

Prevention for At-Risk Youth Target Program:  
A Longitudinal Evaluation Study

by

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A Longitudinal Evaluation Study

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## ABSTRACT

Prevention programs are becoming the trend in today's society. The After School Program examined in this paper is no exception. A longitudinal evaluation study was conducted comparing the findings from the first year to findings from the second year. The participants were analyzed through their behavior, family life and academic achievements. Fifty males and females ranging from the fourth grade through the seventh grade participated.

A literature review was conducted to find out if there were similar programs to the After School Program being evaluated. Three different programs were reviewed and found to have similar objectives to the program being researched. The programs researched for the literature review addressed many of the same variables that were looked at with the After School Program: Parenting factors, social skills, value commitments, and academic factors. All of these factors are believed to play a major part in delinquent behavior.

Chi-square tests were run on the variables to find out if they were statistically significant. Questionnaires were sent to the teachers seeking information on the program participants. It was difficult to determine if there was an overall improvement in academic performance. There was improvements seen in school behavior.

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Finally I would like to dedicate this thesis in loving memory of my grandfather Robert C. Stevens who taught me the importance of education and that the love of family can get you through anything. I Love You Gramp!

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Prevention programs are being developed all over the country try in an effort to educate children before crime becomes their educator. The main reasoning for implementing these prevention programs is to try and keep the youth away from risk factors that could influence their decisions and actions. The more of the risk factors the children come in contact with the more likely they will become involved in delinquency (Steiner, 1994).

In order to try and prevent children from becoming involved in delinquent acts or behaviors, certain factors that influence these children, and make them more prone to delinquency, need to be identified. These factors could include the family, community, school, other individuals, and/or peer groups. Risk factors, within the aforementioned, could include child abuse, family deterioration, economic hardships, social dilemmas, truancy and drop-outs, as well as problems with friends, and peer pressure (Steiner, 1994).

Once these risk factors are identified, the planning and development of the prevention programs can start. The programs should include strategies for handling and educating children against each of the risk factors as well as being prepared for unexpected factors which will arise when you least expect them.

When steering children away from the negative behaviors, positive behaviors must be introduced as an alternative for the children. Giving these children opportunities that they may never have had might just save children from turning to crime.

Children who become involved in these programs will most likely be considered high-risk or more likely to become delinquent if measures are not taken to help them. The programs if implemented properly, could give a child a chance at a life they never would have had. Children will learn by observing those around them. These programs are meant to surround the youth with positive role models who will teach and educate them on how to lead positive, delinquency free lives.

Prevention programs need to be based on research that shows a need for this type of intervention. There must be evaluation of the programs outcomes and performances. It is very important for these programs to have the support of not only the primary agency but also that of the surrounding agencies such as the schools, public and private agencies, the city government and especially the family and community as a whole. The After School Program was set up for with these purposes in mind. In the recorded minutes that were taken during the first few initial meetings, to try and come up with a prevention program, several persons who have run similar organizations stated that elements of society need

to support the organizations. Organizations of the After School Program have seen first hand how successful a program can be with society's support. It was also mentioned that it is difficult to receive all of the needed support. The last thing a prevention program must be able to do is operate the program and prioritize the risk factors that will be identified. Keeping the children off the streets and in school will take a well rounded and well run program. The program is responsible for protecting these children from the effects of the risk factors.

As more and more programs are developed to prevent delinquency, it is imperative that these programs are evaluated so they can be improved, if necessary. This research will focus on one such program. Efforts are made to evaluate the effectiveness of the program by examining changes in the youth's school performance and behavior. There will also be an effort made to determine the youth's social changes. Prior to evaluating the After School Program a literature review will be made of other prevention programs and how effective they are.

CHAPTER II  
LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been a number of prevention programs implemented, and the following is a summary and evaluation of each from the research gathered:

The Early Offender Project: A Community-Bases Program for High Risk Youth was developed in 1988 by the juvenile justice program in Oakland County, Michigan. It found that more and more youths were becoming involved with the juvenile courts at earlier ages. It also found that the very young offender had two diagnostic assumptions regarding being placed in a high risk group:

(1) Sub-normal parenting

(2) Lack of success in any socially approved arena.

Program developers believed that to prevent these children from re-offending the program needed to provide surrogate parenting to the youths, there must be someone who goes inside to schools to advocate for the youths, and feel that it is necessary to hold the youths responsible for their behaviors. Research was done on the program in its first year. The program developers will not know how successful the program is for several more years. The community believes though that the program is worth having and is supportive.

Another program, Parenting Factors, Social Skills, and Value Commitments as Precursors to School Failure,

Involvement with Deviant Peers, and Delinquent Behavior was developed in 1989. In this program, supporters believe that parenting factors, social skills, value commitments, and problems in school contribute to association with deviant peers and involvement in delinquent behavior. Research was conducted to evaluate if there was a correlation with the above mentioned factors. This study found that children who did not identify with their parents had trouble developing positive values. This was found to put these youth at risk for problems in other areas of their lives.

Another program called Cops and Kids Revisited: A Second-Year Assessment of a Community Policing and Delinquency Prevention Innovation was developed in 1993 and is being implemented in Spokane, Washington. Police officers are assigned to the project and they serve as role models for at-risk youth during week-long interactions. The data collected from three sources suggest favorable results from the project for participating youths, their parents, and the officers involved in the project.

A research project, A Meta-Analytic Assessment of Delinquency-Related Out comes of Alternative Education Programs was conducted in 1993. This study found that in prior reviews of alternative schools, not only did the school performance of the youth improve but so to did their attitudes, self-esteem, school attendance, and delinquency.

The present study shows that alternative schools have a small impact on youth. It did find data that indicates that programs that target a specific population of at-risk delinquents or low school achievers produce larger effects than programs with open admissions.

