



WOODSONCENTER

THE VIOLENCE FREE ZONE (VFZ) INITIATIVE:
EVALUATION OF THE
MULTI-STATE MENTORING INITIATIVE



BAYLOR INSTITUTE FOR
Studies of Religion

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ABSTRACT

The Violence-Free Zone (VFZ) youth mentoring program is designed to address truancies, suspensions, violent and nonviolent incidents, involvement in drugs and gangs, and poor academic performance in public middle and high schools.

Originally targeting the highest-risk students, the VFZ program has expanded throughout many of the schools within the Milwaukee, WI Public School system (MPS) and to high school programs in Chicago, IL, Hartford, CT, Baltimore, MD, and Washington DC.

The goal of the 36-month Multi-State Mentoring Initiative Research Project was to conduct a variety of program evaluation and return on investment (ROI) analyses to assess the effectiveness of the VFZ program in providing mentoring services to high-risk, underserved youth. The research project team hopes to provide VFZ and each of its six community-based partners with insight regarding the impact of the VFZ program on the target populations as well as on the schools' climate, in general.



"THE SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS THAT I'VE DISCOVERED OVER THE YEARS WERE NOT FROM PEOPLE WITHIN CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS, GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACIES OR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, BUT WERE PEOPLE WHO ARE WORKING QUIETLY WITHIN THESE COMMUNITIES. SOME OF THESE PEOPLE WERE IN POVERTY BUT NOT OF IT, WHILE OTHERS WERE ONCE OF POVERTY - MEANING THEY WERE FORMER CRIMINALS AND/OR DRUG ADDICTS - BUT HAD TRANSFORMED THEIR LIVES AND NOW SERVE AS ROLE MODELS FOR OTHERS IN THE COMMUNITY. IN A SENSE, MUCH OF WHAT WE DO AT THE WOODSON CENTER IS SIMPLY TO FIND THESE INDIGENOUS LEADERS AND SUPPORT AND HELP GROW THEIR WORK.

ROBERT WOODSON, SR. , LIFE-LONG COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Woodson Center (WC) coordinates the Violence-Free Zone (VFZ) initiative through local nonprofit community-based organizations (CBOs) in several U.S. cities. VFZ employs and trains staff from these local CBOs to function as school-based mentors, called “youth advisors,” who model and encourage positive behaviors among high-risk youth. These youth advisors are chosen for their ability to relate to young people, and often come from circumstances similar to those of the students they mentor. The youth advisors monitor, counsel, and mediate on behalf of students within the VFZ program as well as assisting with school-wide monitoring (e.g., walking the hallways, being there when students come to school) and perform informal mentoring activities for the entire school population, in coordination with school authorities. Local public-school administrators from across the nation have praised the initiative's work.

The Department of Justice's National Gang Center endorses the VFZ initiative as a promising program structure.¹ A research team led by scholars at Baylor University's Program on Prosocial Behavior also found the VFZ initiative positively influenced several behavioral factors known to be associated with high-risk youth. Previously, the Baylor research team was included as the third-party evaluator on a three-year grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to expand and enhance the VFZ initiative in Milwaukee, Richmond (VA) and Baltimore.

The VFZ initiative received another OJJDP Multi-State Mentoring grant (October of 2014 through the end of June 2016) to provide mentoring services to 750 youth through six community-based programs in five cities. This report synthesizes the activities and findings for this 36-month program. The Baylor team's research efforts over this 36-month period are captured in three separate but related evaluations of VFZ program outcomes and projected impacts:

1. Pre/post analysis of VFZ participants to track changes in: Attendance, Behavior, and Coursework (ABC): This evaluation approach is based on the “A, B, C” framework, and is based on research that identifies key factors associated with improving high school graduation and college enrollment rates among high-risk populations.^{2 3} The ABC framework was selected for this evaluation because of its use of longitudinal data on students to predict high school graduation:
 - A – Attendance: Compares the average number of unexcused absences per student per month from before and after VFZ enrollment;

¹ OJJDP. (2012). Strategic Planning Tool: Violence-Free Zones. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice. Retrieved August 1, 2012 from <http://www.nationalgangcenter.gov/SPT/Programs/130>

² “Just the Right Mix: Identifying Potential Dropouts in Montgomery County Public Schools Using an Early Warning Indicators Approach”; West, Thomas A. March 2013.

³ “What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools”; Allensworth, Elaine M. and Easton, John Q.; Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2007.

- B – Behavior: Compares the average number of suspensions and/or suspension days per student per month before and after VFZ enrollment; and
 - C – Coursework: Compares grade-point-average (GPA) for students before and after VFZ enrollment.
2. Pre/post analysis of student perceptions of their mentor: VFZ students were surveyed at the beginning and end of their VFZ mentoring experience to gauge the impact of VFZ on a more personal level. This analysis examines the degree to which significant increases in the student's level of trust and the general availability of their mentor correlates to better outcomes, as determined by the ABC analysis in #1 above.
 3. ROI analysis of VFZ program: This analysis utilizes the results of the ABC evaluation to project improvements in high school graduation rates attributable to the VFZ intervention. These results are then combined with existing data demonstrating the long-term economic benefits of high school graduation to compare the project financial benefits associated with the program with the cost of implementing the VFZ program in order to provide an estimated ROI (Return On Investment) for the VFZ program.

Results

The overall pre-post results are based on data for at least one of the four measures (unexcused absences/attendance, suspensions/incidents, GPA and mentor survey) utilized in this study of 851 students who participated in one of the six VFZ program in the five cities. The percentage of students for whom complete pre/post data were furnished ranged from 45 percent (Baltimore) to 98 percent (Hartford). See Appendix 1 for a detailed breakdown of the selection sizes by site and by measure.

Overall Program Outcomes

- Attendance: There was an overall average pre/post improvement in attendance of 19% for the students served through the VFZ program. With the exception of the Milwaukee, VFZ programs attendance was measured by the pre/post change in the average number of unexcused absences per student per month.⁴ All of the decreases in the other four cities (Baltimore, Chicago, Hartford, and Washington DC) were statistically significant.

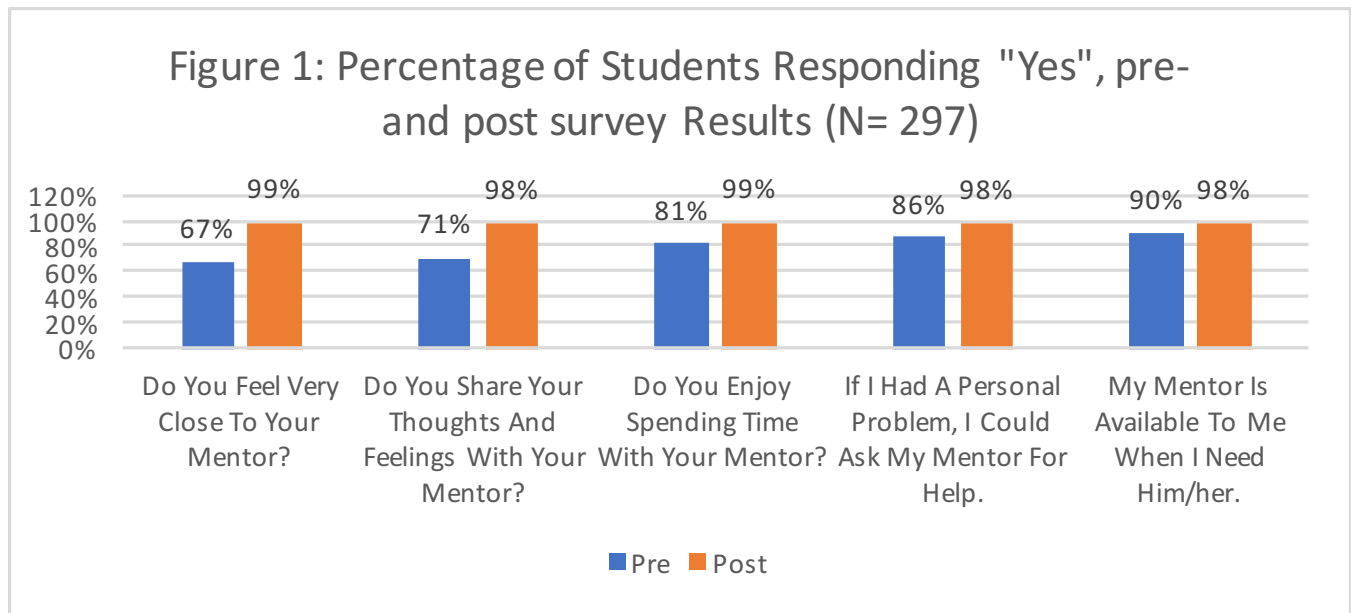
⁴ The one exception was the Milwaukee VFZ, in which attendance was measured by the percentage of days VFZ students were marked as present during the pre-and post-VFZ time periods. For the Milwaukee program, pre/post attendance actually decreased slightly (i.e., the average number of unexcused absences increased from pre to post).

- Behavior: There was an overall pre/post decrease in the average number of suspensions per student per month of 74%.⁵ These reductions were significant in all four sites where data was available.⁶
- Coursework: The overall GPA for the VFZ students for whom pre- and post-data was available improved by 33% from pre-to-post-VFZ. These GPA improvements were significant in four of the five VFZ sites.⁷

(See Appendix I for the statistical analysis of all pre/post results)

VFZ Student Mentor Survey Results

The pre-post mentor survey results showed significant numbers of VFZ students (mentees) responding positively to their mentor. Based on a survey of 35% of the 851 students served, 98% responded affirmatively regarding their relationship with their mentor through the VFZ program.⁸ Figure 1 shows VFZ student responses to the mentor survey pre-and post-VFZ implementation. The difference between pre-and post-survey was lower among students who were continuing, not beginning, the program because they had already established a relationship with their mentors and had a relatively higher initial rating of their mentors.



⁵ For the Milwaukee VFZ program, behavior was measured by the total average number of violent incidents per month for the 126 VFZ students for who pre- and post-data was available.

⁶ Suspensions data was not available for the Baltimore VFZ program (NVYS – New Vision Youth Services).

⁷ There was a slight decline in GPA (3%) for students in the Baltimore VFZ program (NVYS).

⁸ Mentor survey data was not available for the Chicago VFZ program (KLEO – Keep Loving Each Other).

ROI Projections

The Baylor evaluation team employed a two-step approach to calculate the expected value of the return. First, the team used the ABC near-term proximal indicators of decreased absenteeism (A), decreased disciplinary referrals (B), and increased GPA (C) to predict increased graduation rates. Second, the Baylor evaluation team used the predicted increase in the number of high school graduates to estimate the subsequently increased probability of lifetime earnings of successful participants. Consequently, it is the taxpayer’s return on investment that is calculated. The return comprises increased tax revenue on the incremental income earnings of program participants plus the decreased tax-payer outlays for public assistance, the criminal justice system, and incarceration.

Based on improvements in Attendance (reduction in unexcused absences), Behavior (suspensions) and Coursework (GPA), the Baylor evaluation team made a conservative estimate that an additional 45.5 students achieved high school graduation based on the mentoring services received through the VFZ program. The total Net Present Value of Lifetime Wage Differential for the 45.5 additional high school graduates of over \$22 million in 2017 dollars. The additional income and payroll tax revenue at the combined federal and state levels would be \$8,093,431. This represents a substantial pro-social return of taxpayer dollars for the investment in the VFZ program.

Table 1: Summary of Benefits

BENEFIT CATEGORY	TOTAL BENEFITS
1) Wages based on higher graduation rate	\$22,927,567
2) Taxes on those Wages	\$8,093,431
3) Public Assistance Savings	\$1,255,705
4) Criminal Justice and Victimization Cost Savings	\$2,420,244
(2 + 3 + 4) Taxpayers’ Savings	\$11,769,380

Program Costs and ROI

Total funding including overhead costs for the VFZ program in the five cities was \$1,000,000. That \$1,000,000 represents the investment. The taxpayer returns of \$11,769,380 compared to \$1,000,000 investment means that \$11.77 in lifetime revenue plus savings are returned for every dollar invested in the VFZ program.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Woodson Center (formerly, the Center for Neighborhood Enterprise) was founded in 1981 by former civil rights activist and life-long community organizer Robert Woodson, Sr. The three founding principles established by Woodson to govern and direct the Woodson Center, which still serves as the guideposts for the organization 36 years later, are:

1. Those suffering from the problem must be involved in the creation and implementation of the solution;
2. The principles of the market economy should be applied to the solution of societal problems; and
3. Value-generating and faith-based programs and groups are uniquely qualified to address the problems of poverty that are rooted in behavior and life choices.

At the core of the Woodson Center's philosophy and approach is a recognition that effective, community-based programs originate in those same communities, rather than from academia or policy institutes where experts often have very little practical or first-hand knowledge of these communities.

As Woodson explained:

The successful programs and interventions that I've discovered over the years were not from people within civil rights groups, government bureaucracies or higher education institutions, but were created by people who are working quietly within these communities. Some of these people were in poverty but not of it, while others were once of poverty – meaning they were former criminals and/or drug addicts – but had transformed their lives and now serve as role models for others in the community. In a sense, much of what we do at The Woodson Center is simply to find these indigenous leaders and support and help grow their work.

Working closely with school safety officers and local police, the origins of the Violence-Free Zone (VFZ) initiative followed very much along these lines as well.

Background – Multi-State Mentoring Research Project

The Woodson Center (WC) engaged the services of Social Capital Valuations, LLC (SCV) and Baylor University's Program on Prosocial Behavior, hereinafter referred to as the "Baylor evaluation team" to conduct an evaluation of the Woodson Center's Violence-Free Zone (VFZ) Initiative. WC received a \$1 million grant from

OJJDP to provide mentoring services to 750 at-risk youth through six community-based partner organizations located in five cities across the U.S. (see Table 2 for a listing of the VFZ partner organizations and the actual number of youth receiving mentoring services at each site).

Table 2: Listing of VFZ Program Sites and Number of Students Served

SITE LOCATION	COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNER ORGANIZATION	NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED
Baltimore, MD	New Vision Youth Services (NVYS)	113
Chicago, IL	Keep Loving Each Other (KLEO)	136
Hartford, CT	Communities That Care (CTC)	158
Milwaukee, WI	Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC) / Running Rebels (RR)	277
Washington, DC	Sasha Bruce Youth Center (SBYC)	167
	TOTAL	851

First Things First – Creating an Evaluation Framework

The Multi-State Mentoring (MSM) grant, through the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), allowed for the most dramatic expansion of the VFZ program to date, including the enlistment of new partnerships with three community-based organizations (CTC in Hartford, KLEO in Chicago, and SBYC in Washington, DC). As explained by Charles L. Perry, project director for the MSM grant, the Woodson Center wanted to engage their partners in creating the evaluation framework:

We wanted to be sure we had some degree of fidelity to the overall principles guiding the VFZ program, while also recognizing the need for each of our partner organizations to construct their program in a manner that was workable within their existing program model as well.

