



CREATING RESULTS WITH YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

San Mateo County Probation Department:
Juvenile Probation and Camps Funding &
Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act



JJCPA Evaluation Report 2012-2013

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OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

Presented here is an overview of key data findings covering two evaluation years: 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The following sections of the report will discuss these findings in detail.

Figure 1. **Data Highlights from 2011-2012 and 2012-2013**

Data Highlights	Evaluation Years	
	2011-2012	2012-2013
Number of clients served	30	30
Average number of hours of service	88.9	72.3
Average length of time in the program (months)	10.8	10.8
Percentage of participants who:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved by at least one asset level on their Total DAP Score <i>(only includes those who scored in the two lowest asset levels at entry)</i> 	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued to abstain from AOD <i>(only includes those who reported no drug/alcohol use at program entry)</i> 	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduced their use of AOD <i>(only includes those who were at or above the clinical cutoff score)</i> 	NA	NA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Were arrested for a new law violation 	16.7%	16.7%

EVALUATION BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

In 2011, five programs serving San Mateo County youth and their families were awarded three-year grants from the San Mateo County Probation Department's allocation of Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) funding. This State program began in September 2000 when the California Legislature passed AB1913, the Schiff-Cardenas Crime Prevention Act, which authorized funding for county Juvenile Justice programs. A 2001 Senate Bill extended the funding and changed the program's name to the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA). This effort was designed to provide a stable funding source to counties for juvenile programs that have been proven effective in reducing crime among at-risk and young offenders.

JJCPA is administered by the Correction Standards Authority with the funding amount being dependent upon actual receipts from California Vehicle License fees. After having awarded programs their contracts for the 2011-12 fiscal year, San Mateo learned that they were receiving less JJCPA funding than anticipated and was required to reduce contract amounts by one-third. All programs were therefore required to adjust their scope of services for that year. During fiscal year 2012-13, however, 100% of the funds were reinstated, allowing programs to return to their original scope of services.

Applied Survey Research (ASR) was awarded the contract as the evaluator of San Mateo's JJCPA programs and also experienced reduced funding from the original proposal. In the first year of evaluation ASR met with each grantee to review program-specific outcomes and finalize the evaluation plan. ASR identified and piloted assessment tools to capture youth development changes (i.e., the Search Institute's Developmental Asset Profile) as well as changes in perception and usage of alcohol and other drugs (i.e., Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Involvement Scale). These assessments were formally launched during fiscal year 2012-2013.

JJCPA programs are required to report data on the following six mandated outcomes for program participants: 1) arrest rate, 2) incarceration rate, 3) probation violation rate, 4) probation completion rate, 5) court-ordered restitution completion rate and 6) court-ordered community service completion rate. San Mateo County has elected to report these outcomes at 180 days post-entry with the reference group being the past year's cohort of program participants. ASR provided support for the continued utilization of a previously created county database into which program and Probation staff enter participant background information and the required outcome data. ASR also guided the effort to make some necessary modifications and enhancements to the system.

This year's JJCPA evaluation report documents:

- Service- and client-level data: number of clients served, the number of units of service and basic client demographics
- Client survey data: post-survey data captured on FLY's Closure Developmental Asset survey and Alcohol & Drug Assessment
- JJCPA's six mandated outcomes
- Client success stories illustrating the extent to which services impacted youth

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mission of Fresh Lifelines for Youth, Inc. (FLY) is to prevent juvenile crime and incarceration through legal education, mentoring and leadership training. FLY's vision is that the most marginalized and underserved youth will gain the life skills and character needed to avoid the criminal justice system and transform from delinquent youth into positive community leaders.

FLY's programs are designed to build multiple internal and external developmental assets crucial for adolescent development and that youth in the juvenile justice system are lacking. FLY's programs promote safety in the community and prevent crime and incarceration by working with current juvenile justice youth to identify and develop their strengths. FLY provides opportunities for youth to engage and redirect their talents and energy, and create positive change in their communities through community service. Youth in the Leadership Program also have the opportunity to serve as positive role models, by sharing their experiences and offering advice to our middle school law youth. The following are the activities provided by the program:

Leadership: Youth Intake/ Assessment

Youth complete a written application, attend an intake meeting (usually at his/her home), have two interviews (one with a current client), a youth orientation, and a separate feedback discussion with the parent(s). This intake method is used to help youth learn and apply job interview skills.