One prevention program in the Youngstown area is the After School Program. The actual title of the program was asked to be kept confidential. The After School Program supports 50 male and female "at-risk" students in grades fourth through seventh. During the school year, the youth are picked up at their school and brought directly to the center where they participate in a variety of programs. The children attend the program for approximately two and a half hours each day. Some of the activities include: learning about the bible; teaching and discussions about drugs and alcohol, violence, the importance of education; and personal safety issues. The youth are provided with time to work on homework and study for tests. There are three adults with the children at all times to help with all of the above mentioned activities. The children also participate in physical activities such as swimming lessons, karate lessons, basketball, strength training exercises, and step aerobics. During the programming, the children are given a healthy meal which meets nutritional guidelines.

During the summer months, the children attend the program in the morning and are picked up at their homes and

dropped off at the center. The program is basically run the same except the children take more field trips in the summer months.

The After School Program is a collaboration of three agencies, each of which are responsible for different areas of the project. One agency is in charge of case management and transportation. Two case managers work with the families and the schools. Another agency is in charge of the classroom activities and supervision of the children. Two people who work directly with the children and plan the activities are provided by this agency. The third agency provides the physical building in which the program is held along with providing physical fitness activities. In addition, this agency provides another person who works with the children directly.

The After School Program is an unique attempt to divert at-risk youth from the juvenile/criminal justice system. It is this program that is evaluated herein as mentioned in Chapter I, the program's objective is focused on children improving behaviorally and academically. The evaluation of the program's effectiveness is centered on social behavior. The next chapter explains how information was gathered and analyzed to determine the program's effectiveness.

CHAPTER III  
METHODS AND DESIGN

To evaluate the effectiveness of the After School Program, a longitudinal study was conducted. Program participants were evaluated who were in fourth and fifth grades and are now in the fifth and sixth grades. A comparative/descriptive study of children who were in the sixth grade and are now in seventh grade in a new school was also completed. They were monitored on the following variables: school attendance , and disciplinary infractions in the After School Program (see appendix A).

The schools were asked to provide averages on the following variables for comparative purposes: attendance, grades, number of expulsions, detentions, and suspensions.

Teachers were surveyed at the end of the school year on the following issues: impression of program participants adjustment to a new school environment, any knowledge of program participants being arrested or in contact with juvenile court system, any knowledge of drug/alcohol usage, impression of program participants overall attitude about education of school, if parents or guardians attended parent/teacher conferences, how the program participant addressed conflict, and whether they were aware of any type of negative reputation of the program participant before entering school (see appendix C).



Research Objectives:

The reason for this study is to find out if the After School Program has been effective since its inception. Once these children have attended the program for a year and move on to junior high school, will the knowledge and education taught to them in the program follow them and help them adjust to a new school and the transition into the seventh grade?

Need:

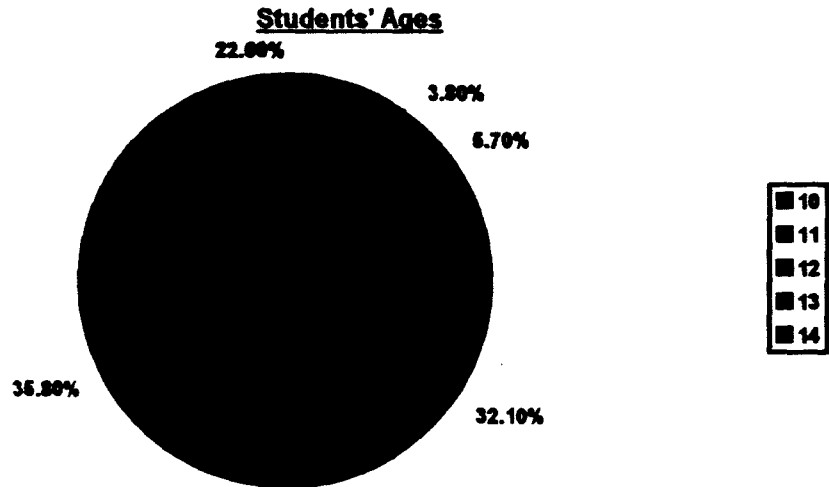
The need for this study is to find out if prevention programs do in fact divert children from delinquency. This study will also help identify some of the problems as well as revealing the flaws and positive aspects of the program. The results of the research are presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Once all the data listed in the last chapter was collected descriptive statistics were calculated. The sample group consisted of 53 inner city children attending three different schools. The average age of the children was 11 years and 10 months with ages ranging between 10 to 14 years old (see figure 1).

