

Proposition 64 - TYC Program

Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency Final Evaluation
Report (October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2023)

March 2024



About the Researcher

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a social research firm that helps people build better communities. We do this by creating meaningful evaluation and assessment data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. ASR has the advantage of bringing more than 40 years of experience working with public and private agencies, health and human service organizations, city and county offices, school districts, institutions of higher learning, and charitable foundations. Through our community assessments, program evaluations, and related studies, ASR provides the data-based insights that communities need for effective strategic planning and community interventions.

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Executive Summary

The TYC (Thriving Youth and Community) program was launched as a trauma-informed, culturally and developmentally responsive model to prevent and divert youth from cannabis use and prevent youth involvement in the juvenile justice system. The TYC program targeted a gap in Santa Cruz County's services for middle school and high school aged youth (ages 12-18) facing peer and societal pressures of cannabis use, providing three levels of care (prevention, intervention, cessation), access to substance use treatment and mental health support, case management, leadership and skill-building opportunities and peer mentorship. Partners of TYC included a robust collaboration between the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency (HSA), Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance (PVPSA), the California Institute of Invincible Youth (CIY), and Friday Night Live (FNL), in addition to participating middle and high schools, Probation, and others as needed. TYC services were available to all Santa Cruz County middle and high school students. Prior involvement with the juvenile justice system/probation or explicit youth substance use was not required for program eligibility.

Ultimately, the goal of TYC was to engage system partners (schools, probation, law enforcement) through outreach and trainings in order to prevent and reduce youth involvement in the juvenile justice system by providing necessary treatment and support and opportunities for youth to build on their strengths, enhance decision-making and resiliency skills, and foster positive relationships and meaningful connections to school and community. By dedicating resources to support youth well-being and positive youth development, TYC intended to reduce disciplinary incidents and promote healthy behaviors and supportive systems and environments.

Major Findings

Below is a brief summary of major findings in each of the program's goal areas:

Goal 1: Improve Youth Well-Being and Positive Youth Development

Direct services via Pathways 1, 2 and 3 were implemented by PVPSA staff with youth beginning April 2021. One hundred and sixteen (116) duplicate youth were enrolled in the TYC program, six of which were repeat participants. Note: "Duplicate" refers to youth who enrolled in TYC more than one time. Thirty-nine (39) participants with an identified need were connected to behavioral health and/or other resources. As of September 30, 2023, 42% of 81 direct service pathway participants had successfully completed the program, 31% were still in process, and 27% did not complete the program.

The Integrative Youth Development (IYD) framework was locally implemented with direct service pathway participants at schools and youth in the community during the TYC program. Three hundred and seventy-two (372) unique youth participated in IYD, which resulted in improvements in personal and social skills, prosocial behaviors, and healthy choices. Additionally, 240 unique youth were connected to leadership and skill-building opportunities through Friday Night Live (FNL) across six different chapters at Pajaro Middle School, Pajaro Valley High School, Sequoia High School, Santa Cruz City Schools, Watsonville High School, and the Santa Cruz County Youth Council.

During the course of the TYC program, all PVPSA and CIY staff were trained to implement evidence-based curriculums and research-based promising practices, and all PVPSA program specialists received training on assessment tools. Between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2023, a total of 148 unique outreach contacts were made with system partners.

Goal 2: Prevent Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

In addition to the outreach and education of school partners to address disciplinary incidents and substance use among students, TYC staff contacted law enforcement and probation staff to promote the

TYC program as an alternative to juvenile justice system engagement. These efforts resulted in 13 referrals to TYC made by law enforcement system partners including School Resource Officers and the Probation Department, and dissemination of program information to increase awareness of TYC as an avenue to support youth well-being, connect to school and community, and to reduce disciplinary incidents.

Program Accomplishments

During the grant period the TYC program successfully implemented all planned activities. Some highlights of program goals include:

- **TYC staff were able to expand services to new schools including New Brighton Middle School, Scotts Valley High School, and Sequoia Alternative Education High School.** At New Brighton Middle School, TYC staff were invited to complete a one-time classroom presentation for 6th and 7th grade science classes. At Scotts Valley High School, CIY staff provided the Stanford Cannabis Toolkit and Invincible Youth curriculum to all freshmen health classes. Youth learned about the web of support that can protect them from harm, mitigate trauma and launch them into their greatness. The colorful string in the following video represents a youth's web of support: [IYD Session In Action](#).
- **Invincible Youth was implemented as part of semester-long health elective classes at Sequoia High School.**
- **Annually, Friday Night Live youth planned, designed and implemented an annual peer-to-peer leadership event.** The goal of the Youth in Action Summit was to provide a safe and supportive space for all youth from across Santa Cruz County to connect with one another through fun and interactive activities and workshops that build self-confidence, community, and youth leadership skills with a focus on substance prevention. Through this event, TYC staff were able to promote TYC services and bridge new relationships with Scotts Valley Middle School youth.
- **Friday Night Live developed the Santa Cruz City Schools chapter which served Harbor, Soquel, and Santa Cruz High Schools.** The FNL youth-led chapters hosted recurring weekly meetings and engaged a number of youth across Santa Cruz County.
- **Direct outreach to students facilitated opportunities to have conversations with youth, answer TYC program related questions, and gain a presence in schools.** Support from Friday Night Live youth helped facilitate conversations among other youth who showed interest in program events. School administration and staff were welcoming of TYC staff and were accommodating in providing a space on campus for outreach activities and individual meetings with students.
- **Ongoing efforts to promote the TYC program among stakeholders and community members as well as build rapport with school administrators were achieved.** Collaborative, on-line meetings were held with school-based stakeholders and probation allowing opportunity to discuss program goals and objectives, further identify community needs and resources, strategize student engagement and promote TYC referrals. Involved in this process included the Student Support Services Director, Superintendent of School, Principals, Assistant Principals, Inside Education members, School Social Workers, Probation, and additional community partners. TYC and Santa Cruz City Schools established a Memorandum of Understanding and Illuminate Education accounts, a platform used to secure student data and provide instructional tools, which allowed the capacity of TYC staff to access pertinent student information.

Challenges

During the grant period, the TYC program faced several unanticipated barriers which impeded its progress. Below is an overview of the major factors and how they were addressed:

- **Initially, COVID-19 and the related safety measures were an impediment to launching the program. While COVID-19 continued to delay progress by slowing referrals, assessments, and connections to services it did not stop these activities.**
 - The COVID-19 safety guidelines for schools resulted in distance learning, which decreased the visibility and ability to identify and refer youth in need of services. This impacted suspension rates positively, but not as a direct result of TYC services, as no students were identified using or having substances and subsequently in danger of being suspended. The impact of COVID-19 and cancellation of in-person events and impeding priorities for school staff affected the ability of TYC staff to adequately reach school staff, youth, and parents. This slowed down the referral process and implementation start dates impacting the overall number of youth during the course of the program. TYC originally planned to serve 185 youth in Pathway 1 – Prevention, 75 youth in Pathway 2 – Intervention and 35 youth in Pathway 3. Outreach to additional school districts to expand opportunities for referrals, coordination of school partner capacity building training to enhance understanding of integrative youth development processes and need for greater student-adult interaction and how to facilitate referrals were performed.
- **Staff turnover across TYC programming was experienced throughout the course of the grant, which led to modifications in service delivery.**
 - To mitigate this challenge, the County of Santa Cruz hired a Senior Health Educator and Health Services Manager, and PVPSA hired one full-time TYC Program Specialist who focused on TYC activities. Modifying services to provide more group sessions to reach more youth with fewer staff, offering virtual programming, weekend sessions and offering county-wide open sessions that are not site specific were some of the ways staff worked to solve these issues.
- **TYC staff faced challenges involving a low uptake of referrals, dropping out of services, and limitations to forming group sessions.**
 - The lack of referrals may have been reflected by the limited capacity for school staff to recognize a student in need of services. When processing referrals, there were delays in completing intake assessments as there were difficulties contacting youth and/or parents resulting in a lack of program enrollment. As an attempt to address these challenges, the modality of communication was extended to phone calls (with caller ID displayed), text messages, and emails (utilizing an established district email address) while maintaining compliance with confidentiality. When appropriate, parents or guardians were asked about ways to get a hold of youth. Attempts to encourage youth were made by identifying and building on the youth's interests or goals, offering incentives, or providing opportunities to earn elective credit. TYC staff were flexible in allowing space to facilitate activities in a more favorable environment on or off school grounds that did not align too closely to a classroom structure.
 - A related challenge was students not showing up to their scheduled sessions with TYC staff, and/or dropping out of services. TYC staff met with Assistant Principals to address challenges with youth retention and completion of TYC services for youth referred by school partners. TYC staff worked with Assistant Principals to ensure student expectations to complete TYC services were clearly communicated to youth and families and that accountability and consequences for dropping out were implemented. TYC also worked with Assistant Principals to identify school support systems to encourage youth participation and avoid drop out of TYC services.

- Additionally, TYC services were primarily individual services as the majority of students and families preferred individual services over group sessions. This limited TYC staff capacity and the benefits of group services such as accountability, peer-to-peer learning, and relationship building. The TYC team strategized to increase group services by integrating more prevention classroom presentations as a way to boost program participant numbers overall while encouraging self and peer referrals.

Conclusion

Despite major, unexpected challenges, TYC actively implemented strategies to identify and divert youth to alternative resources for substance use-related incidents, increase protective factors and decrease risk factors for youth. This program forged new partnerships, implemented evidence-based curriculum, and built the capacity of system partners to promote youth well-being and positive youth development.

Program Background

Guided by the core values of dignity and well-being, the TYC program intended to serve 295 youth over the three-year grant period. The focus for direct services was on middle and high school aged youth who were at risk for substance use or using substances and were utilized instead of school suspensions and law enforcement adjudications. Some TYC participants received one-time interventions while others received ongoing supportive services. Additionally, building the capacity of system partners by enhancing the quality of existing services and implementing trainings on prevention, intervention, treatment, and cessation resources available, the TYC referral process and supportive youth development strategies to connect many more youth to appropriate services. TYC participants were referred to the program by school administrators and other school staff, parents/guardians, Probation staff, and local community-based organizations. Youth were eligible to participate in youth development, prevention and intervention activities and leadership, advocacy, and volunteer opportunities, and receive behavioral health services and case management based on established criteria and assessed need.

The TYC program funded three diversion pathways tailored to individual SUD, MH, and other basic needs, alongside evidence-based programming that integrated positive youth development. The combination of these efforts was intended to create long-term and system-wide changes in substance-related disciplinary incidents including, school suspensions and encounters with law enforcement and improve the capacity of system partners to effectively intervene, and subsequently improve outcomes and public safety. The first change was to emphasize prevention, intervention, and cessation by expanding diversion opportunities to address the problems related to youth substance use, lack of connectedness and best meet the identified needs of youth in the community. The second change was to shift the system's attention from punishment and blame toward a focus on youth health and well-being, including building a strong foundation for belonging and equitable opportunities for youth to thrive.

Program Goals

The two goals of the TYC program were to 1) improve youth well-being and positive youth development by increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors and 2) prevent youth involvement in the juvenile justice system.

Flow Chart of the TYC Pathways

As shown in the TYC pathway flow chart below, youth participated in one of three direct service pathways (prevention, intervention, cessation) and/or youth development and prevention programming including, Integrative Youth Development (IYD) and Friday Night Live (FNL). Youth referred to TYC were screened and

assessed to determine the pathway to their treatment and support service needs, and then referred and enrolled in the appropriate interventions.



Pathway 1 – Prevention: Included an eight-week, 1.5-hour program consisting of four weeks of the Stanford Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit that incorporated IYD. This was followed by four weeks of IYD group sessions. PVPSA continuously monitored youth needs throughout the eight-week program and determined with the youth if they should move into a different pathway.

Pathway 2 – Intervention: Consisted of The Seven Challenges groups that occurred once a week for 90-minute sessions lasting a period of four to five months depending on the needs of the youth.

Pathway 3 – Cessation: Consisted of Project EX, a smoking/vaping cessation program. Project EX consisted of eight 45-minute sessions emphasizing coping with stress, dealing with nicotine withdrawal, relaxation techniques, and how to avoid relapse. It aimed to teach self-control, anger management, mood management, and goal-setting techniques, and it provided self-esteem enhancement.

The goals and objectives detailed below are drawn from the workplan submitted with the TYC proposal and approved by the BSCC. See the Evaluation Results and Discussion section for additional information related to progress on the work plan.

GOAL 1: IMPROVE YOUTH WELLBEING AND POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Improve youth wellbeing and positive youth development by increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors.