The vehicle that WC chose to help coordinate the activities of its six community-based partner organizations into a cohesive initiative was through logic modeling. "A logic model (also known as a logical framework, the theory of change, or program matrix) is a tool used by funders, managers, and evaluators of programs to evaluate the effectiveness of a program. This model can also be used during planning and implementation".⁹ Logic models are usually a graphical depiction of the logical relationships between the resources, activities, outputs and anticipated outcomes of a program".¹⁰ While there are many ways in which logic models can be presented, the underlying purpose of constructing a logic model is to assess the outcomes associated with the activities conducted.

⁹ Innovation Network. "Logic model workbook" (PDF). Retrieved 28 August 2012.

¹⁰ McCawley, Paul. "The logic model for program planning and evaluation" (PDF). University of Idaho.

WC engaged, with the assistance of the Baylor evaluation team, all of its partners in developing a program logic model for the VFZ program, which consisted in identified resources (e.g., funds and staff), collaborators, and the short-term, intermediate and long-term anticipated outcomes. Exhibit 1 (next page) shows the program logic model developed by WC and its community-based partners.

The logic model was not only useful for coordinating the efforts of WC's six community-based partners, but it was also instrumental in determining the data to be collected for the evaluation of the VFZ program performance at each site. The ultimate goal of the evaluation is to develop and track data items relating to all the outputs and outcomes contained in the logic model. However, in recognition of the burden that data collection places on local program sites, WC and the Baylor evaluation team limited its data collection efforts to the elements of what is termed the "ABCs" for improving students' performance in schools:

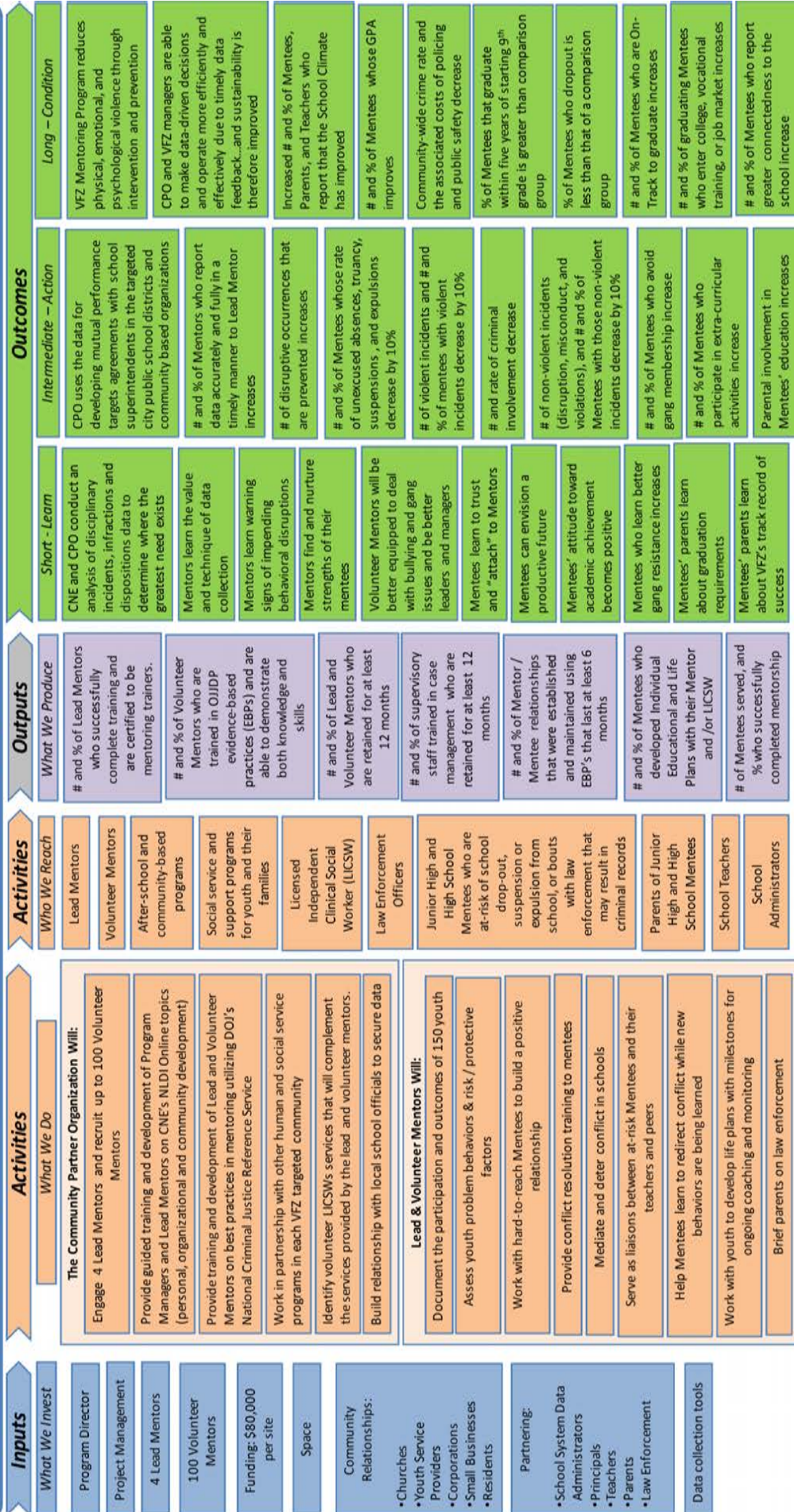
- **A – Attendance:** Much of the recent research around predicting high-school graduation looks at school attendance as a crucial factor. The VFZ Initiative predicts that the presence and engagement of youth advisors/mentors with VFZ students will improve school attendance, as measured by the decline in the average number of unexcused absences per month per student after their enrollment in VFZ;
- **B – Behavior:** For purposes of this evaluation, we use suspension as an approximate measure for how students behave in school. An improvement in school behavior is another outcome associated with involvement with the VFZ program. This will be measured as the change in the average number of suspensions and/or suspension days per student per month from before and after VFZ enrollment;
- **C – Coursework:** Although VFZ does not provide academic tutoring per se, addressing social and emotional learning (SEL) needs of program participants may have a positive impact on their academic performance. This component of the evaluation will compare students' GPA at the time of (or before) VFZ enrollment with their GPA at the conclusion of their mentoring, which, for most students, is the completion of the academic school year (ASY) 2015-16.

Impact of mentors on students

In addition to the outcome measures discussed above, the Baylor evaluation team will also assess students' attitudes toward their mentors. Students were provided with a survey regarding their relationships with their mentor at or near the beginning of their VFZ enrollment and were again surveyed with the same instrument at the conclusion of their VFZ mentoring. (For most, this would be at the end of ASY 2015-16). The purpose of this analysis is to examine the degree to which VFZ students reported developing or strengthening close and trusting relationships with their mentors.

Exhibit 1: Violence Free Zone Logic Model

Vision Statement: The Violence-Free Zone (VFZ) collaborates with Mentees, parents, teachers, school administrators, and others in the community to create a sustainable, positive school climate which fosters youth development and learning that is necessary for youths to lead a productive, contributing, and satisfying life. VFZ uses trained mentors - from the same cultural zip code as the high-risk youths they mentor - to help channel youths' energy and aspirations into pro-social pathways that benefit mentees, their classmates, and the community at large.



III. METHODOLOGY

For purposes of this evaluation, we analyzed two different types of data:

1. Data on Student Performance

The findings presented below are based on those students for which VFZ community-based partners supplied the students' attendance, behavior (measured in suspensions and/or number of suspension days), and coursework (GPA) before and after VFZ enrollment. With some exceptions¹¹, most of the data input required to conduct these evaluations was the responsibility of each program site, via a web-based data collection tool called Results Online 2 (RO2). Because of the extent of the data collection required and the time and resources involved in recording data and given that many VFZ partners lacked experience in collecting and reporting data, information was available for just a portion of the participants at each site. Based on this experience, future evaluations of the VFZ program will consider more carefully the burden of data collection on its program sites to obtain more complete data.

(See Appendix II for the percentage of the total VFZ students served at each site for which a complete set of pre/post data was obtained, along with a description of the source of data for each element.)

Although the selection of students shown in Appendix II was not based on random sampling, the Baylor evaluation team believes that the pre/post results from this sampling is indicative of the results for all the students who received mentoring services at each of these sites. For example, the average GPA for the 23 Baltimore students included in the pre/post analysis (i.e., the ones with complete data) was lower (1.28) than it was for the other Baltimore VFZ students with incomplete data (1.74). This would seem to indicate that the 23 students for whom we did collect data were having greater academic challenges in school than the cohort of students for whom we did not have data.

2. Data on Student Perceptions of Their Relationship with their Mentor

The Baylor evaluation team was also interested in the effectiveness of the VFZ mentoring program from the perspective of the mentees. VFZ students were surveyed both near the beginning of their mentoring relationship and at the end (see Appendix III for a copy of the survey form). The two-fold purpose of this component of the evaluation was: 1) to gauge the overall level of trust

¹¹ For the two Milwaukee sites, data on attendance, suspensions and GPA were obtained directly from the Milwaukee Public Schools' Department of Research and Evaluation.

between the VFZ students and their mentors; and 2) to determine the degree of which that level of trust increased during the period they received mentoring services.¹² Table 3 below provides the data on the percentage of students from each site for whom we could obtain both pre- and post-VFZ results for the mentoring survey.

Table 3: Summary of Sampling Size Obtained for Pre/Post Surveys by VFZ Students on Their Mentoring Experience

VFZ PROGRAM (CITY)	TOTAL STUDENTS SERVED THROUGH MSM	STUDENTS WITH COMPLETE PRE/ POST MENTOR SURVEY DATA	% OF STUDENTS SERVED
NVYS (Baltimore)	113	40	35%
KLEO (Chicago ¹³)	136	N/A	N/A
CTC (Hartford)	158	154	97%
MCC/RR (Milwaukee)	277	95	34%
SBYC (Washington)	167	9	5%

As with the student performance results, the Baylor evaluation team considers the survey results from sampling of VFZ students with complete pre/post survey results to be indicative of the experience of all the VFZ students at that particular site.

IV. FINDINGS

New Vision Youth Services (Baltimore)

New Vision Youth Services of Baltimore (NVYS), a VFZ community partner since 2005, is committed to creating an alternative youth culture by achieving positive youth outcomes with disadvantaged populations.

One of the major challenges NVYS faced in satisfying the requirements of this grant was the number of students for whom they were expected to provide mentoring services. NVYS only implemented the VFZ in one Baltimore City Public School (Patterson High School – alternative school¹³), utilizing a behavioral interventionist with two (2) youth advisors serving 9th-grade students who were referred to the program. They had a contractual agreement with Baltimore City Public Schools for a 1 to 20

¹² In some instances, VFZ students at some sites were “grandfathered” into the MSM program, meaning that they were already receiving mentoring services through a different funding stream. In these instances, while the overall survey results regarding the VFZ student-mentor relationship were very strong, there was not a significant increase from pre- to post-survey.

¹³ “City Schools recognizes that circumstances outside of school can make attending a traditional school difficult for some students, while some students thrive in settings that offer specific supports. That’s why the district offers alternative schools and programs designed to help all students succeed academically and graduate ready for college or career training.”; <http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/Page/24377>.

mentor-to-mentee ratio: The two youth advisors were responsible for providing 40 participants with mentoring services.

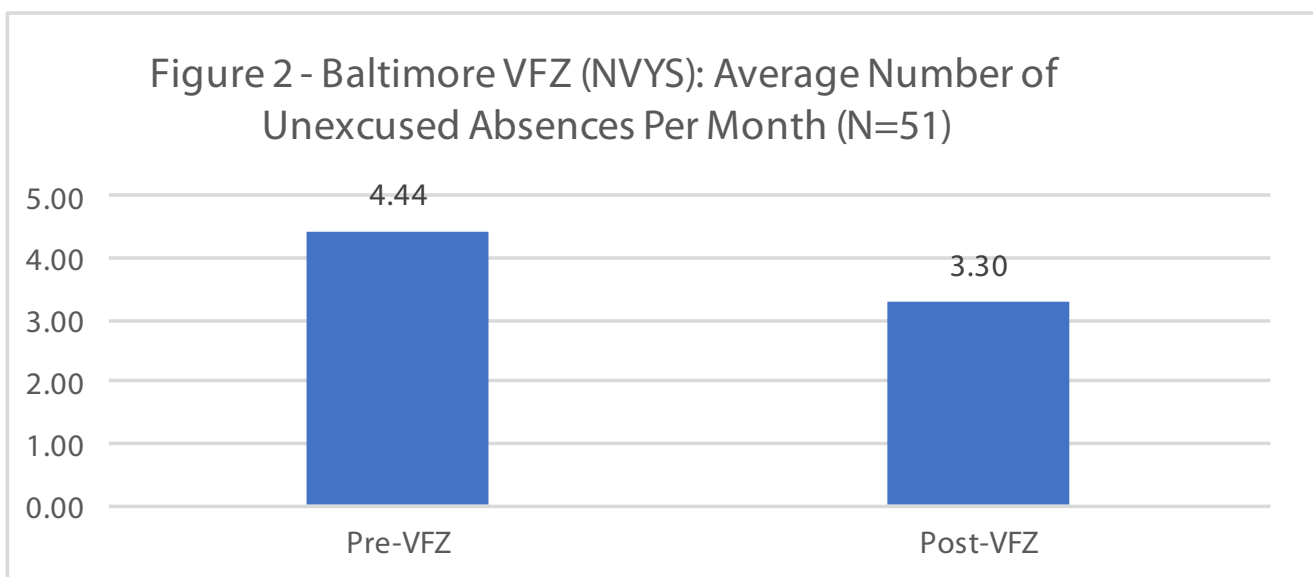
For the remaining students, NVYS partnered with other entities in the school to provide the mentoring services, while NVYS provided joint life skills and character enrichment classes. Although NVYS met the quantitative requirement of this grant (i.e., the number of youths served), they did not directly control the qualitative requirements because the students beyond the 40 mentioned above were not a part of NVYS' direct case load and thus not involved in their daily tracking. The only contact NVYS had with these students was during the life skills and character enrichment sessions.

