



CREATING RESULTS WITH YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES

Annual Evaluation

YMCA OF
SAN FRANCISCO

San Mateo County
Probation Department
Juvenile Justice
Coordinating Council (JJCC)



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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

School Safety Advocates (SSA) is a school-based violence prevention program offered by the YMCA in six San Mateo County Middle schools. SSA's services include: 1) crisis intervention and mediation; 2) risk and mental health assessment; 3) family case management, including parent support and psycho-education; 4) on-campus anger management "CALM groups" based on Aggression Replacement Therapy; on-campus Girls United empowerment groups; and 5) referrals for further individual and family counseling at the Youth Service Bureaus/YMCA clinics. Additionally, SSA provides outreach and education activities to enhance its strategies for reducing school violence, criminal justice involvement, and risk factors including, "lunch box" discussions with students and SSAs; classroom bullying workshops; and parent workshops.

The purpose of the SSA program is to keep young people out of the criminal justice system by addressing critical safety concerns. SSA staff work in partnership with school personnel to create safe environments on campuses by intervening to stop fights, mediating conflicts through restorative justice techniques, and preempting any potential bullying, self-harm, and suicide. SSA's therapeutic program model enables staff to establish relationships with youth so that they feel empowered to work with a safe adult who can guide them through problem-solving and skill-building techniques designed to address challenges, both in the school and in the home. To these ends, the overarching goals of the SSA program are to:

1. Reduce youth violence, gang participation, substance abuse and involvement in the criminal justice system;
2. Change at-risk youth behaviors to increased personal responsibility, risk avoidance, protective behaviors and resiliency;
3. Provide developmental inputs to promote positive behavioral change – safe environments, supportive adults, and a variety of programs and interventions matched to risk levels; and
4. Measure the impacts of those developmental inputs as indicators of positive behavioral change.

Programmatic Challenges in FY 2015-16

SSAs struggled to adequately meet the current demands of the high number of referrals at each school site this year. Numerous referrals could not be assessed due to the SSAs current caseloads. School administrators have made it very clear that they cannot effectively address the needs of their students and families without the assistance of this program.

The needs and severity of clients have also continued to escalate from previous years. SSAs noticed that the students coming to meet with them have higher levels of needs and risks (e.g., victims of abuse, self-injurious behavior, domestic violence, psychosis and suicidal ideation). This has created a greater need for one-on-one time with the SSA and more case management to find and obtain clinically appropriate referrals and follow through from the client and/or family.

EVALUATION METHODS

Programs funded by San Mateo County Juvenile Probation (SMCJP) monitor their programs and report client, service and outcome data to the department and its evaluator, Applied Survey Research (ASR). The methods and tools used to collect this data are described below:

Clients and Services—Grantee programs collected and entered demographic (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity) and service data (e.g., types and hours of service) for individual clients and entered these in their own data systems prior to transferring the data to ASR for analysis.

Risk Factors—In FY 2015-16, SMCJP implemented two new measures of client risk level, the pre-JAIS and the CANS. Funded programs were asked to complete these measures with existing clients beginning January 2016 and at intake with all new clients subsequently.

- The **Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS)** is a risk, strength and needs assessment designed to assist workers to effectively and efficiently supervise youth, both in institutional settings and in the community. It is reliable and has been validated across ethnic and gender groups. The JAIS consists of a brief prescreen assessment (**pre-JAIS**) in addition to full assessment and reassessment components; SMCJP has elected to administer the pre-JAIS to provide an initial indicator of recidivism risk. The pre-JAIS consists of 8 (girls) or 10 (boys) items and yields an overall risk level of low, moderate, or high.
- The **Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)** survey is a multi-purpose tool developed for children’s services to support decision-making including level of care and service planning, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services. The CANS consists of multiple items scored on a 4-point scale (0 to 3, with a score of 2 or 3 indicating an actionable need) and grouped into stand-alone modules—e.g., Risk Behaviors, Strengths, Behavioral/Emotional Needs, Trauma. Each grantee completed a different set of CANS modules according to the specific fit with their programs and clientele.

Outcomes—In FY 2015-16, SMCJP intended to assess change over time using CANS follow-up data at the conclusion of services. Because the CANS is recommended to be administered at 6-month intervals and with low response rates due to the post-January start, ASR was not able to analyze CANS post-test data for FY 2015-16.

- During FY 2015-16, YMCA experienced high levels of staff turnover, a common experience of community-based organizations in the Bay Area. Through these transitions, data collection requirements and training were not continued in such a way that provided for appropriate and complete collection of the pre-JAIS or the CANS. In lieu of this data, YMCA supplied ASR with a synopsis of presenting issues from 506 program intakes (across duplicated clients) from 5 school sites.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

FY 2015-16 Data Highlights

- The number of clients served this year decreased by 32% compared to FY 2014-15, but the average number of hours of service per client increased 11%
- Almost two thirds (63%) of participant presenting issues involved students dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, grief and loss, or other internalizing issues

Profile of Clients Served

This year YMCA served 328 youth, all of whom had demographic data (see Table 1). A majority of participants were female (55%) and identified predominantly as Latino (45%), followed by Multi-racial (17%), Filipino/Pacific Islander (17%), White/Caucasian (12%), and Asian (4%). The average age of clients was 12.6 years. Service data was available for all participants, who received an average of 10.1 hours of services—predominantly group counseling (38% of hours), individual counseling (21%), initial assessment (9%), case management (8%) and family therapy (8%).

Table 1. Client Demographics, FY 2015-16

Metric	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16
Clients & Services					
Number of clients served	286	430	560	483	328
Average number of hours of service	11.5	13.5	9.9	9.1	10.1
Average time in the program (months)	5	6	4	4	3.0
Risk Indicators					
Pre-JAIS Risk Level^a	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				
Low					---
Moderate					---
High					---
CANS Items^a	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				
Clients with 3 or more actionable needs					---
Number of actionable needs per client	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				---

^a YMCA did not provide pre-JAIS or CANS data.					

Risk Indicators

YMCA did not provide for the pre-JAIS or the CANS. Instead, they provided data for presenting issues for each of 506 program intakes—some clients were served on multiple occasions accounting for the duplication. Most intakes presented with multiple issues. As shown in Table 2, 63% of intakes involved students dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, grief and loss, or other similar issues. Other common presenting issues were related to socialization and conflicts with peers and adults (36%); school-related (31%) and family-related (26%) problems; and anger management/verbal aggression (23%).

Table 2. Presenting Issues for YMCA School Safety Advocates Program, FY 2015-16

Presenting Issues	Percent
Stress/Anxiety/Depression	63%
Conflict/Socialization	36%
School-related	31%
Family-related	26%
Anger/Verbal Aggression	23%
Self-Harm/Suicidal	11%
Attention/Impulsivity	7%
Bullying/Harassment	5%
Legal/Theft	4%
Substance Use	1%

Client Vignette

YMCA did not provide a client vignette this year.