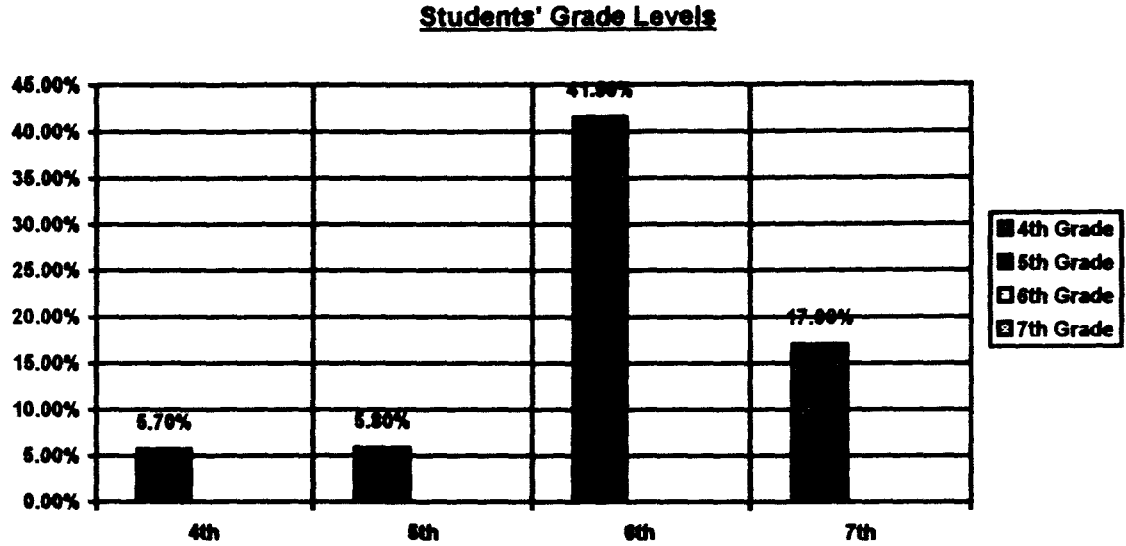
Figure 1



Approximately (92.5%) of the children were African-American while 1.9 percent were Caucasian and 5.7 percent were Hispanic. There were slightly more males (52.8%) than females (47.2%) in the population studied. The students ranged from fourth grade through seventh grade. Approximately six percent (5.7%) are in fourth grade, 35.8 percent are in fifth grade, 41.5 percent are in sixth grade

and 17.0 percent are in seventh grade (see figure 2).

Figure 2

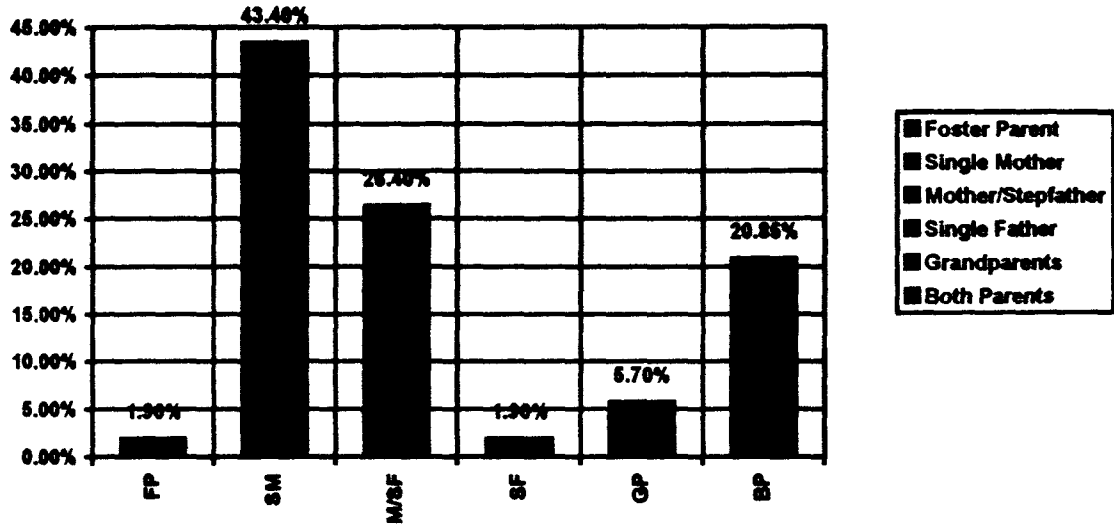


**Family Composition**

The highest percentage of students (43.4%) live with a single mother. Approximately 21 percent (20.8%) live with both parents, 26.4 percent live with their mother and stepfather, 5.7 percent live with their grandparents, 1.9 percent live with a single father and 1.9 percent live with foster parents (see figure 3).

Figure 3

Family Composition



Family Stressors

Some families have to deal with many different types of stressors. A couple examples of would be raising children in a single parent home, with frequent relocation of residents, and violence. Many of the children have experienced violence first-hand by having to deal with parents being shot or killed by inner-city violence. These are just a couple examples of the stressors these young families must cope with on an everyday basis. The After School Program tries to assist the families with these situations. The children in this program have a great deal to handle at such young ages. One occurrence that was seen quite frequently with some of the youth was moving from one location to another. Moving seemed to be a monthly task for

some of the children. Another challenge faced by the youth in this program are the comings and goings of their parent's boyfriends and girlfriends. Different faces and personalities make it very difficult for a child to adjust. The counselors believe that many of these youth are asked to be able to get along with anyone and everyone that comes through their front door. The problem the counselors saw was that too often the youth do not have a steady role model whether it be a male or a female.

Another objective the program is trying to meet, is to provide a sense of structure for these children, as well as good male and female role models.

About one-third (30.2%) of the students had no brothers, while 26.4 percent had one brother, 24.5 percent had two brothers, and 9.4 percent had three brothers. About one-half (45.3%) of the students did not have a sister, while 32.1 percent had one sister, 7.5 percent had two sisters, 3.8 percent had three sisters, and 1.9 percent had four sisters. Most of the students had no step-brothers (88.7%) nor step-sisters (84.9%).

#### Family Environment

Sixty percent of the families receive government aid while 26.4 percent do not receive aid. Fifty-one of the 53 students (96.2%) had no history of conviction. Approximately eight percent (7.5%) of mothers, 15.1 percent

of fathers and only 1.9 percent of siblings were involved in criminality (see figure 4).

