

Stanislaus P.E.P. Project

Key Findings Report

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Background

With funding from the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistant Grant (JAG), Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department entered into a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Stanislaus County, Applied Performance Sciences, Stanislaus Family Justice Center, Stanislaus Drug Enforcement Agency, Stanislaus Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and other entities, like the Stanislaus County Office of Education, to expand services, implement new prevention/education programs, and engage the community and families to improve the lives of County youth. The partnership, named the *Stanislaus Prevent, Educate, and Protect (P.E.P.) Project*, was charged with the following: 1) provide youth positive alternatives to gangs; 2) educate youth to resist alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and gangs; 3) increase youth life skills and educate youth on the benefits of health living; 4) provide therapy/counseling and other program opportunities to help youth exposed to trauma; 5) decrease the availability of methamphetamine and other illicit drugs; and 6) decrease the number of youth exposed to drug labs.

A brief overview of the partners is provided:

- Boys and Girls of Stanislaus County is an after-school and summer youth enrichment organization that provides quality educational, leadership, and character building programs in positive settings for youth ages six (6) to 18.
- The Stanislaus Family Justice Center offers compassion and hope for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse and human trafficking, with collaborative services in one safe place.
- Stanislaus Behavioral Health and Recovery Services provides education and prevention programs in Stanislaus County, such as *The Drug Store Project*.
- Applied Performance Sciences (APS) is dedicated to expanding the capacity for performance in human beings at the individual and organizational levels. Founded by US Navy SEALs and developed in conjunction with Olympic and professional sport coaches, APS delivers content and training that are applicable to any environment in which peak performance is desired.



- The Stanislaus Drug Enforcement Agency (Stanislaus DEA) conducts special investigations using multi-jurisdictional drug task forces, integrating federal, state, and local drug enforcement agencies. Activities conducted by the Stanislaus DEA include informant development, surveillance of targeted drug offenders, search warrants, probation searches, drug seizures, weapon seizures, arrests, disruption or dismantling drug trafficking organizations, and dismantling labs.

Evaluation Overview

The local evaluator, Gary Bess Associates (GBA), worked with project partners to ensure that project goals had measurable outcomes to demonstrate impact. After initial meetings with each partner to discuss data collection procedures, GBA periodically met with partners to assess the data collection process and report on partner-specific results. GBA presented at the monthly steering committee on four (4) occasions over the life of the grant; once to present the suggested evaluation plan, twice to present project outcomes to data, and once to discuss the final report.

Program Impact Highlights

Boys and Girls of Stanislaus County

A key objective for The Boys & Girls Clubs of Stanislaus County (BGC Stanislaus) is to provide a safe place for children during after school hours while providing literacy assistance and an opportunity to explore various areas of the arts, leadership, health and wellness, and education. Based upon survey responses from the most recent Boys and Girls Clubs of

American national evaluation, it appears that BGC Stanislaus is fulfilling the objective.

- ☑ 92.7 percent of (BGC Stanislaus) youth report they feel safe at The Club.
- ☑ More than one-half (52.8%) of youth reported they felt more safe at BGC Stanislaus compared with hanging out somewhere else, and more than one-third (34.5%) reported that they felt just as safe at BGC Stanislaus compared to hanging out somewhere else.



Along with tracking outcomes related to satisfaction with BGC Stanislaus, The Club also tracks outcomes for its specialized programs. A sample of BGC Stanislaus' specialized programs and their outcomes are reported below.

The Club's *Passport to Manhood* program encourages boys age eight (8) to 14 to develop and mature into young men. *Passport to Manhood* represents a targeted effort to engage young boys in discussions and activities that reinforce character, leadership, and positive behavior. This also includes a service

component where boys learn the importance of giving back to the community. Program impact is assessed using a pretest-posttest surveying methodology. Some survey highlights include:

- ☑ The percentage of (male program) youth “agreeing” with the statement, **“Values guide our actions, helping us decide how to act in a given situation”** increased from pretest (72.4%) to posttest (79.3%). Of the youth that responded “disagree” or “not sure” to the statement at pretest, one-half (50.0%) agreed with statement at posttest.
- ☑ Of the youth that had NOT set an academic goal in the year prior to participating in the *Passport to Manhood* program, one-quarter (25.0%) had set an academic goal while in the program.
- ☑ Of the youth that had NOT volunteered or participated in a community-service project in the year prior to participating in the program, one-third (33.3%) had volunteered or participated in a community-service project while in the program.

