

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
FOR LATINO YOUTH

Evaluation Report of Highlights of Identity's
2007-2008 After-School Programs in Montgomery
County Middle and High Schools

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Prepared for:



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Executive Summary

Identity is a community-based organization serving the needs of Latino youth and their families in Montgomery County, Maryland. Identity implemented its Positive Youth Development (PYD) Program in nine Montgomery County Public Schools during the 2007-2008 academic year. The PYD program is an after-school program that aims to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors among Latino high school and middle school youth. This evaluation report provides the highlights of the findings from data analyses designed to measure the effectiveness of Identity's PYD Program. In 2007 – 2008, Identity was also able to analyze the results of its first Control Group, which provided powerful evidence of the effectiveness of its program.

Evaluation results show that high school participants demonstrated *statistically significant* improvements in the following domains: increases in general social support, self-efficacy, and trust of adults at school. Other changes among high school youth included: increased self-esteem, reduced depression symptoms, increased parent-youth trust, increased conflict resolution skills, decreased substance use intentions, increased safe sex intentions, and increased safe sex behavior.

Results with middle school participants were even more encouraging, as they reported *statistically significant* improvements in the following areas: general social support, self-efficacy, knowledge about the risks of substance use, and reduced intentions to use substances in the future. Similar to their high school counterparts, middle school youth also reported increase in their intentions to practice safe sex in the future, though not to a statistically significant degree.

Results of a Control Group analyses provided the strongest evidence yet of Identity's PYD Program's effectiveness. Controls reported *statistically significant worse outcomes* for self-esteem, all parent-youth measures, and optimism about their futures, conflict resolution skills, and unsafe sexual activity. When compared to high school or middle school participants, Control Group responses were significantly worse for almost every domain measured on the PYD Survey. Therefore, analyses indicated that Identity's PYD Program either led to significant improvements or, at the very least, slowed the rate of the negative outcomes that were found among those youth who did not participate in the program.

The Youth Self-Assessment/Satisfaction Exit Survey results provided additional strong indication of the positive impact that the PYD Program had on participants' lives. Participants felt more optimistic about their lives and futures and

reported making great strides in their sense of self-efficacy. Specifically, participants believed that they had improved their communication skills, problem-solving ability, and had learned to be more respectful of others. In terms of overall satisfaction with the PYD Program, participants provided exceptionally high evaluations of Identity's program facilitators and services. Participants also felt safe and respected during the program and an overwhelming percentage would recommend Identity's PYD Program to other youth.

Background Information

Identity's mission is to empower Latino youth to reach their full potential through culturally and linguistically competent youth and family-based initiatives. Its programs are based on a positive youth development approach that seeks to foster resilience, promote social, emotional, cognitive and behavioral competence, provides opportunities for pro-social involvement, fosters pro-social norms and fosters a clear and positive identity as well as self-efficacy and a belief in the future. These programs are designed to replace dependency and isolation with responsibility and leadership. To fulfill its vision of a strong and healthy Latino community, Identity focuses on the strengths within the Latino family including cultural pride and youth resiliency. Its goal is to facilitate Latino youths' successful transition into adulthood by providing them with knowledge, skills, positive role models, much-needed support, and a strong sense of community. To support the PYD Program, Identity runs a complementary parent program, and provides case management and referral services as well as mental health services.

This is an analysis of Identity's Positive Youth Development (PYD) Program, an after school program implemented at nine schools in Montgomery County during the 2007 – 2008 academic year. A total of 252 youth completed the PYD program and throughout the academic year, Identity provided the following at each of the nine schools:

- 60 hours of PYD after-school training sessions with youth (30 sessions)

- 8 hours of parent sessions with parents and youth (4 sessions)

- 1 three-day overnight retreat where participants reinforced the main concepts acquired during the year

Profile of Client Population

The following is a snapshot of the program participants.

Over two-thirds of high school participants were born outside of the United States and a vast majority chose to complete the survey in Spanish. Almost half of high school youth had experienced parental separation due to the immigration

process, and the duration of separation for the vast majority of these youth ranged from two years to more than ten years. Approximately half of the high school youth qualified for Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) at school, an indication of poverty status. A large number of youth were working at a job three days or more per week during the school year. Within the high school PYD Group, there were slightly more female than male participants and most youth were between the ages of 14 and 17.

Identity also implemented its PYD program with a group of students in the multi-disciplinary education, training, and support program which is designed address the particular academic needs of English language learners who have had limited or no previous schooling or have had significant gaps in schooling. These students, meeting the criteria to be in the METS Program, face particularly difficult challenges.

Nearly half of middle school participants were born in the United States and the majority chose to complete the survey in English. Less than a quarter of middle school youth had experienced parental separation due to the immigration process. The duration of the separation for most of these youth ranged from less than a year to four years. Well over half of middle school participants received Free and Reduced Meals (FARM) at school. In the middle school PYD Group, there were more male than female participants and most youth were between the ages of 11 and 13.

Over 35 % of all the youth reached through the program were originally from El Salvador. A very small percentage of youth's parents were born in the United States (1.3% of fathers and 0.9% of mothers). Almost 62% of the youth in the program indicated that they serve as translators/interpreters for their parents. In addition, over 43% indicated that there were six or more people living in their household.

Clearly, Identity's program is reaching a very vulnerable group of Latino youth within the County public school system, including youth struggling with family reunification after lengthy separations, language isolation, academic frustration because of significant schooling gaps and poverty.

