

I was immediately impressed by his ability to connect with the kids in a very relatable way. This is a gift that Dewayne possesses. This gift is further evident in his writing. Indeed, throughout the often heartbreaking retelling of his story, Dewayne engages his reader with a heartfelt desire to help teens who may be struggling with the very issues that he struggled with as a youth and a young man. Perhaps more impressive is the fact that he doesn't sugarcoat the issues, not the abuse he suffered at the hands of a cruel man, his decision to sell drugs, or his subsequent arrest and jail time. Nor does he play the victim; rather, he takes full responsibility for his actions and encourages teens and young adults to do the same. He shares what gave him hope and a renewed interest in living a healthy, meaningful life, a life that includes a relationship with Jesus. A gifted speaker and writer, Dewayne tackles complex issues that are painful to discuss. He does so with grace and dignity for both himself and his audience. Additionally, he is a wonderful role model for young people because he knows how to reach them on a personal level. He travels from school to school, sharing his pain but also his successes, and this book serves to reinforce his life-affirming message. His music, specifically his raps, poetically reach out and touch young people in a very meaningful way. His music allows him to connect with young people on a deeply personal level. His music is therapy – it helped him to heal and offers the same potential for his readership. So, do yourself a favor . . . invest in yourself . . . and read this book! It will put you on the path to becoming a better person through The Youth Project!!

Katherine Gartland, MA, MAT, PhD