Figure 4

Family Involvement in Criminality



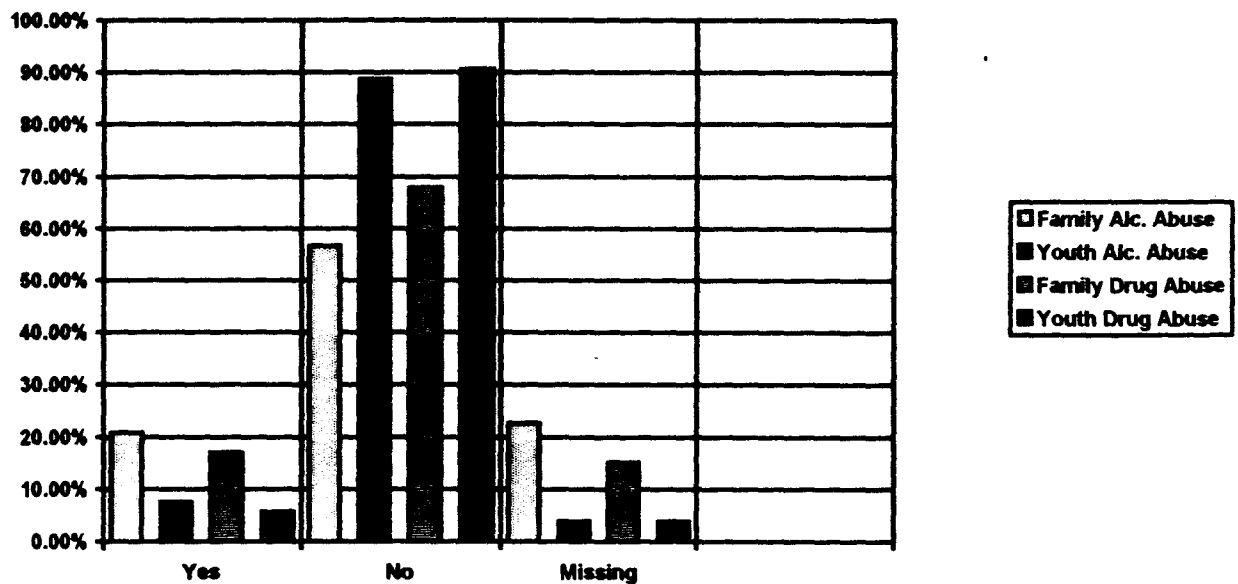
Most (77.4%) of the students' records reported no evidence of family violence. Only 1.9 percent admitted to some form of family violence. There was no report of family or youth suicide or family suicide attempts reported. Approximately five percent (5.2%) of the families had a history of mental illness, 5.7 percent of the youth have a history of mental illness. Most of the youth's siblings (88.7%) reported no history of physical abuse while the same number also reported no history of sexual abuse. Only one sibling (1.9%) was reported as being physically abused. About four percent (3.8%) of the students reported sexual

abuse while there were no reports of physical abuse with the youth. It was also reported that one of the youth who was sexually abused was abused by one of their teachers.

Over one-half (56.6%) of the students reported no family history of alcoholism or alcohol abuse. Over 20 percent (20.8%) of families and 7.5% of youth had a history of alcoholism or alcohol abuse. It was found that 67.9 percent of family and 90.6 percent of youth had no history of drug abuse while 17.0 percent of the families and five percent of the youth did have a history of drug abuse (see figure 5).

Figure 5

**Alcohol and Drug Abuse**



A little under half (47.2%) of the students said they attended church while 35.8 percent said they did not attend

church. The majority of the students (86.8%) are Baptist while 9.4 percent were listed in the "other" category.

All of the students (N= 53, 100%) have been exposed to some type of inner-city violence. Approximately six percent (5.7%) of the students were involved in gang activity while the rest (88.7%) of the students were not. Only one student (1.9%) had a history of weapon usage. This incident occurred when the student was in third grade. The student brought his father's gun to school to show other students.

### School Behavior

In order to help evaluate the success or failure of the After School Program, school records were examined. The following is a description of the students school information and comparative information.

Grades earned, days absent, suspensions, detentions, expulsions, times tardy, and grade point average (G.P.A.) were compared for the first term in the 1996-1997 school year and the first term with the 1997-1998 school year. G.P.A., honor roll, times tardy, and absences were compared prior to the students entering the program, the first term, second term and third term of the 1996-1997 academic year. To simplify the presentation of this information. The first year of the program, 1996-1997 academic year, will be simply called first year. The second year of the program, 1997-1998 academic year, will be simply called second year. Just



to remind the reader, the program began in the first year and the students continued into the second year.

In the first year the students missed an average of one and a half days ( $N=1.59$ ,  $S=2.96$ ). During the second year, 45.3 percent of the students missed no days, an improvement of 16.3 percent from the first year. The average number of missed days was slightly lower ( $N=1.42$ ,  $S=2.84$ ). The number of days tardy during the first year was under 1 day ( $N=.63$ ,  $S=1.33$ ). Over half (52.8%) of the students had no tardies at all. During the second year just under half (49.1%) had no days tardy but the days tardy improved slightly from the first year ( $N=.51\%$ ,  $S=.70$ ).

Over one-third (35.8%) of the students served detention time during the first year. In the second year, approximately two percent less of the students had to serve detentions. Over one-third of the students were suspended from school the first year. During the second year the percentage improved with 3.8 percent less students serving detention. During the first year, no students were expelled while one (1.9%) was expelled during the second year.

Overall, there was an improvement in school behaviors for the students from the first year of the program to the second year. The average number of days absent decreased, as well as the number of days tardy. The number of students serving detentions or suspensions from school also decreased from the first year to the second year. The only area where

an improvement was not noted was in expulsions (1 student). A series of chi-square test were conducted to determine if these improvements from the first year to the second year were statistically significantly different. None of them were found to be statistically significant.

#### Academic Performance

During the first year, 3.8 percent received F's , 11.3 percent D's, 29.3 percent C's, 24.5 percent B's and 7.5 percent received A's the first year in science. During the second year, 13.2 percent got F's, 32.1 percent C's, 20.8 percent B's and 13.2 percent received A's. The results showed that 1.9 percent of the students went down four letter grades, 3.8 percent went down two, 11.3 percent went down one while 22.6 percent received the same grades. Nine students (17.0%) increased one letter grade, 5.7 percent went up two letter grades and 1.9 percent went up three letter grades. Handwriting for both the 1996-1997 and 1997-998 school years showed the majority of the students received a grade S which means satisfactory.