However, for the 40 students which NVYS did serve directly, data was collected beyond what was required under the VFZ evaluation plan. As Reverend Billy Stanfield, Executive Director for NVYS, explained:

Under the direction of the 9th-grade principal, we created a behavioral goal tracker in Google Docs. These goals were created based on the referral of students from the 9th-grade principal. The type of goals that were set centered around academics, discipline, behavior/attendance, and personal social and emotional goals.

Attendance

For the Baltimore students for which we had complete pre/post data on attendance, there was a 26% decrease in the average number of unexcused absences per student per month, as shown in Figure 2 below.¹⁴



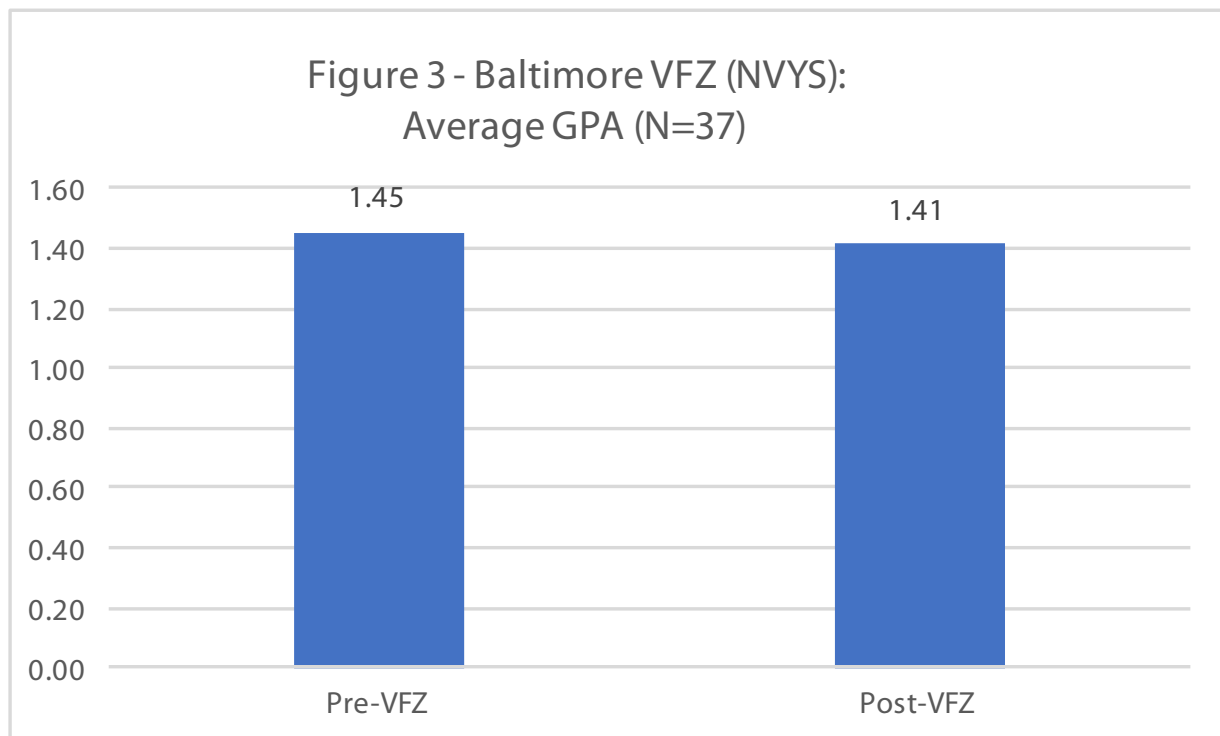
¹⁴ Using significance level of .10 given the small sample size (n = 51) and conducting one-tailed test since the reduction in unexcused absences was expected, the observed difference was statistically significant, if (p = .084 < .10).

Behavior

There was not sufficient pre/post data on student suspensions to conduct this analysis.

Coursework

As shown in Figure 3 below, there was a slight decrease (3%) in average GPA among the students for which we had complete pre/post data, but the decrease was not statistically significant ($p = .839$).



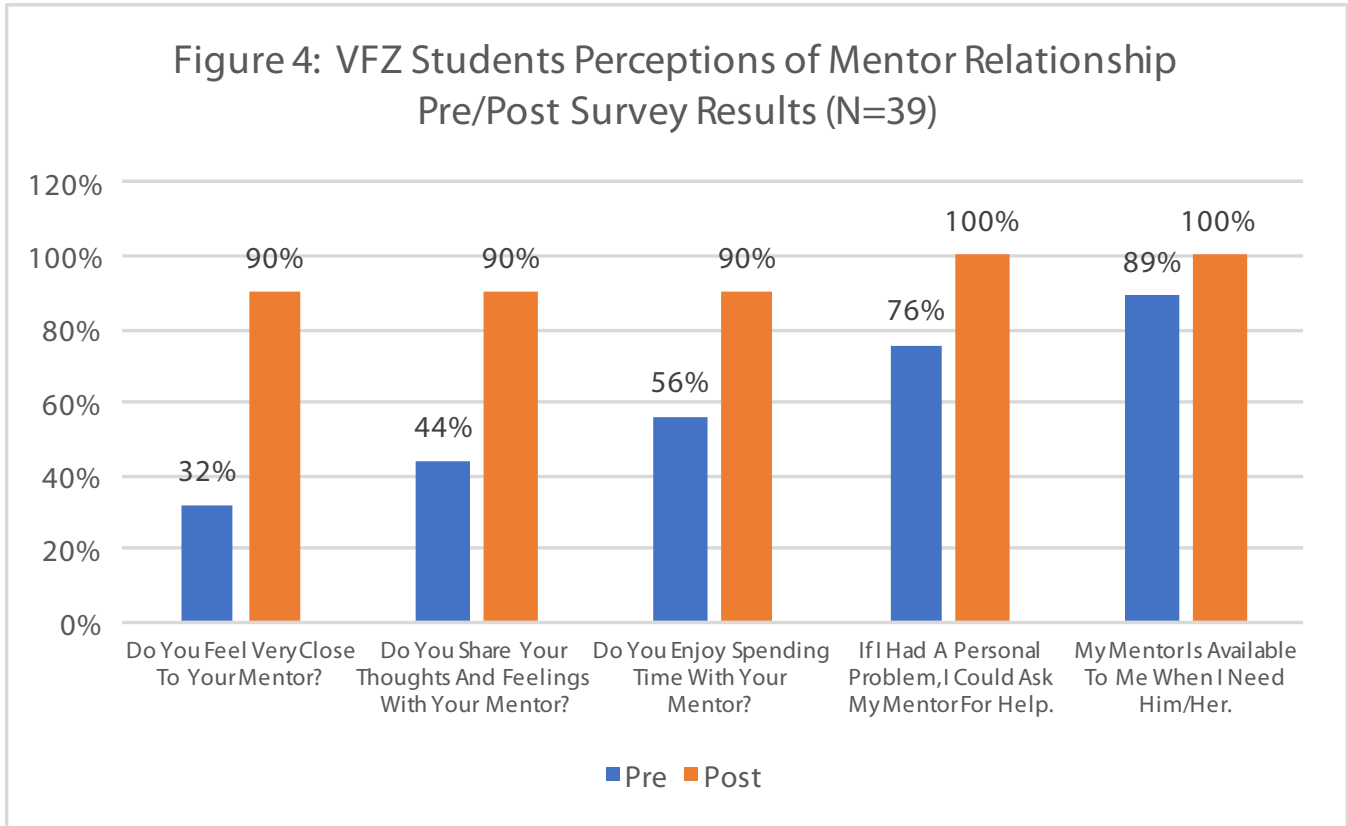
Student Survey on Mentor Relationship

As shown in Figure 4 (next page), NVYS showed significant improvement in terms of students' self-reports on the quality of their relationship with their mentors from pre- to post-VFZ involvement.¹⁵

KLEO - Keep Loving Each Other -- Center (Chicago)

K.L.E.O. Community Family Life Center is a non-profit organization and facility dedicated to strengthening families and serving as a safe haven, providing education, training, support and fun for people of all ages in the Chicago land community. It's goal is to create an enhanced ability to navigate the world by providing the necessary tools, skills, and support needed for our participants to become a productive part of society. KLEO is funded by Chicago Public Schools; Chicago Community Development Block Grant; State of Illinois; and Neighborhood Recovery Initiative. KLEO is committed to help-

¹⁵ The average of five items increased by 10.0%, from 2.82 to 3.10. The increase was statistically significant, using the alpha level of .10 ($p = .054 < .10$, one-tailed test).



ing families live healthy, productive lives in safe, stable, self- sustaining urban communities. KLEO achieves its corporate objective by working with residents and community leaders to identify a consensus vision. Once that vision is identified, they help implement a strategy for the vision to be manifested. KLEO has three areas of focus. Education, Violence Reduction and Real-Estate Development. These three areas of focus allow KLEO to strategically meet the needs of the organization in general and the needs of the participants that they serve.

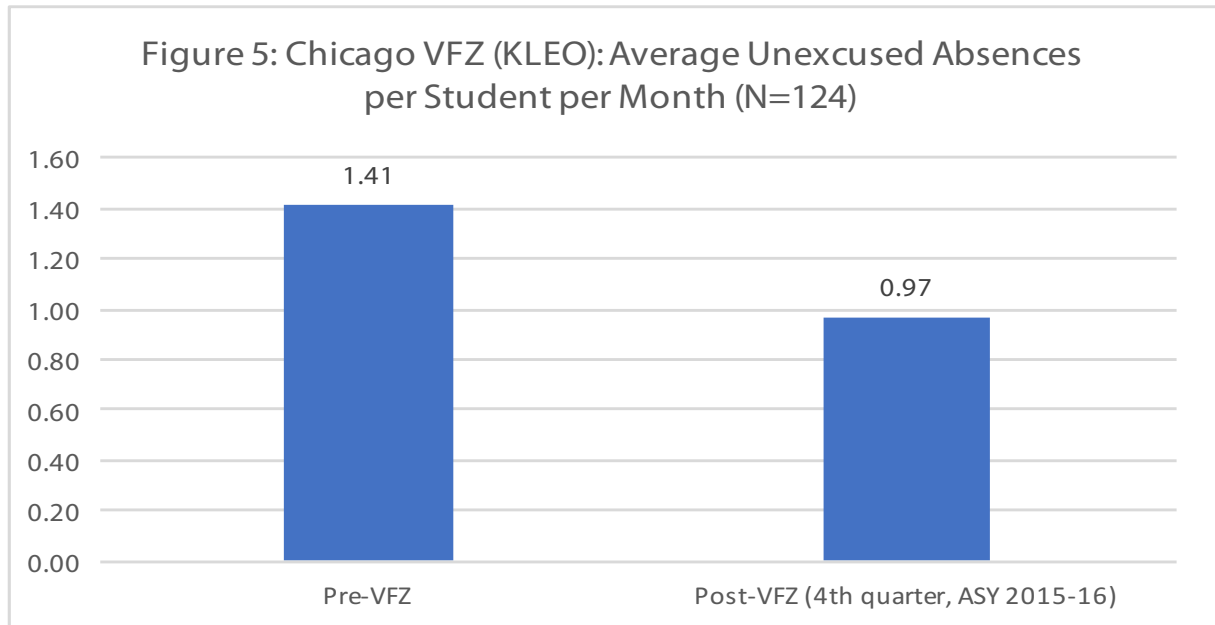
For the most part, the youths that the KLEO Center engaged with for the VFZ program were among the "at risk" population. Over 90% of the youth served were below the poverty level. Between 15%-20% of these youths had some form of IEP as well. Although KLEO's VFZ program was school-based, they worked with the youth after school and also engaged them during the weekends. During their after-school time with the students, KLEO's mentoring staff would "circle up" with the youth and implement some social emotional learning exercises with them. KLEO utilizes a P.I.E.S check in (Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Spiritual). As Torrey Barrett, CEO of the KLEO Center, explained:

From that check in, we are able to see where youth are, and then engage them accordingly. During the weekends, we would take them on different activities all over the city. They would be both educational and fun. What was distinctive about our program is we use a "wraparound" model. Our services are not

just confined to the school, but we want to make sure that when our time is officially up with our youth, they will be equipped to continue moving in positive direction. That's where we identify "natural supports" to continue the work we started.

Attendance

Based on the data provided by KLEO for 91% of the students served (124), the average number of unexcused absences per month per student dropped 32% from pre- to post-VFZ enrollment (see Figure 5 (below)). This reduction was statistically significant at the level of .05 ($p = .002$).

