



CREATING RESULTS WITH YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

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



JPCF 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 | 75 | 117 |
| Average number of hours of service | 8.8* | 36.4 |
| Average length of time in the program (months) | 4 | 6 |
| Percentage of participants who: | | |
| Improved their <i>Total Asset Score</i> | NA | NA** |
| Continued to abstain from AOD <i>(only includes those who reported no drug/alcohol use at program entry)</i> | NA | NA |
| Reduced their use of AOD <i>(only includes those who were at or above the clinical cutoff score)</i> | NA | NA |

Note: (*) 11-12 was PCRC's first year delivering services at 2 high schools, hence the substantially lower UOS. (**) a pre/post analysis of this program's DAP surveys was not completed in 2011-2012 as this program's FedEx package was lost while in transit and could not be found.

EVALUATION BACKGROUND & METHODOLOGY

In 2011, six 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 Probation and Camps Funding. The Juvenile Probation and Camps Funding Program (JPCF) was developed in response to legislation signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in July 2005 (AB 139, Chapter 74) which appropriated state funds to support a broad spectrum of county Probation services targeting at-risk youth, juvenile offenders and their families. JPCF is administered by the State Controller's Office 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 JPCF 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 JPCF programs and also experienced reduced funding from the original proposal. The first year of evaluation was very formative in nature, consisting of an evaluation kick-off meeting to discuss the overall goals and driving evaluation questions, and meetings 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 Inventory Scale). These assessments were formally launched during fiscal year 2012-2013.

This year's JPCF 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: pre-survey data captured on the Developmental Assets Profile
- Qualitative data gathered during a focus group discussion with program participants
- Client success stories illustrating the extent to which services impacted youth

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center (PCRC) is a school-based violence prevention program operating in four Bay Area high schools: Jefferson, Capuchino, San Mateo and South San Francisco. The programs provided include *Student Leadership Group*, *Alternative to Suspension Program*, *Peer Mediation Program* and *Parent Training*. Provided below are descriptions of each of the three unique PCRC programs that are partly funded through JPCF funds.

Student Leadership Group

This program consists of **weekly sessions** throughout the academic year, focusing on communication skills, conflict resolution skills, positive decision-making, impacts of gang involvement, cultural knowledge and connection, assets, and building connections with other peers and adults.

Alternative to Suspension

This program consists of a **six-hour training session** over the course of three evenings for students referred for fighting or using hate speech. Students' parents/guardians are also required to participate. The group learns experientially about the harmful impact of disrespectful language and behavior as well as how to develop empathy and respect for others.

Peer Mediation

This program consists of one **12-hour training** offered in each of the four aforementioned high schools. PCRC works with a selected group of students (a combination of at-risk youth and more traditional student leaders) to become peer mediators in their schools.

Parent Training

This parent-centered program consists of **12 workshops** in each of the four high schools served by PCRC. Some of the topics covered during the workshops include conflict resolution, effective communication, violence prevention, positive discipline, and gang awareness.

Youth Risk Factors

Youth referred to the above-listed PCRC programs exhibit risk factors known to significantly influence youth development and delinquency.¹ As indicated during ASR's interview with program staff, PCRC youth typically lack parental involvement (in some cases due to incarceration), witness gang-related violence in their communities, are not engaged in their schools (some are truant, while others have dropped out altogether), and use illicit drugs.

Programmatic Challenges

During ASR's site visit and interview with PCRC staff in fiscal year 11-12, the following challenges were pointed out (all of which are still relevant to fiscal year 12-13). Some of the schools served by PCRC lack the resources and capacity to 1) engage parents in school activities; 2) connect high needs parents to services; and 3) assist PCRC in its recruitment efforts. In addition, the Alternative to Suspension program did not happen as planned in FY 12-13, resulting in these youth being diverted to the Student Leadership Group instead.

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.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Clients Served

PCRC served 117 unduplicated youth during fiscal year 2012-2013. Due to recruitment challenges and issues coordinating with schools all youth were served through the Leadership Group this year. The majority of the youth served were males (52%), Latinos (55%), and were on average close to 16 years old.

