculty and students with community and nonprofit organizations, civic groups, and government agencies.”



# Who we are and why we hang out together (cont.)

5HE has been refining the design of their programming since their founding in 2005. With a mission of “tapping the collaborative spirit of chamber music” with years of experience building arts-integrated programming in public school classrooms, they were well-versed how to work with partners who were not working in the arts. They had gathered anecdotal evidence that would suggest that the effects of their programs went far deeper than skills-based accomplishments, and that these transformations that were previously seen as a by-product of the main objectives of a residency might in fact be of equal or greater importance, but lacked an evaluation framework to measure data on these outcomes and to subsequently change designs based on observable data. When the ensemble had the opportunity to shift its education work into social service settings, they wished to explore this new territory with an outside evaluator, with personal transformation as a central focus.

Namely, **5HE sought to measure impact of their work in non-traditional settings – homeless shelters, schools in juvenile detention centers, other types of social service agencies, etc. – that seek to provide opportunities to make and experience music that leads to personal transformation.** Through deep listening and other activities, they seek to show the power of making art wherever we might find ourselves. Together, we sought to evaluate and understand that work.

Come join us as we sketch out a toolkit and roadmap for this work based on lessons learned from our own journey together!

# Mindsets

## **Be a Beginner**

There is no need to be an authority or have the answers on every subject. Be willing to learn from the collaborators and participants you work with.

## **Preparation vs. Flexibility**

Things can and will go wrong. We certainly aren't suggesting that you just wing it, but leaving room for change in both individual lesson plans and also entire projects will award you more success. Don't rely on programming that requires everything to go perfectly in order to culminate in a satisfying way.

## **Vulnerability**

Not knowing creates the space for collaboration.

# Mindsets (cont.)

## Overcoming Bias

You are an artist, therefore you can only provide performances or presentations, right? WRONG! Consider the skillsets you've gained from your artistry and how they could or do serve you in your life beyond your art. This is also a two-way street. Don't think that the participants of your programs don't naturally possess artistic skills because of who they are or their current circumstances.

## Redefine Success through Transformation

Having someone reach their highest potential is always the goal. Don't measure the success of your programming by your potential, constantly measure it by the potential of those you work with.

## Your Training Doesn't Prepare You

Your artistic training is centered around perfection and numerous repetition. The most successfully designed programs are not analogous to your conservatory training but rather, the exact opposite.

***Tip: It is extremely important that no one does this work with the express interest of raising money***



# ABCD

Our good friends at the [Asset-Based Community Development \(ABCD\) Institute at DePaul University](https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx) (https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx) have organized some information that is helpful when thinking about what kind of services or connections you can provide to a partner.

## The Dilemma

It is a common misconception that individuals and communities have *deficiencies and needs* and require help from outside programs to see success. In reality, these same individuals and communities already have a bounty of *assets and capacities* that may simply be in need of connection.

# ABCD (cont.)

In every community, there exist **six** basic assets:

- **Individuals**
  - What are the gifts that an individual can give for the betterment of their community?
- **Associations**
  - Local groups and clubs pool individuals together whose gifts can be more powerful than those of an individual.
- **Institutions**
  - For-profit, not-for-profit, or governmental organizations whose members are paid to work for the community.
- **Physical Space**
  - The land and everything on it that individuals, associations, and institutions work on.
- **Exchange**
  - Giving and sharing between all of the six basic assets. This can be anything from buying and selling to giving and sharing.
- **Culture/Stories/History**
  - The reminder of how things have worked in the past. Also, this asset is connected to the culture and identity of the community.

# ABCD (cont.)

In ABCD's research, they found that communities were always aware of local assets.

Successful community action is the result of assets that were previously unconnected being connected.

To connect assets, there must be a connector **(that's you!)**

*Tip: Make a list of your artistic assets that would help you to build successful programs for non-arts partners.*

Using this ABCD mindset, Fifth House Ensemble establishes connections between core-curricular subjects and musical exploration.

**Arts Integration** is an approach to teaching and learning through which content standards are taught and assessed through the arts.

*Tip: To accomplish the best results with arts integration, use **Parallel Process** by focusing on **how things work**, rather than what they are.*

# Making Friends and Finding Partners

Cultivating relationships takes a *long* time. Just like a dinner party, don't expect to be running the show right out of the gate. Try being a guest at the table first. Be a citizen before a leader. Take note of:

- **Who is at the table?**
  - Get to know the personnel of a potential partner already?
- **Who needs to be at the table?**
  - Which voices are underrepresented or who could help serve your partners needs? Don't be afraid to be a connector!
- **Who sets the table?**
  - Who lays the groundwork for how programming is executed?