Leadership: Leadership Retreat

Youth attend a three-day retreat in the Santa Cruz mountains where they learn how to set goals and complete a training in leadership and community activism.

Leadership: Community Service

Youth plan and participate in monthly community service activities such as visiting with seniors, working at soup kitchens, maintaining an inner-city garden used for elementary school field trips, and speaking to middle school students about the dangers of drugs, violence, and crime.

Case Management: Individual Mentoring

Youth meet with their case managers twice a month (more if needed). Case managers help youth set and achieve academic, vocational, and healthy living goals. Case managers also serve as positive role models who emphasize the importance of education and self-sufficiency. For example, the case manager helps connect high school youth with individualized tutoring. For those youth who are high school graduates, the case manager helps them pick a college, enroll in classes, and secure financial aid. When youth have conflicts with peers or family members, the case manager helps them design an action plan for how to resolve the conflict peacefully.

Case Management: Activities/Workshops

Case managers plan workshops on public speaking, career searching, resume writing, interviewing, and financial management. They also sponsor fun monthly activities such as bowling, hiking, and sober Friday nights.

Youth Risk Factors

Youth participating in this program exhibit risk factors known to significantly influence youth development and delinquency.¹ According to program staff, eight out of ten youth have learning disabilities; over three-quarters of

¹ Please refer to the Local Action Plan 2011-2015 for a list of risk factors identified in the literature, and for a list of needs to be addressed by Local Action Plan strategies.

youth have experienced significant trauma in their lives; over half of youth have been victims of physical violence; and one-quarter of youth have mental health concerns. In addition, according to the data entered in the JJCPA database, a little over half the youth served in 2012-2013 had attendance problems (53%), and half of the youth were not performing at grade level (50%.)

Programmatic Challenges

One of the approaches FLY uses when working with youth is to encourage them to try on a more pro-social identity that will open up new life options. When the program brings youth together who don't know each other they have an opportunity to decide what they are going to share with others and how they want to portray themselves. One of the challenges shared with ASR during the site visit is that in San Mateo County youth are more likely to know each other from the camps or juvenile hall than is the case in other communities. Thus, it is much more difficult for them to create a new identity. Additionally, they cannot let themselves become open as quickly for fear of appearing vulnerable before it feels safe.

Another challenge is the dearth of community based programming that is not therapeutic. There are opportunities for youth to engage in mental health and substance abuse counseling. However, there are few enrichment opportunities in San Mateo County available to this group other than Habitat for Humanity.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Clients Served

FLY served a total of 30 unduplicated youth from August 2012 through June 2013, the majority of whom were males (63%), Latinos (77%), and were on average 17 years old.

Figure 2. **Client Demographics, FY 2012-2013**

		Sample
Number served		30
Gender	Male	63%
	Female	37%
Ethnicity	Latino	77%
	Pacific Islander /Filipino	7%
	Caucasian	3%
	African American	13%
Average age of clients		17.1

Note: Percentages based on 30 participants.

Client Services

FLY youth received on average 72 hours of service over the course of 330 days, and the overall number of units of service for the year totaled 2,169 hours.

Figure 3. **Units of Service, FY 2012-2013**

	Units of service
Mean Units of Service	72.3
Total Units of Service	2,169.3

Profile of Developmental Assets Among Clients

In 2011, the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) updated its 2011-2015 Local Action Plan to include seven specific outcomes that they would like to see achieved through the investment of JPCF and JJCPA funds. One of the outcomes selected was “**increased developmental assets,**” which the literature shows as providing the resiliency and resources necessary for youth to deal with difficult circumstances in a healthy manner and avoid anti-social peers, violence, conflict and unhealthy risk-taking behaviors. To that end, ASR selected the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) as a pre/post measure of youth development.

However, since the rollout of the DAP took place several weeks after the start date of FLY’s Leadership Program, it was agreed that FLY would continue to administer its own developmental asset tool during fiscal year 12-13, and launch the DAP in fiscal year 13-14. In lieu of DAP outcome data, FLY provided the results captured on its Closure Developmental Asset survey, which are as follows:

- **100%** of youth report that after the program they are more likely to make healthier choices.
- **100%** of youth report that the program gave them access to positive adult role models.

- **100%** of youth report that they are less likely to break the law after being in FLY.
- **100%** of youth report that they now have hope for their future.
- **100%** of youth report that they want to make positive changes after being in FLY.
- **90%** of youth report that they have done better in school since joining FLY.
- **100%** of youth report that the program has given them more confidence to deal with negative peer pressure.