Objective 1a. Eighty-five percent (85%) of program participants demonstrate an increased understanding of the impacts of cannabis and gain refusal skills as measured by Cannabis Toolkit pre/post-surveys (Pathway 1).

Objective 1b. Fifty percent (50%) of The Seven Challenges program participants will report a decrease of cannabis vaping as measured by The Seven Challenges post-survey (Pathway 2).

Objective 1c. Seventy percent (70%) of cessation therapy participants report quitting vaping as measured by program data (Pathway 3).

Objective 1d. Eighty percent (80%) of program participants will increase school, community, and adult connectedness as measured by IYD Student Support Card (*integrated into all pathways*).

- *Conduct intakes, and CRAFFT assessments to determine with youth which pathway (1-Prevention; 2-Intervention; 3-Treatment/Cessation) they will pursue.*
- *Establish agreements with youth participants.*
- *Implement Stanford Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit, The Seven Challenges, Integrated Youth Development, and Cessation therapy with youth.*
- *Provide case management, programming and services to youth based on assessment and selected pathways.*
- *Engage youth, parents/caregivers in 'completion ceremony' honoring youth success.*
- *Connect and support youth in engaging in leadership and skill building opportunities.*
- *Link youth to ongoing behavioral health services or resource services (if needed/desired).*
- *Monitor and measure outcomes.*

GOAL 2: PREVENT YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Objective 2a. By September 2023, there will be a 40% decrease in cannabis and/or vaping related suspensions among participating school sites as measured by school site data (baseline will be established at the start of the project).

Objective 2b. By September 2023, there will be a 25% decrease (from 48-36) in youth referred to juvenile probation for cannabis-related incidents as measured by juvenile probation and law enforcement data.

Objective 2c. By September 2023, there will be a 90% increase in participating school sites identifying and diverting youth to TYC for cannabis related incidents as measured by school suspension rates.

- *Establish contractual agreements with provider agencies.*
- *Train Program Specialists in assessment tools.*
- *Build capacity of Program Specialists to implement selected EBPs and promising practices.*
- *Develop and/or enhance necessary logistical processes, protocols and referral forms.*
- *Conduct outreach, and engage system partners (schools, probation, law enforcement) and cannabis industry partners about new TYC protocol, process and services.*
- *Provide trainings to system partners on deferment program, prevention/intervention strategies, referral process and supportive youth development strategies.*
- *Monitor and measure outcomes.*

Evaluation Methods and Design

As part of the evaluation process, the external evaluator, Applied Survey Research (ASR), confirmed key outcomes and developed tools to measure outcomes in accordance with best practices. The program's evaluation employed a mixed-methods design, utilizing quantitative and qualitative data to assess the various overall program measures' progress toward accomplishing outputs and outcomes associated with

implementation. Process and outcome measures of the evaluation utilized data from multiple sources and perspectives (trackers, assessments, surveys).

Key Evaluation Questions

ASR's evaluation sought to answer the following overarching questions related to the design, implementation, and outcomes of the TYC program.

Design and Implementation: What has the TYC program done?

1. Is there a clear and efficient referral protocol to route eligible youth into the TYC program?
2. Were the strengths and needs of participants identified using standardized assessments (CRAFT, ASAM)?
3. Were appropriate pathway plans established with each participant?
4. Was the program pathway effective in supporting changes in youth behavior and engagement in prosocial activities?
5. Did participants meet their overall pathway goal (Prevention, Intervention, Cessation)?
6. What progress towards other established goals were met by participants?
7. Were the estimated number of participants expected to receive each type of intervention/service served?
8. Were programs implemented with fidelity to the model?
9. Were referrals provided for participants needing additional behavioral health or other services/activities to enhance protective factors?
10. What successful outcome measures did participants improve?
11. Did participants experience an increase in protective factors and/or decrease in risk factors?
12. Were spot checks of data markers including GPA, school attendance, disciplinary incidents effective in re-engaging participants?
13. Were individual participant check-ins effective in deferring youth adjudications?

Outcomes: How effective was TYC in achieving its goals?

1. Was there an increase in participants' understanding of the health impacts of cannabis use?
2. Did youth gain cannabis refusal skills?
3. Did participants report a decrease in cannabis vaping/use?
4. Did participants report a decrease in other substance use?
5. Did participants report an increase in prosocial behaviors?
6. Did participants report they quit vaping/smoking cannabis and/or tobacco?
7. Did participants report an increase in prosocial behaviors?
8. Did participants report an increase in caring adults they are or could be connected with?
9. Were participants able to identify their specific protective factors?
10. Did participants report an increase in protective factors?
11. Did participants report an increased understanding of their resilience?
12. Did participants report an increased understanding of how to increase their resilience?
13. Did participants report an increase in their ability to identify the attitudes and behaviors that erode connection to caring adults?
14. Were participants able to identify adverse childhood experiences that may create barriers to connection?
15. Did participants report an increase in gratitude and empathy for caring adults?
16. Did participants report an increase in the ability to identify the social norms that impact their decision-making?

17. Did the TYC training of key stakeholders increase referrals in place of suspension?
18. Did schools utilize the TYC referral process to decrease suspensions?
19. Did training in law enforcement and juvenile probation increase TYC referrals?
20. Did law enforcement/juvenile probation utilize the TYC referral process to decrease youth justice system engagement?
21. Did cannabis-related suspensions decrease as a result of schools identifying and diverting students to TYC?

Tracking Tools

Referral Tracking: Youth referred to TYC were logged into a Referral Tracker managed by PVPESA. This tool tracked intake data such as demographic and background information including age, gender, race/ethnicity, education status and employment. It also included referral source, if the referral to TYC was an alternative to suspension, probation status, and risk status based on assessment(s) completed at intake.

Case Management Tracking: Youth enrolled in TYC were logged into a Monthly Case Log managed by PVPESA used to track participant progress and involvement within their referred pathway(s) along with case management hours, intervention sessions, and reason for program exit.

Outreach, Education, Training and Meeting Tracking:

Components and activities of the TYC program that did not directly involve service pathway participants were tracked in an Outreach, Education, Training and Meeting Tracker managed by the TYC team. The tracker collected all program promotion, outreach, presentation, and education efforts performed by TYC staff including, dates, intended audience, number reached/expected, and information distributed. Training information including dates, type of training, and participants facilitating and receiving training were also recorded in this tool. Additionally, internal TYC staff meetings and meetings with system partners were documented in this tracker.

The Outreach, Education, Training and Meeting Tracker was also used to capture positive youth development and prevention via Friday Night Live (FNL) and Integrative Youth Development (IYD). FNL data tracked included number of FNL participants, FNL chapters youth engaged with, number of meetings youth attended and hours of participation. Similarly, IYD activities including length of activities and number reached/expected were documented in this tracking tool.

Risk Assessments

CRAFFT (Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Friends, Trouble): The CRAFFT is a validated health screening tool designed to identify substance use disorder among youth ages 12-21. The CRAFFT helped identify the appropriate service pathway for all youth enrolled in TYC: Pathway 1 – Prevention, Pathway 2 – Intervention and/or Pathway 3 – Cessation. For a score of 0-1 youth were referred to Pathway 1 – Prevention unless findings during the assessment determined a higher level of services was needed.

ASAM (American Society of Addiction Medicine): The ASAM is a validated health screening tool that provides a holistic approach for determining individualized and outcome-driven treatment plans. The ASAM was conducted with TYC participants on an as needed basis based on the determination of a score of 2 or more in the CRAFFT assessment.

Pre- and Post-Surveys

Pre- and post-surveys from all direct service pathways were developed to provide a context of participant perception, behavior and/or impact regarding substance use and services offered through TYC.

Participants completed the pre-survey before the start of the first intervention session and the post-survey immediately following the final session. Data was collected online via SurveyMonkey.

Pathway 1 (Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit): Included items on participant experience with tobacco and cannabis use and opinions about tobacco and cannabis products.

Pathway 2 (The Seven Challenges): Included items on participant experience with substance use, perception of harm, experiences with a caring adult, perceptions of strength and experience in the program.

Pathway 3 (Project EX): Included items on participant decision to attend the group, experience with tobacco use and perception of the quality of the program.

Integrative Youth Development

Integrative Youth Development (IYD) identified and measured the developmental ecology (web of support) experienced by each participant. The measurable factors that created the web of support being tracked included the depth of connection to caring adults, tangible and intangible supports, innate resiliency, experiences that erode resiliency, strengths and multiple intelligences, attitude and behaviors that are barriers to connection, support for connected adults and social norms impacting the youth.

Student Support Card™: The Student Support Card™ assessed and measured seven key impact areas that influence the positive development of IYD participants. Each measurable factor was identified by one of seven colors. Each participant responded to statements on 11 surveys (self-reporting). The Student Support Card™ measured and recorded participant mixture and strength of these colors at any given time. The resulting kaleidoscope snapshot was presented in an easy-to-understand visual representation. The summary provided meaningful clarity and insight to improve the strength of positive factors and reduce negative factors.

Youth Development Survey

The California Friday Night Live (FNL) Partnership conduct an annual Youth Development Survey to gather valuable information about youth experiences in the FNL programs throughout the state. Survey data was collected from all FNL participants in Santa Cruz County on how youth experience a safe environment, opportunities for community engagement, opportunities for leadership and advocacy, opportunities to build caring and meaningful relationships with adults and peers, and opportunities to build interesting and relevant skills-building activities. Youth who participated in FNL with funding from the TYC program were included in this county-wide survey data.

Criteria for Participant Eligibility

TYC was launched to address the lack of resources, infrastructure, and capacity of system partners to effectively prevent and intervene in youth cannabis use. TYC services were available to all Santa Cruz County middle and high school youth at-risk for substance use or using substances, who needed substance use disorder, mental health, and other related services. Anyone concerned about the health and well-being of a student could make a referral to the TYC program.

Process and Outcome Measures

ASR collected the following measures to answer the key evaluation questions related to TYC implementation.

PROCESS MEASURE	SOURCE	COLLECTION METHOD
Goal 1: Improve Youth Well-Being and Positive Youth Development		

PROCESS MEASURE	SOURCE	COLLECTION METHOD
Direct Service Pathway Participants		
1. Total youth referred into TYC	PVPSA	Referral tracker
2. Number of youth participating in the TYC program	PVPSA	Referral tracker
3. Identify the strengths and needs of referred participants using standardized assessments, CRAFFT and ASAM (if needed)	PVPSA	Referral tracker
4. Number of youth intakes with CRAFFT assessment completed	PVPSA	Referral tracker
5. Number of youth given ASAM assessment	PVPSA	Referral tracker
6. Number of youth in Pathway 1 – Stanford Cannabis Toolkit	PVPSA	Monthly case log
7. Number of youth in Pathway 2 – The Seven Challenges	PVPSA	Monthly case log
8. Number of youth in Pathway 3 – Project EX Cessation Therapy	PVPSA	Monthly case log
9. Number of youth intervention sessions held	PVPSA	Monthly case log
10. Number of youth in program specialist sessions	PVPSA	Monthly case log
11. Number of case management sessions held	PVPSA	Program records
12. Average number of case management sessions held per student	PVPSA	Program records
13. Number of youth connected to behavioral health and/or other resources	PVPSA	Monthly case log
14. Percentage and number of youth who completed their pathway(s)	PVPSA	Monthly case log
15. Percentage and number of youth after pathway completion who met their overall pathway goal(s)	PVPSA	Monthly case log
16. Number of youth participants who re-engaged with TYC after initial completion	PVPSA	Monthly case log
17. Number of youth who participated in spot checks after completion of their pathway(s)	PVPSA	Monthly case log
IYD and FNL Participants		
18. Number of youth in Integrative Youth Development	CIY	Outreach and education tracker
19. Number of youth connected to Friday Night Live leadership/skill-building opportunities	HSA	Outreach and education tracker
Program Staff and System Partners		

PROCESS MEASURE	SOURCE	COLLECTION METHOD
20. Number of TYC staff trained to implement evidence-based curriculums and research-based promising practices	PVPSA/CIY/HSA	Outreach and education tracker
21. Number of PVPSA program specialists trained in assessment tools	PVPSA	Outreach and education tracker
22. Number of trainings completed with system partners	PVPSA/CIY/HSA	Outreach and education tracker
23. Number of outreach contacts with system partners	PVPSA/CIY	Outreach and education tracker
24. Percent of system and cannabis industry partners with increased knowledge of TYC protocol, process, and services*	PVPSA	Outreach and education tracker
25. Number of system partners making referrals	PVPSA	Outreach and education tracker
26. Number of individuals stating there was a clear and efficient referral protocol to route eligible youth into the TYC program*	PVPSA	Referral tracker
27. Percentage and number of illicit drug-related suspensions before TYC program implementation	CA Department of Education	Online database
28. Percentage and number of suspensions due to illicit drug-related offenses	CA Department of Education	Online database