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

| | | Student Leadership Group |
|------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Number served | | 117 |
| Gender | Male | 52% |
| | Female | 48% |
| Ethnicity | Latino | 55% |
| | Filipino/Pacific Islander | 34% |
| | African American | 5% |
| | Multi-racial | 4% |
| | Caucasian | <1% |
| | Native American | <1% |
| Average age of clients | | 15.9 |

Note: The percentages listed for gender are based on 103 participants; ethnicity is based on 105 participants; and age is based on 102 participants.

Client Services

Youth who entered and exited the Student Leadership Group during FY 2012-2013 received services for an average of six months. The overall number of units of service for the year totaled 3,824 hours.

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

| | Units of service |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Mean Units of Service | 36.4 |
| Total Units of Service | 3,824 |

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 research 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 DAP as a pre/post measure of youth development.

The Search Institute created the Developmental Asset Profile tool to capture specific youth experiences and qualities that have been identified as being essential to healthy psychological and social development in

childhood and adolescence. These assets have the power to influence youth’s developmental trajectories, protect them from a range of negative outcomes, and help them become more productive, caring and responsible adults.

The DAP survey includes 58 statements that are rated on a 0 to 3 scale, with 0 being “not at all/rarely,” 1 being “somewhat/sometimes,” 2 being “very/often,” and 3 being “extremely/almost always.” All 58 DAP items are further categorized into the following eight asset categories.

External Assets

1. **Support**—support from parents, family and other adults; parent-adolescent communication; advice and help from parents; helpful neighbors; and caring school environment
2. **Empowerment**—feeling safe at home, at school and in the neighborhood; feeling valued; and having useful jobs and roles
3. **Boundaries and Expectations**—having good role models; clear rules at home and school; encouragement from parents and teachers; and monitoring by family and neighbors
4. **Constructive Use of Time**—participation in religious or spiritual activity; involvement in a sport, club, or group; creative activities; and quality time at home

Internal Assets

5. **Commitment to Learning**—enjoys reading and learning; caring about school; doing homework; and being encouraged to try new things
6. **Positive Values**—standing up for one’s beliefs; taking responsibility; avoiding alcohol, tobacco and drugs; valuing honesty; healthy behaviors; being encouraged to help others; and helping, respecting, and serving others
7. **Social Competencies**—building friendships; properly expressing feelings; planning ahead; resisting negative peer pressure; being sensitive to and accepting others; and resolving conflicts peacefully
8. **Positive Identity**—optimism; locus of control; and self-esteem

The scales used for the eight asset categories range from 0 to 30, and can be interpreted using the following guidelines.

Figure 4. **Interpretive Guidelines for DAP’s Internal and External Asset Categories**

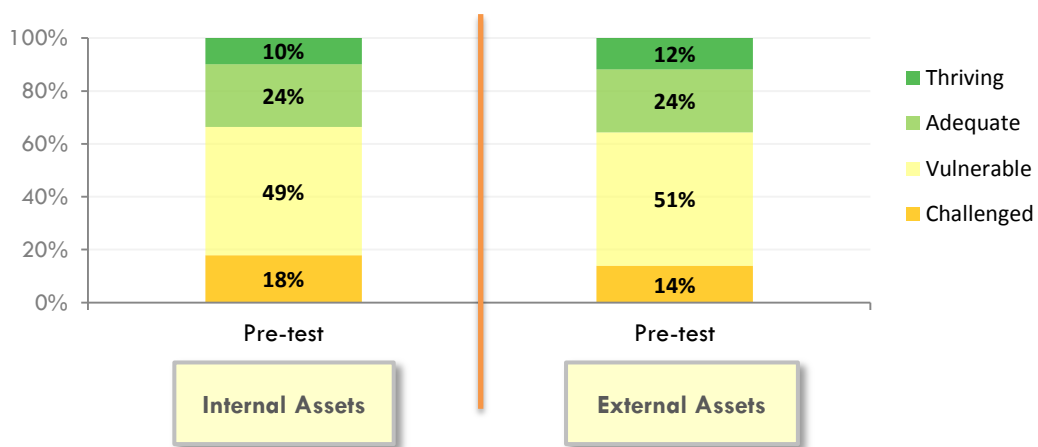
| Label | Range of Scores | Interpretive Guidelines |
|------------|-----------------|--|
| Thriving | 26-30 | Abundant assets: most assets are experienced strongly and/or frequently |
| Adequate | 21-25 | Moderate assets: most assets are experienced often, but there is room for improvement |
| Vulnerable | 15-20 | Borderline assets: some assets are experienced, but many are weak and/or infrequent. There is considerable room for strengthening assets in many areas |
| Challenged | 0-14 | Depleted levels of assets: few if any assets are strong or frequent. Most assets are experienced infrequently. There are tremendous opportunities for strengthening assets in most areas |

