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California Family Life Center

CCG EVALUATION REPORT 2010-2011

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Challenges of Youth Evaluation

CCG 2010-2011

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ABSTRACT & SUMMATION: An evaluation of each of the interventions implemented by the California Family Life Center - Planet Youth under the Community Challenge Grant for the 2010-2011 program year.

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Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Funded by California’s Office of Family Planning under the Community Challenge Grant (CCG), California Family Life Center - Planet Youth (CFLC) established an informal collaboration to provide teen pregnancy prevention services in the city of Lake Elsinore.

CFLC’s Interventions

INTERVENTION	DESCRIPTION	EVALUATION METHODOLOGY
Safer Choices	<i>Safer Choices</i> is a comprehensive sexuality education intervention that has been shown to delay the onset of sexual activity and increase the use of condoms and other contraceptives. This intervention reaches over 150 youth each year (males and females) with this intervention at the Planet Youth Opportunity Center (operated by CFLC) and Ortega-Cal Safe Alternative School.	Pre- and Post-Survey
Unity in the Community	This is a service learning and youth development intervention for youth (ages 12-19). Approximately 30 youth engage in service learning projects and help organize community events. Youth participate in planning projects and learn valuable leadership skills.	Participant Feedback Survey & Focus Group
Parents of Literate, Artistic Youth (PLAY)	The PLAY curriculum includes a series of activities designed to help young teen mothers visualize and develop goals. Many of these activities involve art projects; other activities aim to develop reading skills in the mother and child, particularly through read-aloud exercises.	Focus Group/ Participant Feedback Survey

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present the results of the local evaluation, which was designed not only to measure the impact of each intervention but also to gather information to help CFLC improve the quality of its services.

Each chapter in this report is dedicated to one of the interventions offered by CFLC. In each chapter, we briefly describe the purpose of the intervention, summarize the evaluation methodology used, identify the measurable outcomes associated with the intervention, review the findings, and draw conclusions and, when applicable, make recommendations for the intervention.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the local evaluation are summarized in the table below. More detail on findings from this evaluation is provided in each chapter.

Summary of Key Findings

INTERVENTION	KEY FINDINGS
Safer Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Forty percent (40%) increased their overall knowledge of pregnancy and disease prevention. Despite this being a positive finding, the results falls short of meeting the first outcome for <i>Safer Choices</i>. ▶ Teens' knowledge of STIs and pregnancy prevention increased by 7%. ▶ Roughly half (49%) increased their expectation to resist unsafe sex, satisfying the second outcome for <i>Safer Choices</i>. ▶ The percentage of sexually-active youth that said they were likely or very likely to receive family planning services in the next 12 months increased by just 3%, short of the goal of 10% established by the third outcome. ▶ The most common reason given for not accessing family planning services was that that they did not expect to have sex in the next 12 months. ▶ The percentage of teens that indicated that they would use protection if they had sex in the next twelve months increased by 20% -- from 70% to 80%.
Unity in the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 100% of youth indicating that they learned new skills (i.e., a little or a lot); 75% said they learned a lot of new skills. ▶ 100% of youth indicated that their experience in the intervention taught them how to set and accomplish goals. ▶ 90% agreed that they learned valuable leadership experience -- 20% said "a little"; 73% said "a lot". ▶ 100% of participants agreed that their experience in the intervention made them feel more comfortable working in a group -- 27% said "a little"; 73% said "a lot". ▶ 93% of youth said that working with Planet Youth staff was very enjoyable. ▶ Participants in the focus group provided suggestions about how the intervention could be improved, with perhaps the main suggestion being that other projects and activities could be offered, including those that focus on recycling, community cleanup, and substance abuse.
Parents of Literate, Artistic Youth (PLAY)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The outcome for this intervention was achieved with seven participants providing information about what they liked and didn't like about the program through a focus group.

Safer Choices

SAFER CHOICES

The goal of *Safer Choices* is to reduce the incidence of primary and secondary pregnancies in teens and young adults. *Safer Choices* is a curriculum-based intervention that teaches youth about abstinence, contraception, and sexually-transmitted infections. *Safer Choices* is presented in 10, one-hour sessions. CFLC's goal was to reach 150 youth this year.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

We evaluated *Safer Choices* locally using a pre- and post-survey designed to measure changes in participants' knowledge of sexual risk-taking and their expectations to resist unsafe sex. The survey also asked teens about their sexual history -- that is, whether or not they have had sex, and if they had, whether or not they used protection. The surveys were administered to youth at Ortega High School.