Goal 2: Prevent Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

Direct Service Pathway Participants

1. Number of youth diverted from local law enforcement adjudication	PVPSA	Monthly case log
2. Number of youth diverted from the juvenile justice system	PVPSA	Monthly case log
3. Number of youth who avoided a cannabis-related suspension due to TYC diversion	PVPSA	Monthly case log
4. Number of youth participants who re-engaged with the program	PVPSA	Referral tracker

Program Staff and System Partners

5. Number of outreach contacts to juvenile probation, law enforcement and school resource officers	PVPSA/CIY	Outreach and education tracker
6. Number of outreach materials disseminated to law enforcement and probation partners	PVPSA/CIY	Outreach and education tracker
7. Percentage of referrals made by law enforcement system partners	PVPSA	Referral tracker
8. Percentage of youth on probation due to cannabis-related offenses	DAO/CRC	Referral tracker

OUTCOME MEASURE	SOURCE	COLLECTION METHOD
1. Percentage of youth demonstrating increased understanding of the impacts of cannabis and increased refusal skills	PVPSA	Pre/post-surveys
2. Percentage of youth reporting a decrease in cannabis vaping	PVPSA	Pre/post-surveys
3. Percentage of youth reporting quitting vaping	PVPSA	Pre/post-surveys
4. Percentage of youth reporting increased adult connectedness	PVPSA/CIY	Pre/post-surveys and Student Support Card
5. Percentage of youth receiving services and support through case management	PVPSA	Monthly case log
6. Number of youth engaging in leadership and skill-building opportunities through FNL participation	HSA	Outreach and education tracker
7. Percentage of youth referred to behavioral health services and/or other resources	PVPSA	Pre/post-surveys

**Indicates data not collected during the program. See the Difficulties with Data Collection section for a full list.*

Difficulties with Data Collection

With any program of this size and complexity, there are challenges with data collection. Below are some of the issues experienced in the TYC program:

- Due to staff turnover and resulting program implications, the TYC team experienced a learning curve in inputting participation data into the TYC trackers.
- The burden for staff to enter data into the TYC trackers in addition to their own required systems led to delays and required additional follow up.
- There were challenges following up with TYC staff to obtain additional participant data not tracked in the TYC trackers and arranging for the “warm hand off” of data.
- Tracking service pathway participants presented challenges, as communication, contact and interest among youth varied over time.
 - Additionally, youth who dropped out of the program or were closed by TYC staff because of no contact, did not complete all pathway sessions. TYC staff were unable to administer pathway post-surveys to measure outcomes including the impact of services offered.

Due to various data collection challenges, the following evaluation plan process measures for goal 1 were not collected during the duration of the program:

- Number of individuals stating there was a clear and efficient referral protocol to route eligible youth into the TYC program.
- Percentage of system and cannabis industry partners with increased knowledge of TYC protocol, process, and services.

Successful Program Completion

Overall, TYC participants were considered to have successfully completed the program if they achieved any of the following outcomes:

1. Completion of a CRAFFT assessment and ASAM assessment (if needed).

2. Completion of a pre/post-survey before the start of the first session and immediately following the final session as designed (*Pathway 1, 2, and 3*).
3. Completion of a Student Support Card (*Pathway 1*).
4. Completion of up to a set of nine Seven Challenges Journals as needed (*Pathway 2*).
5. Adherence to all eight sessions delivered over eight weeks (*Pathway 1 and 3*).
6. Adherence to appropriate topic areas delivered in compliance with the Fidelity Checklists (*Pathway 1, 2, and 3*).
7. Completion of suspension/deferment requirements (if applicable).

TYC Final Evaluation Findings

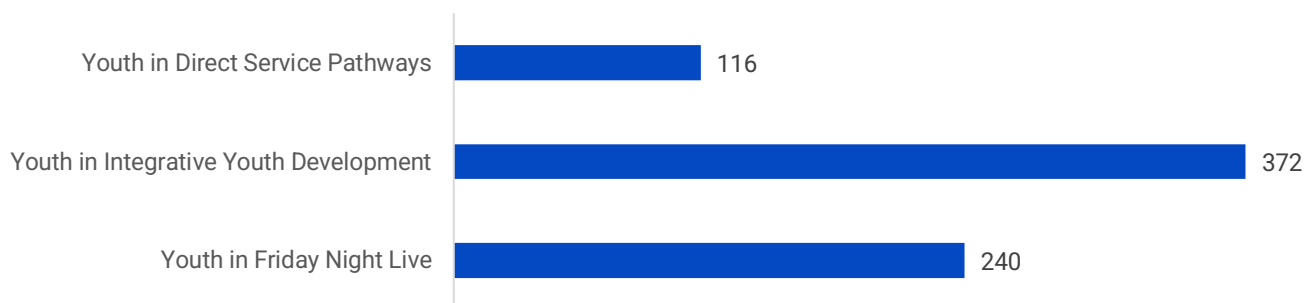
While the COVID-19 pandemic and staff turnover slowed referrals, assessments, and connection to services, they did not stop all program activities. TYC staff adapted and found flexible and creative ways to ensure program activities continued. Despite the many challenges throughout the program, participants were enrolled into and completed the TYC program where they received needed treatment and support, youth received positive youth development programming via IYD and FNL, and TYC staff received training that improved how they supported and served middle and high school aged youth at-risk for substance use. Additionally, TYC staff reached system partners through outreach, education and training efforts, expanding partnership and collaboration with youth serving organizations throughout Santa Cruz County. See the Evaluation Results and Discussion section for specific information on the data gathered for each goal area.

The following information outlines the demographic characteristics or participant information for each of the two goal areas.

Goal 1: Improve Youth Well-Being and Positive Youth Development

Of the 116 duplicate youth enrolled in TYC's direct service pathways, most (85% or 99) were between the ages of 13 and 17. Thirty-eight percent (38% or 44) were White, 36% (42) were Hispanic or Latino, and 57% (66) were male (see Evaluation Results and Discussion section for full breakdown of demographics). Demographic data was not tracked for Integrative Youth Development and Friday Night Live participants.

Total Number of Youth Participants, Goal 1



Note: Twenty-one (21) of the 372 total IYD youth were connected to IYD via Pathway 1.

Goal 2: Prevent Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

Of the 116 duplicate youth enrolled in TYC's direct service pathways, six were repeat clients. Three of the six enrolled in TYC for a second time after initial completion of their service pathway. While only five of the

168 outreach contacts to system partners were with juvenile justice system partners, they included School Resource Officers, the Santa Cruz Police Department, the Probation Department, and the District Attorney's Office.

Summary of Process and Outcome Evaluation Results

Data instruments and tools, including the data collection tools and pre/post-surveys described above, were developed to assess progress towards the following process and outcome measures. See the Changes to the Evaluation Plan section for more information on changes to the evaluation plan.

PROCESS MEASURE	RESULT
Goal 1: Improve Youth Well-Being and Positive Youth Development	
Total youth referred into TYC	153 duplicated
Number of youth participating in the TYC program	116 duplicated
Identify the strengths and needs of referred participants using standardized assessments, CRAFFT and ASAM (if needed)	Completed
Number of youth intakes with CRAFFT assessment completed	107
Number of youth given ASAM assessment	28
Number of youth in Pathway 1 – Stanford Cannabis Toolkit <i>Note: Pathway data was not available for all 116 youth who participated in TYC.</i>	63
Number of youth in Pathway 2 – The Seven Challenges <i>Note: Pathway data was not available for all 116 youth who participated in TYC.</i>	35
Number of youth in Pathway 3 – Project EX Cessation Therapy <i>Note: Pathway data was not available for all 116 youth who participated in TYC.</i>	9
Number of youth intervention sessions held	870
Number of youth in program specialist sessions	116
Number of case management sessions held <i>Note: Case management session data was only available for 15 of 116 total youth who participated in TYC.</i>	23
Average number of case management sessions held per student	1.5
Number of youth connected to behavioral health and/or other resources	39
Percentage and number of youth who completed their pathway(s) <i>Note: Pathway completion data was only available for 81 of 116 total youth who participated in TYC.</i>	42% (34/81)
Percentage and number of youth after pathway completion who met their overall pathway goal(s) <i>Note: Pathway completion data was only available for 81 of 116 total youth who participated in TYC.</i>	42% (34/81)

PROCESS MEASURE	RESULT
Number of youth participants who re-engaged with TYC after initial completion (of their direct service pathway) <i>Note: "Re-engaged" refers to youth who enrolled in TYC for a second time.</i>	3
Number of youth in Integrative Youth Development <i>Note: Twenty-one (21) of the 372 total IYD youth were connected to IYD via Pathway 1.</i>	372
Number of youth connected to Friday Night Live leadership/skill-building opportunities	240
Number of TYC staff trained to implement evidence-based curriculums and research-based promising practices	PVPSA: All CIY: All
Number of PVPSA program specialists trained in assessment tools	All
Number of trainings completed with system partners	3
Number of outreach contacts with system partners	148
Number of system partners making referrals <i>Note: Data is shown as a count rather than as a percentage because all possible system partners were not identified at the start of the program.</i>	11
Percentage and number of illicit drug-related suspensions before TYC program implementation <i>Note: Data from the California Department of Education was only available for illicit drug-related suspensions, not cannabis specific.</i>	2018-19: 22% (474/2,173) 2019-20: 24% (353/1,486)
Percentage and number of suspensions due to illicit drug-related offenses <i>Note: Data from the California Department of Education was only available for illicit drug-related suspensions, not cannabis specific.</i>	2020-21: 32% (7/22) 2021-22: 20% (365/1,840) 2022-23: 20% (400/1,972)
Goal 2: Prevent Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System	
Number of youth diverted from local law enforcement adjudication <i>Note: This is likely due to the low number of referrals received from law enforcement system partners.</i>	0
Number of youth diverted from the juvenile justice system <i>Note: This is likely due to the low number of referrals received from law enforcement system partners.</i>	0
Number of youth who avoided a suspension due to TYC diversion <i>Note: It is unknown if the reason for the suspension was due to a cannabis-related offense.</i>	1
Number of youth participants who re-engaged with TYC <i>Note: "Re-engaged" refers to youth who enrolled in TYC for a second time.</i>	6
Number of outreach contacts to juvenile probation, law enforcement and school resource officers <i>Note: Data shows outreach contacts rather than presentations because outreach and education conducted by TYC staff were not only presentations.</i>	5
Percent of referrals made by law enforcement system partners	8%

PROCESS MEASURE	RESULT
<i>Note: Data shows the referrals made by law enforcement system partners rather than law enforcement system partners making referrals because all possible law enforcement system partners were not identified at the start of the program. Additionally, referral sources were tracked by type, not by specific law enforcement agency.</i>	(13/153)
Percent of youth on probation <i>Note: It is unknown if the reason for the youth being on probation was due to a cannabis-related offense.</i>	1% (1/116)

OUTCOME MEASURES	
Percentage of youth demonstrating increased understanding of the impacts of substances <i>Note: Pathway 1 data shows the percentage of youth demonstrating increased understanding of the impacts of substances rather than the percentage of youth demonstrating increased understanding of the impacts of cannabis and increased refusal skills.</i>	Pathway 1 Pre: 13.0% Post: 14.4%
Percentage of youth reporting a decrease in marijuana use <i>Note: Pathway 1 data shows the percentage of youth reporting a decrease in marijuana use rather than the percentage of youth reporting a decrease in cannabis vaping. Due to the small sample size, Pathway 2 pre- and post-survey data are not included in this report.</i>	Pathway 1 Pre: 88% Post: 54%
Percentage of youth reporting trying to quit marijuana <i>Note: Pathway 1 data shows the percentage of youth reporting trying to quit marijuana rather than the percentage of youth reporting quitting vaping. Due to the small sample size, Pathway 3 pre- and post-survey data are not included in this report.</i>	Pathway 1 Pre: 12% Post: 26%
Percentage of IYD participants who were able to identify at least one caring and connected adult <i>Note: Data shows the percentage of youth who identified at least one caring and connected adult rather than the percentage of youth who reported an increase in adult connectedness.</i>	91% (339/372)
Percentage of youth receiving services and support through case management	100% (116/116)
Percentage of youth referred to behavioral health services and/or other resources	34% (39/116)

Evaluation Results and Discussion

TYC Goal 1: Improve Youth Well-being and Positive Youth Development

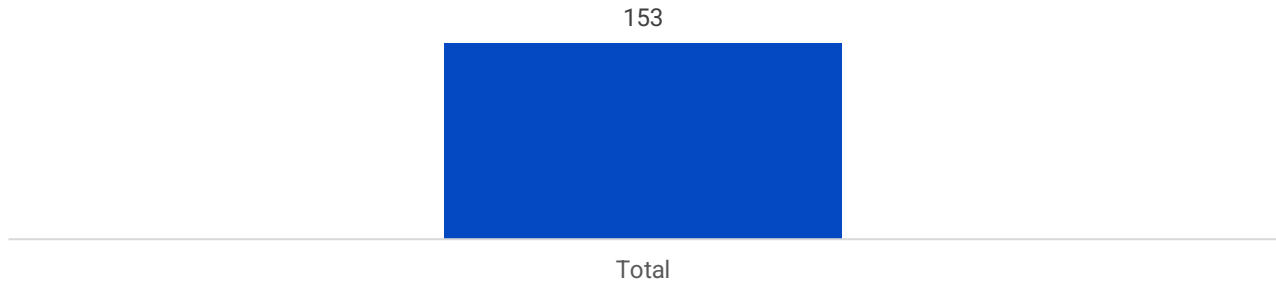
Improve youth well-being and positive youth development by increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors.

