

# SAN MATEO COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF THE  
PENINSULA ANNUAL EVALUATION

2020 - 2021



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## About the Researcher

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a nonprofit social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by collecting meaningful data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm was founded on the principle that community improvement, initiative sustainability, and program success are closely tied to assessment needs, evaluation of community goals, and development of appropriate responses.

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## Program Description

The mission of Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula (BGCP) is to empower the youths in our community with equitable access to social, academic, and career opportunities to thrive.

Through the implementation of several evidence-based curricula, BGCP provides the following youth-centered strategies:

- **After-School Enrichment & Academic Support:** BGCP provides daily after-school enrichment and academic support. Students work on their homework assignments while being able to access one-on-one or small group instruction and tutoring. Students also can engage in high-yield project-based learning activities in the gym, tech room, art room, leadership room, video and music recording studio, academic room, library, commercial-grade kitchen, or games room.
- **Mentoring:** Students in grades 9 and 10 who participate in BGCP's High School Success Advising (HSSA) program meet weekly with mentors to ask the tough questions: How is school going? What problems are you having? What do you need to be successful? What projects are coming up? How are your applications to high school or post-secondary education going? Mentors and advisors work with BGCP students to create a plan to work through these critical questions together.
- **Leadership Development:** Through participation in Torch Club and Keystone Club, pre-teens and teens engage in leadership opportunities. Members participate in community service, serve as peer leaders, and develop programming to benefit their peers. These local clubs are sanctioned by the Boys and Girls Club Association (BGCA). Members can participate in annual conferences with members from clubs throughout the United States and Canada.
- **Behavioral Skills & Life Skills Development:** BGCP after-school programs provide positive alternatives to risky behavior. By providing academic support, fostering positive relationships through peer group activities and adult mentors, and exposing students to fun and engaging enrichment activities, BGCP programs provide members with a sense of belonging, support, and safety. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is a key component of all BGCP programs and a critical element of academic success.
- Through **individual mentoring and small group sessions**, BGCP staff help students build SEL mindsets and skills in self-awareness, decision-making, interpersonal skills, peer and social pressures, stress reduction, communication skills, assertiveness training, and self-esteem enhancement. During the one-on-one ninth grade HSSA program, advisors support students in making decisions, addressing peer and social pressures, setting goals, and developing plans to achieve their goals.

## Programmatic Challenges

BGCP's main programmatic challenge in fiscal year (FY) 2020-21 was the inability to interact with most of their students in-person. BGCP's impact stems from in-person programs built on positive relationships with caring adults. While they were able to remain connected to many students virtually, it was not the same as in-person. The pandemic reinforced the value of their in-person approach, and BGCP staff were thrilled to return to complete in-person learning over the summer.

With COVID-19 and shelter-in-place (SIP) mandates, BGCP could not run their standard programming in FY 2020-21. BGCP was able to serve HSSA students on-site with their in-person learning pods and virtually with their "Crews" (peer network), but the number of youths served was significantly lower. They also had to eliminate some HSSA program services such as field trips, classroom observations, and additional mentoring and tutoring that usually take place in-person after-school at BGCP's clubhouses.

Providing on-site mental health services to support youths with high risk factors or barriers to success and equip staff to better understand, recognize, and respond to students' challenges was significantly difficult. At the start of FY 2020-21, one full-time, on-site, bilingual psychotherapist served high school students in the Redwood City Teen Clubhouse. BGCP hired an additional full-time, on-site therapist at the East Palo Alto Clubhouse and a part-time clinician to work with high school and post-secondary students. Pre-COVID-19, BGCP staff were on-site during program hours, joined in program activities, ate dinner with students, and had a myriad of opportunities to observe, interact with, and form positive relationships with students. The staff pivoted to serve students via video chat, phone, and text during pandemic distance learning. BGCP's FY 2021-22 strategic priorities include increasing the number of students receiving mental health services, ensuring caregivers have access to mental health consultations, and training direct service staff to respond in the event of a student's mental health crisis.

## Evaluation Methods

Programs provided by BGCP are funded by San Mateo County Probation Department's (Probation) Juvenile Probation and Camp Funding (JPCF). BGCP monitors programs and reports client, service, and outcome data to Probation and its evaluator, Applied Survey Research (ASR). The methods and tools used to collect this data are:

**Participants and Services:** Grantee programs collected demographic data (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, etc.) and service data (e.g., type of services, hours of services, etc.) for individual participants. Program staff entered these data elements into their own data systems prior to transferring the data to ASR for analysis.