Profile of Clients’ Alcohol and Drug Use

In addition to seeing changes in youth’s developmental assets, the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (JJCC) hoped to also see “**decreased use of alcohol and drugs.**” As such, ASR selected the Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Involvement Scale (AADIS) as a pre/post measure of program participants’ use of substances.

Similar to the DAP, the AADIS was launched several weeks after the start date of FLY’s Leadership Program, and was therefore not be implemented until fiscal year 13-14. Provided instead are the results captured on FLY’s Drug & Alcohol Assessment.

Figure 4. **Clients’ Reported Use of Alcohol and Drug at Program Exit**

How often do you say NO to drinking alcohol?	0 times per week - Never say ‘No’ (14.3%) 0 times per week – never asked (14.3%) 1-2 times per week (52.4%) 3-4 times per week (14.3%) 5-9 times per week (4.8%) 10 or more times per week (0%)
How often do you say NO to smoking cigarettes?	0 times per week - Never say ‘No’ (50%) 0 times per week – never asked (25%) 1-2 times per week (0%) 3-4 times per week (25%) 5-9 times per week (0%) 10 or more times per week (0%)
How often do you say NO to smoking marijuana?	0 times per week - Never say ‘No’ (46.7%) 0 times per week – never asked (0%) 1-2 times per week (40%) 3-4 times per week (6.7%) 5-9 times per week (0%) 10 or more times per week (6.7%)

Source: FLY’s Drug & Alcohol Assessment.

Focus Group Summary

ASR conducted a focus group with 10 FLY youth to better understand how their engagement in the program helped them overcome some of their challenges and risk factors.

What are youth’s goals/dreams, and how is FLY helping them work toward their selected goals/dreams?

At the start of their yearlong involvement with FLY, each youth is asked to select a goal or dream that they would like to work toward during their engagement. As seen in the figure below, **academic success (e.g., going to college, graduating and improving their grades) was very important to youth.** According to youth, FLY mentors helped them with their endeavors by encouraging them to succeed and persevere, by connecting them to relevant resources, and by being present at school meetings.

Successfully ending probation was also identified as a goal/dream for two of the youth. Again, youth’s mentors played an important role in steering youth in the right direction. As one youth pointed out, when she is tempted to engage in a behavior that would violate her terms of probation (e.g., staying out past her curfew), she knows that she can count on her mentor to guide her back on the right path. Lastly, **finding employment** was also a goal for one of the youth present at the focus group.

Figure 5. Clients’ Goals and Dreams Upon Starting the Program

Goals/Dreams	Why is this goal/dream important?	How is FLY helping?
Going to college (2); Graduating from high school (2); Improving my grades/passing my classes (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School is everything to me; it’s needed to get ahead. ▪ I want to be the first one in my family to graduate from high school. ▪ I want a good career. ▪ I want to return to mainstream high school (currently in a community school). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentors attend school meetings, and provide support when resolving issues between teachers/school personnel and youth. ▪ Mentors motivate youth to do well in school (do their homework, etc.). They remind youth of why they need to keep going. ▪ Mentors provide transportation when parents cannot. ▪ Youth participate in extracurricular activities provided by FLY in exchange for school credits.
Getting off probation (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I was going down the wrong path; I don’t want to be like my mom. ▪ I want to get on the right track. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ When youth are tempted to do something that would violate their terms of probation (e.g., use their phone, see a friend, leave the house), they call their mentors who in turn talk them out of doing these things. ▪ Mentors help youth work through their emotions. ▪ Mentors motivate youth to not give up.
Getting a job (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To make money the legal way and become more productive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Help them look for jobs for which they would be a good match. ▪ Help them complete job applications.

What changes do participants see in themselves as a result of FLY?

Program participants were asked to take a minute to think of a word or adjective that best described them on the day of the focus group. This is what they shared:

- **Courageous!** “The doors were closing on me before and I didn’t see any opportunities. Now when doors are being closed, I move on to other/new doors; I try/make an effort.”
- **Stronger!** “When I entered the foster care system, I knew that my mom wouldn’t get me back, so I felt weak. Now I feel stronger and feel hopeful about the future.”

- **Dedicated!** “I was doing drugs before. Now I am dedicated to positive things in my life like school. I also finish what I start.”
- **Independent!** “I was weak as hell before. I went through a lot and didn’t care. I was dependent on men to take care of me and give me what I wanted. Now I am independent.”
- **Work in progress!** “I didn’t care before so there was no reason for me to try.”
- **Strong!** “I was giving up before because my family didn’t care. FLY helped to put a smile on my face.”