DIRECT SERVICE PATHWAYS

REFERRALS AND DEMOGRAPHICS OF PARTICIPANTS

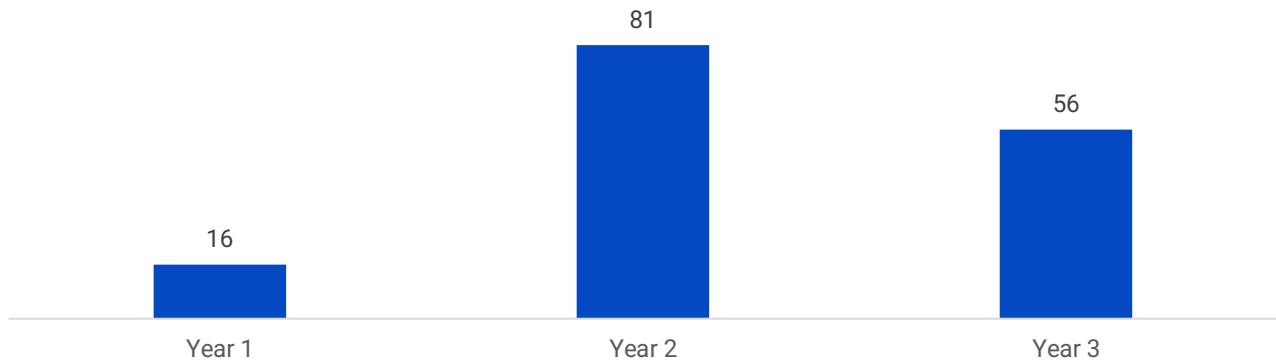
A total of 153 duplicate youth were referred to the TYC program between January 2021 and March 2023, 20 of which were referred more than one time. Of all the possible referral sources, school administrators (e.g., principals, assistant principals) was the most common with 110 referrals. As of September 30, 2023, 116 duplicate youth were enrolled in TYC, six of which were repeat participants.

Total Youth Referred to TYC



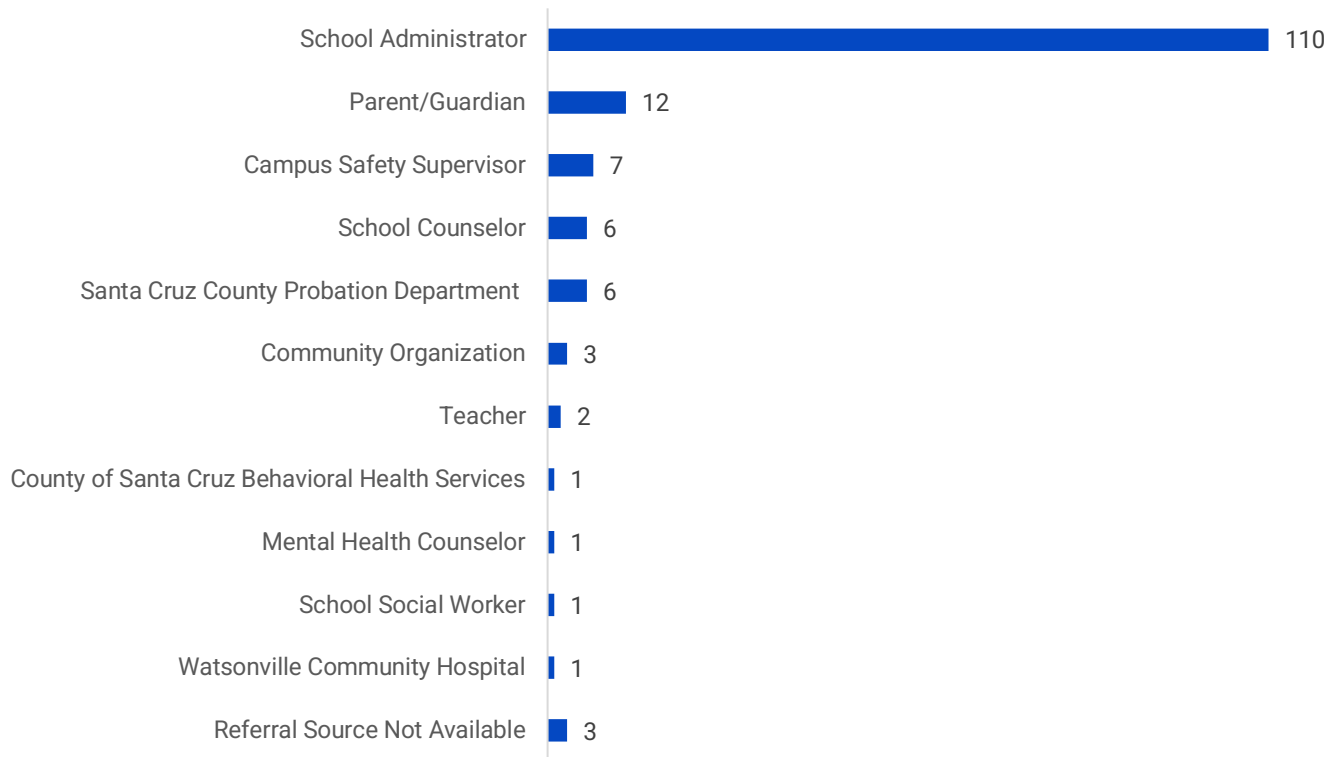
Note: Referral data does not add up to the total youth who participated in TYC (116) because 20 youth were referred more than one time.

Total Youth Referred to TYC, by Year



n=153

Note: Referral data does not add up to the total youth who participated in TYC (116) because 20 youth were referred more than one time.

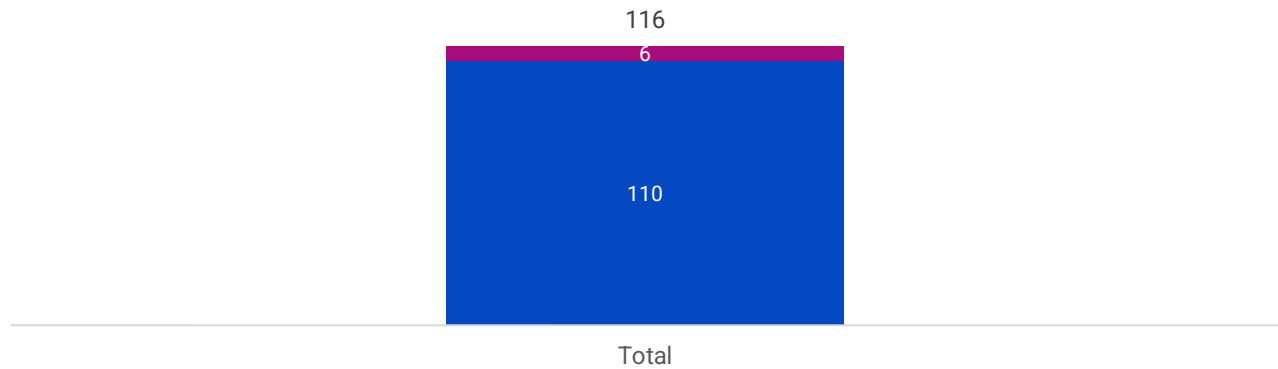
Total Youth Referred to TYC, by Referral Source

n=153

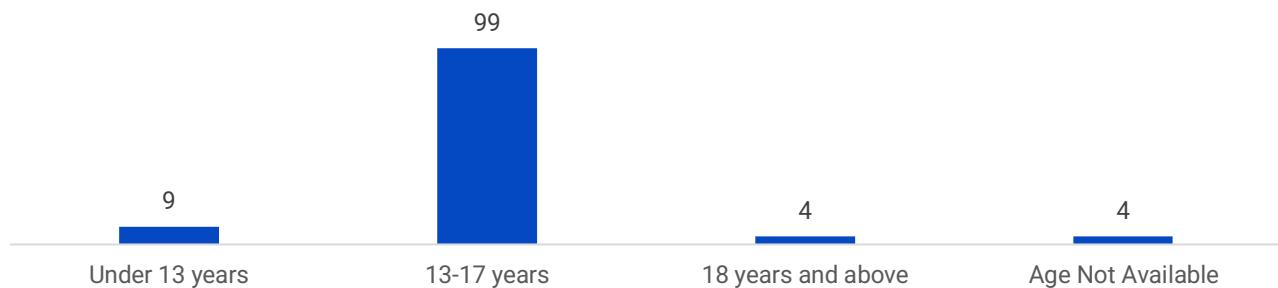
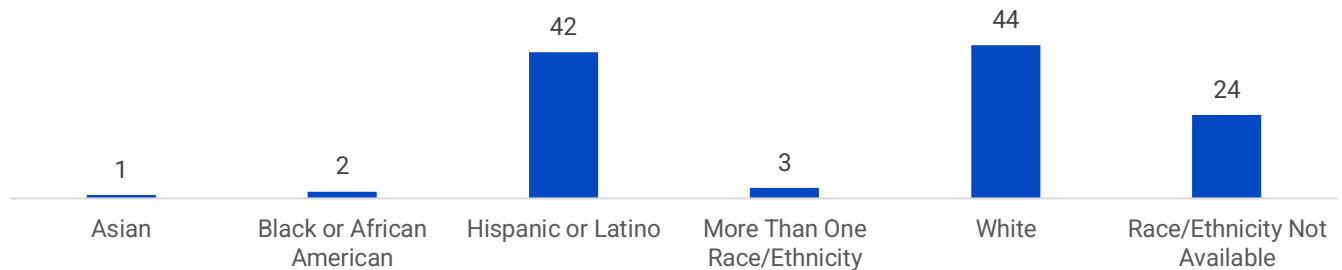
Note: Referral source data does not add up to the total youth who participated in TYC (116) because 20 youth were referred more than one time.