During the first year, 3.8 percent received F's, 1.9 percent D's, 37.7 percent C's, 22.6 percent B's and 9.4 percent A's in health. In the second year, 7.5 percent received F's, 5.7 percent D's, 28.3 percent C's, 20.9 percent B's, 7.5 percent A's and 9.4 percent were N/A. Overall changes showed that 7.5 percent dropped two letter

grades, 26.4 percent received the same grade while 17 percent went up one letter grade.

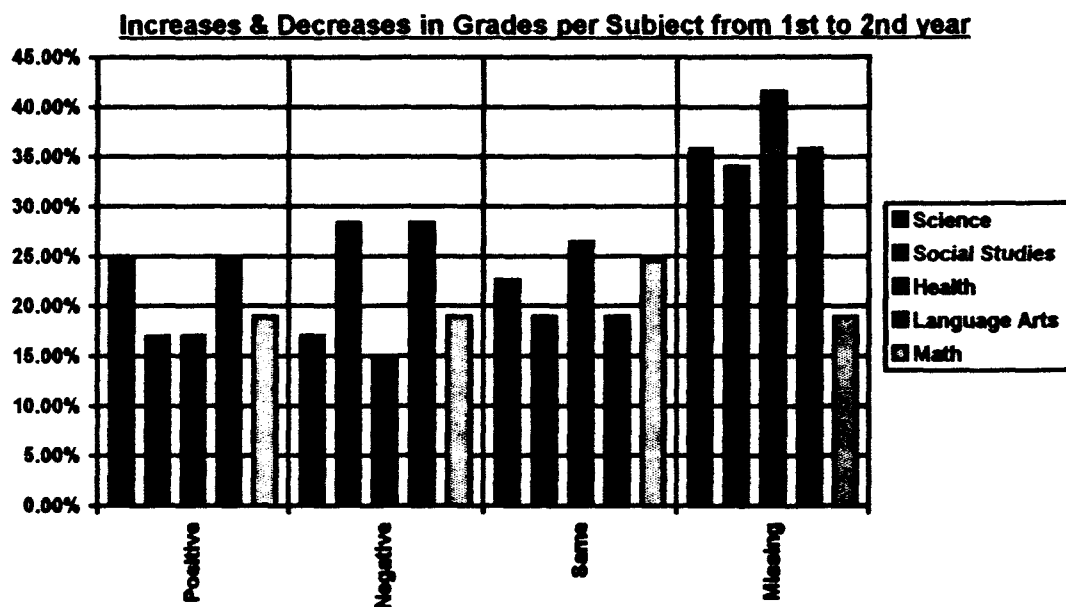
Language arts during the first year showed 1.9 percent receiving F's. 5.7 percent D's, 30.2 percent C's, 18.9 percent B's and also 18.9 percent receiving an A. During the second year, 9.4 percent received D's, 22.6 percent C's, 37.7 percent B's, 9.4 percent A's and 1.9 percent were N/A. Overall changes in language arts showed 1.9 percent dropping one and 18.95 percent received the same grades, 20.8 percent went up one letter grade, and 3.8 percent went up two letter grades.

During the first year 7.5 percent of the students received F's, 9.4 percent D's, 17.0 percent C's, 28.3 percent B's and 13.2 percent A's in math. During the second year, 15.1 percent received F's, 13.2 percent D's, 13.2 percent C's, 32.1 percent B's, 3.8 percent A's and 1.9 percent were N/A. Changes in math scores were 3.8 percent dropped three letter grades, 9.4 percent dropped two letter grades, 11.3 percent dropped one and 18.9 percent received the same grade. Seventeen percent went up one grade and 1.9 percent went up two grades.

Social studies grades the first year were 7.5 percent of students received F's, 5.7 percent D's, 20.8 percent C's, 24.5 percent B's, and 17.0 percent A's. During the second year, 9.4 percent received F's, 15.1 percent D's, 26.4 percent C's, 13.2 percent B's and 17.0 percent A's. Overall

changes were: 1.9 percent dropped three letter grades, 1.9 percent dropped two, 24.5 percent dropped one, 18.9 percent received the same grade, 13.2 percent went up one letter grade while 5.7 percent improved two letter grades. The above was a detailed list of grades the students earned during their time participating in the After School Program. While this information is interesting, it was difficult to determine if there was an over-all improvement in academic performance as has been seen in school behavior. To test for over-all improvement in academic performance, new variables were created. These variables were improvement or decrease in grades prior to starting, first year, and second year for each subject. Each student grades were examined and it was determined whether to give a student a code of 0, which represents same grade from year to year, a code of 1 which represents an improvement from year to year, or a code of -1 which represents a decrease in their grade from year to year. This was done for each subject for every child. After this coding was completed, chi-square test were conducted to determine if any changes in grades per subject, from year to year occurred (see figure 6).

Figure 6



As a result of the chi-square test conducted only two subjects showed significant statistical differences between grades received the first year and the second year: health and science (see figure 7 and table 1).