The Club’s *SMART Girls* program is a small-group health, fitness, prevention/education, and self-esteem enhancement program designed to meet the developmental needs of girls ages eight (8) to 18. In the program, girls explore their own and societal attitudes and values as they build skills for eating right, staying physically fit, getting good health care, and developing positive relationships with peers and adults. Key survey highlights include:

- ☑ After participating in the *SMART Girls* program, 86.7 percent of (female program) youth “agreed” with the statement, **“A SMART Girl knows how to resolve conflict, calmly and without violence.”**
- ☑ After participating in the *SMART Girls* program, 88.2 percent of youth “agreed” with the statement, **“A SMART Girl treats others the way she would like to be treated.”**
- ☑ Two-thirds (66.7%) of youth reported that they had been a positive role model in previous 30 days.



A key component of The Club’s work with program youth is achieving academic success. Key findings from the most recent analyses of academic performance (*report cards between the 2012-2013 academic year and the 2016-2017 academic year*) are reported below:

- ☑ Approximately 40 percent (39.1%) had a decrease in number of absences from the trimester of their program entry to their most recent trimester.
- ☑ Twenty-eight percent (28.3%) had a decrease in number of tardies from the

trimester of their program entry to their most recent trimester.

GBA used a 1 to 4 grading equivalence system (for example where **1 (lowest grade) = F, Not Meeting Expectations, Unsatisfactory, etc., and 4 (highest grade) = A, Above Expectations, Outstanding, etc.**) to assess change in academic performance. Academic data for some youth served by The Club were available for three (3) different grades, e.g., 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. Changes in grades were assessed from the trimester of youth's program entry to his or her most recent trimester.

- ✓ Program youth's math scores increased statistically ($p < .05$) from 2.79 to 3.02.
- ✓ Program youth's reading scores increased statistically ($p < .000$) from 2.64 to 3.01.
- ✓ Program youth's language arts scores increased statistically ($p < .000$) from 2.69 to 3.19.

Stanislaus Family Justice Center

Select Stanislaus County Family Justice (SFJC) program youth have attended adventure/exploration camps designed to promote tangible and productive goal setting, which is crucial to cultivating hope. Research has shown that unsuccessful goal pursuits can result in a general expectancy that future goal attainment is NOT likely; i.e., loss of hope. A pretest-posttest surveying methodology with a "hope" survey (adapted from standardized instruments assessing hope) was used. Key survey highlights include:

- ✓ The percentage of youth that responded the *majority of the time* (i.e., *a lot of the time, most of the time, or all of the time*)

in regard to the question, "**When I have a problem, I can come up with lots of ways to solve it**" increased from pretest (50.0%) to posttest (77.8%).

- ✓ The percentage of youth that responded *all of the time* in regard to the question, "**Others accept me just the way I am**" increased from pretest (29.7%) to posttest (52.9%).
- ✓ The percentage of youth that responded *all of the time* in regard to the question, "**I have friends that really care about me**" increased from pretest (47.1%) to posttest (76.5%).



Some county youth have participated in the SFJC's afterschool "Art Restores Kids" (ARK) program. The ARK program lets youth express their feelings through artwork and talk about what they think and how they feel. Many youth participating have experienced domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault or some other form of trauma. Youth and

- ✓ The percentage of youth that responded *true* in response to the statement, “**A person can die if they use drugs only once**” increased statistically ($p < .000$) from pretest (21.4%) to posttest (43.4%).
- ✓ The percentage of youth that responded *true* in response to the statement, “**The earlier in life that someone experiments with drugs, the more likely he or she is to become addicted**” increased statistically ($p < .000$) from pretest (57.1%) to posttest (69.2%).
- ✓ At posttest, 70.1 percent of youth reported that they were less likely to try alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs because of what they learned at *The Drug Store Project*.