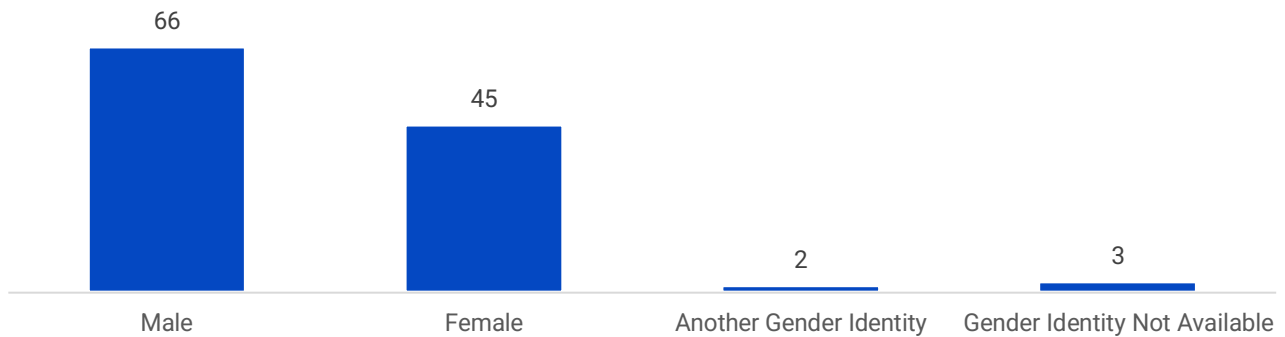
Number of Youth Participating in TYC

■ New Participants Added ■ Re-Entered

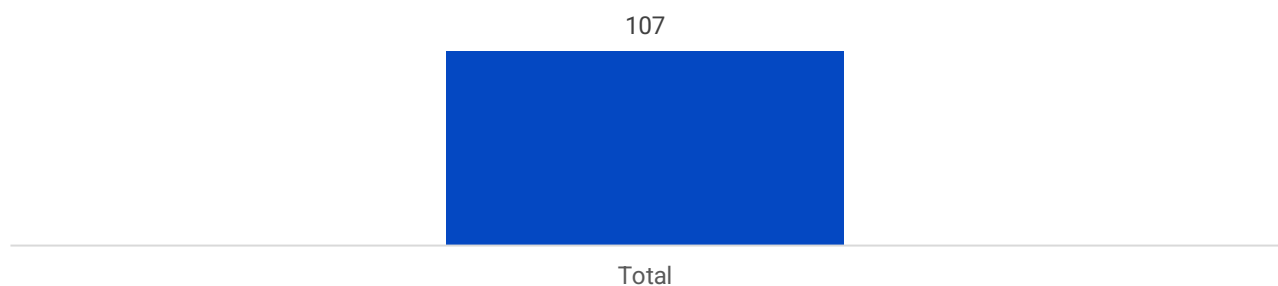
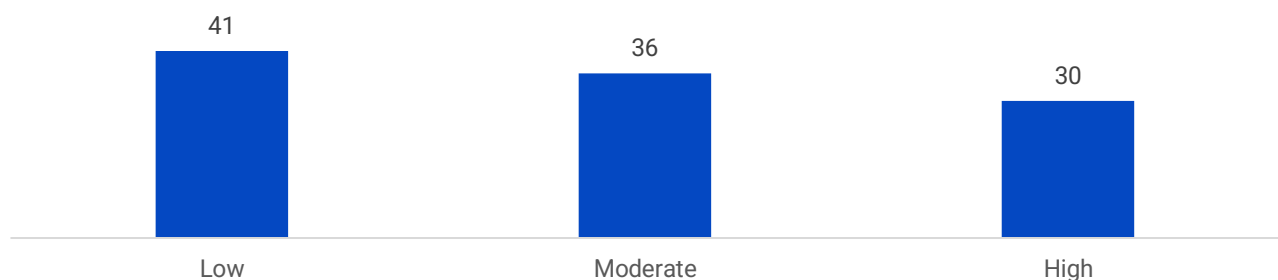
*n=116*

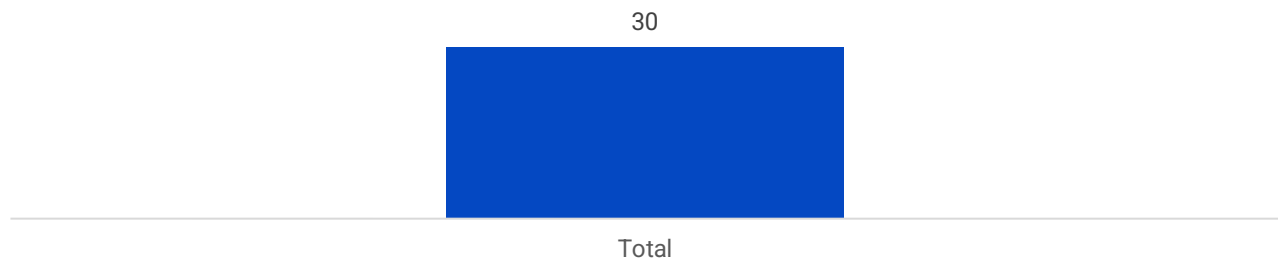
Most service pathway participants (99 or 85%) were between the ages of 13 and 17. Forty-four (44 or 38%) were White, 42 (36%) were Hispanic or Latino, and 66 (57%) were male.

Number of Youth Participating in TYC, by Age*n=116***Number of Youth Participating in TYC, by Race/Ethnicity***n=116*

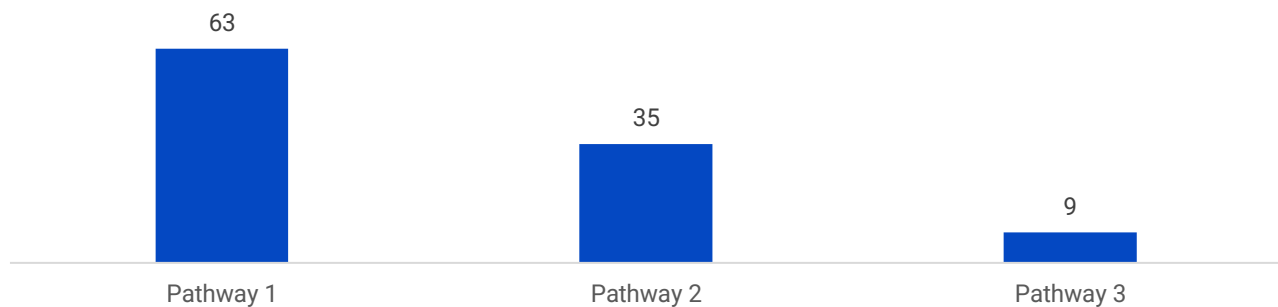
Number of Youth Participating in TYC, by Gender Identity*n*=116**ASSESSMENT AND SERVICES FOR PARTICIPANTS**

The CRAFFT (Car, Relax, Alone, Forget, Friends, Trouble) assessment was administered to youth participants at program intake to identify their needs and to inform level of care and service planning. Of the 116 duplicate youth enrolled in TYC, 107 (92%) completed a CRAFFT assessment. Over one-third (41 or 37%) were at low risk and a majority had medium to high levels of risk (66 or 62%). All 30 youth with a high level of risk from the CRAFFT assessment were also given the ASAM (American Society of Addiction Medicine) assessment and linked to behavioral health services and/or other resources.

Number of Youth Intakes with CRAFFT Assessment Completed**Number of Youth Intakes with CRAFFT Assessment Completed, by Risk Level***n*=107

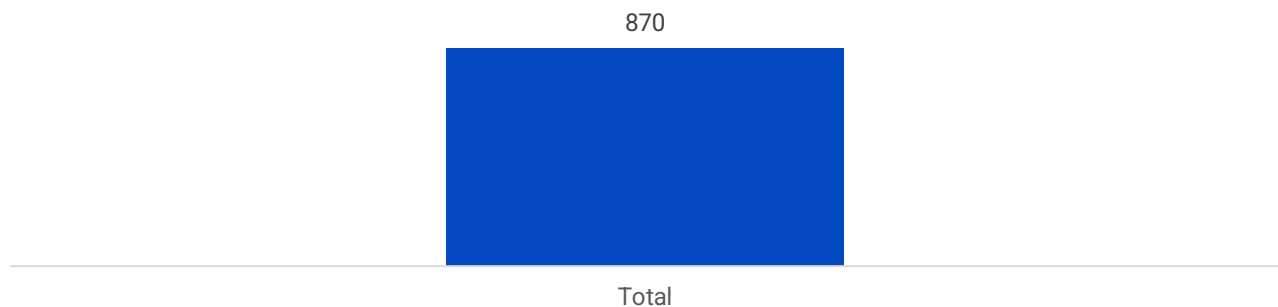
Number of Youth Given ASAM Assessment

Among 89 duplicate youth with available pathway data, most engaged in Pathway 1 – Prevention, followed by Pathway 2 – Intervention and Pathway 3 – Cessation. Eighteen (18) participants were referred to more than one pathway based on assessed need. A total of 870 intervention sessions were held with 68 youth with available session data. All 116 participants in TYC were in program specialist sessions with PVPSA staff, and of these youth, 39 were connected to behavioral health and/or other resources.

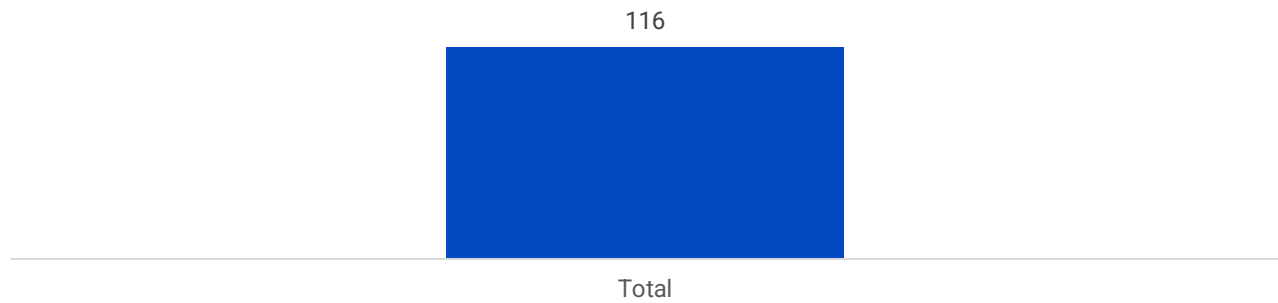
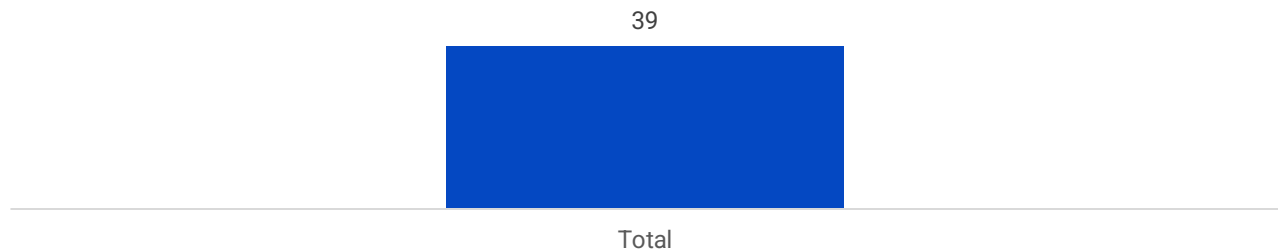
Number of Youth in Service Pathway(s)

n=89

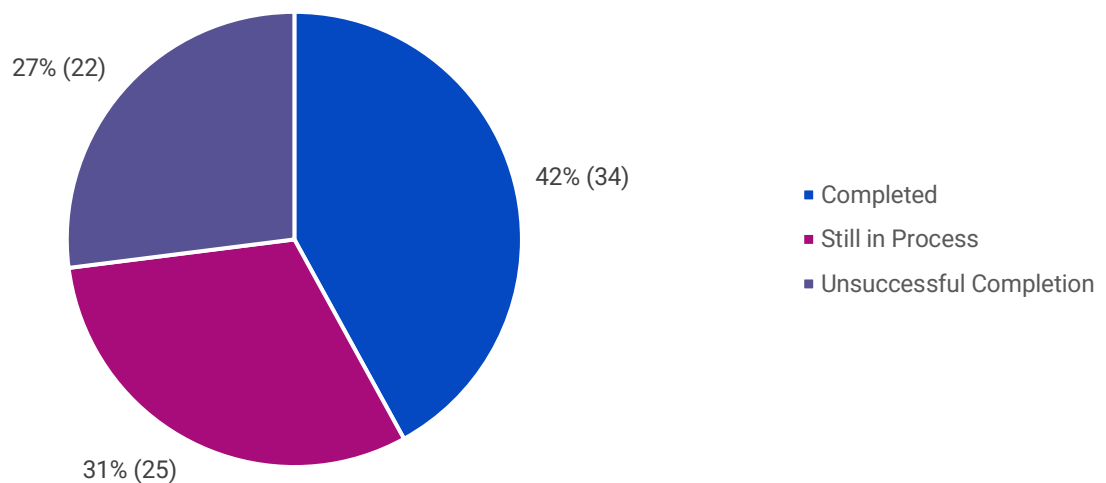
Note: Pathway data was only available for 89 of 116 total youth who participated in TYC and does not add up to 89 because 18 participants engaged in more than one pathway.

Number of Youth Intervention Sessions Held

Note: Intervention session data was only available for 68 of 116 total youth who participated in TYC.

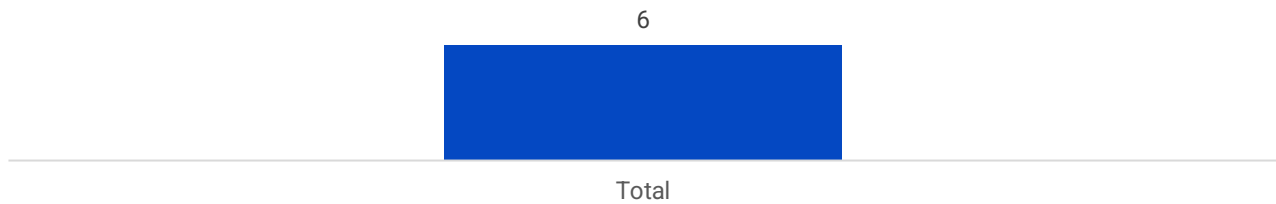
Number of Youth in Program Specialist Sessions**Number of Youth Connected to Behavioral Health and/or Other Resources**

Pathway completion status was only available for 81 of the 116 duplicate youth who participated in TYC however, data shows that as of September 30, 2023, 42% (34) of participants had successfully completed, 31% (25) were still in process, and 27% (22) did not complete. Six (6) of the 116 enrollments were youth who enrolled in the TYC program for a second time.