“I like being in school now.”

“I no longer harm my body or put myself down.”

“I am less violent.”

- FLY Youth

JJCPA Mandated Outcomes

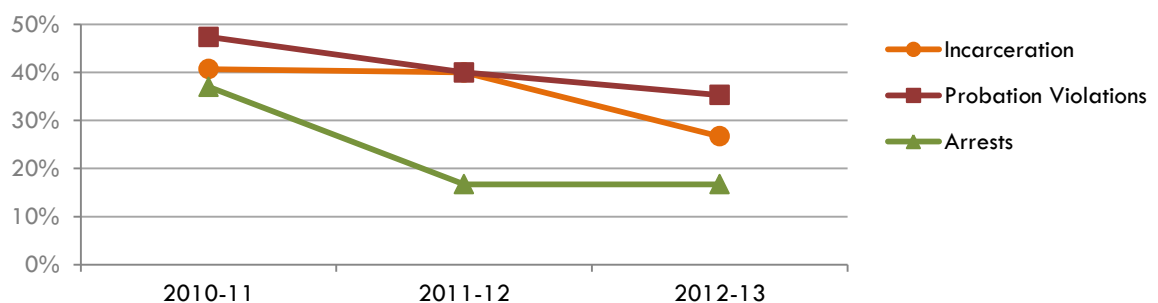
Justice outcomes are based on the 30 youth who enrolled in FLY in August 2012 and whose six month post-entry evaluation milestone occurred in fiscal year 2012-2013.

Arrests, probation violations and incarceration

Of the 30 youth in the evaluation cohort, 17% had an arrest for a new law violation filed in the six months following their entry into the program and 27% were incarcerated at least once in the same time period. Incarceration may be the result of an arrest for a new law violation, probation violations or 24-48 hour holds initiated by Probation Officers as a consequence of truancy or school suspension. Of the 17 youth in fiscal year 2012-2013 who were on formal court-ordered probation at entry or during the six months following entry, 35% had at least one probation violation filed. A Probation Officer may give a youth a violation for not following conditions of their probation including: not going to school, breaking curfew, testing positive for alcohol or drugs, associating with a gang member, etc. This behavior may result in a consequence that includes a juvenile hall stay but will not be a police arrest.

The next figure presents the last three years of data for these outcomes. Arrests for new law violations remained stable while incarceration and probation violation rates decreased from last year.

Figure 6. **Arrest, Probation Violation and Incarceration Rates by Project Year**



Note: 2012-13 Arrests for new law violations and Incarceration are based on 30 youth; Probation Violation is based on 17 youth.

FLY serves a particularly high risk group in terms of current and past justice involvement. At program entry 17 (57%) of the 30 program participants were on formal probation, two were on informal probation, two had previously been on court-ordered probation, and four had previously been on non-court ordered probation.

Completion of probation, restitution and community service

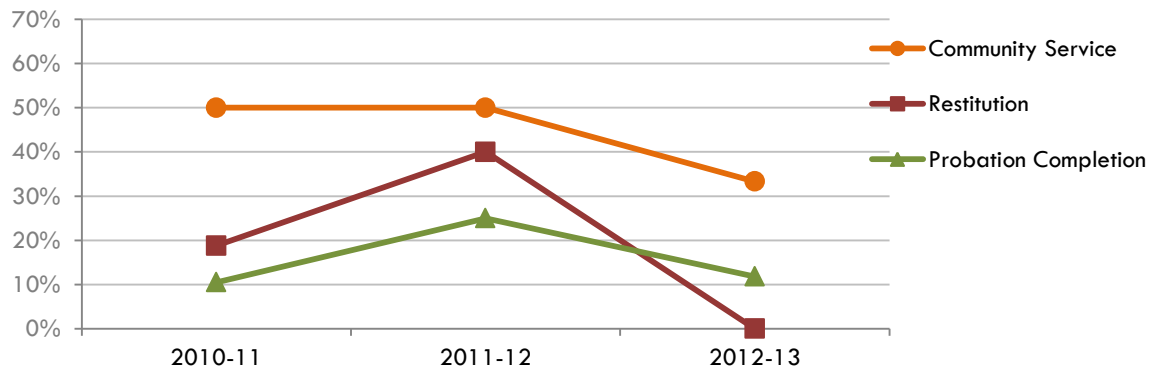
For outcomes related to completion of probation and conditions of restitution and community service, percentages are based upon the subgroup of youth who were wards of the court. In fiscal year 2012-13, 57% of the 30 participants were on formal probation at some point in the six months after entry. Of these 17 youth, 12% completed probation in the six months after entry. It should be noted that formal juvenile probation generally takes at least twelve months to complete. In the six months after entry, youth may complete probation or youth who were not previously on probation may become wards of the court.