**Risk Factors:** Grantee programs used the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) to provide a standard measure of risk for youths. This individualized assessment is a widely used criminogenic risk, strengths, and needs assessment tool that assists in the effective and efficient supervision of youths, both in institutional settings and in the community. It has been validated across ethnic and gender groups. The JAIS consists of a brief initial assessment followed by full assessment and reassessment components (JAIS Full Assessment and JAIS Reassessment). The JAIS assessment has two unique form options based on the youth's gender. Probation has elected to administer the JAIS to all youths receiving services in community programs for at-risk and juvenile justice involved youth. The JAIS Girls Risk consists of eight items, and the JAIS Boys Risk consists of ten items. Each assessment yields an overall risk level of 'low,' 'moderate,' or 'high.'

**Evidence-Based Practices:** JPCF-funded programs are encouraged to follow evidence-based practices. To augment Probation's knowledge of which programs are being implemented by funded partners, each funded program has provided a catalog of its practices since the FY 2017-18 evaluation period. After receiving this information, ASR runs any new cataloged practices reported through several clearinghouses to determine whether each practice is an<sup>1</sup>:

- evidence-based theory or premise
- evidence-based model, shown by multiple experimental or quasi-experimental studies to be effective
- evidence-based practices, or modalities shown to promote positive outcomes
- evidence-based tools, or instruments that have been validated (concurrent and predictive)

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<sup>1</sup> For the full list of evidence-based practice clearinghouses used to evaluate programs, please see the JJCPA/JPCF Comprehensive Report for FY 2020-21.

## Evaluation Findings

### Fiscal Year 2020-21 Highlights

- BGCP served 72 middle and high school youths across all programs. The number of youths served decreased by 16% from FY 2019-20.
- All youths scored 'low' on the JAIS Risk assessment. No youths presented with a 'moderate' or 'high' JAIS Risk score.
- A high percentage of youths reported feeling physically and emotionally safe, developing positive and supportive relationships, and being engaged and building skills as a result of being in BGCP programs.

### Profile of Youths Served

In FY 2020-21, BGCP served 72 youths, with race/ethnicity and gender data available for 99% and 100% of youths, respectively. Among those who had available demographic data, 38 youths were male (63%), and the average age was 15.4 years. Most youths identified as Latino/Hispanic (86%), followed by Asian/Pacific Islander (6%), 3% identified as Black/African American, 3% identified as Multi-Racial/Ethnic, 1% identified as White/Caucasian, and another 1% identified as Other. They spent an average time of 9.1 months in the program and were served for an average of 20.9 hours (Table 1).

**Table 1. Youth Services**

YOUTH SERVICES	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21
Number of Youths Served	1088	115	93	86	<b>72</b>
Average Number of Hours Served	28.8	31.9	44.0	27.5	<b>20.9</b>
Average Time in the Program (Months)	N/A	8.9	9.6	7.5	<b>9.1</b>

### Risk Indicators

Figure 2 shows that BGCP served youths on the lower end of the risk spectrum in FY 2020-21. All 65 youths (100%) scored 'low' risk. In the past five years, no youth has received a 'high' JAIS risk score.

**Table 2. JAIS Risk Levels**

JAIS RISK LEVEL	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21
Low	99%	83%	100%	100%	<b>100%</b>
Moderate	1%	17%	0%	0%	<b>0%</b>
High	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>0%</b>

FY 2020-21 n=65.

## Program-Specific Outcomes

As displayed in Table 3, BGCP and Probation developed four measures specific to BGCP activities to further understand youths' outcomes in the program. BGCP exceeded three out of four FY 2020-21 targets, including the percentage of youths feeling physically and emotionally safe at BGCP (92%), the percentage of youths who developed supportive and positive relationships at BGCP (96%), and the percentage of youths who were engaged and developed skills as a result of the program (82%). BGCP did not achieve its objective for retaining 65% students from Spring of 2020.

**Table 3. Performance Measures**

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21 TARGET	FY 20-21 RESULTS
Youth report feeling physically and emotionally safe in our programs	100%	96%	80%	92%
Youth report developing supportive and positive relationships in our programs.	88%	95%	80%	96%
Youth report they are engaged and building skills as a result of the program.	62%	98%	80%	82%
Program retention*	87%	54%	65%	42%

\*Retention from Spring 2020

## Evidence-Based Practices

In FY 2020-21, JPCF programs were asked to provide the curricula or practices employed in their programs. ASR then evaluated the given programs to determine whether they were evidence-based or promising practices through a thorough search of evidence-based practice clearinghouses. Table 4 details the practices that BGCP reported, and the evidence base for each practice.