Percentage and Number of Youth Who Completed their Service Pathway(s)

n=81

Note: Pathway completion data was only available for 81 of 116 total youth who participated in TYC.

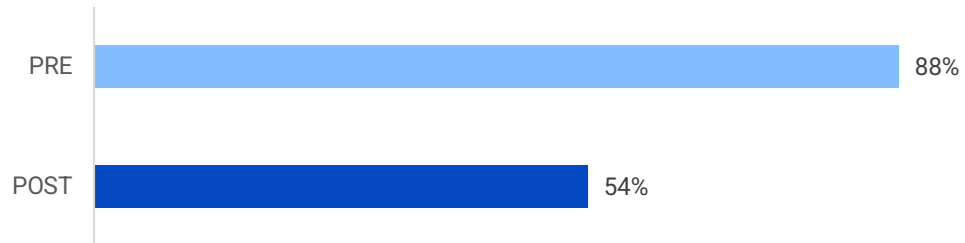
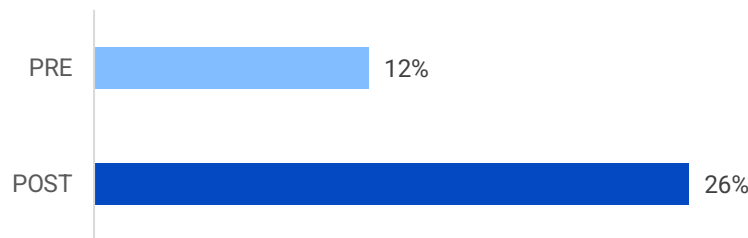
Number of Youth Who Re-Engaged with TYC**Results of Pre and Post-Pathway Surveys**

Although youth participated in all three direct service pathways (Prevention, Intervention, Cessation) during the course of the TYC program, pre- and post-survey data could only be reported for Pathway 1 participants due to small sample sizes for the other two pathways. However, among the 63 participants of Pathway 1, only 27 participants completed both a pre- and post-survey. This is mostly due to youth dropping out of the program and not completing a post-survey at exit, as well as other difficulties with data collection.

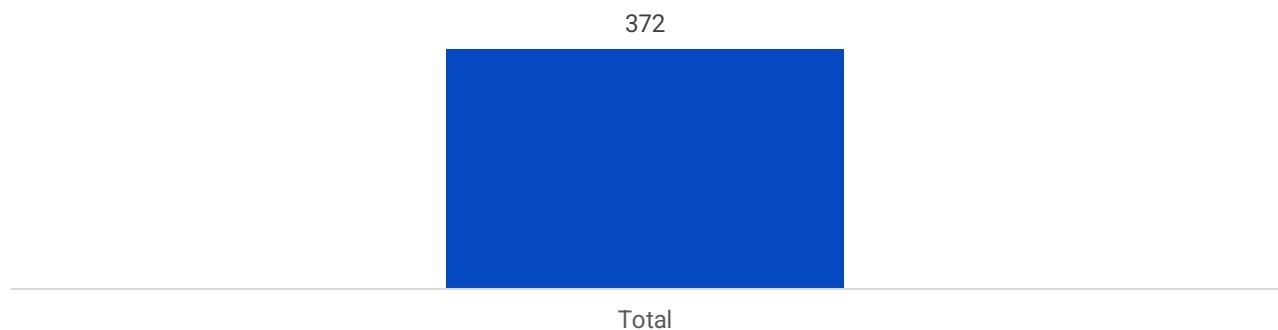
Analysis of pre- and post-survey data shows a slight increase in the percentage of Pathway 1 participants who correctly answered statements about their knowledge of substances, from 13.0 to 14.4. Marijuana use in the past 30 days among Pathway 1 participants decreased from 88% pre-TYC to 54% post-TYC. Additionally, the percentage of participants who reported trying to quit marijuana more than doubled from 12% to 26% when comparing pre- and post-survey results.

Number of Statements Pathway 1 Participants Correctly Answered about Substances

n=27

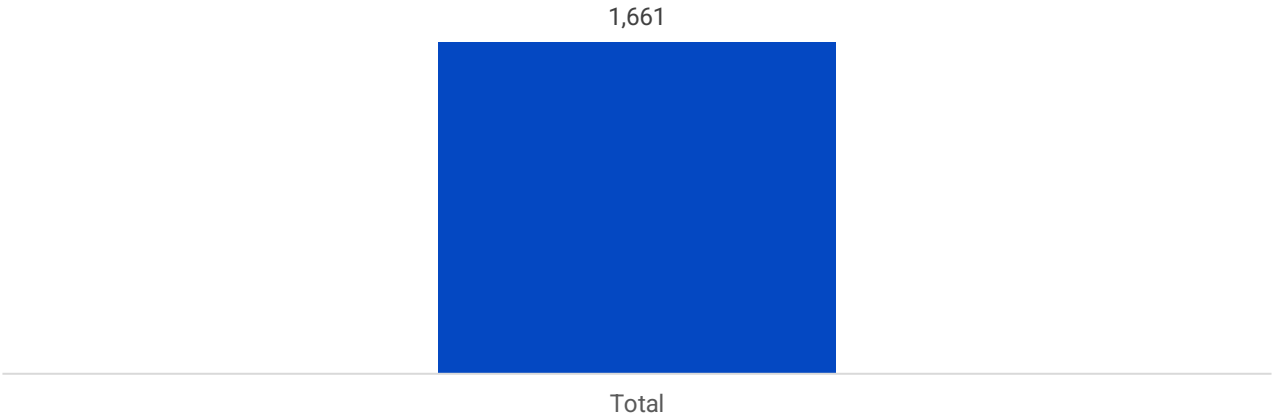
Percentage of Pathway 1 Participants Who Reported Using Marijuana in the Past Month*n=27***Percentage of Pathway 1 Participants Who Reported Trying to Quit Marijuana***n=27***POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND PREVENTION****INTEGRATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Three hundred and seventy-two (372) unique youth participated in IYD for a total of 1,661 contact hours. Twenty-one (21) of the 372 total IYD youth came from Pathway 1 – Prevention. During their time in the program, youth were asked to identify their anchors, people in their life who are strong and reliable and make them feel safe, stable and confident. While anchor data was only available for 166 youth, it shows that most (130 or 78%) youth were able to identify two or more anchors with the most frequently cited anchor being a parent or relative.

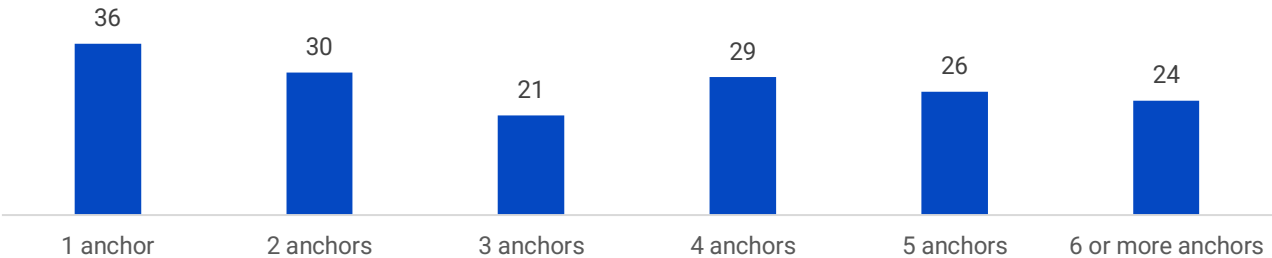
Number of Youth in IYD

Note: Twenty-one (21) of the 372 total IYD youth were connected to IYD via Pathway 1.

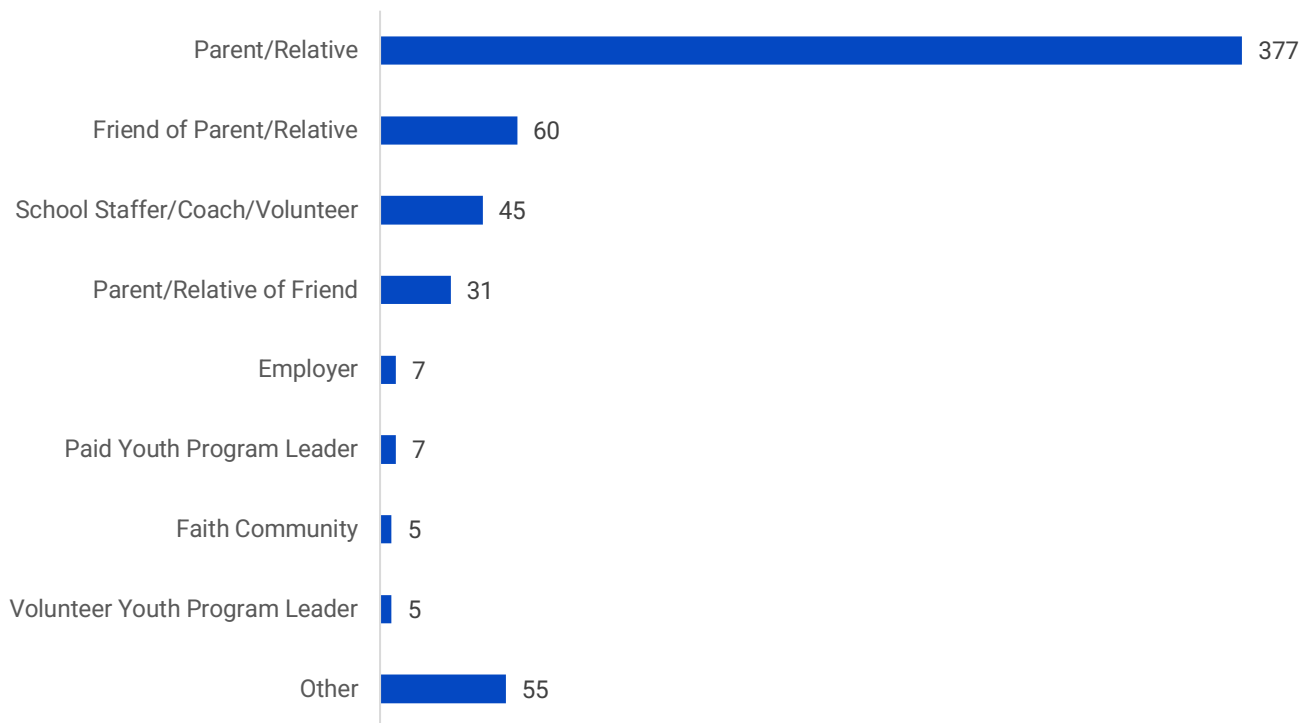
Number of IYD Contact Hours



Number of Anchors Identified by IYD Youth



n=166
Note: Anchor data was only available for 166 of 372 total youth who participated in IYD.

Anchors Identified by IYD Youth, by Type**DID PARTICIPANTS REPORT AN INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR RESILIENCE?****PERCENTAGE OF IYD PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY...**

The factors that comprise their innate resilience

100%
(372/372)**DID PARTICIPANTS REPORT AN INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO INCREASE THEIR RESILIENCE?****PERCENTAGE OF IYD PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY...**

The two strategies to bolster their resilience

90%
(335/372)**DID PARTICIPANTS REPORT AN INCREASE IN THEIR ABILITY TO IDENTIFY THE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS THAT ERODE CONNECTION TO CARING ADULTS?****PERCENTAGE OF IYD PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY...**

Scissor cuts (both in their control and out of their control) that potentially erode connections with their anchors

85%
(316/372)

Strategies to repair the scissor cuts they create

85%
(316/372)

WERE PARTICIPANTS ABLE TO IDENTIFY ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES THAT MAY CREAT BARRIERS TO CONNECTION?	
PERCENTAGE OF IYD PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY...	
ACEs that may create barriers to connection <i>Note: Only students at Sequoia High School were asked these questions. The safe discussion of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) requires deeper connection and trust than can be created with four sessions.</i>	95% (21/22)
Choices of mitigating barriers to connection <i>Note: Only students at Sequoia High School were asked these questions. The safe discussion of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) requires deeper connection and trust than can be created with four sessions.</i>	95% (21/22)

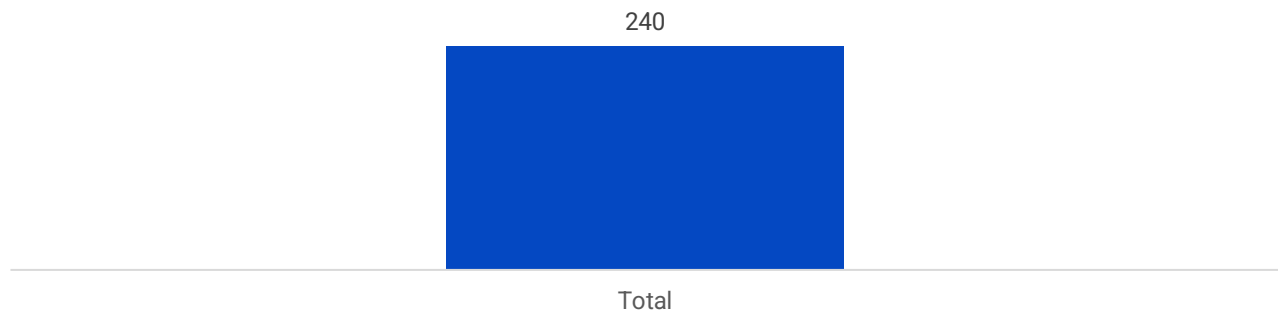
DID PARTICIPANTS REPORT AN INCREASE IN GRATITUDE AND EMPATHY FOR CARING ADULTS?	
PERCENTAGE OF IYD PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY...	
Ways to show gratitude to the anchors in their life	85% (316/372)

DID PARTICIPANTS REPORT AN INCREASE IN THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY THE SOCIAL NORMS THAT IMPACT THEIR DECISION-MAKING?	
PERCENTAGE OF IYD PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE ABLE TO IDENTIFY...	
The impact of positive and negative social norms	90% (335/372)

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE

Between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2023, 240 unique youth participated in FNL for a total of 389 meetings attended and 435 participation hours. These 240 youth represent six different FNL chapters including, Pajaro Middle School, Pajaro Valley High School, Sequoia High School, Santa Cruz City Schools, Watsonville High School, and the Santa Cruz County Youth Council.