Health

Figure 7

Improvement in Health Grades

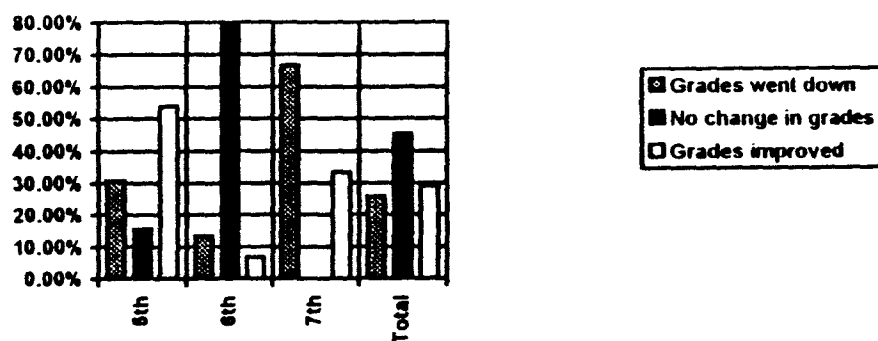


Table 1

Improvement in Health Grades

Grade Improvements	Grades			
	fifth	sixth	seventh	Total
	N=13	N=15	N=3	
Grades went down	30.80%	13.30%	66.70%	25.80%
No change in grades	15.40%	80.00%	0.00%	45.20%
Grades improved	53.80%	6.70%	33.30%	29.00%
	$\chi^2=16.268, p \leq .003$			

Younger children in the program were shown to have the highest improvements in their health grades (53.8%). The oldest children, unfortunately were more likely to experience a decrease in their health grades (66.7%). The other area which showed statistical difference was science (see figure 8 and table 2).

Science

Figure 8

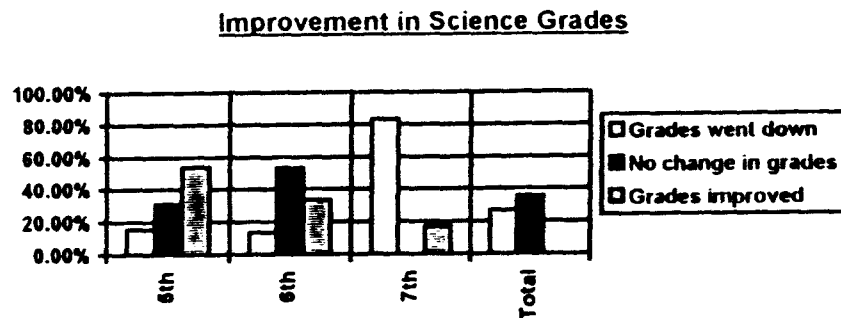


Table 2

Improvement in Science Grades

Grade Improvements	Grades			
	fifth	sixth	seventh	Total
	N=13	N=15	N=6	
Grades went down	15.40%	13.30%	83.30%	26.50%
No change in grades	30.80%	53.30%	0.00%	38.20%
Grades improved	53.80%	33.30%	16.70%	38.20%
	$\chi^2 = 14.139, p \leq .007$			

Again the same pattern that was seen with health grades occurred with science grades. seventh graders decreased, the sixth graders stayed the same and the fifth grades improved their grades. What this is telling us is that the program is not adequately preparing the youth to move up to seventh grade.

#### Teacher information

Another method used to determine the effectiveness of the program was to ask teachers their impressions of the After School Program participants. The teachers were asked seven questions. Half (N=8, 50%) of the teachers who instructed the students responded to the questionnaire. The following is a summary of their impressions and thoughts.

#### Drugs and Alcohol

The teachers were asked if they had any knowledge or suspicion of any of the program children being involved with drugs or alcohol. Three-fourths (75%) of the teachers said that none of the students from the program were involved with drugs and alcohol. The rest said yes (12.5%) or did not respond to the questionnaire (12.8%).

#### Contact with Juvenile Court

The teachers were asked if they had any knowledge of



any of the children being arrested or having contact with the juvenile court. The majority of the teachers (87.5%) said "no" they had no knowledge of this occurring.

#### Attitude about Education

These answers differed depending on the teacher and their experiences with the children. One teacher said the student had the "I Don't Care" attitude. One very interesting comment was that by a sixth grade teacher who said she believes many of them feel it is a necessary evil. Other teachers (62.5%) commented on how positive and cooperative the students are.

#### Parents/Guardians

The next question asked the teachers was if the students parents/guardians attended parent/teacher conferences, and if they did were they concerned about their child's grades and overall performance. Thirty-seven and a half percent of teachers who responded said that most of the parents do attend the conferences, the others had a much different experience. They ranged from most do not to only the workers from the After School Program came to check on the students and how they are progressing.

#### Conflict

The fifth question that the teachers answered was how

they see the children addressing conflict, verbally, aggressively, or physically. All of the teachers (N=100%) said that the students start out verbally but as time elapses the conflict can escalate and become aggressive and physical. One sixth grade teacher put it simply by saying "all of the above".

### Reputation

The sixth question the teachers were asked to answer was if they were aware of any type of negative reputation of any of the After School Program students before they entered their classroom or school. The majority of teachers (62.5%) said that they were not aware of any negative reputation. The rest of the teachers (37.5%) said the "yes", some of the children were legends or had reputations that went before them. Another teacher said that shortly after school started they had \$20 taken from them. At the time the teacher suspected one of the program participants. They found out later that the student had a reputation for stealing.

### Adjustment

The final question the teachers were asked to answer was how do they think the children have adjusted to their classroom or next grade level. Eighty-seven and a half of the teachers said that they felt the students had adjusted

quite well. The other teacher said that the students had adjusted poorly.

The findings suggest that the majority of the students have adjusted well to the next grade level and also that the majority of children are not involved with drugs and alcohol. Some of the teachers did feel that a few of the children brought a reputation with them while the others felt they did not have a reputation. Five out of the eight teachers feel that the students do care about their education while the other three believe that the students believe that school is a necessary evil. Half of the teachers said that the parents attended the conferences while the other half said that they did not have many of the parents come in to check on their child.

CHAPTER V  
DISCUSSION

Conclusion

There were several limitations and challenges that were faced during this research. First the information was given by the child's guardians when they filled out the necessary paperwork to enter their child into the program. They were not required to fill out the whole questionnaire and even if they did there is no way of testing the validity of the answers. It was difficult to obtain all of the children's grades. At first the last quarter of both the 1996-1997 and 1997-1998 grades were going to be compared but they were not available so the first quarter of both years were used. Many of the children move quite frequently so it was very hard to keep track of where the children were living. Schools have closed down as well so there were records and report cards lost in the move.

