The Youth and Family Centers (YFC) Program formally began 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.

The Title I 2011-12 program workscope allocation for this component was $868,341.

In 2011-2012, the focus of the Youth and Family Centers Program evaluation was to describe the general characteristics of the Youth and Family Centers program, clients, and staff; determine the effectiveness of the program at increasing service delivery in 2011-2012 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 2011-2012 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>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>4,493</td>
<td>40,285</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>4,817</td>
<td>35,860</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Staff Overview

The YFC program employed 95 staff members in 2011-2012. Staff included support and administrative personnel (23), full-time behavioral health professional employees (60), and part-time permanent staff (12). The part-time staff consisted mostly of therapists who provided behavioral health services to students and their families in the evening hours. All but five staffers were assigned duties at one of the YFC service delivery centers. The five staffers assigned to the program office at H. B. Bell School Support Service Center provided administrative and leadership services in support of the service delivery Centers.

### Staff Educational Levels

Data showed that a large proportion of YFC behavioral health staff attained master’s degrees, with 44 of 60 (73.3%) staffers holding the Master of Arts or Master of Science degree. Most of these were therapists providing services to students and their families. Fourteen staffers held a Ph.D. degree.

### Years of District Experience

Sixty percent (60%) of the employees of the YFC program had within 0-5 years of district experience, while the remaining 40 percent of YFC staff had six or more years of district experience. Overall, YFC staff had an average of seven years of district experience.

### Gender

Administrative and behavioral health staff members were mostly female (95.7% and 78.3%, respectively).

### Client Characteristics

Ethnicity, Gender and Grade. YFC student clients’ gender and ethnicity by grade approached Title I school demographics in terms of ethnicity for Hispanics (68.6% YFC vs. 69.7% Title I), African Americans (23.1% YFC vs. 24.7% Title I), and white students (5.3% YFC vs. 3.6% Title I).

Other Demographic Characteristics. YFC clients were less likely to be Talented and Gifted program participants (5.4% YFC vs. 11.4% Title I), but were just as likely to be at the low socio-economic status (84.7% YFC vs. 86.4% Title I) and limited English proficient (LEP) [26.3% YFC vs. 39.9% Title I] as their non-client peers. Male students were more likely to be YFC program participants than females (51.0% YFC vs. 51.2% for male and 49.0% YFC vs. 48.8% for female).

A greater percent of YFC clients were in grades two through nine, than in Early Childhood and grades 10 through 12.
Developmental Assets Profile

The Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) 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 an 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 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.

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 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.

Developmental Assets Profile data revealed that higher percentages of YFC clients, in comparison to district students, fell within the low range on all scales of both the external and internal assets. More district students fell within the excellent range on all scales of the internal assets and the empowerment scale of the external assets than YFC students. Figures 1 and 2 display DAP scale scores for YFC clients and district students.

In comparison to district students, higher percentages of YFC clients fell within the low range of all context area scales (personal, social, family, school, and community). More district students fell within the excellent range in all context area scales except in the community context area. Sixteen percent of YFC clients and district students were within the excellent range on the community context area scale. 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. Figures 3 and 4 display DAP context area scale scores for YFC clients and district students.
Summary and Recommendations

During 2011-12, the Youth and Family Centers Program provided 35,860 mental health service contacts and served 4,817 students. There was a decrease in client contacts from 2010-11 to 2011-12. This has probably resulted from a reduction of staff in the program. The Youth and Family Centers’ staff mostly consisted of behavioral health professionals (60) most of them with a master’s level of education (44). On average, Youth and Family Centers’ staff had about seven years of district experience.

The Youth and Family Centers program worked in coordination with other departments within the district and agencies outside the district, increasing efficiency in the use of resources and maximizing services to students.

Recommendations for improvement to the Youth and Family Centers’ program include (1) increase student 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 of the Developmental Asset categories (Good and Excellent levels).

For more information, contact Program Evaluation at 972-925-6457.