Number of Youth Connected to FNL Leadership and Skill-Building Opportunities



Number of Meetings FNL Youth Attended

389



Total

Number of Hours FNL Youth Participated

435



Total

Results of Youth Development Survey

The California Friday Night Live Partnership administer annual youth development surveys to each county in California with FNL programs. FNL program staff are instructed to administer the online survey to as many youth served in their program as possible. The Youth Development Survey gathers basic demographic information, length and time in the program, youth experiences related to each of the five FNL Standards of Practice (safe environments, caring and meaningful relationships, community and school engagement, leadership and advocacy, skill development), specific skills gained, and alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) attitudes.

Survey data for Santa Cruz County during TYC program implementation shows the positive impact of FNL on youth. FNL not only promotes positive youth development, but also builds skills and helps to reduce the risk of ATOD, indicated by the high percentages across the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. Specific outcome data related to positive youth development, skill-building and ATOD use can be found in the following three charts.

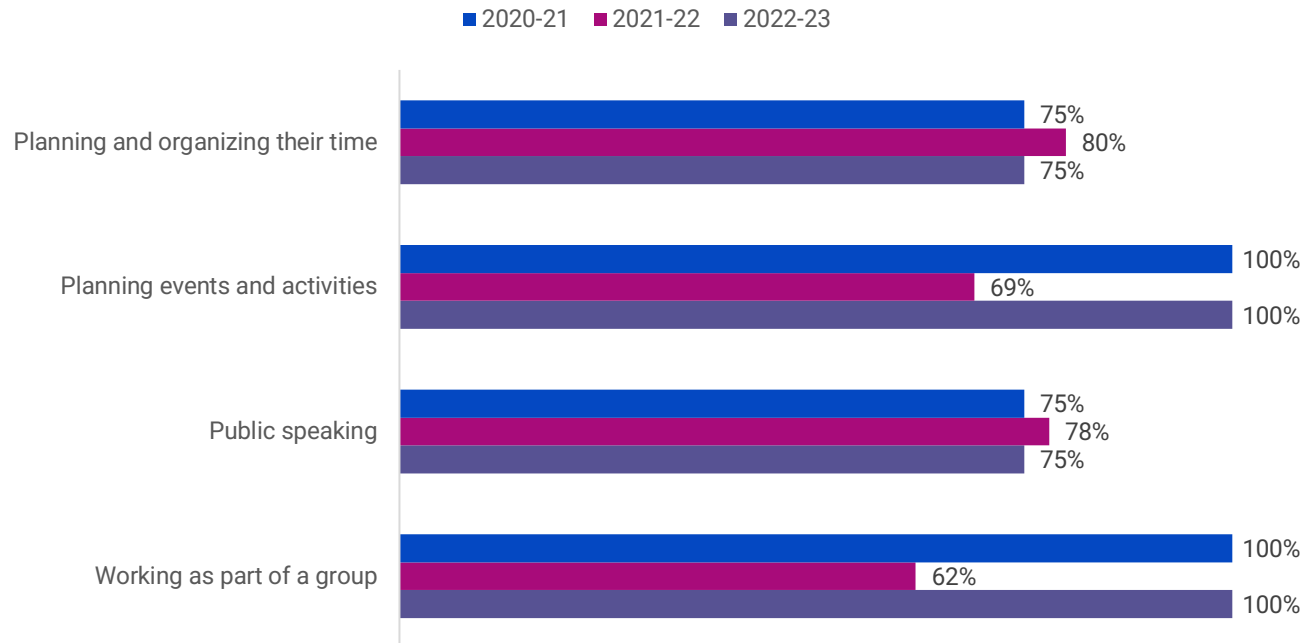
**Positive Youth Development:
Percentage of FNL Youth Who Reported the Following**

■ 2020-21 ■ 2021-22 ■ 2022-23



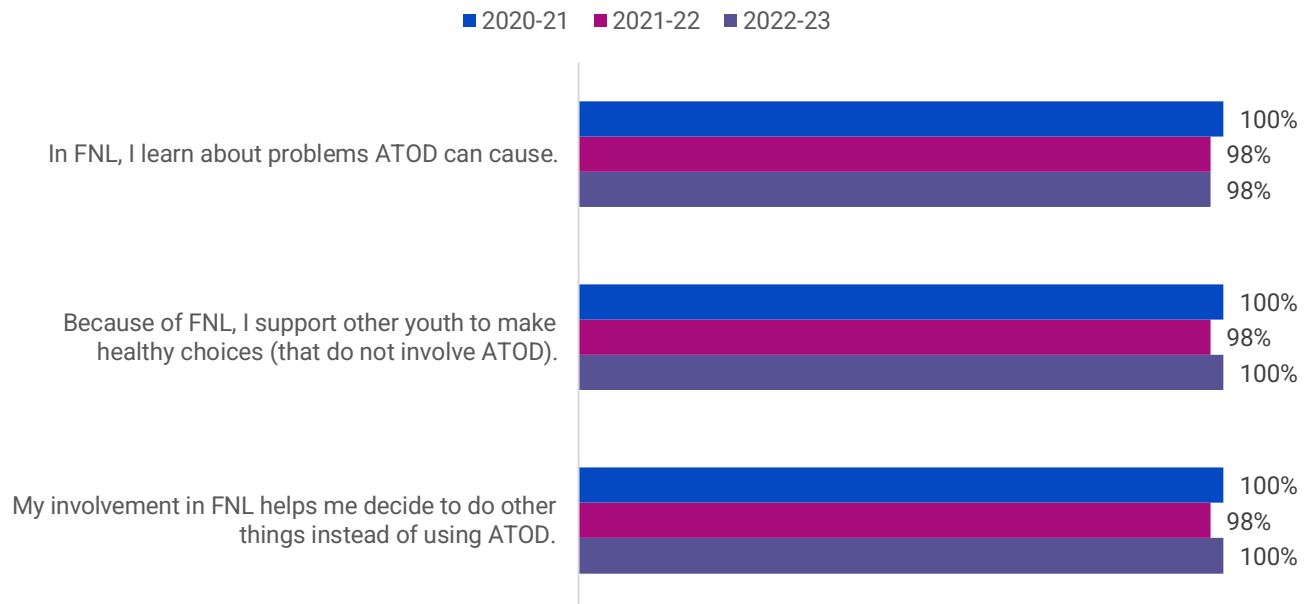
2020-21 n=14; 2021-22 n=58; 2022-23 n=49

Skill-Building:
Percentage of FNL Youth Who Reported Working on the Following Specific Skills



2020-21 n=14; 2021-22 n=58; 2022-23 n=49

Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs:
Percentage of FNL Youth Who Agreed with Each of the Following Statements

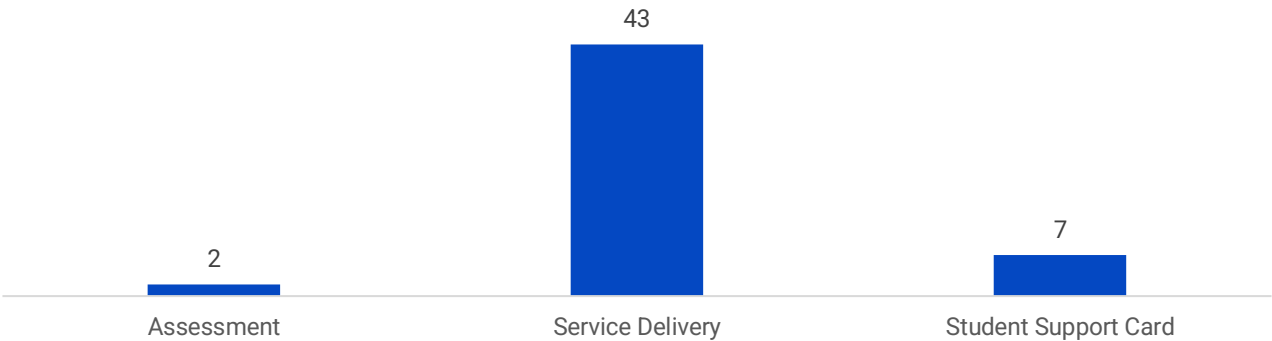


2020-21 n=14; 2021-22 n=58; 2022-23 n=46

PROGRAM STAFF AND SYSTEM PARTNERS

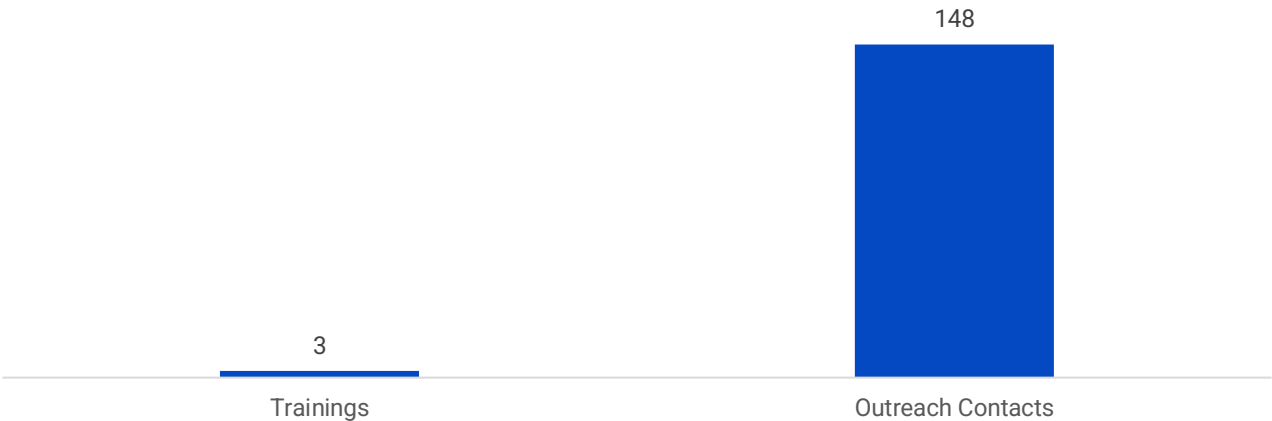
During the course of the TYC program, all staff were trained to implement evidence-based curriculums and research-based promising practices. Between October 1, 2020 and September 30, 2023, a total of 52 trainings were completed among TYC staff related to service delivery, the Student Support Card and assessment tools. One hundred and forty-eight (148) unique outreach contacts were made with system partners with the most common type of outreach being school based, as a result of the expansion of partnerships and collaboration with schools throughout Santa Cruz County.