Youth on probation may be ordered by the court to pay restitution. Completion of payment of restitution is reported only for those youth for whom an account was established within a month of this order. For both the restitution and court-ordered community service outcomes the number of youth in each group is generally small and varies each year. This small sample size may lead to unstable results. This year, six youth were assigned restitution and none of the youth completed this condition. There can be great variation in restitution amounts ordered by the court which may affect the time it would take a youth to finish payment.

One of the three youth ordered to complete community service at some time during the six months following entry, completed this condition of their probation by 180 days. It can at times be difficult for youth to find a community service opportunity as the number of sites in the county that will accept youth to perform community services is decreasing. However, service work is a component of the FLY program, a factor which may lead to increased rates of completion. **It is important to note that not completing probation, restitution or community service by six months post-entry does not mean that they failed to complete altogether.** It is likely the case that they are still working on the conditions at this point and may complete at some point after six-months.

The rates of completion of probation and the conditions were good for this program, and improved over last year, though the number of youth is very small in this sample.

Figure 7. Completion of Probation, Restitution Payment and Community Service



Note: 2012-13 Completion of Probation rate is based on 17 youth; Completion of Restitution is based on 6 youth; Completion of Community Service is based on 3 youth.

Client Vignette

As a way to illustrate the effort of the FLY program and the benefits to its participants, staff provided an account of one of its youth.

Cindy is a 17 year old girl who joined our Leadership Program after having our Legal Education Program at Camp Kemp (GIRLS Program). Her Probation Officer recommended her for additional programming. When Cindy first came to our program she was motivated to do well and to get released from Camp. However, she was also very angry. She was angry at the system, at probation, at Camp staff, the police, and her mom. Cindy felt isolated and

as though everyone was out to get her. She was already at Camp when she entered our program, but still smoked marijuana and hung out with friends past curfew who were gang-related as often as she could. She would constantly get in trouble while on home passes and had run from multiple group homes. Prior to being incarcerated, Cindy had become depressed after her parents divorced and her father was deported to Mexico. Her mom worked a lot and had a string of boyfriends who used drugs and often lived with them. Cindy began to deal with this depression by using drugs. She started by smoking marijuana, but soon started using any drugs she could obtain. By the time she was in middle school, she was using drugs every day and rarely attending school. She frustrated her mom by hanging out with gang members, which ultimately compelled her mom to kick her out for weeks at a time. Living this lifestyle was dangerous and she was raped on the streets by a group of guys. She became more depressed and was using even more regularly until she finally was arrested for showing up to school under the influence of drugs.

Cindy immediately became actively engaged in FLY's Leadership Program. She was an incredibly enthusiastic participant. She worked to find employment and once she did would feel upset and conflicted about having to miss community service activities or other events with the other peer leaders, wanting to be at everything she could. She also met regularly with her case manager. These meetings progressed over time. At the beginning she would meet regularly and consistently with her case manager, but was still incredibly angry and focused on how unfair everything was and was still engaging in some of her old behaviors. Over time she began achieving small goals on the way to her larger ones and started to take more and more responsibility for herself.

"I learned to push myself, to never give up, and that I can accomplish anything (legal) I set my mind to... Now I take responsibility for my actions, I think before I act and I manage my anger better...I try to tell others how I feel instead of socking them in the face, even though sometimes I still want to. I'm no longer using drugs or alcohol. I am going to graduate high school and go to college."

Cindy no longer uses any drugs or alcohol. She is a consistent role model for other youth in the program and volunteers to take on many leadership roles at school and at her job. She is working hard on her relationship with her mom and the rest of her family. This is an ongoing struggle and Cindy displays persistence but also focus on not letting it derail her own goals and sense of self. Although Cindy still often struggles with depression, she also has very high hopes for her future including someday herself becoming a lawyer to help others fight for their own rights. She is on track to graduate from High School on time and has a job as a host at Denny's.