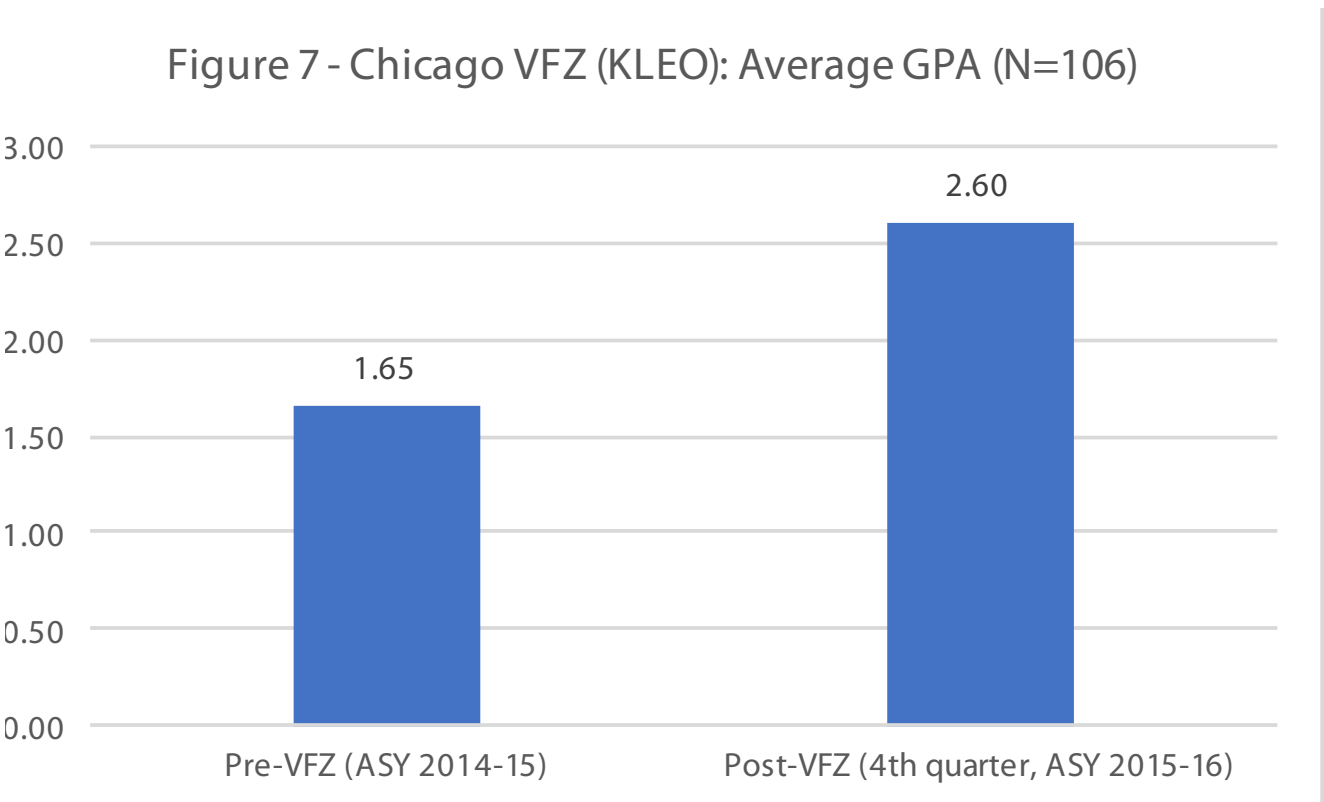
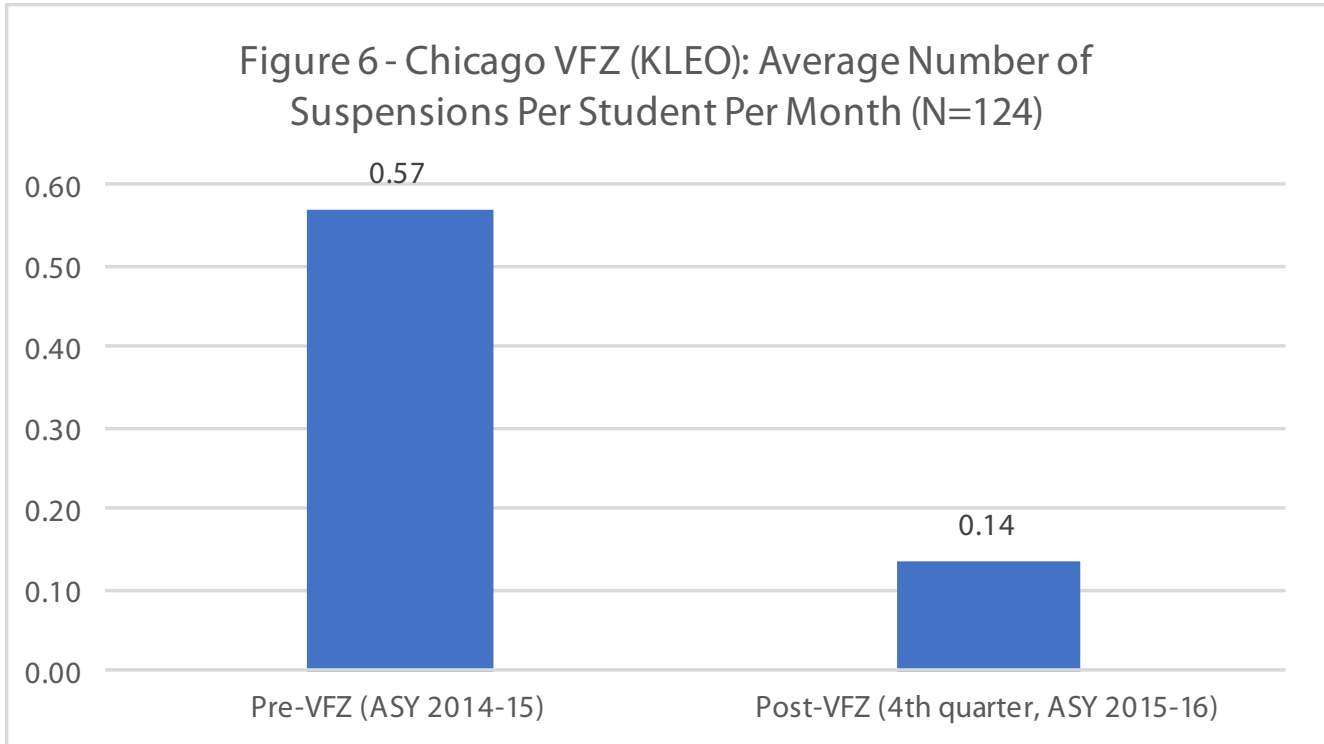


Behavior

As shown in Figure 6 (next page), the average number of suspensions per student per month dropped by 76%, from .57 to .14, based on the data received from 91% of the Chicago VFZ students served by KLEO. This drop was statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Coursework

The VFZ Chicago students also showed marked improvement in GPA before and after VFZ enrollment. Based on data received through KLEO, the average student GPA increased by 57% for the 124 students for whom pre- and post-data were provided (see Figure 7 (next page)). This improvement was statistically significant ($p = .000$).



Student Survey on Mentor Relationship

No follow-up mentor survey data was collected for KLEO students participating in the VFZ program.

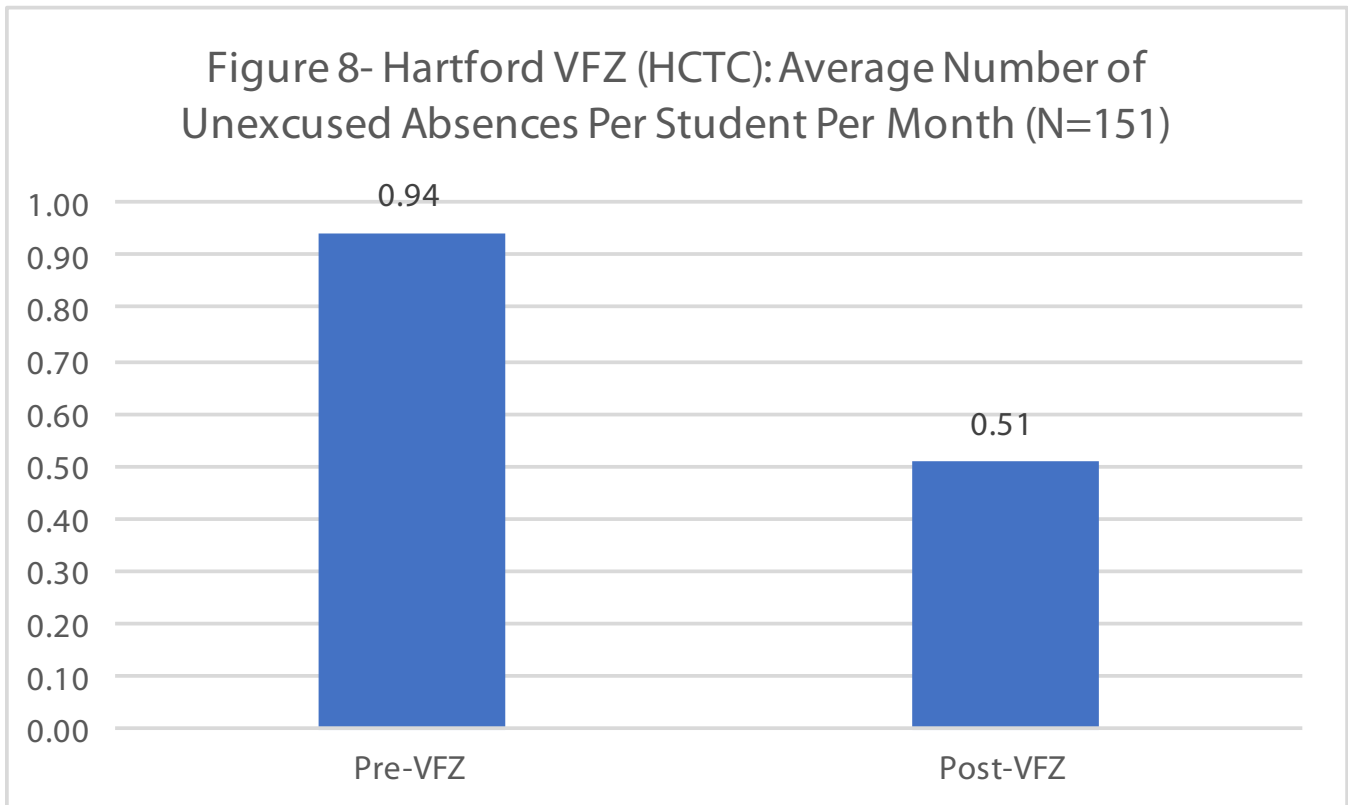
Hartford Communities That Care (HCTC)

The VFZ program in Hartford's Northeast Neighborhood is a community-based intervention that strives to reduce youth crime, drug abuse, violence, and victimization. Its components include an intentionally-designed after-school program, organized block watches, a youth intervention specialist, and an evidence-based anti-bullying initiative.

The Hartford Communities That Care, Inc. (HCTC) provided therapeutic mentoring, academic and enrichment support to over 150 youths, of primarily African-American, Caribbean and Hispanic students at Fred. D. Wish K-8 Elementary in Hartford's North End community. This community-based initiative was premised on the Woodson Center's Violence Free Zone (VFZ) school and community-based model and funded from a variety of sources including the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention / Woodson Center Multi-City Mentoring Initiative, the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the City of Hartford and the State Department of Education and US Department of Education.

The core elements of the HCTC/ Violence Free Zone (VFZ) Mentoring program consisted of the following:

- A. 24/7 Hospital and Community-Based Trauma Response Team:** Designed to support victims of violent crime to ensure mental health, medical treatment, grief counseling, and funeral, legal and victim services were available in times of crisis and beyond.
- B. Block Watch Organizing:** the creation and support of 5-7 neighborhood Block Watch groups were organized in collaboration with residents, the Hartford Police Department, area faith leaders, local business, local NRZ's, and civic groups
- C. Faith-Based Partnership:** VFZ staff trained local churches to respond and support crime victims and support young people as mentors. The training consisted of CPR; First Aid; Psychological First Aid; positive parenting skills training and guidance on integrating trauma-focused practices into spiritually based programs and services within the church and community.
- D. Fred D. Wish Elementary:** The VFZ Mentoring initiative at Fred D. Wish Elementary School operated during school hours, out-of-school hours and provided students with academic enrichment opportunities along with other activities designed to complement the students' regular academic, social, emotional and recreational supports. This school-community-police partnership will also consist of a strong parental engagement component.



Attendance

The Hartford VFZ program, operated by Hartford Communities That Care, reduced the average number of unexcused absences per student per month from .94 to .51, a 46% reduction (see Figure 8 (above)). This reduction was statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Behavior

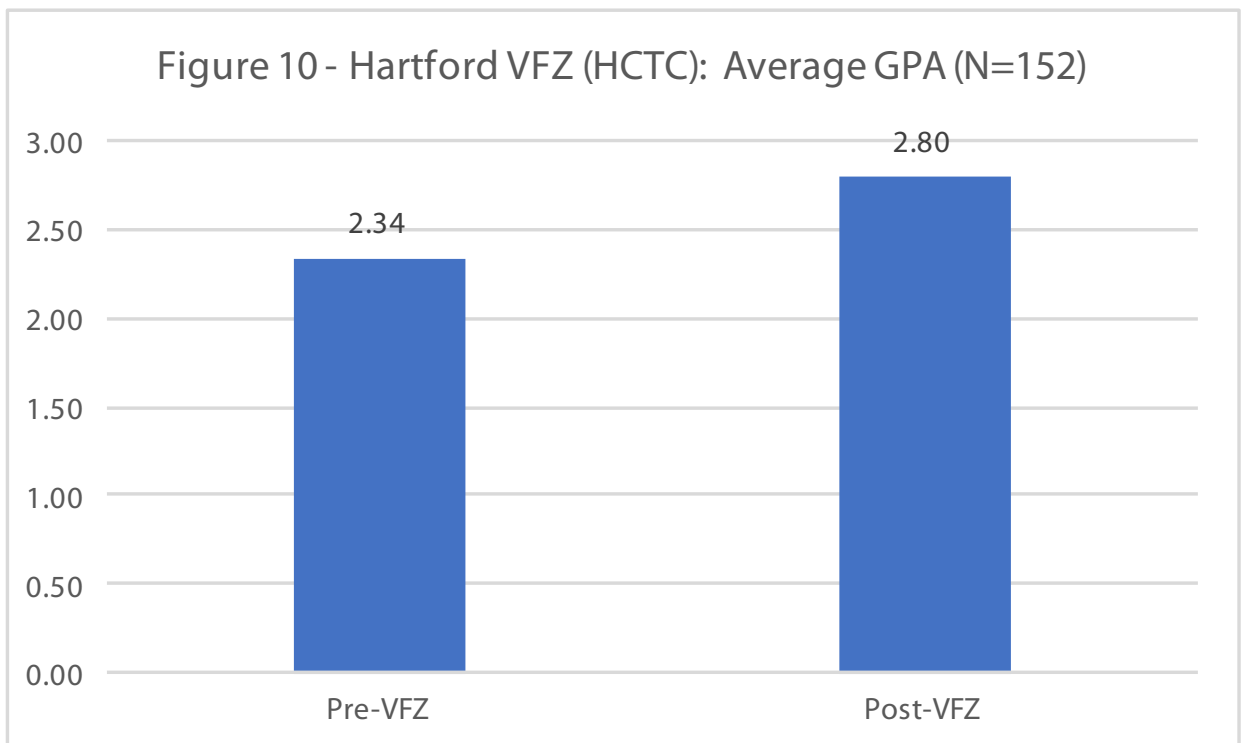
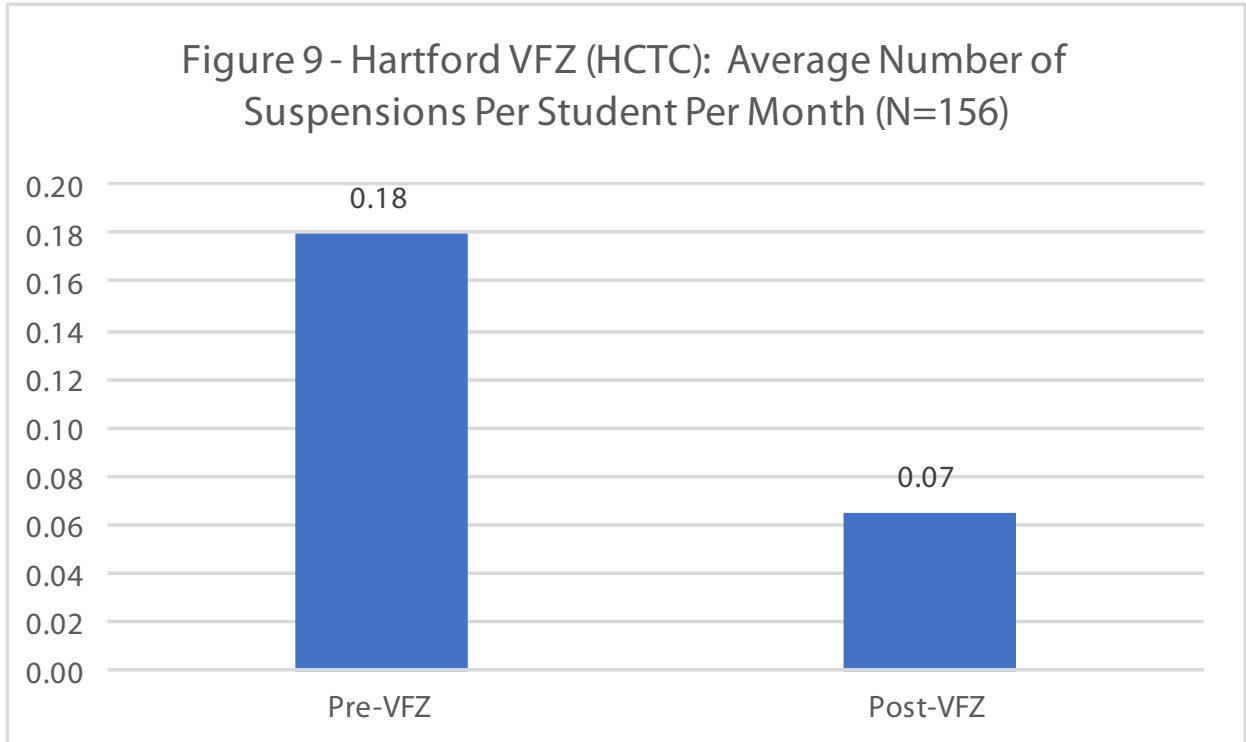
The Hartford CTC program had even greater success in reducing behavioral issues, reducing the average number of suspensions per VFZ student per month by 72%, from .18 to .05, as shown in Figure 9 (next page). This reduction was also statistically significant ($p = .000$).