Major Outcomes: Analysis of High School Programs

The principle objectives of the PYD program are to increase positive outcomes and decrease negative outcomes in the lives of Latino youth. The Table that follows provides a comparison of the mean scale scores for high school participants,

middle school participants, and Wait List Control Group participants. Youth were advised that all information on the surveys would be kept confidential and anonymous.

Unless otherwise noted, higher mean scale scores in The Table indicate an increase in positive and healthy attitudes or behaviors.

Baseline and Exit Mean Scale Scores: High School, Middle School, and Control Group Participants

	High Schools		Middle Schools		Control Group	
Social Support (2 items)	<i>Baseline</i>	7.18	<i>Baseline</i>	7.64	<i>Baseline</i>	8.13
	<i>Exit</i>	7.69*	<i>Exit</i>	8.08*	<i>Exit</i>	9.65*
Self-Esteem (4 items)	Baseline	12.74	Baseline	13.34	<i>Baseline</i>	12.63
	Exit	12.96	Exit	13.09	<i>Exit</i>	11.55*
Depression (4 items)**	Baseline	5.79	Baseline	5.03	Baseline	4.79
	Exit	5.67	Exit	5.14	Exit	5.06
Self-Efficacy (6 items)	<i>Baseline</i>	22.06	<i>Baseline</i>	24.06	Baseline	23.32
	<i>Exit</i>	24.28*	<i>Exit</i>	25.24*	Exit	23.16
Future Expectations (5 items)	Baseline	21.05	Baseline	21.87	<i>Baseline</i>	21.25
	Exit	20.39	Exit	21.75	<i>Exit</i>	20.00*
Conflict Resolution (6 items)	Baseline	12.91	Baseline	12.99	<i>Baseline</i>	13.22
	Exit	12.97	Exit	12.40	<i>Exit</i>	10.85*
High Risk Gang Attitudes (6 items)***	Baseline	9.41	Baseline	9.86	Baseline	9.88
	Exit	9.78	Exit	9.31	Exit	10.41
Substance Abuse Knowledge (10 items)	Baseline	41.71	<i>Baseline</i>	39.83	Baseline	38.64
	Exit	41.34	<i>Exit</i>	43.75*	Exit	39.21
High Risk Substance Abuse Attitudes*** (3 items)	Baseline	5.26	<i>Baseline</i>	4.47	Baseline	5.10
	Exit	5.03	<i>Exit</i>	3.38*	Exit	5.27
High Risk Substance Abuse Behavior*** (5 items)	<i>Baseline</i>	5.63	Baseline	5.30	<i>Baseline</i>	5.23
	<i>Exit</i>	6.04*	Exit	5.46	<i>Exit</i>	6.50*
Safe Sex Attitudes (3 items)	Baseline	12.45	Baseline	12.05	Baseline	12.30
	Exit	12.75	Exit	12.73	Exit	12.68
Safe Sex Behavior (4 items)	Baseline	7.75	Baseline	N/A	Baseline	N/A
	Exit	10.50	Exit	N/A	Exit	N/A

* - Denotes statistically significant change at $p \leq .05$

** - A lower score indicates less depressive symptoms for this scale

*** - A higher scorer indicates more likely to engage in a risk behavior

PARTICIPANT RETENTION

There was a retention rate of 80% among the high school youth. The reasons for withdrawal from the program included family and/or work responsibilities, moving from the area, care giving responsibilities of younger siblings, or suspension/expulsion from school.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Participants were presented with a two-item scale designed to gauge their level of perceived social support. The scale contained the following two questions:

- (a) Do people listen to you when you need to vent about a personal problem?
- (b) Do you have someone who will give you a hug or hold you when you need it?

Items were presented along a scale from 1 to 5, where the former represented "Not at all" and the latter represented "A lot." Items were then summed together to derive an overall scale score.

As shown in the Table, high school participants reported that they received higher levels of social support after their involvement in the PYD Program. This increase from Baseline to Exit represented a statistically significant improvement ($p < .01$) for general social support.

MENTAL HEALTH

One of the main objectives of the PYD program is to promote the wellness and mental health of the youth participants. The PYD program attempts to do so by addressing specific mental health factors: enhancing self-esteem and self-efficacy as well as reducing depression. Many researchers have shown that such personality factors have a major impact on whether youth avoid or engage in risk behaviors (Arnett, 1990; Jessor, 1992; Jessor & Jessor, 1977).

Youth were presented with four questions from the six-item version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). A wide body of research has established the validity and reliability of the RSES, including use with ethnically diverse populations (Westaway & Wolmarans, 1992; Yanico & Lu, 2000) and adolescents (Lorr & Wunderlich, 1986).

The PYD self-esteem scale was adapted from the RSES and consisted of the following four questions:

- (a) I feel that I have a number of good qualities

- (b) I am inclined to feel that I am a failure
- (c) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself
- (d) I think I am no good at all

As shown in the Table, high school participants reported higher levels of self-esteem after their involvement in the PYD Program. This increase from Baseline to Exit trended towards significance ($p = .15$).

DEPRESSION SCALE

Participants were asked four questions selected from the Children's Depression Inventory – Short Form (CDI-S; Kovacs, 1999) to assess their depression levels. The items assessed four major symptoms of depression – irritability, sadness, anhedonia (lack of fun or pleasure), and loneliness. Each item lists three sentences and the respondent must indicate which statement best describes how s/he has felt during the prior two weeks. For example, the item designed to measure loneliness is presented as follows:

Pick out the sentence that describes you best in the **PAST 2 WEEKS**.