Many items or variables could not be measured that were worked on in this program. Some of those variables are self-esteem, their personal relationships with God, their social skills and team work. These are all very important items that are stressed in the program. There was really no way for them to be measured properly with the data in this research. In doing the research it was very difficult to have to depend on others for some of the data. This was a common road block that was experienced often.

Some recommendations for the program would be to find a way to better prepare the students when they move up to the next grade level and especially to a new school environment. The results of this study show that as the child moves to the next grade level they tend to let their grades slip but they tend to behave better and attend more frequently.

Another problem that needs looked at is the fact that three different community organizations make up this After School Program. Due to all of the people involved, there is much red tape to get through before something is accomplished. Also the teachers who work one-on-one with the children in the classroom need to have more information and time to spend outside of the classroom with these children. These children are forming a bond with their counselor and need to see that they will be there for them at all times. This is a very important component that is missing from the program. It is also believed that any expansion of the program, or talk about plans to increase the size of the program before all of the problems are worked out, will be detrimental to the program and staff. Growing too fast, too soon, can be very dangerous and hard to accomplish. It is very difficult to work with children who have all experienced violence or witnessed it as these children have.

#### Future Research

Research needs to be conducted to find out if the

program is helping the children adjust to the next grade level. As of right now, the program is not helping the students academically who have moved on to the seventh grade level. It would also be beneficial to try and measure the social components of the program. It is believed that an increase would be shown in this area. Self-esteem and the belief in themselves will play a very big part in the future that these children.

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**APPENDIX A**

**DATA SHEET FOR EACH CHILD**



Name: Age:  
Gender: Male Female Grade: 4th 5th 6th 7th  
School attending: Zip Code:  
Race: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Other  
Religion: Baptist, Catholic, Protestant, Methodist,  
Pentecostal, Other\_\_\_\_\_

Attending Church: Yes No

Living With: Both Parents, Mother Step-Father, Grandparents  
Father Step-Mother, Single Mom, Single Dad,  
Foster Parent, Group Home, Other

Mother's Employment:  
Father's Employment:  
Family receiving government aid: Yes No

Rank among siblings: 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th  
9th 10th 11th 12th

Number of Brothers:  
Number of Step-Brothers:  
Number of Sisters:  
Number of Step-Sisters:  
History of Conviction: Yes No  
Father involved in criminality: Yes No  
Mother involved in criminality: Yes No  
Sibling's involved in criminality: Yes No  
Evidence of family violence: Yes No  
Type\_\_\_\_\_

Youth exposure to violence: Yes No  
Type\_\_\_\_\_

Youth have history of weapon usage: Yes No  
Type/Why\_\_\_\_\_

Youth involved in gang activity: Yes No How  
Long\_\_\_\_\_

Youth history of physical illness: Yes No  
Type\_\_\_\_\_

Youth history of mental illness: Yes No  
Type\_\_\_\_\_

Family history of mental illness: Yes No  
Type\_\_\_\_\_

Youth history of physical abuse: Yes No

Sibling history of physical abuse: Yes No

Youth history of sexual abuse: Yes No

Sibling history of sexual abuse: Yes No

Family history of suicide: Yes No

Youth history of suicide attempts: Yes No

Family history of suicide attempts: Yes No

Family history of drug abuse: Yes No Type  
\_\_\_\_\_

Youth history of drug abuse: Yes No  
Type/Length\_\_\_\_\_

Family history of alcoholism/alcohol abuse: Yes No

Youth history of alcoholism/alcohol abuse: Yes No

**School Information:**

Language Arts 1996-1997: A B C D F N/A

Language Arts 1997-1998: A B C D F N/A

Handwriting 1996-1997: A B C D F N/A

Handwriting 1997-1998: A B C D F N/A

Mathematics 1996-1997: A B C D F N/A

Mathematics 1997-1998: A B C D F N/A  
Social Studies 1996-1997: A B C D F N/A  
Social Studies 1997-1998: A B C D F N/A  
Science 1996-1997: A B C D F N/A  
Science 1997-1998: A B C D F N/A  
Health 1996-1997: A B C D F N/A  
Health 1997-1998: A B C D F N/A

Days Absent 1996-1997:

Days Absent 1997-1998:

Times Tardy 1996-1997:

Times Tardy 1997-1998:

Number of detentions 1996-1997:

Number of detentions 1997-1998:

Number of suspensions 1996-1997:

Number of suspensions 1997-1998:

Number of expulsions 1996-1997:

Number of expulsions 1997-1998:

**APPENDIX B**

**REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION TO TEACHERS,  
PRINCIPALS AND GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

Youngstown State University  
November 13, 1997

Dear Teachers:

My name is Heidi Miller and I am one of the coordinators with the SWANS program. I am currently working on my thesis to earn a master of science degree in criminal justice at Youngstown State University. I will be conducting a longitudinal study on the SWANS program to see if it is meeting all of its goals and objectives. I would like to ask you to help me in my study by filling out the enclosed questionnaire. It would mean a lot to me and to the study I am conducting. The SWANS program, and especially the children, mean a great deal to me, and, hopefully, my study will help improve the program for the children.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (330)652-3625 or Dr. Tammy King at (330)742-3279.

Sincerely,

Heidi Miller, B.A

Tammy King, Ph.D

**APPENDIX C**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS, PRINCIPALS  
AND GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Child's grade \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you have any knowledge or suspicion of this child being involved with drugs and or alcohol?

2. Do you have any knowledge of this child being arrested or having any contact with the juvenile court system?

3. What is your impression of this child's overall attitude about education?

4. Did this child's parents/guardians attend parent teacher conferences? If so, did they seem concerned about the child's grades and overall performance?

