



CREATING RESULTS WITH YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES

Annual Evaluation

FRESH LIFELINES
FOR YOUTH (FLY)

San Mateo County
Probation Department

Juvenile Justice
Coordinating Council (JJCC)



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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mission of Fresh Lifelines for Youth, Inc. (FLY) is to prevent juvenile crime and incarceration through legal education, mentoring, and leadership training. FLY's vision is that the most marginalized and underserved youth will gain the life skills and character needed to avoid the criminal justice system and transform from delinquent youth into positive community leaders.

FLY's programs are designed to build multiple internal and external developmental assets crucial for adolescent development and that youth in the juvenile justice system are often lacking. FLY's programs promote safety in the community and prevent crime and incarceration by working with current juvenile justice youth to identify and develop their strengths. FLY provides opportunities for youth to engage and redirect their talents and energy, and create positive change in their communities through community service. Youth in the Leadership Program also have the opportunity to serve as positive role models by sharing their experiences and offering advice to the program's middle school law youth. The following are the activities provided by the program:

Law Program—Youth attend a 12-week interactive cognitive-behavioral therapy based legal education curriculum, including weekly, two-hour sessions that focus on key experiential components (e.g. role play, juvenile justice system stakeholder visit, field trip, recognition ceremony), that provides: a) knowledge on legal and social consequences of juvenile crimes; b) safety for trying new behaviors and identities; c) community that supports positive actions and choices; d) empathy for juvenile justice systems and their stakeholders; e) cognitive dissonance between present realities and future potential; and f) self-efficacy to see they have the potential that can be used in a positive way.

Leadership Program—Youth complete a written application, attend an intake meeting, have two interviews, a youth orientation, and a separate feedback discussion with the parent(s). This intake method is used to help youth learn and apply job interview skills. Youth also attend a three-day retreat in the Santa Cruz Mountains where they learn how to set goals and complete a training in leadership and community activism. Lastly, youth plan and participate in monthly community service activities such as visiting with seniors, working at soup kitchens, maintaining an inner-city garden used for elementary school field trips, and speaking to middle school students about the dangers of drugs, violence, and crime.

Case Management—Youth meet with their case managers twice a month to help set and achieve academic, vocational, and healthy living goals. Case managers serve as positive role models who emphasize the importance of education and self-sufficiency. Case managers also plan workshops on public speaking, career searching, resume writing, interviewing, and financial management, and sponsor monthly prosocial activities such as bowling, hiking, and sober Friday nights.

Programmatic Challenges in FY 2015-16

In FY 2015-16, FLY continued to hone the use of the Ohio Youth Assessment System (OYAS) in the leadership program and have also added in the pre-Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) and Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessments in San Mateo County. In addition, FLY's Leadership Training Program shifted to a two cohort model to better accommodate the semester schedule of the Law Program. Formerly, the Leadership Training Program started in August and ended in June. Now, for youth in the spring semester of the Law Program, cohort one begins in August and ends in June. Youth who attend the Law Program in the fall semester start the Leadership Training program in February and end in December.

Part of the adjustment to this new model has included scheduling separate events for the two cohorts and determining an effective frequency of deadlines for each cohort. So far, this new style of year-round recruitment has helped retain more youth from the fall semester of the Law Program. The Leadership Training Program will continue to learn and adjust to improve processes within this two cohort model.

EVALUATION METHODS

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

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

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

- The **Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS)** is a risk, strength and needs assessment designed to assist workers to effectively and efficiently supervise youth, both in institutional settings and in the community. It is reliable and has been validated across ethnic and gender groups. The JAIS consists of a brief prescreen assessment (**pre-JAIS**) in addition to full assessment and reassessment components; SMCJP has elected to administer the pre-JAIS to provide an initial indicator of recidivism risk. The pre-JAIS consists of 8 (girls) or 10 (boys) items and yields an overall risk level of low, moderate, or high.
- The **Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)** survey is a multi-purpose tool developed for children’s services to support decision making including level of care and service planning, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services. The CANS consists of multiple items scored on a 4-point scale (0 to 3, with a score of 2 or 3 indicating an actionable need) and grouped into stand-alone modules—e.g., Risk Behaviors, Strengths, Behavioral/Emotional Needs, Trauma. Each grantee completed a different set of CANS modules according to the specific fit with their programs and clientele.
- Programs funded by the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) also collected data on several risk-related indicators, including whether a youth had any of the following at program entry: 1) an alcohol or drug problem, 2) an attendance problem, and 3) a suspension or expulsion in the past year.