- I do not feel alone.
- I feel alone many times.
- I feel alone all the time.

Items were then summed together to derive an overall scale score and the internal reliability of this scale was also tested with Identity's sample of high school youth. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.75 at Baseline and 0.78 at Exit, indicating strong internal reliability.

The interpretation of the Depression scale is the reverse of most of the other survey scales, as a lower score indicates healthier adaptation (or less depressive symptoms) and a higher score indicates worse adaptation (or more depressive symptoms) and a stronger likelihood of depression being present.

As shown in the Table, high school participants reported slightly less symptoms of depression after being in the PYD Program. However, this increase from Baseline to Exit was not statistically significant.

SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

Participants were asked several questions designed to gauge how confident they felt about refusing a variety of risk behaviors, such as gang involvement, substance use, and unsafe sex. The questions on the scale were as follows:

- (a) I am confident I am able to say "no" if my friends ask me to join a gang
- (b) How confident are you that you would be able to say "no" if a friend offered you a cigarette
- (c) How confident are you to say "no" if a friend offers you a drink of alcohol
- (d) I am confident I can say "No" to marijuana if I am at a party where my close friends are insisting me to use it
- (e) I am confident I could refuse to have sex with someone if I didn't want to
- (f) I am confident I could buy condoms/contraceptives

These six items required responses along a five-point scale from "1" to "5," indicating a range of options from feeling "Least confident" to feeling "Most confident" in their abilities to refuse participation in a risky activity. Item responses were summed together to create an overall scale score and the Cronbach's alpha was 0.64 at Baseline and 0.63 at Exit, indicating adequate internal reliability with the program's high school sample.

As shown in the Table, high school participants reported higher levels of self-efficacy after their involvement in the PYD Program. This increase from Baseline to Exit was statistically significant ($p < .05$).

PARENT-YOUTH RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between PYD participants and their parents will frequently be more strained than that of their non-Latino peers due to family separation and reunification issues. Recognizing the important role that parents play in the positive and healthy development of youth, Identity runs the Parent Education and Support (PES) Program for the parents of participants enrolled in the PYD Program. The PES Program attempts to strengthen and repair the parent-child relationship through activities that can help build communication skills and bridge culture gaps.

High school youth were asked to report on their relationships with their parent(s) and/or guardian(s) in various areas. All of the items in these domains were presented along a scale from "1" to "5," where the former represented "Not at all" and the latter represented "A lot." This outcome was comprised of four separate scales as well as two single items that addressed the effects of parental separation (if applicable).

High school youth who had been separated from their parents felt slightly less anger towards their parents and more youth had spoken to their parents about their feelings regarding the separation following their involvement in the PYD Program. Neither of these results, however, reached a level of statistical significance.

It is important to highlight that at Baseline, over half of high school youth who had been separated from their parents reported that bad things happened to them during the separation period. Considering the experience of such trauma, it is very encouraging that high school youth reported less feelings of anger and a greater ability to discuss their trauma with their parents after the PYD Program. Thus, the PYD and PES programs had the desired impact of increasing parent-youth dialogue regarding the family separation and reunification process.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Teaching youth healthy and productive ways to manage their anger and resolve conflicts is an important way to reduce violence and improve interpersonal relationship skills. High school participants were asked the following questions that aimed to determine their skills and attitudes in resolving potential conflicts:

- (a) If someone makes me really angry, I would hit the person
- (b) If I walked away from a fight, people would think I was a coward ("chicken")
- (c) I would try to stop a fight, even if other kids thought I was weird
- (d) I don't need to fight because there are other ways to deal with being mad
- (e) If someone teases me, I try to talk it out instead of fighting

Items were presented along a five-point scale from "1" to "5," representing a range from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." Two questions emphasized negative reactions, and the other four questions emphasized positive reactions. Internal reliability for this scale was adequate (Cronbach's alpha=0.66 at Baseline; 0.61 at Exit).

The results in the Table indicate that high school participants reported an increase in their conflict resolution skills after their involvement in the PYD Program.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE RISK ASSESSMENT

An objective of the PYD program is to assess and ultimately decrease youth's levels of risk for abusing substances.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE KNOWLEDGE

Substance use knowledge was measured with a 10-item scale in which high school youth were asked to report the likelihood of negative consequences from prolonged ATOD use. Youth were asked how likely a specific negative result would occur if they used a particular substance “nearly every day for the next 12 months.” The Table shows a small, non-significant decrease in high school participants’ levels of substance abuse knowledge at Exit.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE ATTITUDES

Participants responded to a three-item scale designed to assess their attitudes or intentions to use substances in the near future.

The three items were presented along a five-point scale from “1” to “5”, which represented options ranging from “Least likely” to “Most likely.” Therefore, higher scores reflect more likelihood or intent to use substances in the future. Responses to these items were summed to create an overall scale score for substance use attitudes and the Cronbach’s alpha was 0.43 at Baseline and 0.82 at Exit, indicating an increasingly satisfactory internal reliability.

As reflected in the Table, high school youth reported a decrease in their curiosity or intentions to use substances at Exit.