**Table 4. Evidence-Based Practices**

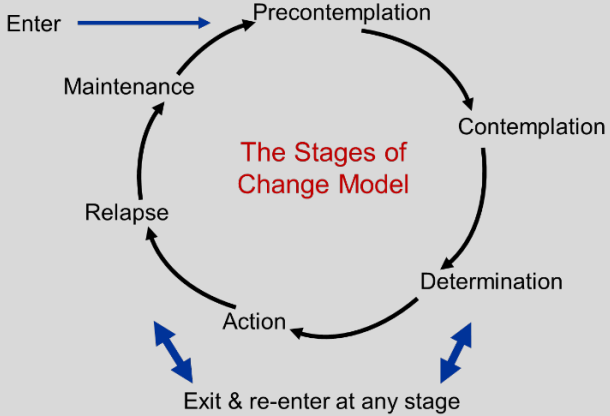
PRACTICE	PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION	RATING
<b>Consortium on Chicago School Research</b>	This is a critical framework for school success throughout the service continuum, and it cites the benchmark of third grade literacy as a leading indicator of future academic successes in all core subjects. The University of Chicago research focuses on how the five main non-cognitive factors affect classroom performance. The factors include academic mindsets that lead to a combination of academic perseverance, social skills, and learning strategies, which all impact academic behavior and, ultimately, academic performance. This framework	Not an evidence-based or promising practice or framework.



PRACTICE	PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION	RATING
	<p>provides an academic support roadmap for practitioners and a useful guide for defining and assessing key performance indicators for programs focusing on the outcome of academic achievement.</p> <p>Third grade reading proficiency is widely regarded as a predictor for academic success in education, especially for low-income children. BGCP relies on this research to focus intensive interventions for students in K-3rd grade programming with remediation support and/or maintenance of gains in programming for fourth through eighth grades.</p>	
<b>Check &amp; Connect</b>	<p>The High School Success Advising Program is modeled closely after the Check &amp; Connect Program Manual. Check &amp; Connect is an intervention used with K-12 students who show warning signs of disengagement with school and who are at risk of dropping out. At the core of Check &amp; Connect is a trusting relationship between the student and a caring, trained mentor who both advocates for and challenges the student to keep education salient. Students are referred to Check &amp; Connect when they show warning signs of disengaging from school, such as poor attendance, behavioral issues, and/or low grades. In Check &amp; Connect, the "Check" component refers to the process where mentors systematically monitor student performance variables (e.g., absences, tardies, behavioral referrals, grades), while the "Connect" component refers to mentors providing personalized, timely interventions to help students solve problems, build skills, and enhance competence. Mentors work with caseloads of students and families for at least two years, functioning as liaisons between home and school and striving to build constructive family-school relationships.</p>	<p>Research-based practice based on empirical evidence.<sup>2</sup></p>
<b>Transtheoretical Model (Stages of Change Model) and Motivational Interviewing</b>	<p>The most notable change management framework, applicable to behavioral change for both clients and practitioners, is Dr. James Prochaska and Dr. Carlo DiClemente's Transtheoretical Stages of Change model (illustrated).<sup>3</sup></p>	<p>An evidence-based model based on empirical evidence and motivational interviewing is an evidence-based practice, according to the Center for</p>

<sup>2</sup> Social Programs that Work. (n.d.). Check and Connect - Dropout Prevention Programs that Work Social Programs That Work. [https://evidencebasedprograms.org/programs/check-and-connect/\(evidencebasedprograms.org\)](https://evidencebasedprograms.org/programs/check-and-connect/(evidencebasedprograms.org))

<sup>3</sup> LaMorte, W. W. (2018). *The Transtheoretical Model (Stages of Change)*. Boston University School of Public Health. Retrieved from <http://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/MPH-Modules/SB/BehavioralChangeTheories/BehavioralChangeTheories6.html>