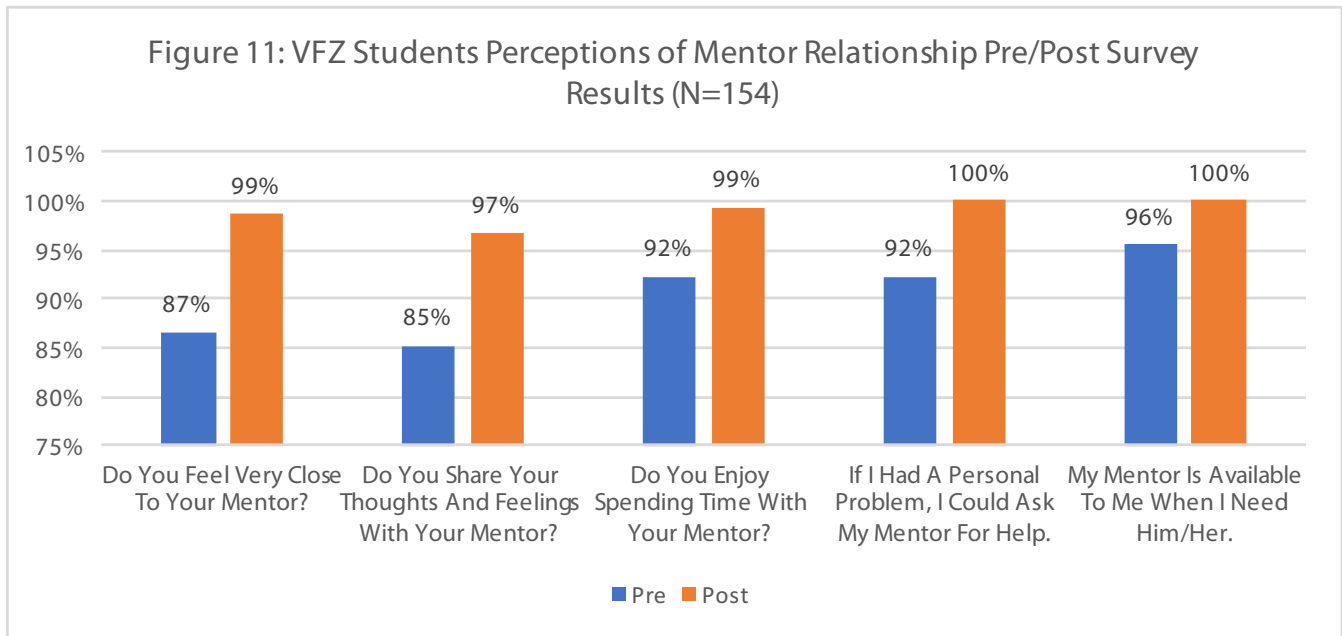
Coursework

Hartford VFZ students also showed an improvement in their GPA from pre- to post-VFZ enrollment, with overall average GPA for VFZ students increasing by 20% during the time they were receiving mentoring services (see Figure 10 (next page)). This improvement was statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Student Survey on Mentor Relationship

As shown in Figure 11 (next page), HCTC was also successful in developing trusting relationships between its mentors and students. The pre/post increases were minimal because most of the mentoring relationships had already been established when the pre-survey was administered. The average of five items about VFZ students' perceptions of mentor relationship improved by 10.7%, from 3.46 to 3.83, which was statistically significant ($p = .000$).





Milwaukee Christian Center and Running Rebels (Milwaukee)

The Milwaukee VFZ Program is the longest-standing program of the Woodson Center, having been in operation now since September 2005. The Milwaukee VFZ program works with students who are less likely to transition successfully into adulthood and achieve economic self-sufficiency. These students make up at least 20 percent of each school's total enrollment. These students are referred by the school staff, youth advisors, parents or law enforcement. VFZ Milwaukee also assists students who display above average leadership skills: Self-motivated, trustworthy and creative.

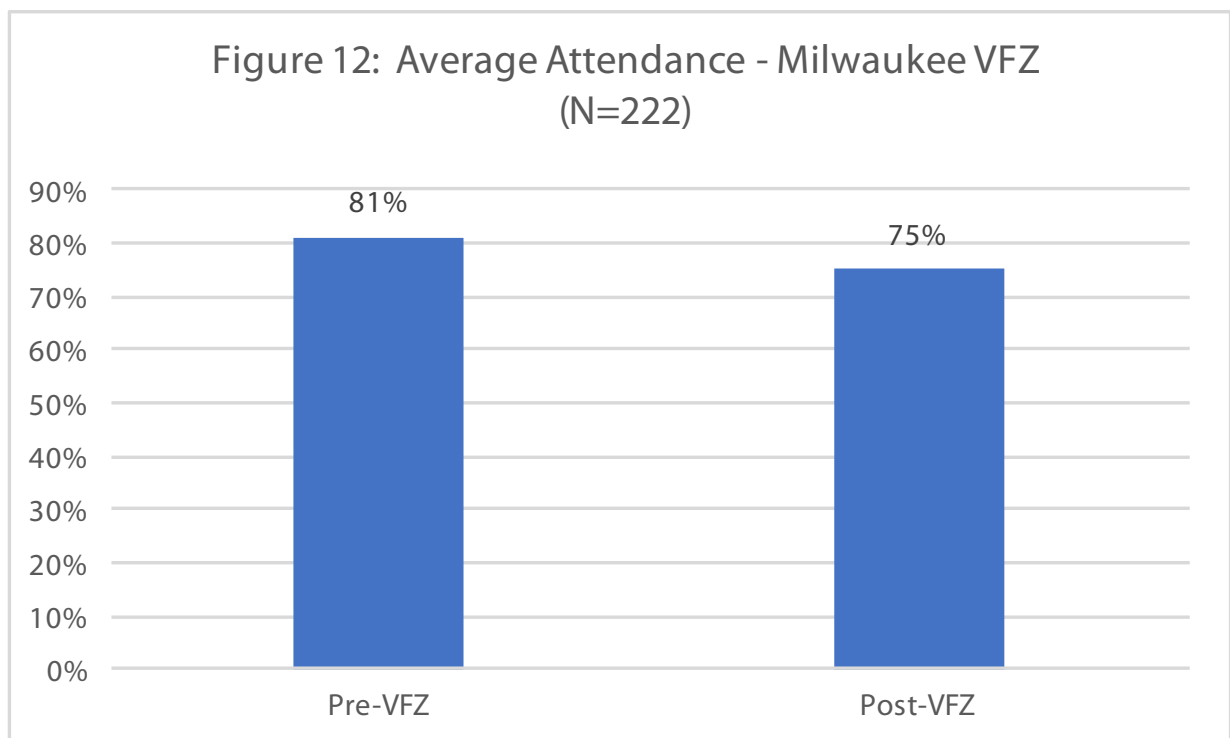
The VFZ Milwaukee staff is responsible for engaging with youth to build and maintain a relationship that positively impacts academics, while expanding their community network, therefore, increasing the odds of their success into and through adulthood. The locations of engagement may take place in several areas: student 1-on-1's monitoring hallways and lunchrooms, during mediations, after school activities including to community service opportunities. There are times when VFZ conducts staff home visits in accordance with school administration/psychologist/Youth Advisors intuition. All home visits are completed with VFZ Youth Advisors, and two MPS experienced individuals.

As Andre Robinson, Director of the VFZ program for the Milwaukee Christian Center describes:

VFZ is a culturally competent program that accepts all students. We work closely with all case load students to increase GPA's, attendance, and decrease violent incidents. The VFZ staff is made up of many different ethnic groups and backgrounds. All of them have overcome some social and/or economic hardship that may be similar to those experienced by the students they serve. Staff and student relationships are developed through matching of staff and student backgrounds. These relationships are solidified with trust and loyalty while sharing each other's past hardships and accomplishments. VFZ Youth Advisors do not judge any student but are there to provide a listening ear, safe place, and be a living example of what it means to be a productive member of society.

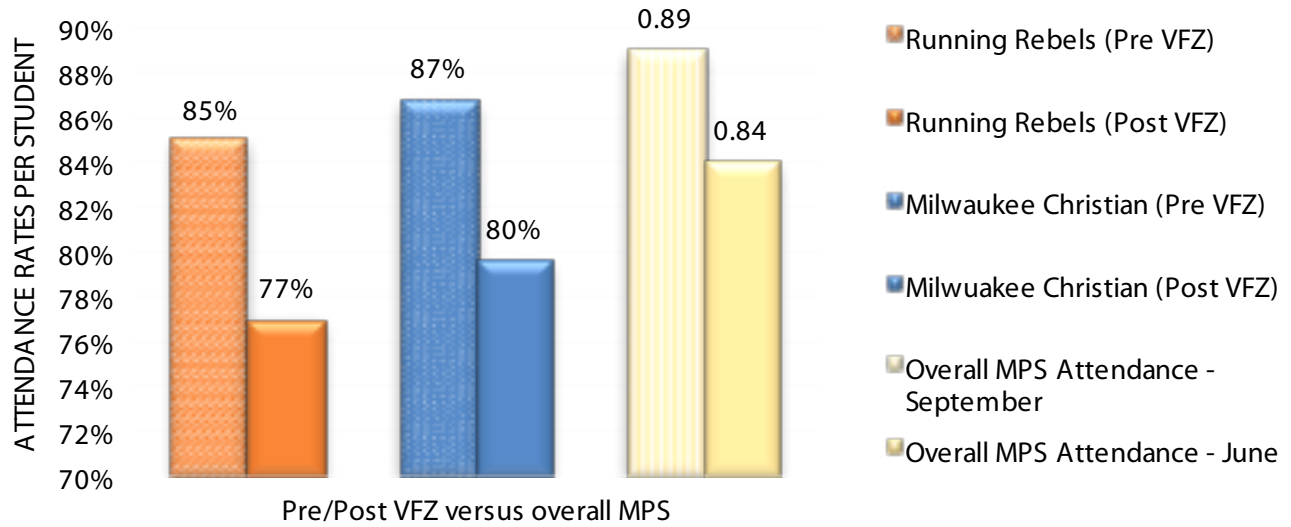
Attendance

As shown in Figure 12 (below), the average attendance for VFZ participants decreased by 8% between the 1st quarter of ASY 2014-15 and the 4th quarter of ASY 2015-16. This reduction is statistically significant (p = .000).



However, Figure 13 (next page) shows the overall before and after changes in attendance rates, alongside the overall attendance rates for MPS students from September to June. This is important, considering the fact that a higher proportion of the post-VFZ mentored students were drawn from the later marking periods, in which overall attendance decreases in comparison with the earlier mark-

Figure 13: Attendance Rates Per Student Per Marking Period (Pre vs Post)



ing periods of AY 2013.¹⁶ Therefore, much of the decreased post-VFZ attendance may be attributable to the overall attendance decreases at MPS schools.

Behavior

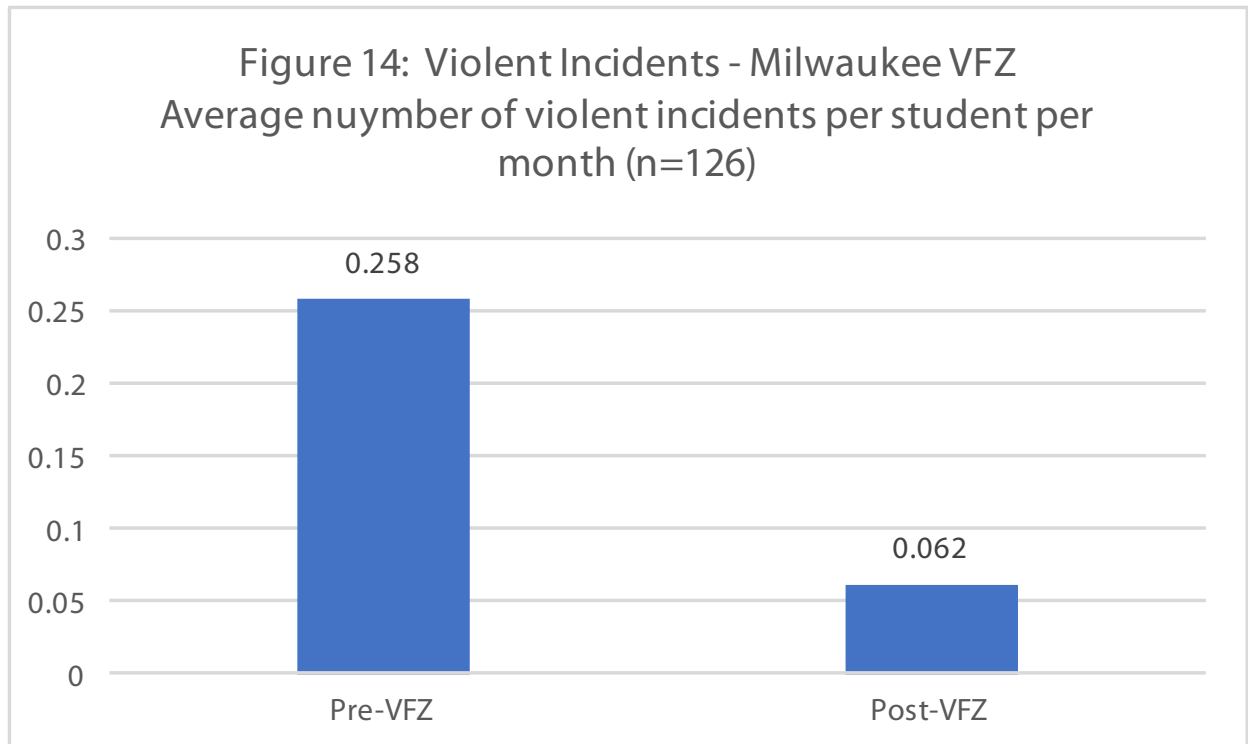
For the Milwaukee VFZ program, we used data obtained from MPS on violent incidents (see Table 4 for a listing of types of violent incidents) as a proxy for changes in behavior for VFZ students before and after VFZ enrollment, instead of the number of suspensions.