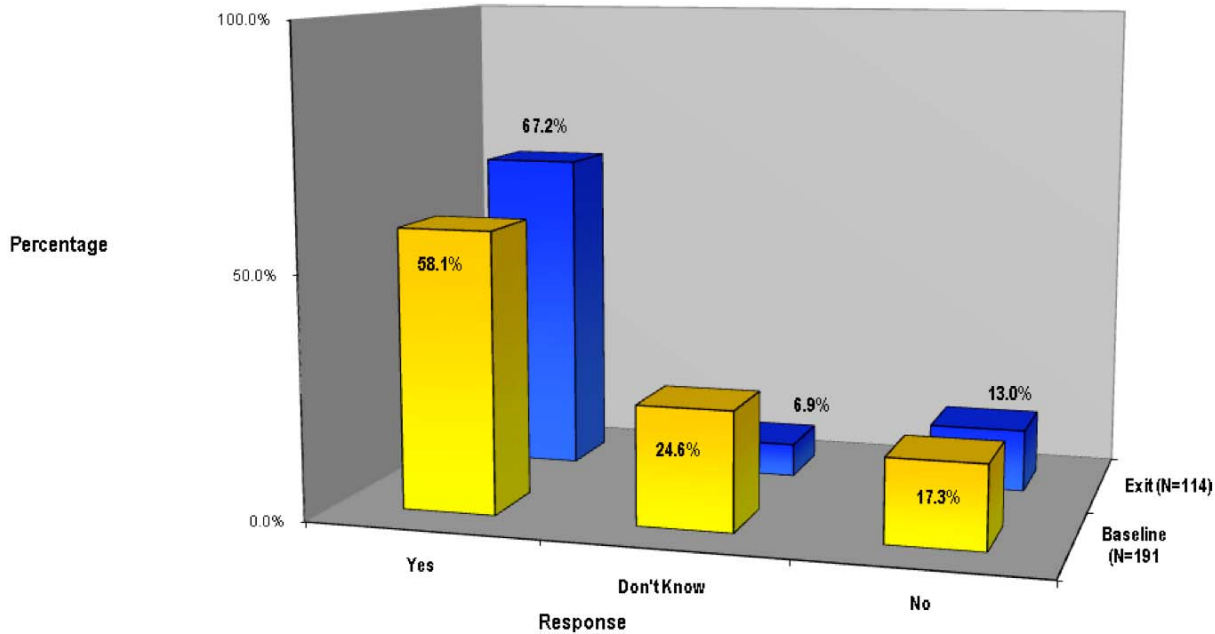
SEXUAL HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT

SAFE SEX KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL

There was a large increase in the percent of high school youth who learned how to correctly use a condom.

There was also an increase in the amount of high school youth who had talked to their parents about safe sex, which is an encouraging development when one considers the cultural and generational gap issues that often complicate the Latino parent-youth relationship.

HIV/AIDS Prevention Knowledge – Effectiveness of Condom Use (High School Participants Only)



From Baseline to Exit, we also see more improvements in high school youth's knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS transmission. More youth who had been uncertain at Baseline learned that condoms are effective in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS.

SAFE SEX ATTITUDES SCALE

A three-item scale was designed to measure participants' intentions or confidence in their ability to practice safe sex in the future.

Answers to the three items were summed to create an overall scale, meaning that high scores represent higher levels of safe sex attitudes.

The results in the Table indicate that high school youth reported an increase in their safe sex intentions after participating in the PYD Program. In addition, Exit data shows that while most high school participants reported abstinence from sexual activity, those who did engage in sexual activity were more likely to practice safe sex.

Major Outcomes: Analysis of Middle School Program

This section focuses on the results specific to the PYD program implementation in Montgomery County middle schools.

PARTICIPANT RETENTION

The middle school program had a retention rate of 79.4%

SOCIAL SUPPORT

SOCIAL SUPPORT SCALE

Middle school participants were presented with a two-item scale designed to gauge their level of perceived social support.

As shown in the Table, middle school participants reported that they received significantly higher levels of social support after their involvement in the PYD Program.

SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

Middle school participants were asked questions to gauge how confident they felt about refusing a variety of risk behaviors, such as gang involvement, substance use, and unsafe sex.

These six items required responses along a five-point scale from "1" to "5," indicating a range of options from feeling "Least confident" to feeling "Most confident" in their abilities to refuse participation in a risky activity. Item responses were summed together to create an overall scale score. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.70 at Baseline and 0.74 at Exit, which indicates the scale's strong internal reliability with the program's middle school sample.

As shown in the Table, middle school youth reported a statistically significant increase in their sense of self-efficacy after participating in the PYD Program.