Stanislaus Drug Enforcement Agency
(Stanislaus DEA)

Key Stanislaus DEA findings include:

- ✓ In January 2016, agents completed a wiretap case by serving (2) search warrants. As a result, agents seized five (5) lbs. of methamphetamine and one rifle. The case was linked to



Southern California and agents served an additional two (2) search warrants in the Los Angeles area resulting in the seizure of two (2) kilos of white heroin. A total of eight (8) subjects were federally indicted and two (2) were arrested on State charges.

- ✓ In July 2016, agents assisted the Modesto Police Narcotics Team and a Southern California task force with a traffic stop that resulted in the seizure of 38 kilograms of heroin (83.6 lbs. total). The 38 kilograms were all packaged individually in brick forms, each weighing one (1) kilogram and stamped with a scorpion.

In July 2017, agents assisted the Turlock Narcotics Enforcement Team (TNET) with a traffic stop. A search of the vehicle resulted in a substantial amount of crystal meth and U.S. currency. Subsequent to the enforcement stop, agents executed a search warrant at the target's residence. A total of 23.12 lbs. of crystal meth were seized along with \$84,840 in US currency.

- ✓ In November 2017, agents responded to a FedEx business location in Modesto, regarding a suspicious package destined for Worcester, Massachusetts. Upon arrival, agents seized 20 vacuumed sealed plastic bags from the package. A total of 23.71 lbs. of marijuana were seized.

Stanislaus DEA outcomes for the grant period are reported in the table below.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total	Four (4) Year Average
Labs-Meth*	5	2	1	3	11	2.75
BHO Labs/THC Extraction	3	4	4	4	15	3.75
Cases	156	186	257	228	827	206.75
T-III's	20	15	0	11	46	11.5
Pen Registers	15	20	4	11	50	12.5
Arrests	89	45	64	29	227	56.75
Asset Seizures (Total)	439,875	321,361	431,105	77,352	1,269,693	317,423.25
Search Warrants Served	74	57	51	66	248	62
Guns	32	51	26	21	130	32.50
Heroin (Lbs)	10	12	99	1.15	122	30.54
Cocaine (Lbs)	1	25	32	2.87	61	15.22
Crystal Meth (Lbs)	157	232	119	440	948	237.00
Meth Powder (Lbs)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Meth in Solution (ml)	822,972	10,670	6,133	29,534	869,309	217,327.25
Marijuana (Lbs)	1,142	1,023	435	698	3,298	824.50
Marijuana Plants-Indoor	6,726	11,156	3,442	1,634	22,958	5,739.50
Marijuana Plants-Outdoor	27,935	20,872	28,564	1,307	78,678	19,669.50
Marijuana (Plants) Total	34,661	32,028	32,006	2,941	101,636	25,409.00
Drug Endangered Children	16	27	19	14	76	19.00
Federal Indictments	9	9	11	4	33	8.25

Additional Achievements

Though not originally identified as a program component in the grant application, the F.O.C.U.S program was created to serve youth exposed to a traumatic event. F.O.C.U.S (**F**ocusing **O**n **C**hildren **U**nder **S**tress), based on West Virginia's *Handle With Care* program, F.O.C.U.S. supports children exposed to violence and trauma through improved communication and collaboration between first responders (law enforcement, fire fighters, emergency medical responders, etc.), schools and community resources. If a first responder encounters a child that may have been exposed to a traumatic event, that child's information is included in a FOCUS Notification that is sent to Stanislaus Drug Enforcement Agency (SDEA). The SDEA Prevention/Education liaison will forward the notification to the designated school official as soon as possible.

A "F.O.C.U.S. Notification" alerts the school that this child may have been exposed to a traumatic incident (i.e. domestic violence, child abuse, death in the family, witness to a crime, loss of home due to a house fire) and may exhibit or develop academic/behavioral problems. No specific details about the incident are given, just one simple request: To focus on the child and handle them with care.

A designated school official receives the notification and alert the child's teacher. The teacher observes the child's behavior/academic performance. If the child exhibits any problems, the teacher will address the issue or refer the child to the school counselor. **Over the life of the grant, there were 191 referrals, comprising 312 students.**