Table 4: Violent Incidents (Milwaukee Public Schools)

VIOLENT INCIDENTS
Assault
Battery
Bullying
Fighting
Other Personal Safety/Criminal
Personal Threat
Possession/Ownership/Use of Weapon Other than Gun
Sexual Assault

¹⁶ Although this data on overall attendance is from AY 2013, we have been told by MPS Data and Evaluation staff that this is a consistent pattern of attendance for MPS students.

As shown in Figure 14 below, the average number of violent incidents per month per VFZ student for the 126 Milwaukee VFZ students for which we had complete pre/post data) decreased by 76% from .258 to .062. This reduction was statistically significant ($p = .000$).



Coursework

The Milwaukee VFZ programs (MCCW and RR) also showed a 19% increase in average GPA for the students they served, increasing 8% from pre- to post-VFZ enrollment (see Figure 15 (next page)). This increase was statistically significant ($p = .006$).

Student Survey on Mentor Relationship

The Milwaukee VFZ program has been in place since 2005. For purposes of the Multi-State Mentoring program, existing VFZ students were tracked for program evaluation purposes, so when the pre-survey was implemented for the selected schools from Running Rebels and Milwaukee, the VFZ students had already received mentoring services and had established trust with their mentors.¹⁷

¹⁷ The average of five items increased by 10.2%, from 3.42 to 3.77. The increase was statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Figure 15- Milwaukee VFZ:
 Average GPA (N=185)

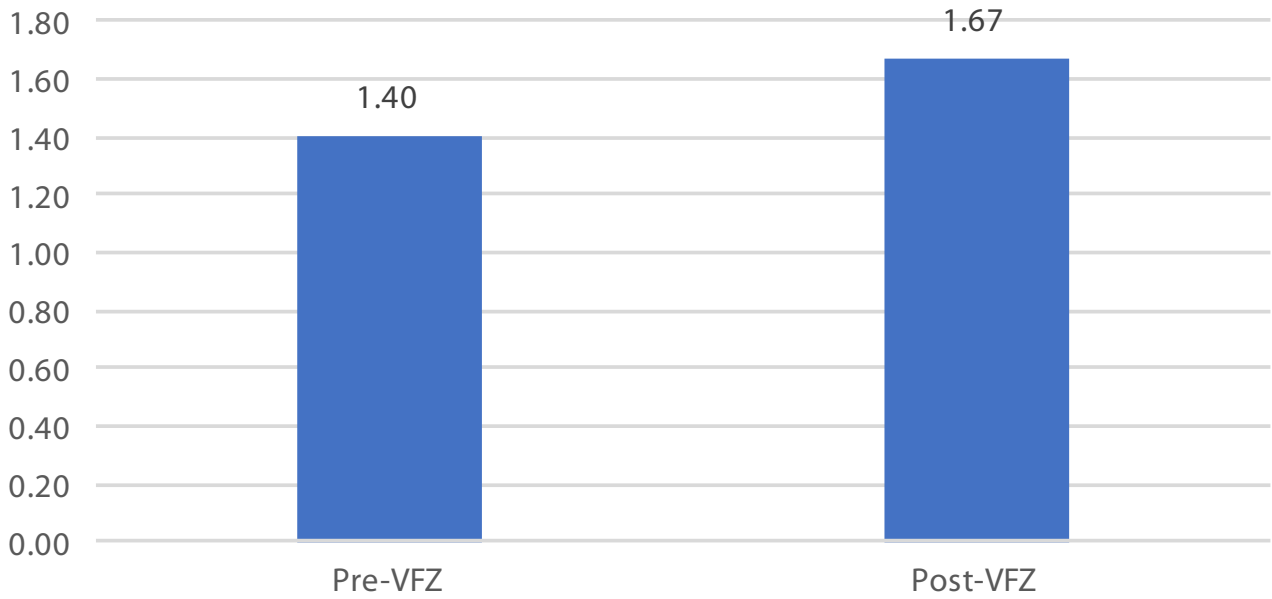
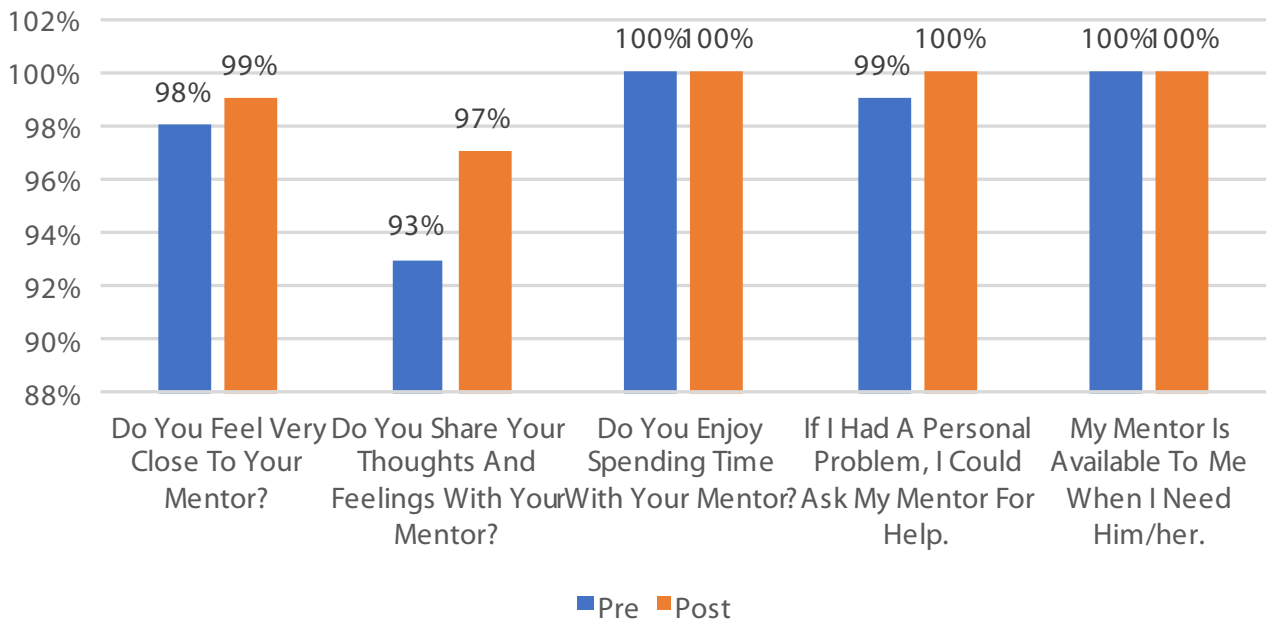


Figure 16: Milwaukee VFZ: Percentage of Students Responding "Yes", pre- and post survey Results (N= 95)





"VFZ IS A CULTURALLY COMPETENT PROGRAM THAT ACCEPTS ALL STUDENTS. WE WORK CLOSELY WITH ALL CASE LOAD STUDENTS TO INCREASE GPA'S, ATTENDANCE, AND DECREASE VIOLENT INCIDENTS. THE VFZ STAFF IS MADE UP OF MANY DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS AND BACKGROUNDS. ALL OF THEM HAVE OVERCOME SOME SOCIAL AND/OR ECONOMIC HARDSHIP THAT MAY BE SIMILAR TO THOSE EXPERIENCED BY THE STUDENTS THEY SERVE. STAFF AND STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS ARE DEVELOPED THROUGH MATCHING OF STAFF AND STUDENT BACKGROUNDS. THESE RELATIONSHIPS ARE SOLIDIFIED WITH TRUST AND LOYALTY WHILE SHARING EACH OTHER'S PAST HARDSHIPS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS. "

ANDRE ROBINSON, DIRECTOR OF THE VFZ PROGRAM FOR THE MILWAUKEE CHRISTIAN CENTER

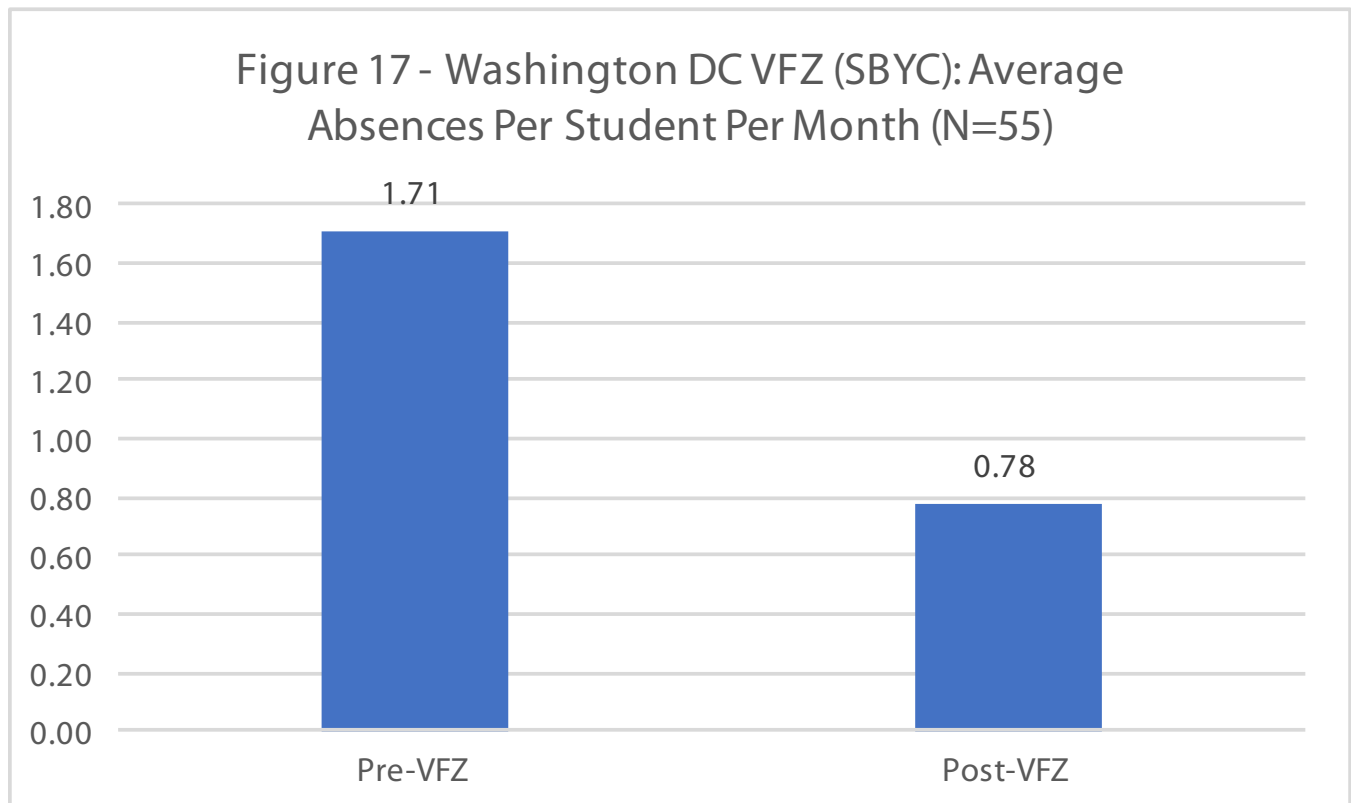
Sasha Bruce Youth Center (Washington, DC)

Deborah Shore founded Sasha Bruce Youthwork in 1974 as the Washington Streetwork Project. With a small staff and a few volunteers, Shore counseled homeless youth and out-of-town runaways in the Georgetown and Dupont neighborhoods of Washington, DC, where they congregated. Presently, Sasha Bruce Youthwork is one of the largest and most experienced providers of services to youth in Washington, DC. Sasha Bruce helps young people find safe homes, achieve and maintain good physical and mental health, create and strengthen supportive and stable families, and explore opportunities in education and careers.

Sasha Bruce Youth Center (SBYC), along with KLEO in Chicago and HCTC in Hartford, represent new VFZ programs made possible through the Multi-State Mentoring program. SBYC served a total of 167 youth through the MSM funding provided through the Woodson Center.