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

- JJCPA-funded programs are also required to report data on the following six mandated outcomes for program participants: 1) arrest rate, 2) incarceration rate, 3) probation violation rate, 4) probation completion rate, 5) court-ordered restitution completion rate and 6) court-ordered community service completion rate. San Mateo County has elected to report these outcomes at 180 days post-entry with the reference group being the past year’s cohort of program participants (i.e., whose six-month milestone occurred in FY 2015-16).

EVALUATION FINDINGS

FY 2015-16 Data Highlights

- The number of Leadership clients served increased 40% compared to the last 4 fiscal years
- FLY clients appear to have moderate risk levels—55% Low and 34% Moderate on the pre-JAIS—but lack important internal, social and community supports—98% have at least one actionable need on CANS Youth Strengths module
- On justice-related outcomes, the rates for Arrests, Incarcerations and Probation Violations dropped substantially from previous fiscal years

Profile of Clients Served

This year FLY served a total of 94 unique Probation youth—42 in the Leadership Program and 63 in the Law Program, with 11 participating in both—all of whom had demographic data (see Table 1). A majority of participants were male (72%) and identified predominantly as Latino (53%), followed by Filipino/Pacific Islander (26%), White/Caucasian (10%) and Black/African American (7%). The average age of clients was 16.8 years.

The large decrease in duration of time in the program for Leadership participants can be explained by the shift to the two cohort model; approximately half of these clients entered the program in February and March, 2016.

Table 1. Client Demographics, FY 2015-16

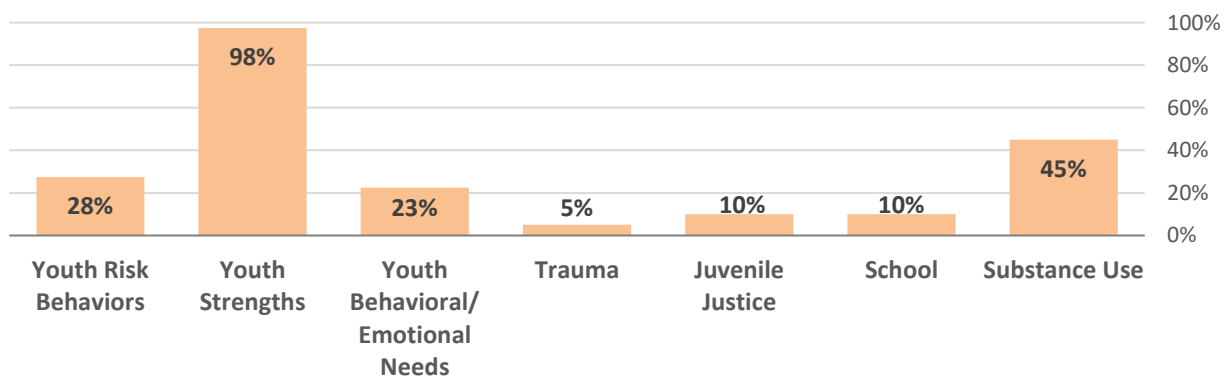
Metric	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16
Clients & Services					
All Probation Clients					
Number of clients served	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				94
Average number of hours of service	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				44.5
Average time in the program (months)	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				6.4
Leadership Program Only					
Number of clients served	30	30	31	30	42
Average number of hours of service	88.9	72.3	97.8	98.5	85.9
Average time in the program (months)	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.0	6.6
Risk Indicators					
Pre-JAIS Risk Level^a	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				
Low	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				55%
Moderate	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				34%
High	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				11%
CANS Items^b	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				
Clients with 3 or more actionable needs	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				88%
Number of actionable needs per client	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				7.8
Percent of items with actionable needs	Data not collected in prior fiscal years				11%
^a n = 38 clients with complete pre-JAIS data. ^b n = 40 clients with data on a total of 69 CANS items.					

Participants received an average of 44.5 hours of services, though the amount of services provided was dramatically different between the two programs. Leadership clients received an average of 85.9 hours of leadership activities/services (62% of hours) and case management (38%), whereas Law clients received an average of 9.8 hours and 6.1 classes of law-related education services. In FY 2015-16, FLY participants assessed with the pre-JAIS (n=38) had criminogenic risk levels predominantly at the Low (55%) and Moderate (34%) levels (see Table 1). FLY did not provide data on alcohol/drug or school problems at program entry.