YOUTH-SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS – SINGLE ITEMS

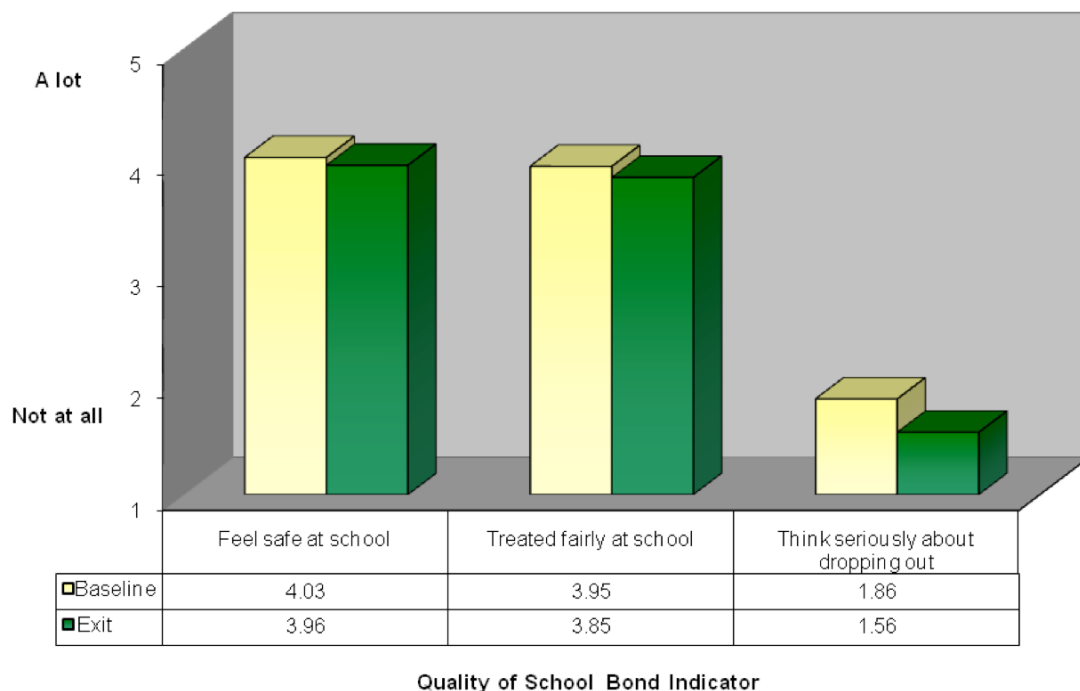
Middle school participants also responded to three questions to assess the strength of their connection and level of comfort at school and in the academic environment. These three questions were as follows:

- (a) At school, I feel safe
- (b) At school, I feel treated fairly
- (c) I think seriously about dropping out of school

Items were again presented on a scale from 1 to 5, where the former represented "Not at all" and the latter represented "A lot."

The figure below displays several changes from Baseline to Exit, including decreases in the amount of middle school youth who feel safe and feel treated fairly at school. This outcome may be a reflection of many factors: the number of violent incidents which occurred in middle schools during the past school year, an increase in young people involved in violent behavior at schools or the anti-immigrant sentiment that has been growing throughout the country and which impacts Latino youth.

Quality of Youth-School Bond (Middle School Participants Only)



However, the figure also shows the positive change that middle school youth made in that fewer were contemplating dropping out of school after their participation in the PYD program.

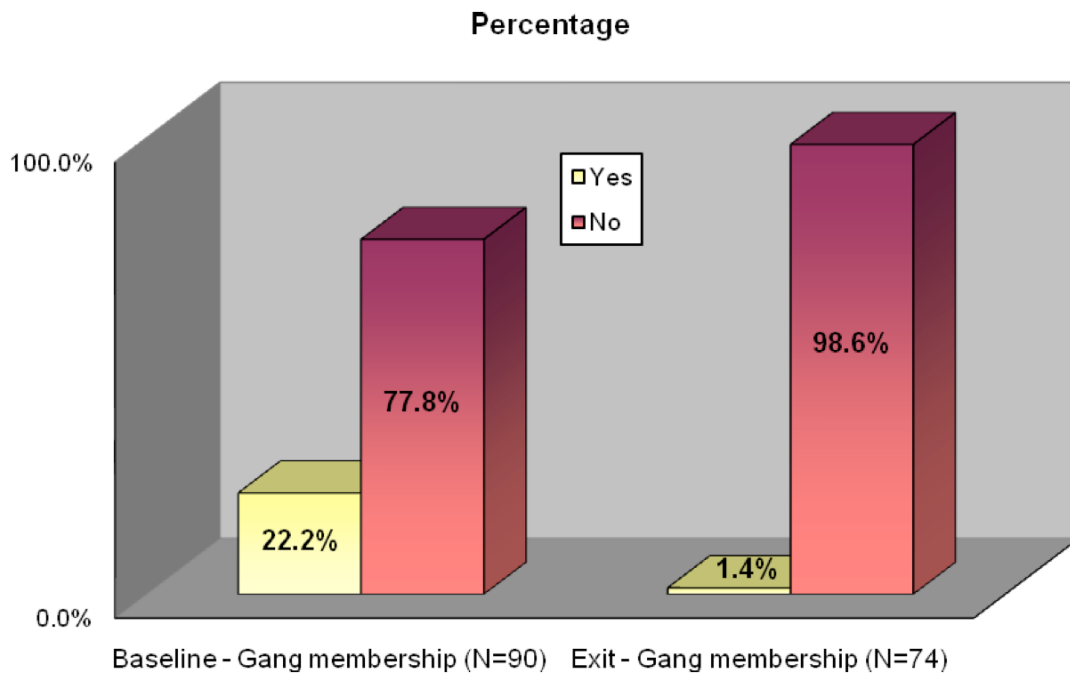
GANG RISK

Middle school youth were presented with a six-item scale to determine whether their appraisals of gangs place them at greater risk for gang involvement.

As shown in the Table, middle school youth reported a decrease in their high risk gang attitudes after participating in the PYD Program, suggesting a greater ability to avoid gang involvement in the future.