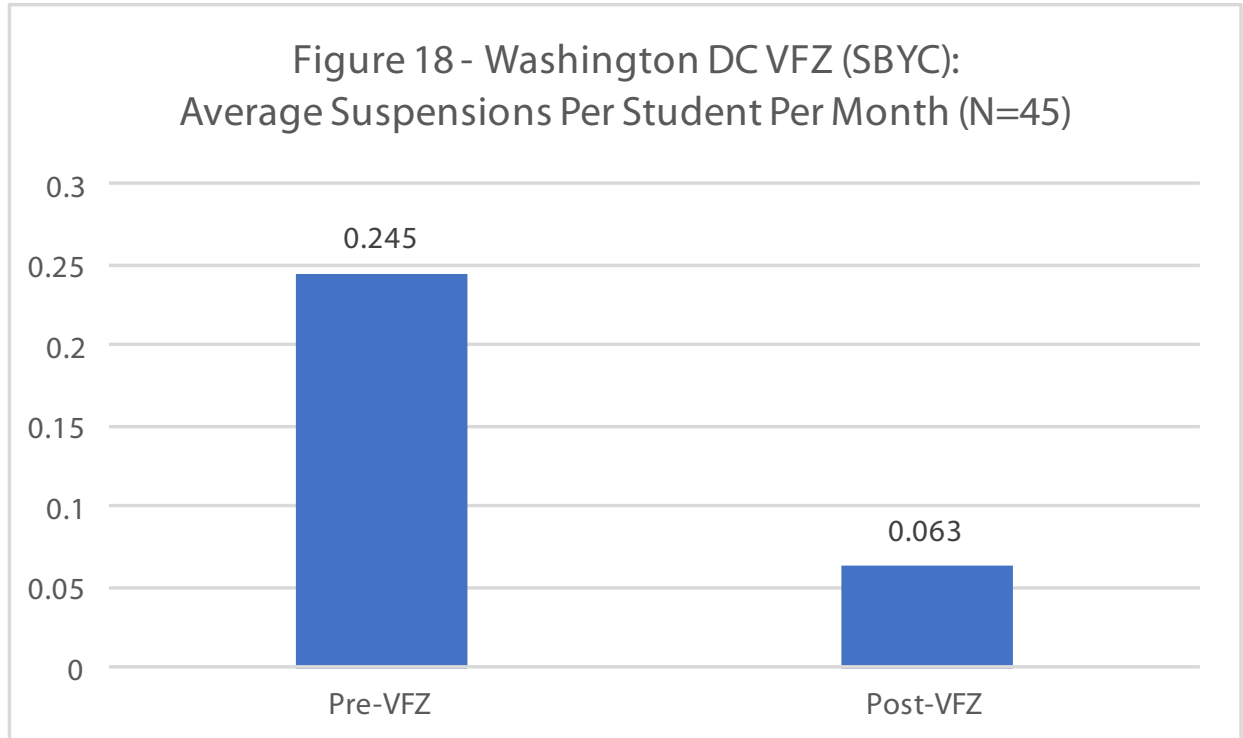
Attendance

As shown in Figure 17 (below), average absences per student per month decreased by 55% from pre- to post-VFZ enrollment for the sampling of Sasha Bruce Youth Center youth for whom we had pre- and post-data (35% of total students served). This reduction was statistically significant ($p = .000$).



Behavior

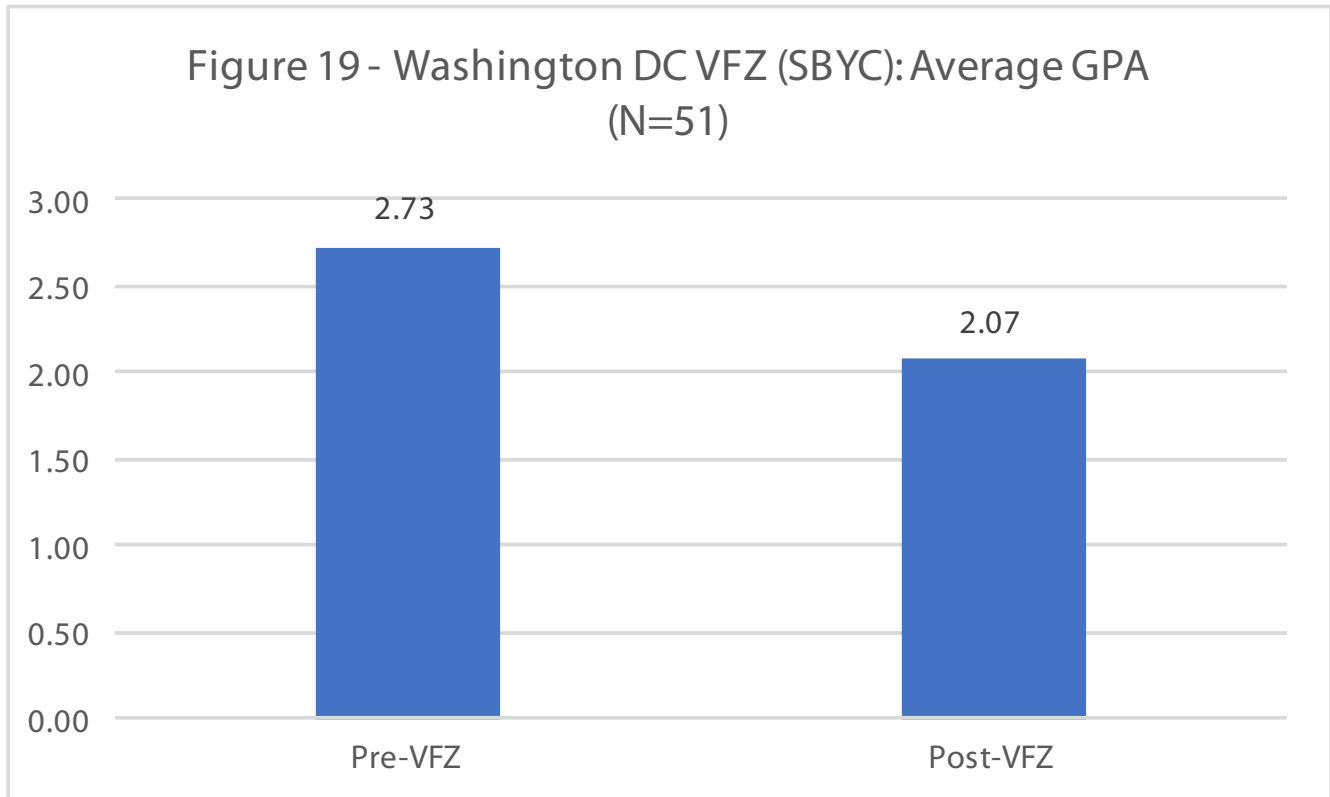
Behavior, as measured by the average number of suspensions per student per month, improved, even more, decreasing by 74% from pre- to post-VFZ enrollment (see Figure 18 below). This decrease was statistically significant ($p = .008$).

**Coursework**

GPA for the 51 students for whom we had complete pre- and post-VFZ data, however, declined by 24%, as shown in Figure 19 (next page). The decline was statistically significant ($p = .000$).

Student Survey on Mentor Relationship

The sample size for completed mentoring survey data was too small (5%) to provide any analysis.



V. EV-ROI Projections for the Woodson Center's Multi-State Mentoring Program

Expected Value – Return On Investment (EV-ROI)

Expected Value-Return on Investment (EV-ROI) is a predictive model¹⁸ that combines a commonly accepted probability theory (expected value) with a common approach that businesses use to make informed financial decisions (return on investment). Expected value is the probability of an occurrence multiplied by the absolute dollar value of that occurrence.

EV-ROI Applied to VFZ

The Baylor evaluation team employed a two-pronged approach to calculating the expected value of the return. First, the team used the ABC near-term proximal indicators of decreased absenteeism (A), decreased disciplinary referrals (B), and increased GPA (C) to predict increased graduation rates. Second, the team used the predicted increase in the number of high school graduates to estimate the subsequently increased probability of lifetime earnings of successful participants. The return on investment that is calculated is the return on taxpayer's investment. The return is comprised of increased tax revenue on the participants incremental income earnings plus the decreased tax-payer outlays for public assistance, the criminal justice system, and incarceration.

Table 5 below shows the results of multiplying the number of students showing progress in number of absences, GPA, and suspensions by the increased probability of graduating given the progress that was made. For instance, Chicago showed an increase of 61 students whose rate of absence dropped below seven days per school year. According to a study done by researchers at the

Table 5: Estimate of Additional Future Graduates

CITY	ADDITIONAL GRADS BY LOWERING ABSENCE	ADDITIONAL GRADS BY INCREASING GPA	ADDITIONAL GRADS BY LOWERING SUSPENSIONS ²¹	AVERAGE ADDITIONAL GRADS
Chicago	14.6	24.4	18.8	19.3
Hartford	18.5	10.7	5.2	11.5
Milwaukee	0.5	24.1	7.4	10.7
Washington	4.3	-0.24	0	1.4
Baltimore	-0.65	5.83	No Data	2.6
TOTAL				45.5

¹⁸ This model was developed by Social Capital Valuations, LLC (SCV), which is part of the Baylor evaluation team. For more information about the EV-ROI methodology, go to www.socialcapitalvaluations.com.

University of Chicago¹⁹, that decline in the absence rate raised their probability of graduation by 24 percentage points. So $24\% \times 61$ students = 14.6 additional graduates predicted. A similar methodology was employed for all the cells on the chart. Calculations were made based on the population for which data was available, which was: 508 for absences, 436 for GPA and 565 for suspension data, or an average of 503. The Baylor evaluation team believes the predicted number of additional graduates forecasted is conservative since no attempt was made to extrapolate to the full population of the 851 students served.

The Value of Saving 45.5 Students from Dropping Out of High School

A high school graduate's median weekly income in 2015 was \$678, and a high school dropout's median weekly income was \$493 in 2015. These weekly incomes must be reduced by the probability of being employed, which was 94.6% for a high school graduate and 92% for a high school drop-out²⁰ in 2015. These new "expected value" weekly wages are \$641.39 for the high school graduate and \$453.56 for the drop-out. This \$187.83 differential in weekly income equals \$9,767 per year. Assuming a 50-year career, the differential would be \$488,350 in earnings. Assuming a 2% discount rate that would equal \$306,916 in additional lifetime earnings per high school graduate. Assuming an annual federal income tax of 15%, state income tax of 5%, and total FICA of 15.3%, then the taxpaying public would be denied \$108,341 in lifetime taxes for every high school dropout. The following Table 6 (next page) "Incremental Wages Earned and Taxes Paid" summarizes the additional wages earned and federal and state income and payroll taxes paid by the 45.5 additional students who are projected to graduate high school due to the influence of the VFZ program.

The total Net Present Value of Lifetime Wage Differential for the 45.5 additional high school graduates of \$22,278,524 in 2015 dollars would be \$22,927,567 in 2017. The additional income and payroll tax revenue at the combined federal and state levels would be \$8,093,431. This represents a substantial pro-social return of taxpayer dollars for the investment in the VFZ program.

In addition to the pro-social gains, we can calculate the avoidance of public expenditures for the 45.5 students who otherwise would have dropped out of high school. We know that high school dropouts are three times more likely to receive welfare assistance than high school graduates.²¹ 37.3% of people who did not graduate from high school received means-tested benefits in 2012²² 37.3% is 3 times 12.43%, so assume that there is a 24.87% difference in the probability of receiving means-tested benefits. Applying this 24.87%

¹⁹ Allensworth, E., and Easton, J.Q. (2007). What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public Schools. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research.

²⁰ http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm; Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2015

²¹ Pennsylvania's Best Investment: The Social and Economic Benefits of Public Education; Mitra, D. and Zheng, A; The Education Law Center; Pennsylvania State University

²² 21.3 Percent of U.S. Population Participates in Government Assistance Programs Each Month; May 28, 2015 ; <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-97.html>



WORKING THROUGH LOCAL NONPROFIT COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, THE VIOLENCE-FREE ZONE UTILIZES SCHOOL-BASED MENTORS KNOWN AS "YOUTH ADVISORS," TO MODEL AND ENCOURAGE POSITIVE BEHAVIORS AMONG HIGH-RISK YOUTH IN PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS. BECAUSE OF THEIR OUTSTANDING TRACKRECORD IN WORKING WITH PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN URBAN COMMUNITIES, THE VFZ INITIATIVE RECEIVED A MULTI-STATE MENTORING GRANT FROM THE OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION, TO PROVIDE MENTORING SERVICES TO 750 AT-RISK YOUTH THROUGH SIX COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS IN FIVE CITIES.

Table 6: Incremental Wages Earned and Taxes Paid

ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT	% AND # OF 45.5 GRADS WHO MAX OUT AT EACH LEVEL OF ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT ²³	WEEKLY WAGE DIFFERENTIAL X PROBABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT ²⁴	ANNUAL WAGE DIFFERENTIAL (WEEKLY X 52)	NPV OF LIFETIME (50 YRS) WAGE DIFFERENTIAL DISCOUNTED AT 2%	NPV OF LIFETIME WAGE DIFFERENTIAL X NUMBER OF GRADUATES	INCREASED 35.3% TAX REVENUE (FEDERAL + STATE + FICA) ²⁵
High School	40% or 18.20	\$187.83	\$9,767	\$306,916	\$5,585,871	\$1,971,813
Some College	30% or 13.65	\$247.54	\$12,872	\$404,487	\$5,521,248	\$1,949,000
Associate's Degree	13.4% or 6.10	\$314.12	\$16,334	\$513,274	\$3,129,432	\$1,104,689
Bachelor's Degree	16.6% or 7.55	\$651.60	\$33,883	\$1,064,739	\$8,041,974	\$2,838,817
TOTAL					\$22,278,524	\$7,864,319

differential to 45.5 students means 11.32 fewer families would be on public assistance. The weighted average of the state welfare benefit packages based on the proportion of high school graduates from each four states plus the District of Columbia in 2013 was \$26,460²³. Using the CPI Inflation Calculator²⁴ that package would be \$27,732 in 2017. Assuming four years of usage²⁵, that would equal \$110,928 per person times 11.32 families equaling \$1,255,705 in public assistance payments avoided.

Two other benefits should also be considered. According to a study by a group of researchers from the Social Development Research Group, School of Social Work, at the University of Washington on the benefit-cost of Communities that Care²⁶ the average savings in criminal justice and victimization costs through grade 12 equals \$2,626 in 2011 dollars.²⁷ Inflating to 2017 dollars that would be \$2,844.²⁸ Multiplied by the 851 students in the program equal an additional savings of \$2,420,244. We feel confident in attributing this claim from the CTC study due to HCTC's commitment to the CTC ideals in all of their activities. For instance, HCTC's Pride Survey Report shows the protective factor of "School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement" increased by more than 30%, from 59 in 2011-12 to 77 in 2014-15. Also pertinent is the population-based 15% reduction in "Academic Failure" and a 17% drop in "Low Commitment to School."²⁹

²³ The Work Versus Welfare Trade-Off: 2013; An Analysis of the Total Level of Welfare Benefits by State; Tanner, M. and Hughes, C. (2013).

²⁴ <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl?cost1=38761&year1=2013&year2=2016>

²⁵ <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-97.html>; Census report

²⁶ Benefit-Cost Analysis of a Randomized Evaluation of Communities That Care: Monetizing Intervention Effects on the Initiation of Delinquency and Substance Use Through Grade 12; Kuklinski, M. et al. (2015).

