

# Exemplary Program Evaluations

## PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

### National Outcome Area

- Youth

### Results

- Attitude change
- Skill gains

### Methods & Tools

- Quantitative measures
- Qualitative measures

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- State: Utah
- Project name: Youth and Families with Promise
- Participants: Youth (10-14) and their families are referred from school administrators, Juvenile Courts, community and religious organizations or from parents
- Number involved: Approximately 500 students last year (in 22 counties) although only 381 students included in evaluation since they must be in the program for a minimum of 6 months for inclusion
- Program:
- Two level mentoring program (young adult individual mentors and grandparent age couple or individual mentors). Mentors establish a relationship with the identified youth and their family through providing motivation and tutoring relating to reading and academic skills and also participating with them in structured recreation, community service, and 4-H.
  - Young adult mentors use Connect curriculum developed based upon Search Institute's Developmental Assets for 1:1 work between youth and mentor. Grandmentors use Strengthening Families Ties curriculum with youth and families.
  - Youth, parents, and mentors participate in monthly group activities using the Family Night Out program curriculum developed by Washington State Extension.
  - Youth and mentors participate in service projects about every quarter.

- Where: Program is implemented through the county extension office, which houses the site coordinator. Actual programs take place at many places including schools.
- When: Program runs on a school year calendar. Mentors are supposed to meet with youth on a weekly basis and with the family on a monthly basis.
- Who:
- Program is administered under the direction of Utah State University Extension with paid and volunteer staff in each county in collaboration with a local advisory board.
  - Young-adult mentors are recruited from students attending one of Utah's universities, colleges, or technical schools. Grandmentors are recruited from the family's religious congregation or from community volunteer organizations.

### PROGRAM GOALS and OBJECTIVES

- Improve academic performance
- Increase interpersonal competence
- Strengthen family bonds

### EVALUATION

#### Methods & Tools

- A retrospective pre and posttest was developed for this project for parents, youth, and mentors
- Mentors complete a monthly report indicating how often they met with their mentee, what they did, and if they did focus on an asset - which one it was
- Instruments were developed for individual interviews with youth and for focus groups with parents, grandmentors, and young adult mentors
- Post and pre questionnaires (completed by youth, parents, and teachers) assesses youth's attitudes about school, interpersonal skills, family relationships, self-reported changes in academic skills, problem behaviors and healthy behaviors
- If parents do not complete the survey, site coordinator goes to their home to assist them in its completion
- Individual interviews with selected youth
- Focus group interviews with parents and mentors

## Analysis

- Paired t-tests to determine change between self-reports pre and post
- Based on mentor's monthly reporting, each mentee is either considered a "high" dosage or a "low" dosage group. Analyses are conducted on each separately
- Focus groups and individual interviews are entered into NUD\*IST and themes are grouped and analyzed.

## Results

- High dosage group has shown statistically significant change in 20 out of the 21 variables
- Low dosage group has shown statistically significant change in 7 out of the 21 variables
- Focus group and individual interviews provide support for the quantitative findings while also providing more information on the process and meaning of the program for youth, parents, and mentors

## HOW WERE RESULTS USED?

- To assess program effectiveness
- Program planning
- Program modification
- Documentation in grant proposal writing
- Reports to collaborators and funders
- Marketing to potential funders
- Marketing to the community
- For support to replicate program in other places

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Tom Lee

Email: [toml@ext.usu.edu](mailto:toml@ext.usu.edu)

## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Retrospective pre- and posttest for parents
- Retrospective pre- and posttest for youth
- Retrospective pre- and posttest for mentors
- Mentor monthly reporting form
- Interview questions for youth
- Focus group questions for parents
- Focus group questions for grandmentors
- Focus group questions for young adult mentors