GANG MEMBERSHIP – SINGLE ITEM

Middle school youth were also asked if they were gang members. They were instructed to answer “yes” or “no” to this item on the PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys. Since middle school youth had not yet developed trust in Identity and the PYD program facilitators, it is very possible that youth did not respond in a completely candid manner to this question at Baseline. Baseline and Exit data are graphically displayed in the figure below and it should be noted that these results reflect overall, non-matched percentages for all participants.



At Baseline, 22.2% of middle school participants identified themselves as gang members. At Exit, this percentage dropped substantially to 1.4%. This drop might also be a reflection of the lessened levels of “fascination” with gangs following participation in the PYD program, a very positive outcome.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE RISK ASSESSMENT

One of the main objectives of the PYD program is to assess and ultimately decrease youth's levels of risk for abusing substances. The PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys measure this risk along the following three dimensions: a) knowledge, b) attitudes, and c) behavior.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE KNOWLEDGE

Substance use knowledge was measured with a 10-item scale that asked middle school youth to assess the likelihood of negative consequences from prolonged ATOD use. Youth were asked how likely a specific negative result would occur if they used a particular substance "nearly every day for the next 12 months."

Items were presented along a five-point scale from "1" to "5," representing options that range from "Least likely" to "Most likely." Responses to items (c), (f), and (i) were recoded inversely before responses to all 10 items were summed to create an overall scale score. The Cronbach's alpha at Baseline was 0.79 and 0.88 at Exit, indicating the scale's excellent internal reliability with the present sample of middle school youth.

The Table indicates that middle school youth significantly increased their knowledge and awareness regarding the dangers of substance abuse due to their participation in the PYD Program.

HIGH RISK SUBSTANCE ABUSE ATTITUDES

Middle school participants responded to a three-item scale designed to assess their attitudes or intentions to use substances in the near future.

As shown in the Table, middle school participants reported a statistically significant decrease in their high risk attitudes towards substance use. This result suggests that participation in the PYD program helped middle school youth develop more negative attitudes towards substance use and making it less likely that they would use drugs or alcohol in the future.

HIGH RISK SUBSTANCE ABUSE BEHAVIOR

Middle school participants were asked five questions to measure actual substance use during the previous 30 days. These items were presented along a five-point scale and then recoded, where "1" represented "Almost daily," "2" represented "A couple of times each week," "3" represented "A couple of times during this month," "4" represented

“Not at all,” and “5” represented “I have never (done the behavior).” Responses were summed together to create an overall scale score and the scale’s internal reliability was inconsistent, with Cronbach’s alpha of 0.79 at Baseline and 0.24 at Exit.

The Table shows a slight, non-significant increase in substance use reported by middle school youth at Exit. This finding may appear inconsistent with the statistically significant decrease in middle school youth’s “likeliness” to use substance use reported in the previous sub-section. However, it is important to emphasize that current theories of behavior change stipulate that youth will often manifest changes in knowledge and attitudes before finally altering their actual behaviors. In addition, the program itself is only 60 hours of after-school programming, not an extensive amount of time in which to measure actual behavior changes.

SEXUAL HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT

SAFE SEX KNOWLEDGE – SINGLE ITEMS

Middle school participants were also asked five questions to assess their knowledge of safe sex and HIV/AIDS prevention techniques.

Evaluation shows a large increase in the percentage of middle school youth who learned how to correctly use a condom. Evaluation also showed an increase in the amount of middle school youth who had talked to their parents about safe sex, another encouraging sign if one considers the cultural and generational gap issues that can frequently complicate the Latino parent-youth relationship.

There were reductions in the percentage of middle school youth who either did not know or who erroneously believed that HIV is transmitted through kissing. There was a nearly 30% increase in the amount of middle school youth who had gained the accurate knowledge that HIV cannot be transmitted via kissing. It is clear that after participation in the PYD Program, a majority of middle school youth were aware that HIV transmission does not occur through kissing.

SAFE SEX ATTITUDES SCALE

Participants concluded a three-item scale designed to measure intentions or confidence in their ability to practice safe sex in the future.

The results in The Table indicate that middle school youth had higher levels of safe sex intentions after participating in the PYD Program. This finding was almost statistically significant ($p < .06$).

Conclusions: PYD vs. Control Group

The most compelling results that support the effectiveness of the PYD Program are the negative outcomes found for the Control group participants on the waiting list. Controls reported only one statistically significant improvement – an increase in general social support – for a domain not directly impacted by the PYD curriculum. On the other hand, Control participants reported the following negative and statistically significant results:

- Control group youth reported significant decreases in self-esteem (PYD scale)

- Control group youth reported significant decreases on all parent-youth measures (e.g., parental monitoring scale, parent-youth trust scale, parent-youth bond scale, parent-youth communication scale, and parental academic support scale)

- Control group youth reported significant decreases in optimism about the future (PYD scale)

- Control group youth reported significant decreases in conflict resolution skills (PYD scale)

- Control group youth reported significant increases in unsafe sex behavior (PYD scale)

When compared to high school participants, Control group participants were significantly worse off in almost every domain except for safe sex behavior – high school youth also reported a significant increase but the scale mean difference was lower. When compared to middle school participants, Control group participants were significantly worse off in virtually all aspects except for the Parent-Youth Trust Scale, but middle school participants had a lower scale mean difference. Thus, a comparison of Control group participants and youth who received the PYD Program services reveals the strongest evidence that the PYD Program does indeed foster many of the positive changes it sets as programmatic goals.