Risk Indicators

On the CANS assessment, 88% of the 40 respondents had actionable needs on 3 or more items and the average number of actionable needs per clients was 7.8, below the average for all JJCPA programs (9.5).

Figure 1. Percent of clients with at Least 1 Moderate or Significant Need by CANS Module



Note: n = 40 clients with a total of 69 CANS items.

Figure 1 presents the percentage of clients with at least one actionable need on each of the 7 CANS modules FLY administered. Almost all participants (98%) had actionable needs on the Youth Strengths module, indicating that participating youth lack important internal (e.g., resilience, optimism), social (e.g., family strengths/support, relationship permanence) and community (e.g., community connection, educational setting) resources and supports. A substantial percentage of youth (45%) also had one or more needs on the Substance Use module.

The Trauma (4%), School (10%) and Juvenile Justice (10%) modules had the lowest rates; it should be noted that current risk must be serious and immediate to warrant an actionable need on the Juvenile Justice domain (e.g., 1 or 2 arrests in past 30 days vs. arrest history but none in last 30 days; risk to community residents vs. risk to community property).

Justice Outcomes

Table 2 presents justice-related outcomes for 45 youth whose six-month post-entry evaluation milestone occurred in FY 2015-16. Thus, data presented in this section are for youth who enrolled in the program in the 2015 calendar year. As shown, rates for Arrests, Incarcerations and Probation Violations dropped substantially from previous fiscal years. The rate of completion of court-ordered Probation also decreased substantially, whereas there were no youth who were assigned Restitution nor Community Service.

Table 2. Justice Outcomes, FY 2015-16

Metric	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16
Outcomes					
Justice Outcomes^a					
Arrests (for a new law violation)	17%	17%	16%	20%	2%
Incarcerations	40%	27%	42%	40%	7%
Probation violations	40%	35%	36%	50%	29%
Completed court-ordered probation	25%	12%	14%	50%	14%
Completed court-ordered restitution	40%	0%	33%	N/A	N/A
Completed court-ordered community service	50%	33%	29%	100%	N/A

^a Sample sizes vary for each FY and indicator; for FY 2015-16, n = 45 for Arrests and Incarcerations, n = 7 for Probation Violations and Completed Probation, n = 0 for Completed Restitution and Completed Community Service.

Client Vignette

As a way to illustrate the effort of the FLY Leadership and Law programs and the benefits to its participants, staff provided a summarized case history of one client served this year.

Name of focus client:	Julianne
Age and sex of client:	18 years old, female
Reason for referral:	<p>Julianne was first introduced to FLY through our Law Related Education Program at community school, Redwood High School.</p> <p>Her main goal was graduating on time, alongside her twin. Being aware she was behind on credits, possibly running the risk of not achieving her goal, Julianne joined the Leadership Training Program (LTP).</p> <p>Julianne wanted to graduate to walk the stage in June.</p>
Client’s behavior, affect and appearance when they first started your program:	<p>Before Julianne started LTP, she expressed feeling uneasy about attending the three-day wilderness retreat. She arrived as a shy, reserved person who engaged mostly with her twin sister.</p>
What activities did your client engage in and was their engagement consistent?	<p>Through the program year, Julianne has participated in various events including social problem discussion/art event, blanket making for the homeless, Yelp tour and white water rafting.</p> <p>Julianne worked very closely with her case manager on connecting and meeting deadlines with teachers and counselors. While participating in the program, Julianne became more engaged in school, set goals for herself around school attendance and focused her energy completing school assignments. Through all her efforts, Julianne graduated early from her community school and she was able to walk the stage alongside her twin sister.</p>
Describe client’s affect, behavior or appearance toward the end of your program, noting any ways in which they changed.	<p>Ever since Julianne graduated from high school, her self-esteem has improved and now she is more confident about achieving personal goals.</p>

<p>What did your client learn as a result of this program?</p>	<p>Julianne understands there are challenges that she will encounter and have to work hard to overcome. Working with her case manager she will have support to do so.</p>
<p>What is your client doing differently in their life as a result of the program?</p>	<p>Currently, she has been applying to different jobs and is very hopeful she will get a job at the SFO airport.</p>
<p>What does your client say is the value of the program for them?</p>	<p>While having a one on one with her case manager, youth stated “thanks to everyone in FLY, I found motivation in attending school more frequently and I’m back on track to graduate.”</p>