PRACTICE	PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION	RATING
	 <p>The Stages of Change Model</p> <p>When changing serious problem behaviors, several relapses can often prompt clients to restart the cycle of change. The Evidence-Based Practice that actualizes progression between stages is known as Motivational Interviewing (MI). A practitioner’s effective use of MI can strengthen a youth’s own motivation for and commitment to change. MI techniques include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressing empathy: Listening, complimenting, and building up the client rather than telling, criticizing, and tearing down the client.</li> <li>• Developing discrepancy: Helping clients perceive a discrepancy between where they are and where they want to be by raising the client’s awareness of the adverse personal consequences of continuing with the current behavior.</li> <li>• Supporting self-efficacy: Giving the client hope or optimism that they can change their behavior, recognizing that only the client can decide to change and carry out that choice.</li> </ul>	<p>Evidence-Based Practices.<sup>4,5</sup></p>

<sup>4</sup> LaMorte, W. W. (2018). *The Transtheoretical Model (Stages of Change)*. Boston University School of Public Health. Retrieved from <http://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/MPH-Modules/SB/BehavioralChangeTheories/BehavioralChangeTheories6.html>

<sup>5</sup> Center for Evidence-Based Practices (2018). *Motivational Interviewing*. Case Western Reserve University. Retrieved from <https://www.centerforebp.case.edu/practices/mi>

PRACTICE	PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION	RATING
<b>Trauma-Informed Care</b>	Much of the leading research around youth with high risk factors, or barriers to success, points to the need to offer trauma-informed care. This refers to an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. Practitioners who understand presenting behaviors of traumatized students are better equipped to respond in ways that alleviate pressures of the root causes instead of simply, and often ineffectively, addressing the surfacing symptoms.	Evidence-based practice according to SAMHSA. <sup>6</sup>
<b>Growth Mindset</b>	Growth Mindset is a strengths-based practice that suggests that achievement is a function of strategy and effort applied to reach the goal rather than intrinsic intelligence or deficiencies. In other words, it is the strategy or approach and effort that has the greatest impact on any given outcome. The embodiment of this mindset promotes positive risk-taking and reduces fear of failure, as it is not tied to one's inherent skill or ability.	Research-based practice based on empirical evidence. <sup>7</sup>

### Client Story

Each year, staff at funded programs provide a client story to help illustrate the effect of JPCF-funded services. The following is the client story that BGCP provided for FY 2020-21.

<b>Name of Client</b>	Cynthia
<b>Age and Gender</b>	14, female
<b>Reason for Referral</b>	Cynthia joined because a relative recommended the Boys and Girls programming to her and her family as a support network to transition to and through high school.
<b>Client's Behavior, Affect, and Appearance When They First Started in the Program</b>	Cynthia was very open and outgoing during our first check-in. She expressed insecurities in her reasoning for content understanding and always looked for a "correct" answer. Although Cynthia was very outgoing in our one-to-one check-ins, Cynthia was quiet and reserved during academic tutoring, yet never failed to ask for support. Cynthia demonstrated clear enthusiasm and curiosity to understand her schoolwork. At the beginning of our programming, Cynthia was

<sup>6</sup> SAMHSA. (2014). SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach, p10. Pub ID#: SMA14-4884. <https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA14-4884/SMA14-4884.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Mueller, C. M., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(1), 33-52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.75.1.33>. <http://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-04530-003>.

	<p>dependent on handholding and was afraid to do something wrong even when it required personal opinions and reflections.</p>
<p><b>Activity Engagement and Consistency</b></p>	<p>Cynthia actively participated in academic tutoring, English support, algebra support, high school success advising, Fun Fridays, middle school and high school joint Fun Fridays, and has recently joined our Future Grads program.</p>
<p><b>Client's Behavior, Affect, and Appearance Toward the End of the Program</b></p>	<p>Toward the end of the program, Cynthia's self-confidence was evident. She knew how to advocate for her needs and confidently shared strengths and challenges with her academics. She became more independent and completed most, if not all, work on her own.</p>
<p><b>What the Client Learned as a Result of the Program</b></p>	<p>Cynthia was able to improve in her advocacy skills and learned to be successfully independent. She knows exactly who she can turn to for support and how to navigate those relationships.</p>
<p><b>What the Client is Doing Differently in Their Life Now as a Result of the Program</b></p>	<p>Cynthia is now able to challenge herself to take a community college level course over the summer without fear of failing. She's gained even more interest in college-level work and is interested in pursuing a career in nursing where she can help others and make an impact.</p>
<p><b>The Value of the Program in the Client's Words</b></p>	<p>Cynthia openly shares her gratitude toward the support that she receives through high school success advising and tutoring through our academic department. Cynthia has been able to build strong relationships with her peers as well as our staff on-site and is now taking advantage of our Future Grads program, as well.</p>