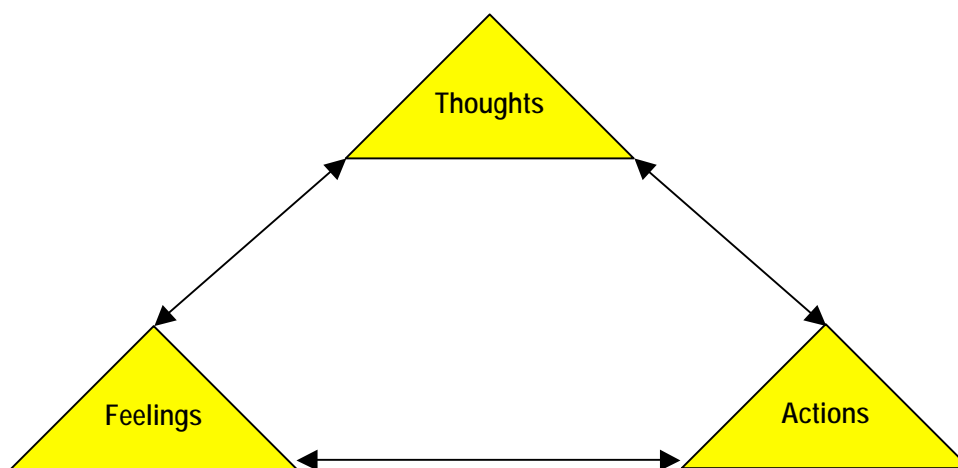
Model For Behavior Change

Identity implemented the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Program with vulnerable Latino students in five high schools and four middle schools in Montgomery County, Maryland. The PYD Program aims to increase participants'

self-esteem, self-efficacy, and conflict resolution skills while also decreasing their feelings of depression and isolation. In addition, the PYD Program aims to increase participants' level of knowledge regarding the dangers of the following problems or risks: a) gangs, b) alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use, and c) unsafe sexual practices that can lead to unwanted pregnancies and contraction of HIV/AIDS. The PYD Program also endeavors to change youth's attitudes so that they are more willing to avoid gang affiliation or membership, to avoid or reduce ATOD use, to practice safe sex, and in general, make healthier choices in their lives. Ultimately, the PYD Program intends to guide youth to the point where they will increase their positive or prosocial behaviors and decrease their negative or problem behaviors.

Identity's model for behavior change is consistent with the current theory in the field of behavioral sciences. The generally accepted notion among proponents of a cognitive-behavioral approach is that human functioning is best described in terms of the cognitive-behavioral triangle. As shown in shown in the figure below, this model proposes that changes in thought patterns can lead to changes in feelings, which then lead to altered actions or behaviors. From the perspective of the PYD Program, if participants improve their level of knowledge (i.e., thoughts) then this will have a positive impact on their feelings (i.e., attitudes), which will lead them to healthier and less risky behaviors. The model also stipulates interdependent relationships between the three components, such that actions may also impact thoughts and/or feelings. For example, participation in the PYD Program is an action that can impact the thoughts and feelings of the participants, which can then produce the desired changes in attitudes and behaviors.

The Cognitive-Behavioral Triangle



When viewed from the cognitive-behavioral perspective, Identity achieved great success with its PYD Program participants. Identity administered the PYD Survey at both Baseline and Exit in order to measure program outcomes

or changes in youth's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in several domains of functioning. In addition, Identity administered the PYD Youth Self-Assessment/Satisfaction Exit Survey at the conclusion of the program and it can also be viewed as measure of attitudinal change. This survey measured the following six major areas: overall satisfaction, satisfaction with the program facilitators, perceived increase in knowledge, perceived acquisition of new skills, sense of self-efficacy, and optimism about the future. In all six areas, the participants reported an overwhelming percentage of positive attitudes about the PYD Program, themselves, and the directions of their lives.

Data analysis of the PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys consisted of paired sample *t*-tests to determine whether positive trends or statistically significant progress had occurred. Analyses were performed separately for PYD high school and middle school participants as well as Control group participants. The PYD Program implementation with high school youth produced statistically significant improvements for the following scales or single items:

High school youth reported increases in general social support (PYD scale)

High school youth reported increases in self-efficacy (PYD scale)

High school youth reported increases in level of trust for adults at school (PYD single item)

Analyses also found many results that changed in the desired directions but not quite to the level of statistical significance. Among high school participants, the PYD Program produced positive trends for increased self-esteem, reduced depression symptoms, increased parent-youth trust, increased conflict resolution skills, decreased substance use intentions, increased safe sex intentions, and increased safe sex behavior.

The PYD Program implementation with middle school youth produced statistically significant improvements for the following scales or single items:

Middle school youth reported increases in general social support (PYD scale)

Middle school youth reported increases in self-efficacy (PYD scale)

Middle school youth reported increases in knowledge about the dangers of substance use (PYD scale)

Middle school youth reported decreases in their intentions to use substances in the future (PYD scale)

Non-significant but desired change among middle school participants was also found for increased safe sex intentions.