Number of TYC Staff Trainings, by Type



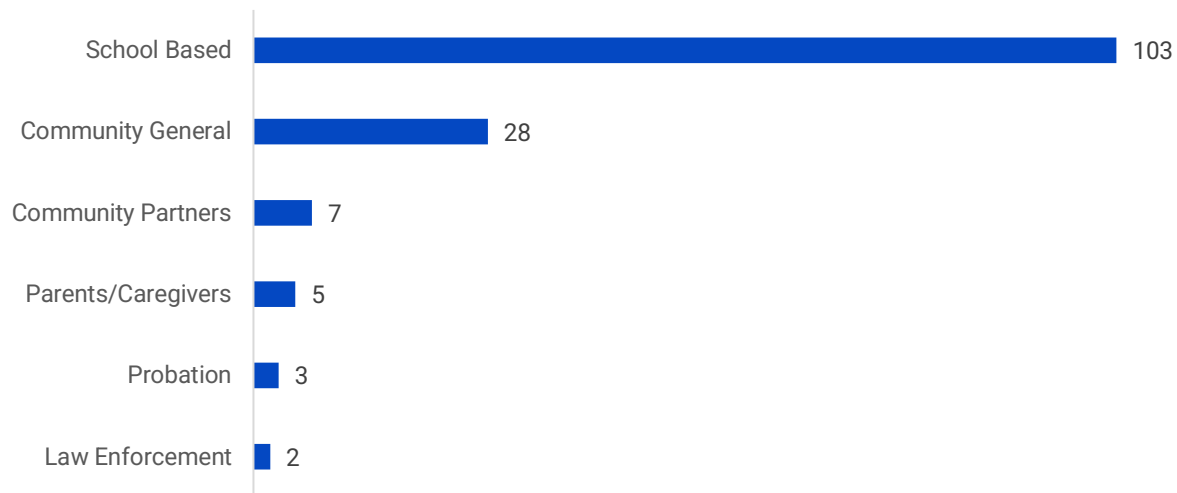
n=52

Number of Trainings and Outreach Contacts with System Partners



n=151

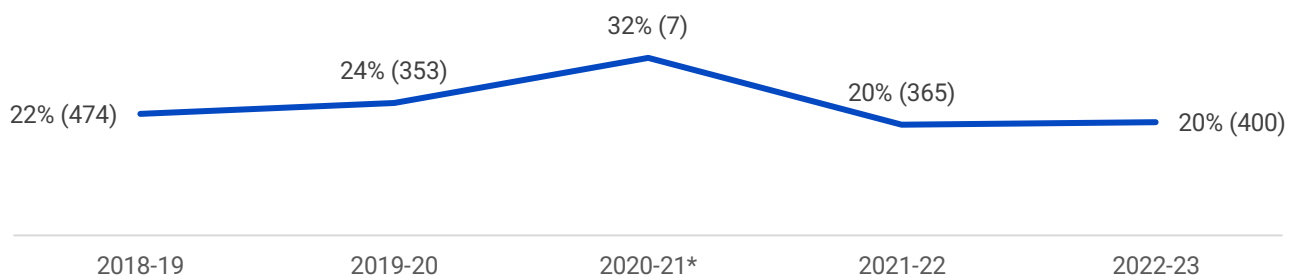
Number of Outreach Contacts with System Partners, by Type



n=148

Related to one of TYC's objectives to be an alternative to school suspension, county-level data from the California Department of Education shows that the percentage and number of suspensions due to illicit drug-related reasons has slightly decreased from the 2018-2019 school year to the 2022-2023 school year. Although not a direct result of TYC program implementation, TYC as a school-based intervention program did address student needs, providing a menu of services with a broad range of activities selected to provide substance education, build adult support systems for youth, and connections to school. Of all referrals to TYC, only one (1) youth avoided a suspension due to TYC participation.

Percentage and Number of Suspensions in Santa Cruz County due to Illicit Drug-Related Reasons



2018-19 n=2,173; 2019-20 n=1,486; 2020-21 n=22; 2021-22 n=1,840; 2022-23 n=1,972

Source: California Department of Education. (2024). 2018-2023 Suspension Data, Santa Cruz County.

*The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in statewide physical school closures in March 2020 followed by widespread implementation of distance learning during the 2020-21 academic year. The California Department of Education recommends caution when comparing discipline data across academic years.

TYC Goal 2: Prevent Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

Throughout the program, TYC staff contacted law enforcement and probation staff to promote TYC as an alternative to juvenile justice system engagement. Five outreach efforts resulted in 13 or 8% of referrals by School Resource Offices and the Probation Department. While this is not a high number of referrals in comparison to the referrals made by other system partners, the dissemination of program information helped to increase awareness of TYC as an avenue to support youth well-being and connect youth to school and community and initiate relationships between TYC staff and juvenile justice system partners.

Although the original intent of TYC's goal 2 was to divert youth from the juvenile justice system, program data shows no youth were diverted to TYC and only one (1) youth avoided a suspension due to TYC participation. Again, this is likely due to the low number of referrals from law enforcement system partners, as well as many participants not having any prior contact with law enforcement. In fact, only one (1) participant was on probation, according to case management records.

Conclusions

Since program initiation in October 2020, the TYC program worked to engage system partners to prevent and reduce youth involvement in the juvenile justice system. The program aimed to provide necessary treatment and support and opportunities for youth to build on their strengths, enhance their skills, and foster meaningful connections to school and community, ultimately improving youth, family, and community well-being by promoting healthy behaviors and supportive systems and environments.

- The TYC program improved youth well-being and positive youth development through direct services, which resulted in a total of 116 enrollments in its three direct service pathways (prevention, intervention, cessation). All 39 participants who had an identified behavioral health need were connected to treatment and/or other resources. By the end of the grant period, 42% of 81 pathway participants successfully completed the program, 31% were still in the process of completing the program, and 27% did not complete the program. When looking at pathway pre- and post-survey data available, there were positive changes in knowledge of substances, recent marijuana use and attempts to quit marijuana use, among Pathway 1 – Prevention participants.
- In total, 372 youth participated in IYD, and an additional 240 youth were connected to FNL leadership and skill-building opportunities. During their participation, an overwhelming majority of IYD youth were able to identify caring and connected adults in their life, attitudes and behaviors that erode connection to caring adults, adverse childhood experiences that may create barriers to connection and social norms that impact their decision-making. Findings from the last three annual youth development surveys for Santa Cruz County show that FNL promoted positive youth development, helped youth build skills and helped to reduce the risk of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.
- All TYC program staff were trained to implement evidence-based curriculums and research-based promising practices through their direct service work with youth participants. As a result of the expansion of partnerships and collaborations throughout the course of the TYC program, a total of 148 outreach contacts were made to system partners.

Despite the programming challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and staff turnover, the TYC program proved to be effective in improving youth well-being and positive youth development and building connections with community partners in order to prevent youth involvement in the juvenile justice system. While efforts to address goal 2 did not yield any diversions from the juvenile justice system into TYC and

only one diversion from a school suspension, TYC staff contacted system partners not only to promote TYC as an alternative to juvenile justice system engagement but also as an avenue to support youth well-being and connect youth to school and community. These outreach efforts helped to initiate relationships and build rapport between TYC staff and system partners. TYC can build on this momentum, continuing the community's commitment to youth health and well-being, and efforts to address the prevalence of substance use among middle and high school aged youth through evidence-based practices.

The TYC program built a solid foundation for strengthening systems of support for youth, especially those in need of behavioral health supports and services. By improving existing capacity and collaboration between system partners, offering three levels of care through service pathways and providing positive development opportunities, hundreds of youth were supported in new ways. As a result of the TYC program, middle and high school aged youth and system partners were connected to TYC as an avenue to support student's academic, social and emotional wellness through a trauma-informed, culturally and developmentally responsive model, that worked to build schools and communities where youth can thrive.

Santa Cruz County Thriving Youth & Community Logic Model

Assumptions:

Addressing individual and systemic impacts of cannabis legalization to prevent youth use and criminalization of adolescent behavior and increase connectedness.

Goals:

- Goal 1. Improve youth wellbeing and positive youth development by increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors.
- Goal 2. Prevent youth involvement in the juvenile justice system.

INPUTS

- Leverage funding
- Agency/institutional partnerships
- Community partnerships
- Dedicated expert staff and contractors
- Adult/youth volunteers
- Multifaceted referral process
- Staff Training
- Evidenced-based programs
- Established youth diversion programs
- Social Media/Marketing
- Data collection and evaluation
- Quality Assurance

Collaborative Partners:

Santa Cruz City Schools, Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance, Juvenile Probation, County Office of Education, CA Institute for Inevitable Youth, County of Santa Cruz HSA, SUDS Prevention

Budget: \$1,000,000 over 3 years.

ACTIVITIES

Stage One: Planning Period (5 Months)

- County, School District and contractor project planning
- Development of outreach video and promotional materials and website information.
- Creation of referral tools and links, tracking and evaluation tools
- Outreach/education of key stakeholders

Stage Two: Program Implementation (30 months)

Assessment & Intervention Planning

- Risk and protective factor assessment & referral to Prevention/Treatment/Cessation
- Individual youth and family goals and safety planning as needed
- Implement cannabis curriculum to build self-control, decision making and other skills
- Implement Inevitable Youth program to build protective factors & connection to adults
- Provide case management & linkages to leadership and skill building programs
- Promote referrals to address disciplinary incidents and substance use/misuse
- Promote supportive youth development strategies through school/community training
- Promote deferment strategies as an alternative to justice system engagement
- Outreach/education of key stakeholder's school administration.

Assessment & Intervention Planning

- 100% of youth will complete an intake with CRAFT assessments
- 100% of youth entering intervention services will have an ASAM assessment
- 100% of youth will have an individualized service plan identifying appropriate pathway (prevention, intervention, cessation)
- 95% of youth will complete pre/post assessment of cannabis curriculum
- 95% of youth will complete Support Card identifying protective factors and adult support.
- 100% of youth will receive case management services and/or linkages to youth development skill building programs
- 60 presentations/social media posts will be conducted to promote program annually.
- 4 Youth development trainings conducted for school and community members annually.

Stage Three: Evaluation and Sustainability (1 month)

- SUDS Prevention and ASR develop final Evaluation Report
- ASR develops plan for dissemination of program results

- Quarterly reports and 1 annual report per year
- 1 final TYC Program Report
- Dissemination of results

OUTPUTS

- One/Two meetings per month with deliverables
- Video produced, flyer/overview sheet designed, materials posted on websites
- Referral link, tracking and evaluation tools finalized

OUTCOMES

Short-Term Outcomes (Year 2-3)

- Increase youth perception of harm of recreational cannabis use
- Improve parent/guardian knowledge of negative impacts of youth recreational cannabis use
- Increase youth/adult connectedness

Intermediate Outcomes (Year 3)

- 85% of program participants understand impacts of Cannabis use and gain refusal skills
- 50% of Seven Challenges participants report decrease in Cannabis vaping
- 70% of cessation participants report quitting vaping
- 80% of all participants increase school, community, and adult connectedness
- 40% decrease in cannabis/vaping suspensions at engaged schools
- 25% decrease in cannabis referrals to juvenile probation

Long-Term Impacts (Year 3+)

- Youth wellbeing, resiliency, thriving
- Inclusion, compassion, dignity
- Caring, supportive adults
- Equitable systems

Grantee Highlight

See the accompanying PDF for the one-page grantee highlight, including a brief program summary and a program highlight (screen shot below).

THRIVING YOUTH & COMMUNITY (TYC) PROGRAM

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

PROGRAM GOALS:

GOAL 1: Improve Youth Well-Being and Positive Youth Development

GOAL 2: Prevent Youth Involvement in the Juvenile Justice System

Ultimately, the goal of TYC was to engage system partners through outreach and trainings in order to prevent and reduce youth involvement in the juvenile justice system, by dedicating resources to support youth well-being and positive youth development.



PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE (FNL)



FNL youth planned, designed and implemented an annual peer-to-peer leadership event. The goal of the **Youth in Action Summit (YAS)** was to provide a safe and supportive space for all youth from across Santa Cruz County to connect with one another through fun and interactive activities and workshops that build self-confidence, community, and youth leadership skills with a focus on substance prevention.

"I liked making new friends"

"It was soooo fun!"

"I liked journaling and sharing our dreams"

-- YAS youth participants



INTEGRATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT (IYD)

Youth worked with TYC partner the California Institute for Invincible Youth to learn the **IYD framework**. IYD participants learned about the web of support that can protect them from harm, mitigate trauma and launch them into their greatness.



"I learned that chemicals like formaldehyde have been found in vapes. We went and told all our friends"

"It does help. Hearing information on why it's bad reminds me of why I want to not use anymore"

-- Pathway 1 (Stanford Cannabis Toolkit) youth participants

"I never realized how much support I really have. I always felt like I was on my own, listing out who cares about me (Anchors) made me see I'm not"

"Listing out the (scissors) cuts made me see how much I do to push them (adults) away"

"The balloon activity was awesome. It made me see how hard some of my anchors work to try and keep me off the floor" (The floor represents what youth feel adults want to protect them from)

-- IYD youth participants