5. How did this child address conflict- were they verbal, aggressive, or physical?

6. Were you aware of any type of negative reputation of this child before (s)he entered your classroom or school?

7. How do you think the child has adjusted to your class/next grade level?

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Child's grade \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your impression of this child's adjustment to a new school environment:

2. Do you have any knowledge or suspicion that this child is involved with drugs and or alcohol?

3. Do you have any knowledge of this child being arrested or having any contact with the juvenile court system?

4. What is your impression of this child's overall attitude about education?

5. Has this child's parents/guardians attended parent teacher conferences? If so, did they seem concerned about the child's grades and overall performance?

6. How did this child address conflict- were they verbal, aggressive, or physical?

7. Were you aware of any type of negative reputation of this child before (s)he entered this school?



**APPENDIX D**

**LETTER TO BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO OBTAIN DATA**

Youngstown State University  
November 13, 1997

Dear Board Members:

My name is Heidi Miller, and I am currently attending Youngstown State University working on my master's degree in criminal justice. I work for the SWANS program which many children from your school or Youngstown School system participate. I am presently working on my thesis, and I am doing a longitudinal study on the SWANS program to see if the program is accomplishing its goals and objectives. To complete my study, I would like to know if you would provide the data averages on the following variables for comparative purposes: attendance, grades, number or expulsions, number of suspensions, and the number of detentions. This information would help me in my study and would be greatly appreciated. The SWANS program and all of the children involved mean a great deal to me, and my research will hopefully improve the program for the children.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (330)652-3625 or Dr. Tammy King at (330)742-3279.

Sincerely,

Heidi Miller, B.A

Tammy King, Ph.D

**APPENDIX E**

**LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARENTS  
ASKING PERMISSION FOR QUESTIONNAIRES**

Youngstown State University  
November 13, 1997

Dear Parent/Guardian:

My name is Heidi Miller, and I am one of the coordinators for the SWANS program. Currently, I am working on my master's degree at Youngstown State University, and I have just begun work on my thesis. I am conducting a study to determine if the SWANS program is meeting its goals and objectives. With your permission, I would like to send the following questionnaire to the teachers, principal and guidance counselors at your child's school. I would also like to check juvenile court records on all the children in the SWANS program. I will never list your child's name or discuss them individually. All information in the report will be summary data. There are no risks to your child. All the information that I receive will be handled in a strictly confidential manner so that no one will be able to identify your child when the results are recorded/reported. The SWANS program and the children all mean a great deal to me. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (330)652-3625 or Dr. Tammy King at (330) 742-3279. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Heidi Miller, B.A

Tammy King, Ph.D

-----  
I understand the study described above and give my permission to have the above mentioned information released for the purpose of this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX F**

**LETTER TO MR. RALPH RICCI  
REQUESTING JUVENILE COURT CONTACT AND ARRESTS**

Youngstown State UniversityAddress  
November 13, 1997

Dear Mr. Ricci:

My name is Heidi Miller, and I am a second year graduate student working on my masters of science degree in criminal justice. I have currently started work on my thesis. I have chosen to do a longitudinal study on the SWANS program. The SWANS program is just starting it's second year. It is a very unique and special program. The SWANS program enrolls 50 "at-risk" children, most from the East side of Youngstown. This program's goals and objectives are to try and instill positive values in each of the children while also teaching them the importance of education and the consequences of getting involved in delinquent acts. My study on the SWANS program will evaluate the children from different variables such as school attendance, grades, disciplinary actions and whether or not they have any contact with the juvenile court system. I am writing this letter to ask if it would be possible to know if any of the children involved in the SWANS program come in contact with the juvenile justice system. I have enclosed a list of all the children and also permission slips from their parents/guardians to receive this information. I do not want to know the exact nature of the contact just a general description such as arrests for a status offense, felony, custody issue.

The SWANS program and the children are very special to me. I have worked with the program from day one as one of the coordinators. I work one-on-one with the children so my research means a lot to me.

When the results of the study are presented, data will be discussed only in an aggregate form. I will provide you with a copy of the completed research.

Thank-you for your time and consideration. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (330)652-3625 or Dr. Tammy King at (330)742-3279.

Sincerely,

Heidi Miller, B.A

Tammy King, Ph.D



Youngstown State University / One University Plaza / Youngstown, Ohio 44555-3091

Dean of Graduate Studies

(330) 742-3091

FAX (330) 742-1580

E-Mail: amgrad03@ysub.yzu.edu

October 9, 1997

Ms. Heidi Miller  
Department of Criminal Justice  
UNIVERSITY

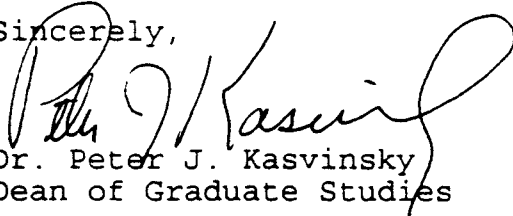
Dear Ms. Miller:

The Human Subjects Research Committee of Youngstown State University has reviewed your Protocol, HSRC #02-98, "Prevention for At-risk Youth Target Program: A Longitudinal Evaluation Study," and determined your protocol is approved. The Committee also desired to communicate the following concern:

The Committee recognizes the sensitivity of the issues in question and feels it may be problematical for the professionals you will be interviewing to answer the survey questionnaire based on professional standards considerations. This concern does not affect your approval to conduct the study, however.

Any change in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Human Subjects Research Committee and may not be initiated without HSRC approval.

Sincerely,



Dr. Peter J. Kasvinsky  
Dean of Graduate Studies

cc

c: Dr. James Conser, Chair  
Department of Criminal Justice  
Ms. Tammy King, Student Advisor  
Department of Criminal Justice  
HSRC Members  
File