Please note that there are no post DAP data for fiscal year 12-13 as this program’s FedEx package was lost while in transit and could not be found. As a result, ASR is only providing a profile of program participants upon entry in the program.

What is the asset profile of program participants?

In general program participants had relatively low levels of reported assets. The average internal and external asset scores were configured into four distinct ranges, from “thriving” to “challenged.” As seen in the figure below, slightly more youth had “challenged” levels of Internal Assets (i.e., Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies and Positive Identify) as compared to External Assets (i.e., Support, Empowerment, Boundaries & Expectations, Constructive Use of Time).

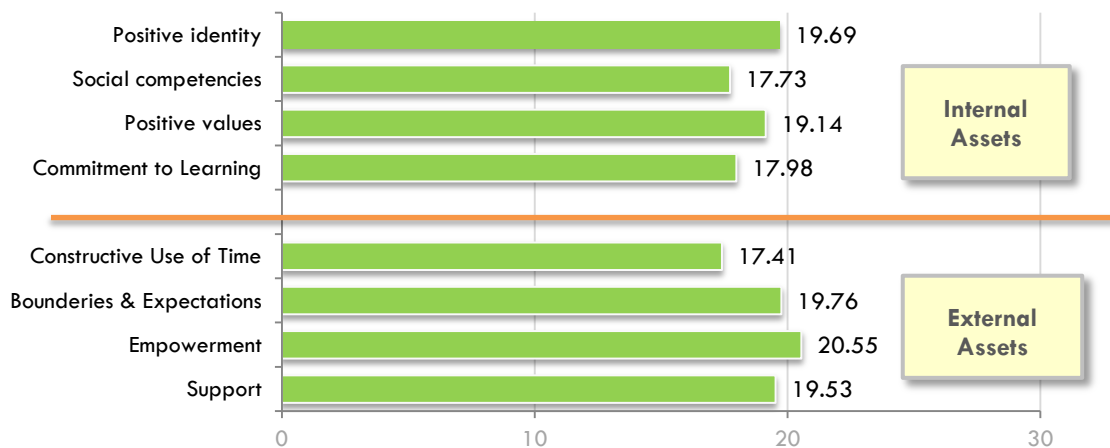
Figure 5. Percentage of Participants Who are “Thriving” to “Challenged” in Internal and External Assets



Note: Based on 51 participants.

Provided next, are the pre-mean scores on each of the eight asset categories that together form the global categories of Internal and External Assets. As seen in the figure below, participants reported levels of Internal and External Assets that fell in the “vulnerable” range upon entry in the program (see page 6 for Interpretive Guidelines). Of the eight categories, *Empowerment* was rated the highest (20.55 out of 30).

Figure 6. Asset Category Mean Scores Upon Entry



Source: Developmental Assets Profile surveys.

Note: Sample based on 51 participants.

Level of Communication Between Clients and Parents

A third priority outcome selected by the Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council's (JJCC) is **improved family functioning**. This outcome - along with decreased substance use and increased developmental assets - is documented in the literature as having the potential to put a youth on the path to better success in adulthood.² To that end, ASR selected the Family Communication Scale to gauge changes in families' communication over time. The survey is composed of 10 items measured on a 5-point scale, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The sum of the 10 items is the total score, and can range from 10 points ("very low") to 50 points ("very high").

As indicated earlier, this program's FedEx package containing completed surveys was lost while in transit. Consequently, ASR could not analyze data pertaining to families' communication.

Focus Group Summary

To complement the data obtained through the DAP survey, ASR conducted a focus group with 8 program participants.

Why did participants join PCRC?

Provided below are some of the reasons program participants joined the program.

