Youth and Family Centers Program: 2010-2011

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At-a-Glance

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 2010-2011, 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 2010-2011 compared to prior years, as well as the number of YFC services delivered and program growth.

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 2010-2011 school year. Data for the 2006-2007 school year were not available.

Table 1: Number of YFC Clients and Services

<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>
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<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>
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<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>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>4,493</td>
<td>40,285</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff Overview

The YFC program employed 117 staff members in 2010-2011. Staff included support and administrative personnel (34), full-time professional employees (59), and part-time permanent staff (28). The part-time staff consisted mostly 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 staffers assigned to the program office at Buckner provided administrative and leadership services in support of the service delivery Centers.

Staff Educational Levels. Data showed that a large proportion of YFC staff’s attained master’s degrees, with 47 of 117 (40.2%) staffers holding the Master of Arts or Master of Science degree. Most of these were therapists providing services to students and their families. Ten staffers held a Ph.D. degree, and six held bachelor’s degrees.

Years of District Experience. Figure 1 presents the YFC staff’s years of district experience. Forty-seven of 117 (47.0%) YFC staff had within 0-5 years of district experience while the remaining 53 percent of YFC staff had six or more years of district experience. Overall, YFC staff had an average of ten years of district experience.

Gender. Administrative and counseling staff members were mostly female (70.0% and 79.7%, respectively).

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**

Ethnicity, Gender and Grade. YFC student clients’ gender and ethnicity by grade approached districtwide demographics in terms of ethnicity for Hispanics (61.6% YFC vs. 66.3% districtwide), African Americans (28.7% YFC vs. 26.5% districtwide), and White students (6.3% YFC vs. 5.0% districtwide).

Other demographic characteristics, YFC clients were less likely to be Talented and Gifted program participants (5.4% YFC vs. 10.9% districtwide), but were just as likely to be low socio-economic status (SES) and limited English proficient (LEP) as their non-client peers (84.5% YFC vs. 75.9% districtwide for SES and 33.2% for YFC vs. 32.8% districtwide for LEP). Male students were more likely to be YFC program participants than females (67.6% YFC vs. 49.5% for male and 32.4% YFC vs. 48.1% for female).

YFC clients were more heavily distributed in Grade 1 through Grade 9 than in Early Childhood and Grade 10 through Grade 12. The differences in student distribution between YFC clients and the general district population increased steadily from grades 1 through 3 and decreased from 4 through 8. The largest difference occurred at Grade 3.

**Developmental Assets Profile**

The Developmental Assets are 40 common sense, positive experiences and qualities that help to influence choices young people make to become caring, responsible adults. Developmental Assets have been powerfully related to a range of outcomes among children and youth. Low levels of assets are related to increased risk for negative outcomes including academic underachievement and school problems; alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use; precocious sexual activity; and antisocial behavior and violence. High levels of assets are related to positive sexual activity, antisocial behavior, and violence. High levels of assets are related to positive outcomes including academic achievement, leadership, thriving, and well being. Assets are crucial for the healthy development of all youth, regardless of their community size, geographic region, gender, economic status, race, or ethnicity (Search Institute, 2010).

Based on Search Institute’s Developmental Assets framework (Search Institute, 2010), the 58-item Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) was a valid and reliable questionnaire designed to (1) examine the presence of Developmental Asset categories and (2) document how Developmental Asset categories were currently being experienced by adolescents (ages 11-18). The DAP provided a way to document, quantify, and portray adolescents’ reports of the types and levels of Developmental Assets working in their lives. The DAP was not designed to yield information about the presence or absence of each of the 40 Developmental Assets. Instead, the DAP yielded quantitative scores on eight asset categories, as well as five context areas. The Developmental Assets framework included both external and internal assets. External assets were positive experiences, relationships, encouragement, and support young people received from peers, parents, teachers, neighbors, and other adults in the community. They included positive role models, boundaries and expectations, as well as young people’s constructive use of time. Internal assets were characteristics and behaviors that reflected positive personal and psychological development in young people. They included strengths such as positive values, positive identity, social competencies, and commitment to learning. Of the DAP’s 58 items, 26 tapped external assets, and the remaining 32 tapped internal assets (Search Institute, 2010).

**Summary and Recommendations**

During 2010-2011, the Youth and Family Centers Program provided 40,285 mental health service contacts and served 4,493 students. These results represent an increase 15.0% over the totals from the 2009-2010 school year. The Youth and Family Center staff mostly consisted of mental health professionals (59) most of them with a master’s level of education (37). On average, Youth and Family Center staff had about ten years of district experience.

Recommendations for the Youth and Family Centers’ program improvement include (1) increase students awareness of the services provided by the program, (2) explore additional services or interventions that could contribute to increase the percentages of clients at the higher range Developmental Asset categories (Good and Excellent levels).

For more information, see EA11-143-2, at [http://www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/](http://www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/)