*Tip: Partnerships are forged between people, not organizations. Your best connections and referrals are to individual contacts within any potential partner organization.*

*Tip #2: It is not equitable to create public-facing programs without inclusive, public participation.*

# Getting to Know You ~~You~~ *Them*

Let's use your best friendships as a guide here. The best friends you have always have your best interests at heart and rarely forget to check-in about your successes. Treat your partners with the same curiosity. Not only will they be happy you asked, but you'll quickly find out about what is important to them, what they're proud of, and where they feel they need support.

Below are some of the questions we asked to our partners that helped us understand how to build the kind of programming they needed:

- What are you working on this year?
- What is your organization succeeding at right now?
- What are you finding challenging?
- How can we raise awareness for your organization?
- How do you imagine being involved?
- How can we best connect with the clients you serve?
- What do you most wish people know about your organization or that they would be surprised to learn?



# Program Planning

If you can believe it, NOW we are finally ready to design some programs! Those seeking out this document may have had this particular section in mind, but everything prior to this section is crucial to making the deep and valuable connections that allow for the success of the following.

## Assigning roles

Assuming that you've already established administrative contact, it's now time to assign roles. Assign a lead teaching artist (TA) that will be in charge of creating the curriculum and be the primary contact with teachers or program directors. Also assign at least one supporting teaching artist (if your budget allows) to offer variety in teaching styles and different personalities in the classroom. Having a supporting TA also allows for one person on the artistic team to focus on logging evaluation and managing classroom behavior, if necessary.

*Tip: Keep lines of communications clear so that when partners have questions, they always know who to ask!*

## Small Teams

Fifth House Ensemble uses teams of three when doing arts-integration work, with usually only two TAs per visit. Using small teams allows for variety as mentioned earlier but also keeps the student/TA ratio to a point where there are never more facilitators in the room than participants. In our research, trauma-informed populations respond better to smaller teams than needing to put trust in a continuously rotating roster of teachers.

# Content Planning

## Meet with Teachers/Program Facilitators

Now is the time that you'll want to meet with the partner's facilitator to discuss about how you'll be integrating into their typical programming. Take a look at Fifth House Ensemble's template for this initial meeting below. By the end of this meeting, all of questions posed by this document should have answers so that you can effectively schedule your team and design your curriculum.

[Initial Planning Meeting Template](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1urPPWZyrANLzyET7Dy89Jkol6otH7agwCQC277SsOpc/edit?usp=sharing)

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1urPPWZyrANLzyET7Dy89Jkol6otH7agwCQC277SsOpc/edit?usp=sharing>)

## Outline the Program

With the information gathered from the initial meeting, you can map out the residency in broad strokes before designing individual lesson plans. Below is Fifth House Ensemble's 4-visit outline template. A completed sample version is available in the appendices along with a completed sample lesson plan.

[Outline Template](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WcQnWafPFEN47z5xBY3M60co9rhAW36KvKrUne4-ac4/edit?usp=sharing)

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1WcQnWafPFEN47z5xBY3M60co9rhAW36KvKrUne4-ac4/edit?usp=sharing>)

*Tip: Always start designing **backwards!** Start with the end goals as defined from your initial planning meeting and build lesson plans that develop the skills or experience necessary for participants to reach those goals.*

# Assessment

This topic is just too big for one document! To find out more about our findings on evaluation methods, tools, and mindsets, check out Fifth House Ensemble and CURL's [Evaluation Toolkit](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BYAnsfvCTZRS0crsMA3VwN7CaLRQSJQH/view?usp=sharing).  
(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BYAnsfvCTZRS0crsMA3VwN7CaLRQSJQH/view?usp=sharing>)



# Documentation

If possible, record all of your sessions. But where is the camera pointed? Make sure it's at you! Use this resource to learn more about your strengths and weaknesses as a facilitator.

*Tip: Always ask before bringing a camera into the space. Trauma-informed populations and organizations can be very wary of cameras and documentation. If you do want to show participants, have them sign a Photo/Video release form (a sample of which is below).*

[Photo/Video Release Template](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12sNR36sVAcgQhiSy8GoNYIGV93Xn-4wk-bk1vR_Kuhc/edit?usp=sharing)

([https://docs.google.com/document/d/12sNR36sVAcgQhiSy8GoNYIGV93Xn-4wk-bk1vR\\_Kuhc/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12sNR36sVAcgQhiSy8GoNYIGV93Xn-4wk-bk1vR_Kuhc/edit?usp=sharing))

## **Post-Assessment Videos**

In addition to the framework and tools found in our Evaluation Toolkit, Fifth House Ensemble also has each TA team film a short reflection video after each visit. This will supplement evaluation forms that can help improve future programming but also is a great way to capture the emotion or quotes from populations that are not able to be filmed during the programming.