- I wanted to **make a change in my community** because I was tired of seeing youth on the streets drinking and smoking.
- I joined because I want to **be a better person**, to learn social skills, and to learn how to communicate without the use of violence. There is a lot of drama [in my life] and people like to handle [their frustrations] by fighting and picking sides.
- I joined because **it is a safe and positive environment**, and also because I live a sheltered life. When I'm not at school, I'm home. I also wanted to improve my communication, and find hope in myself.
- Some of my friends were members of this program, so I decided to give it a try. [Joining was important to me because] **I was always thinking about dropping out of school** anytime there was a conflict.
- I joined because I knew that I would drop out [of high school] otherwise. **I needed to be motivated to go to school and keep trying.**

"I learned how I can stay away from all this drama in my life, and prevent it."

"Gustavo helped me to see the positive things about school, and stop complaining."

"[The program helped me] to stay busy instead of doing stuff that was bad."

"...I did not drop out so I beat the statistics!"

What changes do participants see in themselves?

Program participants were asked to take a minute to think of a word that best described them on the day of the focus group. They were then asked whether they would have chosen that same word several years back. Provided below are participants' responses.

² 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.

Figure 7. **Changes Reported by Program Participants**

| How they see themselves today | And how is it different from two years ago? |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Stronger | Before I used to make little things into big things. Like it is the end of the world. I know how to handle things better now. I think things through. |
| Responsible | I didn't take responsibilities before. Now I try to register for classes at Skyline on my own, and not rely on my parents. I try to look for a job on my own. I am in charge of some things in the group. I try to be on time; the program made me realize it is important to be on time. |
| Open and outgoing | I used to be very quiet. I did not used to stand up for myself. Now if I see something wrong I say something. If I don't like something. We got to meet with people in the group. We can say anything in the group – is confidential. |
| Wiser | I make better decisions. More knowledge about our culture. |
| Proud | Before the Mana group I was not making a 2.0 GPA, and I was not going to school. I was not making the right choices. Now I have a 3.6 GPA. |
| Nicer | I was hard-headed. I would let the smallest thing get to me. I did not care about anything or anybody. |
| Heroic | I did not have confidence in anything in middle school. I am proud of myself now. I used to see people get picked on and I would do nothing. Now I am not scared to take a stand and stop what's wrong. Both in the community and school. I won the Youth Hero award. |
| Intelligent | I used to act out, and hang around with the wrong group of people. Now I make better choices. |

Client Vignettes

PCRC provided the following client vignettes to help illustrate the impact of its services.

Anna, a 17 year old student joined the program to get to know her new community (she had moved numerous times). She was quiet at first getting used to the new people in the program and was reticent to speak in front of others. Anna began to take the group more seriously by making recommendations to the program leader to make it better. She also began to sign up for more responsibilities like outreach or helping out with lunch time activities. During her participation in the program, Anna learned many different skills, such as event planning (as the group has hosted many different community events in San Mateo County), creating timelines, conducting outreach, and working on her public speaking skills. She has also learned the process of meeting with public officials like her school's principal and superintendent.

“The program is important to me because it helped me finish my last year of high school and also opened my mind to look at things in a different view”

By the end of the program, Anna had already been chosen as an ambassador for South San Francisco High School to represent at the annual, “Rock the School Bells” at Skyline College in San Bruno. She is also the lead

youth at the Emerging Leaders Program, helping make the agenda, taking roll call, and even facilitating some of the activities.

Allisa, a 17-year old student heard about the program through in-class outreach. She showed a lack of control over her anger, was very reactionary to other group members, and let outside stress and troubles affect her energy in the group.

Allisa attended the group on a weekly basis, and also attended various training sessions at PCRC and community service projects in and around San Mateo. Toward the end of the program, the client still showed the same amount of energy and enthusiasm but showed more restraint in her anger towards teachers and other students. She was less reactionary and more contemplative when it came to her actions.

As a result of her participation, Allisa learned how to respect other people, their space, and their feelings. She learned that many things that she thought were not always appropriate to say out loud in the group and that there's a way to speak honestly and to be honest to one's emotions without being reactionary. The client also learned that community is what you make it and that it affects its members as much as the members affect the community.

"I feel like this program is a great place to learn about yourself and how you can make a difference in the community that you live in. I also learned that respect is more than being nice to people, it's understanding them too."