The Youth and Family Centers (YFC) Program began formally offering behavioral health services to students in the Dallas Independent School District in 1995. The main objectives of the YFC Program included, but were not limited to, (1) providing school-based health care, behavioral health care, and support services to Dallas children and families, (2) reducing the barriers to academic success so children can learn and teachers can teach, and (3) promoting the wholeness of the family by engaging families in their children’s health care and education.

In 2009-2010, the focus of the Youth and Family Centers Program evaluation was to describe the general characteristics of the Youth and Family Center program, clients, and staff; determine the effectiveness of the program at increasing service delivery in 2009-2010 compared to prior years, and examine YFC organizational climate through the utilization of the YFC Employee Satisfaction Survey. Additionally, the number of YFC services delivered and program growth were addressed in the evaluation.

**YFC Program Growth**

Table 1 presents the number of students served and the number of visits for psycho-social services from the 2004-2005 school year through the 2009-2010 school year. Data for the 2006-2007 school year were not available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Visits</th>
<th>Mean Number of Visits/Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>4,211</td>
<td>24,838</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>3,388</td>
<td>20,469</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>3,599</td>
<td>28,690</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>3,244</td>
<td>26,969</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>3,829</td>
<td>31,893</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Staff Overview**

The YFC program employed 117 staff members in 2009-2010. Staff included support and administrative personnel (37), full-time professional employees (50), and part-time permanent staff (30). The part-time staff mostly consisted of therapy providers providing mental health services to students and their families in the evening hours. All but ten staffers were assigned duties at one of the YFC service delivery centers. The ten staff who were assigned to the program office provided administrative and leadership services in support of the service delivery centers.

YFC staff’s educational attainment was heavily weighted towards the master degree, with 71 of 117 staffers holding a master’s degree. Some 34 support staff were high school graduates, many with some college, but without a degree. Two staffers held a Ph.D. degree and ten held bachelor degrees.

**Client Characteristics**

Youth and Family Centers’ program office records and the Dallas Independent School District’s student databases were consulted to develop data concerning the characteristics of YFC Clients. The YFC program served a total of 3,829 district students during the 2009-2010 school year. YFC demographics closely matched districtwide demographics in terms of ethnicity for Hispanics (64.1% YFC vs. 67.6% districtwide) and African Americans (28.0% YFC vs. 26.4% districtwide).

YFC clients were less likely to be Talented and Gifted program participants (4.6% YFC vs. 5.9% districtwide, but were just as likely to be low socio-economic status (SES) or limited-English proficient (LEP) as their non-client peers (83.6% YFC vs. 88.1% districtwide for low SES and 33.2% for YFC vs. 36.1% district wide for LEP).

YFC clients were more heavily distributed in Grade 2 through Grade 9 than in Early Childhood through Grade 1 and Grade 10.
through Grade 12. This distribution mirrored the general district population and the proportional differences in student distribution throughout the grades between YFC clients and the general district population never achieved a difference of even 4 percent. The largest difference occurred at Kindergarten (-3.3%) and Grade 5 (3.2%).

Overall, YFC clients were less likely to fall within the excellent range of Developmental Asset categories and more likely to fall within the low range of Developmental Assets categories than district students.

**YFC Employee Satisfaction Survey Results**

The 2009-2010 Youth and Family Centers Employee Satisfaction Survey asked participants to answer questions across three domains (general information, YFC Center climate, and YFC departmental climate) in relation to: feedback, communication, teamwork, professional development, personal satisfaction, resources, workplace safety, and others.

Overall, YFC respondents seemed to gain personal satisfaction from conducting their job responsibilities well. YFC staff received useful and constructive routine feedback from managers that was often used to improve their work performance. YFC staff had appropriate resources to conduct their job responsibilities and the majority of YFC staff felt that their workplace was safe.

Almost all (95%) of YFC staff respondents reported that their Center or worksite valued their work-related contributions, 65 percent reported that their contributions were valued at the departmental level. Over 85 percent of respondents practiced effective communication and shared information and knowledge openly at their Center or worksite, while only 55 percent of respondents reported that the YFC Department encouraged and practiced effective communication. Additionally, 28 percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that the YFC department openly shared knowledge and information.

While 69 percent of respondents reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that they had adequate opportunities to participate in relevant professional development activities, 15 percent of survey respondents reported that they did not have adequate opportunities to participate in relevant professional development activities.

These findings suggested that although YFC staff seemed relatively satisfied with their work related roles and responsibilities and organizational climate at their Center or worksite, (1) YFC staff perceptions of the YFC Program administrative department were less positive than staff perceptions of the Centers or worksite and (2) more opportunities for adequate professional development activities may be warranted.

**Recommendations**

Recommendations for the Youth and Family Centers’ program improvement include (1) additional review of YFC staff perceptions in an effort to (a) provide staff with more opportunities to participate in relevant professional development activities, (b) reduce negative staff perceptions of the YFC department, (c) increase Center staff employee satisfaction, and (d) enhance YFC organizational climate, thus improving the overall YFC Program and (2) undertaking studies to determine additional services or interventions that would be most beneficial in increasing the presence of higher range Developmental Asset categories in YFC clients.

For more information, see EA10-143-2, at http://www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/