# Design *and Redesign*

You've done an amazing job at building a killer curriculum, congratulations! Smooth sailing from here right? Well, not always. Circumstances with your partner organization can change, participation can drop, visits can be canceled, and in some cases, programs need to be shifted or radically changed to no fault of your own. You can either throw in the towel (not recommended) or you can get to redesigning!

To highlight the mindsets mentioned earlier, approached your program with the flexibility that will allow you reorganize what you have available into a satisfying conclusion.

## **What's In Your Fridge?**

Once it's been determined that a redesign is necessary, view the assets available to you as food in your refrigerator. The meal you planned needs more ingredients than what you have. So, collect the ingredients you do have and put them together to make something new. Just because a program is different than what was planned for, doesn't mean it can't be delicious.

# CURL Findings

Loyola CURL researchers watched Fifth House Ensemble TAs maneuver the redesign of projects multiple times each year and found that TA's adaptability allowed for the greatest chance of success. In this case, adaptability was broken down into three observable behaviors:

## **Flexibility, Role Adaptability, and Meeting Participants Where They Are**

[Definitions of these terms, in this context, can be found here](#)

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XxRTReleKQhItoTldg4leLE023HFxBv0h15zUDmCmuw/edit?usp=sharing>)

When Fifth House Ensemble TAs exhibited these adaptability traits, participants were observed to experience increases in **Mindfulness** which also lead to increases in:

## **Agency, Empowerment, Creativity, and Collective Decision-Making**

[Definitions of these terms, in this context, can be found here](#)

([https://docs.google.com/document/d/117\\_PiAlfmCGAKDVH61t7IXnEVFvh0tCG9GpsZxyMGnA/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/117_PiAlfmCGAKDVH61t7IXnEVFvh0tCG9GpsZxyMGnA/edit?usp=sharing))

# CURL Findings

## *Teaching Artist Adaptability*

Flexibility

Role Adaptability

Meeting Participants  
Where They Are

## *Participant Outcomes*

Mindfulness

Agency

Empowerment

Creativity

Collective  
Decision-Making

# Best Practices

## Co-Designing with the partner

Working with the agency to layer arts learning with objectives of the agency. TAs and other work with staff at the site to identify common factors between goals of partner and art-based goals. (Including the ability to identify creative connections between music-based and curricular goals by uncovering parallel processes between subjects that might seem unrelated).

## Flexibility and patience

An expanded sense of the time, flexibility, and patience required to develop, design, and implement residencies, is essential for in working with these often understaffed, underfunded, and overly stressed social service agencies.



# Best Practices (cont.)

## **Creativity and Willingness to Break the Mold**

TA's engaging their creativity in moments when any part of the residency development, design, or implementation plan falls short, and that at times it is imperative to break the mold. (technical issues impacting residency implementation (i.e., not having access to a computer), agency postponement, and intense and restrictive environments have only served to inspire 5HE to develop new and creative solutions to these seemingly minor obstacles).

## **Connect with the Vision of the Partner Organization**

Accessing the passion in working social service agencies and the vulnerable populations they serve makes for a stronger outcome for everyone. Especially with new partnerships, peace of mind and dedication to artistic programming comes from clear communication that you're in it for them. A commitment to a deep connection with a partner's vision is key to success.

# Our Story - A case study that followed this roadmap and produced some tools

## Introduction

We can't rehash every detail of our shared journey but we hope you will find this quick review of our own story helpful in seeing the above process in action. Be sure to take a look at some of the key lessons for design that we highlight.

As we noted earlier, 5HE had already been engaged in design thinking and practice. They were keen to take it in new and expanded directions. This meant talking as a team, reflecting on what path made most sense, and then, after several meetings and lots of coffee for everyone, developing a partnership with CURL. The key here is that 5HE began with what they had planned and moved into a new phase. It sounds simple but those simple steps cannot be overlooked!

# Our Story (cont.)

## **Meeting Ignite (formerly Teen Living Programs)**

One of the researchers from the Loyola CURL team, Brian Kelly, had connections to social service organizations throughout the city of Chicago and introduced Fifth House to administration at what was then known as Teen Living Programs (TLP) (now known as Ignite) prior to our 2015-2016 season. From the first meeting, Fifth House found out that TLP had two major locations, the Drop-In Center which was for short-term and immediate resources and Belfort House, a two-floor, dormitory-style living space where clients could stay for up to eighteen months. TLP's goals at this point focused mainly around assistance with employment, reconnecting with families, and education.

From our initial meetings, we also found out that a lot of the youth coming through the doors of TLP, both at the Drop-In Center and Belfort House, were very interested in music recording, production, and music entrepreneurship. In fact, both of TLP's locations had small recording studios which consisted of a computer, microphones, and audio interfaces. Fifth House Ensemble proposed an eight-week songwriting and music production residency that would be lead by Fifth House Ensemble bassoonist, Eric Heidbreder, who already knew about songwriting and production from his own personal recording projects.