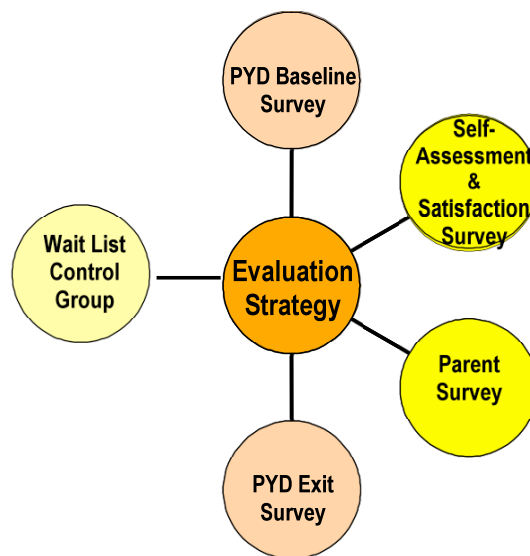
Despite the potentially powerful impacts of negative peer influences and the current political climate that has produced negative sentiments towards immigrants and their children, the participants in Identity's PYD Program have made important progress towards healthy development. Analysis of matched PYD Baseline and Exit Survey data yielded positive trends in some areas and statistically significant improvements in several domains of functioning.

Another particularly encouraging sign for the PYD program was the high level of participant satisfaction across all levels of programmatic implementation.

Evaluation Strategy and Methods

Identity partnered with the Department of Psychology at The George Washington University to continue the evaluation strategy established in the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 academic years. The evaluation strategy places emphasis on measuring program effectiveness and participant satisfaction (PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys, Parent Surveys, and Youth Self-Assessment/Satisfaction Exit Surveys).

Evaluation Strategy



Identity also administered a Youth Self-Assessment/Satisfaction Survey at the end of program to evaluate participant satisfaction with the program, the program facilitation, and the perceived impact that the program had on HIV risk reduction, illegal substances abuse, risk behavior, conflict resolution, and other factors that impact healthy development. The PYD program is implemented in Spanish and all evaluation instruments are administered in either Spanish or English, depending on the participants' language preferences. Instruments and data were translated into English for purposes of this report.

The data in this report reflects youth's responses on the PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys administered with participants from the following four middle schools: Neelsville MS, Newport Mill MS, Parkland MS, and Roberto Clemente MS. The PYD Baseline Survey was also administered to participants from the following five high schools: Albert Einstein HS, Gaithersburg HS, Northwood HS, Watkins Mill HS, and Wheaton HS. At Gaithersburg HS, one group was recruited from the school's general Latino population and the second group was recruited from the Multidisciplinary Education, Training and Support (METS) program.

From a developmental perspective, adolescents in high school and their younger middle school counterparts will likely respond differently to the PYD Program curriculum and therefore provide different responses on the PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys. To confirm this hypothesized difference in the two populations, independent samples *t*-tests were conducted at Baseline to determine if high school and middle school participants differed significantly on key demographic variables. With respect to demographic data, significant differences between high school and middle school participants were found for age, language preference, country of origin, years living in the US, helping parents with translation, receiving Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) at school, employment during the school year, separation from parents due to immigration, negative experiences during the separation, gang membership, and language preference. In terms of outcome variables, the following Baseline Survey scales reflected significant differences: Social Support, Depression, Self-Efficacy, Parental Monitoring, Parent-Youth Trust, Parent-Youth Bond, Parent-Youth Communication, Parent Academic Support, Future Expectations, High Risk Drug Attitudes, and Safe Sex Attitudes. Therefore, separate statistical analyses were conducted to assess program effectiveness for high school and middle school participants.

PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys were entered and analyzed via the SPSS software package. The 13-page survey is divided into several different scales designed to measure various domains of functioning. The majority of the items on the PYD Baseline Survey were selected from several of the following well-established measurement tools: Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (Bohn, Babor, & Kranzler, 1995); CSAP GPRA; National Survey of Parents and

Youth Questionnaires (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2002); Children's Depression Inventory (Kovacs,1999); Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the UCLA Multidimensional Condom Attitudes Scale (Helweg-Larsen & Collins, 1994). Most items were presented in Likert-scale format, such that youth would indicate varying degrees of agreement from options marked 1-4 or 1-5. Scale values will be explained as each variable is presented. In addition to the survey scales, there are several other important questions on the PYD Baseline Survey that were not included as parts of any scales. Many of these items were categorical or dichotomous in nature (e.g., requiring only a "yes" or "no" response) and others did not provide sufficient internal reliability when combined with other items to be a part of a valid or reliable PYD Scale.

A series of paired-sample *t*-tests were conducted with paired survey responses (i.e. both Baseline and Exit for the same participants) to detect differences in the means between the participants' responses on the PYD Baseline and Exit Surveys. Significant differences in the means indicate that Identity can be reasonably certain that changes in the participants' attitudes, behaviors, and knowledge have occurred due to the impact of Identity's PYD program. All outcomes in the desired directions are specified in this section and those that are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) will be noted. Statistical convention states that a sample size of at least 30 participants is necessary in order to draw inferences from analysis.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, Identity incorporated a new element in its program evaluation plan by implementing a Waitlist Control group to provide a comparison between youth who receive the program and those who do not. Youth from four different schools (Albert Einstein HS, Gaithersburg HS, Parkland MS, and Roberto Clemente MS) who were not participating in the PYD Program during Fall 2007 completed the Baseline Survey. These youth represent the Control group and were ineligible to participate in the next implementation (either in the Winter or Spring) of the PYD Program at their school. A series of independent samples *t*-test were conducted to confirm that no significant differences existed between the PYD and Control participants. The PYD and Control participants only differed on average age, as PYD participants were older (mean = 12.75 years) than Control participants (mean = 12.28 years). More importantly, PYD and Control youth did not differ significantly on any of the Baseline Survey scale outcome measures.

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