²⁷ In Kuklinski (footnote 7) see Table 3: Benefits from CTC effects on sustained abstinence from delinquency, alcohol use, and cigarette smoking through grade 12 (\$897 in Criminal Justice costs savings and \$1,729 in Victimization cost savings)

²⁸ <http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl?cost1=2626&year1=2011&year2=2016>

²⁹ From a comparison of the 2011-12 Hartford Communities That Care / HBH Pride Survey report for grades 6 to 12 against Hartford's 2014-15 Risk and Protective Factor Report for

Summary of Benefits

The following table summarizes the economic benefits that are projected to accrue from 36 months of student engagement with the VFZ program in five cities including Baltimore, Chicago, Hartford, Milwaukee, and Washington.

Table 7: Summary of Benefits

BENEFIT CATEGORY	TOTAL BENEFITS
1) Wages based on higher graduation rate	\$22,927,567
2) Taxes on those Wages	\$8,093,431
3) Public Assistance Savings	\$1,255,705
4) Criminal Justice and Victimization Cost Savings	\$2,420,244
(2 + 3 + 4) Taxpayers' Savings	\$11,769,380

Program Costs and EV-ROI

Total funding including overhead costs for the VFZ program in the five cities was \$1,000,000. That \$1,000,000 represents the investment. The taxpayer return of \$11,769,380 compared with \$1,000,000 investment means that \$11.77 in lifetime revenue plus savings are returned for every dollar invested in the VFZ program.

grades 6 to 12.

VI. CONCLUSION

Working through local nonprofit community-based organizations, the Violence-Free Zone utilizes school-based mentors known as “youth advisors,” to model and encourage positive behaviors among high-risk youth in public high schools. Because of their outstanding track record in working with public high schools in urban communities, the VFZ initiative received a Multi-State Mentoring grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, to provide mentoring services to 750 at-risk youth through six community-based programs in five cities. Our research efforts over a 36-month period captured a number of important findings showing a positive relationship between VFZ mentoring and improved student behavior and performance:

1. For students served through the VFZ program, there was a 19% improvement in attendance.³⁰
2. There was an overall pre/post decrease of 74% in the average number of suspensions per student per month.³¹
3. The overall GPA for the VFZ students for whom pre- and post-data was available improved by 33% from pre- to post VFZ.³²
4. Based on a survey students served, 98% responded affirmatively regarding their relationship with their mentor through the VFZ program.
5. Based on improvements in Attendance, Behavior, and Coursework, we estimate that an additional 45.5 students achieved high school graduation as a result of the mentoring services received through the VFZ program. The total Net Present Value of Lifetime Wage Differential for the 45.5 additional high school graduates is over \$22 million in 2017 dollars. The additional income and payroll tax revenue at the combined federal and state levels would be \$8,093,431.
6. The total taxpayer returns of \$11,769,380 compared with \$1,000,000 investment indicates that \$11.77 in lifetime revenue plus savings are returned for every dollar invested in the VFZ program.

³⁰ The one exception was the Milwaukee VFZ, in which attendance was measured by the percentage of days VFZ students were marked as present during the pre- and post-VFZ time periods. For the Milwaukee program, pre/post attendance actually decreased slightly (i.e., the average number of unexcused absences increased from pre to post).

³¹ For the Milwaukee VFZ program, behavior was measured by the total average number of violent incidents per month for the 126 VFZ students for who pre- and post-data was available.

³² See Appendix I for the statistical analysis of all pre/post results.

APPENDIX I: Comparisons between Pre-Test and Post-Test Means: Paired-Samples T-Tests

Research site(s) & variable	n	Pre-test		Post-test		2-tailed p-value
		Mean	(S.D.)	Mean	S.D.	
<u>Four sites combined 1^a</u>						
Mentor survey	297	3.341*	(.635)	3.699*	(.473)	.000
<u>Four sites combined 2^b</u>						
# absences/month	381	1.675*	(2.312)	1.070*	(1.809)	.000
GPA	346	2.091*	(1.008)	2.478*	(.985)	.000
# suspension/month	325	.338*	(.455)	.092*	(.304)	.000
<u>Baltimore, MD</u>						
# absences/month	51	4.440	(5.056)	3.304	(3.457)	.169
GPA	37	1.454	(.889)	1.412	(.932)	.839
# suspension/month	0					
Mentor survey	39	2.823	(.741)	3.097	(.743)	.109
<u>Chicago, IL</u>						
# absences/month	124	1.414*	(.556)	.968*	(1.448)	.002
GPA	106	1.654*	(1.015)	2.588*	(.689)	.000
# suspension/month	124	.571*	(.424)	.137*	(.448)	.000
Mentor survey	0					
<u>Hartford, CT</u>						
# absences/month	151	.942*	(.869)	.507*	(.632)	.000
GPA	152	2.335*	(.929)	2.795*	(.856)	.000
# suspension/month	156	.180*	(.404)	.065*	(.156)	.000
Mentor survey	154	3.457*	(.657)	3.831*	(.313)	.000
<u>Washington, D.C.</u>						
# absences/month	55	1.709*	(1.506)	.775*	(.596)	.000
GPA	51	2.729*	(.588)	2.072*	(1.237)	.000
# suspension/month	45	.245*	(.446)	.063*	(.166)	.008
Mentor survey	9	2.830	(.731)	3.356	(.240)	.057
<u>Milwaukee, WI</u>						
% attendance	222	81.2%*	(16.1%)	75.0%*	(20.7%)	.000
GPA	185	1.404*	(1.292)	1.672*	(.781)	.006
# violent incidence/month	126	.258*	(.438)	.062*	(.107)	.000
Mentor survey	95	3.417*	(.462)	3.772*	(.347)	.000

Note. The total sample of 624 students came from Baltimore (95), Chicago (124), Hartford (157), Milwaukee (185), and Washington, D.C. (63).

^a includes Baltimore, Hartford, Milwaukee, and Washington, D.C.

^b includes Baltimore, Chicago, Hartford, and Washington, D.C.

* $p < .05$ (two-tailed test).

APPENDIX II: Summary of Data Collection by VFZ Site

VFZ Program (City)	Total students served through MSM	Students with complete attendance data (% of students served)	Source of attendance data	Students with complete suspensions data (% of students served)	Source of suspension/incidence data	Students with complete GPA data (% of students served)	Source of GPA data
New Vision Youth Services (Baltimore)	113	51 (45%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 Report Card Post: ASY 2015-16 Report Card	N/A ^c	N/A	37 (33%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 Report Card Post: ASY 2015-16 Report Card
Keep Loving Each Other (Chicago)	136	124 (91%)	Pre: 4 th quarter of ASY 2014-15 (student self-report) Post: 4 th quarter of ASY 2015-16 (data output from Chicago Public Schools)	106 (91%)	Pre: 4 th quarter of ASY 2014-15 (student self-report) Post: 4 th quarter of ASY 2015-16 (data output from Chicago Public Schools)	124 (91%)	Pre: 4 th quarter of ASY 2014-15 (student self-report) Post: 4 th quarter of ASY 2015-16 (data output from Chicago Public Schools)
Hartford Communities That Care (Hartford)	158	151 (96%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 Report Card Post: ASY 2015-16 Report Card	156 (99%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 Report Card Post: ASY 2015-16 Report Card	152 (96%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 Report Card Post: ASY 2015-16 Report Card

^c We did not obtain a sufficient level of data on suspension for the students served by New Vision Youth Services in Baltimore to include in the analysis.

VFZ Program (City)	Total students served through MSM	Students with complete attendance data (% of students served)	Source of attendance data	Students with complete suspensions data (% of students served)	Source of suspension/incidence data	Students with complete GPA data (% of students served)	Source of GPA data
Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC)/ running Rebels (/RR) (Milwaukee)	277	222 (80%)	Pre: 1 st quarter ASY 2014-15 (MPS ^d) Post: 4 th quarter ASY 2015-16 (MPS)	126 (45%)	Pre: Violent Incidents from 1 st quarter ASY 2014-15 up to VFZ enrollment ^e (MPS) Post: Violent Incidents for months enrolled in VFZ from ASY 2014-15 to 2015-16 ^f	185 (67%)	Pre: 1 st quarter ASY 2014-15 (MPS ^f) Post: 4 th quarter ASY 2015-16 (MPS)
SBYC (Washington)	167	55 (33%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 (student self-report) Post: Time period enrolled in VFZ during ASY 2015-16	45 (27%)	Pre: ASY 2014-15 (student self-report) Post: Time period enrolled in VFZ during ASY 2015-16	51 (31%)	Pre: First two terms of ASY 2015-16 Post: ASY 2015-16
Total	851	603 (71%)		451 (53%)		531 (62%)	

^d MPS – Milwaukee Public Schools Department of Research and Evaluation.

^e Because the Milwaukee VFZ programs enroll students throughout the year, we were able to capture data relating to suspensions and suspension days for the time period prior to VFZ enrollment (as far back as September of 2014) for the pre-data, and the time period from enrollment up to the end of ASY 2015-16 with the MPS data.

^f MPS – Milwaukee Public Schools Department of Research and Evaluation.

APPENDIX III: Youth Mentee Survey Form

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____

REQUIRED for all VFZ students selected for data input

1. Do you have a mentor?

no yes

2. If yes, what is that mentor's name?

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

3. Do you feel very close to your mentor?

NO! no yes YES!

4. Do you share your thoughts and feelings with your mentor?

NO! no yes YES!

5. Do you enjoy spending time with your mentor?

NO! no yes YES!

6. If I had a personal problem, I could ask my mentor for help

NO! no yes YES!

7. My mentor is available to me when I need him/her

NO! no yes YES!

8. Were you in a gang at the time you enrolled in VFZ?

no yes

9. If yes, did you drop out of the gang due to the VFZ?

no yes was not in a gang when I enrolled in VFZ

10. If you were not in a gang when you started the VFZ, are you better able to resist an invitation to join a gang now that you are in the VFZ program?

NO! no yes YES!

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Byron Johnson is Distinguished Professor of the Social Sciences at Baylor University. He is the founding director of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion (ISR) as well as director of the Program on Prosocial Behavior. Johnson has completed a series of studies on Boy Scouts and Eagle Scouts. Professor Johnson was the principal investigator on a project funded by the Department of Justice that produced a series of empirical studies on the role of religion in prosocial youth behavior. He is a former member of the Coordinating Council for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Presidential Appointment). A leading authority on the scientific study of religion, the efficacy of faith-based organizations, and criminal justice, Johnson's recent publications focus on the impact of faith-based programs on recidivism reduction and prisoner reentry, and is the emphasis of his books, *More God, Less Crime*, and *The Angola Prison Seminary*. His new book *The Quest for Purpose* was released in August 2017. Before joining the faculty at Baylor University, Johnson directed research centers at Vanderbilt University and the University of Pennsylvania. He is the 2013 Big Brother of the Year for Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star of Texas.

William Wubbenhorst served as a Non-Resident Fellow for the Institute for Studies of Religion (ISR) at Baylor University. He also previously served a total of 13 years as a Senior Management Consultant and Return On Investment (ROI) Specialist for ICF International and Macro International. Over the years, William Wubbenhorst has collaborated with professors from several prestigious academic institutions, including Baylor University, Boston University and Harvard University. He has published a variety of peer-reviewed journal publications and case studies. Most recently, Mr. Wubbenhorst co-authored a national study entitled *Assessing the Faith-Based Response to Homelessness in America: Findings from Eleven Cities*, published through the Baylor University's Institute for Studies of Religion. He also co-authored "Demonstrating the Value of Social Service Programs: A Simplified Approach to Calculating Return on Investment" - a peer-reviewed article, published in the *Foundation Journal* (September 2010). Mr. Wubbenhorst also co-authored an article entitled: "Assessing the Effectiveness of the Violence Free Zone in Milwaukee Public Schools", published in the *Journal of Knowledge and Best Practices in Juvenile Justice & Psychology* (2013). Additionally, two recent case studies were published through the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion entitled: *What Keeps them from Coming Back? - The Indiana Faith and character Training Initiative*, and *Incorporating Faith and Works within a Healthcare Network: Baylor, Scott & White's Office of Mission and Ministry*. Other recent Baylor ISR publications related to prisoner re-entry and recidivism include: *Recidivism Reduction and Return On Investment: An Empirical Assessment of the Prison Entrepreneurship Program* (2013), *Stronger Families, Stronger Society: An Analysis of the RIDGE Project, Inc.* (2014).

Andrew Gluck has been serving public and non-profit sector funders and their grantees as a management consultant designing and implementing performance measurement / management systems for more than 25 years. Mr. Gluck works with leadership at federal, state and local agencies and their grantees to construct logic models that served as the underpinning of strategic plans, operating plans and performance measures that align departmental, organizational and personal goals and objectives. Mr. Gluck was the principal author of an innovative approach for monetizing outcomes using expected value to calculate the taxpayers' return on investment. In addition to multiple assignments with the Violence Free Zone, Mr. Gluck's has served a wide variety of school-based health clinics in Alabama, Illinois, Louisiana, New Mexico and Oregon; The National Association for Relationship and Marriage Education; Marriage Works! Ohio; Anthem Strong Families; Community Marriage Builders; the Alabama Baptists Children's Homes and The Children's Guild of Baltimore. Proximate indicators of early childhood development and k-12 childhood academic and social-emotional development culminating in high school graduation have played a key role in assessing past performance and in projecting future outcomes for many of the programs analyzed under these contracts.

Sung Joon Jang is Research Professor of Criminology at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, USA, and co-director of the Program on Prosocial Behavior of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion (ISR). Jang's research focuses on the effects of religion and spirituality as well as family, school, and peers on crime and delinquency. It has been published in social scientific journals of sociology, criminology, psychology and social work, including American Sociological Review, Criminology, Journal of Quantitative Criminology, Journal of Criminal Justice, Justice Quarterly, and Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology. Jang has been leading ISR's ongoing five-year study of seminaries embedded within maximum security prisons in Louisiana and Texas, and is co-author of *The Angola Prison Seminary: Effects of Faith-Based Ministry on Identity Transformation, Desistance, and Rehabilitation* (2016). Jang is the founding President of the Korean Society of Criminology in America and has been active in many capacities in the American Society of Criminology.

Sumner Wubbenhorst is currently employed as a Technical Data Analyst for Social Capital Valuations, LLC (SCV) since 2014. He received acknowledgements in two research case studies published by Baylor University's Institute for Studies of Religion in 2014 and 2015: *Community Transformation in West Dallas* and *Multi-State Mentoring Research: The Center for Neighborhood Enterprise's Violence-Free Zone Initiative*. In his role as Technical Data Analyst, Mr. Wubbenhorst conducts program evaluation and Return On Investment (ROI) analysis for federally-funded Healthy Relationship and Family Strengthening programs, such as: *Community Marriage Works* (Indianapolis, IN), *Marriage Works! Ohio* (Dayton, OH) and *Anthem Strong Families* (Dallas, TX).



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