# Our Story (cont.)

## **Redesign #1: Studio Access and Differences in Space**

While getting access to the Belfort House studio wasn't an issue, the first challenge we had was not being able to access the studio at the Drop-In Center. TLP administration turnover had left the password to the computer unknown and therefore, students wouldn't be able to work in programs like Ableton as Fifth House had planned.

Adjustments in curriculum were made to still cover the basics of songwriting but had students performing with microphones with Fifth House musicians rather than creating their own works that could be replicated without Fifth House in the room.

Another challenge was the differences between the Drop-In Center and Belfort House studios. Belfort House had a conference room (that included the studio equipment) with a door that allowed for lessons to be focused. The Drop-In Center was essentially one big room that was divided with collapsable walls which meant that keeping clients focused on lessons plans was more difficult. Drop-In Center clients also had a tendency to walk in and out of sessions regularly because of the open nature of the space we were in.

Curriculum was adjusted with the support of TLP and 5HE administration to best serve the clients and culminated in successful performances at both locations.

# Our Story (cont.)

## Redesign #2: Losing the Drop-In Center

In the middle of the 2016-2017 season, Teen Living Programs informed Fifth House that for staffing and security concerns, the Drop-In Center would be closed indefinitely. This change meant that a number of clients would either lose access to the programming entirely or need to travel to Belfort House in order to participate. While some clients did make the trip, we found that culturally, clients from the Drop-In Center differed from those from Belfort House. Therefore, collaborative projects needed more time for completion than originally intended. Interestingly, Belfort House was initially viewed as the more challenging location because the songwriting project was designed with a large number of people in mind. In the end, the change proved to be one that helped to focus the learning goals of Fifth House Ensemble's program and helped to shape future programs to provide the highest quality final projects of any residency at TLP thus far.

# Our Story (cont.)

## Redesign #3: COVID-19

Teen Living Programs, now having changed its name to Ignite and had some major administrative change, was back for the beginning of our 2019-2020 season. You probably know where this is going.

The COVID-19 pandemic completely rocked our programming and we were no longer able to interact with Ignite clients in-person. Like many, Fifth House quickly redesigned its program to take advantage of the new virtual learning medium and redesigned the songwriting curriculum to use tools that clients could explore outside of the Fifth House program, if they wished.

Fifth House teaching artists had to learn how to record, use a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), gain basic mixing skills, and familiarize themselves with the tools necessary to make this residency a success.

Thankfully Ignite was one of the first to approve virtual programming for the 2020-2021 season, but while the program redesign was complete, it would turn out to be ineffective and require another redesign.

# Our Story (cont.)

## Redesign #4: iSkills

The stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fatigue of increased screen time for both work and school, and increased challenges of health protocols in the dormitory-style living space made a virtual songwriting residency a bust. Clients were not attending programming and a handful of visits were cancelled simply because there was no one for Fifth House to work with. It was clear another redesign was in order.

After helpful meetings with Ignite administration and a reassessment of Ignite's goals, Fifth House was able to integrate with the only in-person program still running at Ignite, iSkills, which centered on life skills such as mindfulness, physical health, diet, financial literacy, and job readiness training. Having a facilitator in-person at Belfort House eased the screen time fatigue, and using Deep Listening curriculum highlighting the connection between music and mindfulness, the program has become the most successful in the partnership's history.

To learn more in depth about some of the steps taken in this redesign, read Fifth House Educational Programming Coordinator, Parker Nelson's blog post:

[Flipping the Script: Adjusting to the Needs of a Partner Organization](https://www.fifth-house.com/blog/flipping-the-script-adjusting-to-the-needs-of-a-partner-organization)

(<https://www.fifth-house.com/blog/flipping-the-script-adjusting-to-the-needs-of-a-partner-organization>)



# Final Thoughts

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- [Sample Residency Outline](#)

([https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m6GQU-PSiv-\\_RP1zU1JkPOWPZNYSnmsyAba3PuTifA4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1m6GQU-PSiv-_RP1zU1JkPOWPZNYSnmsyAba3PuTifA4/edit?usp=sharing))

- [Sample Lesson Plan](#)

(<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W6cNrVbZ7IGWkss9JvpzEy7L-LAbp9Jt6s55Z1vz7Dc/edit?usp=sharing>)

- [Evaluation Toolkit](#)

(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BYAnsfvCTZRS0crsMA3VwN7CaLRQSJQH/view?usp=sharing>)

- For the most recent case studies of current projects and the complete reports written by the CURL team, visit Fifth House Ensemble's [Social Initiatives webpage](#).

([www.fifth-house.com/social-initiatives](http://www.fifth-house.com/social-initiatives))