This evaluation will examine how well the intervention achieved the outcomes identified in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Measurable Outcomes for *Safer Choices*

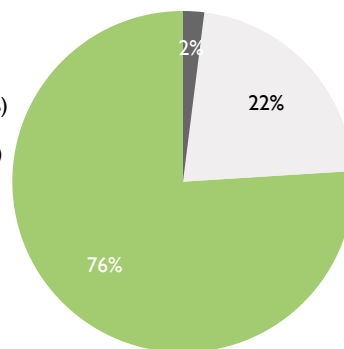
OUTCOME	HOW IT IS MEASURED
1. At least 50% of participants in <i>Safer Choices</i> will increase their understanding of teen pregnancy and disease prevention.	Pre-post survey; 7 true-or-false items measuring teens' knowledge of teen pregnancy and disease prevention; items were used to generate a total score.
2. At least 40% of participants in <i>Safer Choices</i> will increase their expectation to resist unsafe sex.	Pre-post survey; respondents asked how they agreed or disagreed to a series of five statements about their expectation to practice safer sex; items were used to generate a total score.
3. Among sexually-active youth, the percentage of youth indicating they are likely to receive family planning services within the next 12 months will increase by at least 10 percentage points by the post-survey. Sexually-active youth are those indicating they are very likely to have sex within the next 12 months.	Pre-post survey; single item asking youth the likelihood of visiting a local clinic.

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

We collected a total of 54 matched surveys. Descriptive information about the participants is offered below.

- ▶ **Gender.** Males greatly outnumbered females. Three-quarters of respondents (75%) were male.
- ▶ **Race/Ethnicity.** The racial and ethnic distribution of participants (based on the surveys) is illustrated in **Figure 1**, which shows that the vast majority were Latino/Hispanic (76%). Whites accounted for 22%.
- ▶ **Sexual Activity.** Upon entering *Safer Choices*, 67% of youth said that they have had sexual intercourse. Nearly two-thirds (62%) said that they have engaged in other forms of sex (e.g., oral sex) on the pre-survey.
- ▶ **Use of Protection.** On the pre-survey, 13% of youth admitted that they didn't use any form of protection against STIs or pregnancy the *first time* they had sex, and another 11% could not remember or did not know. The *last time* they had sex, 21% of youth said they did *not* use protection, with another 8% admitting they didn't know or couldn't remember.

Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity



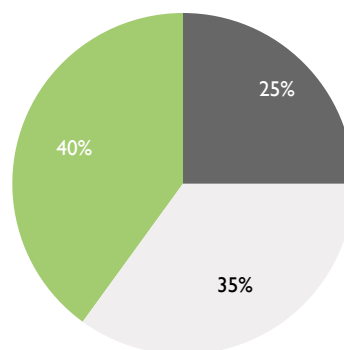
OUTCOME 1: 50% WILL INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF TEEN PREGNANCY AND STI PREVENTION

Outcome 1 states that at least 75% of youth will increase their understanding of pregnancy and disease prevention. To measure this outcome, we constructed seven true-or-false items -- three measuring pregnancy prevention, four measuring STI prevention. These items were treated as an index, with one point given for each correct response. Total scores ranged from zero to seven.

Figure 2 shows the percentage of participants that increased, decreased, or did not change their score. **Forty percent (40%) increased their overall knowledge of pregnancy and disease prevention, falling short of the outcome.**

The failure to meet this outcome may have something to do with the fact that teens' knowledge of teen pregnancy and STI prevention was relatively high when they started the intervention. The average pre- and post-intervention score increased only 7% (or .41 points) -- from a pre-survey average (mean) of 5.90 (out of 7) to 6.31 on the post-survey -- and was not statistically significant¹

- Decreased Understanding (25%)
- No Change (35%)
- Increased Understanding (40%)



OUTCOME STATUS: NOT ACHIEVED

This outcome was not achieved, with only 40% of participants increasing their knowledge score. The average score increased by 7% after teens finished *Safer Choices*. Over three-quarters of participants (35%) did not change their knowledge score at all.

OUTCOME 2: 40% WILL INCREASE EXPECTATION TO RESIST UNSAFE SEX

Outcome 2 requires that 40% of youth completing *Safer Choices* will increase their expectation to resist unsafe sex. Five items asked participants to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed to a series of statements about their expectation to resist unsafe sex. Total scores on these questions ranged from 5 to 25, with higher scores suggesting a greater expectation to resist unsafe sex than lower scores and, thus, a higher score was desired for our purposes.

The average (mean) score on the scale increased from 18.96 to 19.78, an increase of 0.82, or about 4%, over the pre-survey mean. Note that the initial score was relatively high, and the magnitude of the change was relatively small, and was not found to be statistically significant.

¹ Statistical significance was determined using a Wilcoxon signed-rank test, a nonparametric version of a t-test for paired data. We determined a standard t-test was not appropriate because the data were not normally distributed, one of the requirements that needs to be satisfied before using a t-test. The increase in the average knowledge score was not statistically significant using a one-way Wilcoxon signed-rank test [$Z = 1.573, p = .1157$].

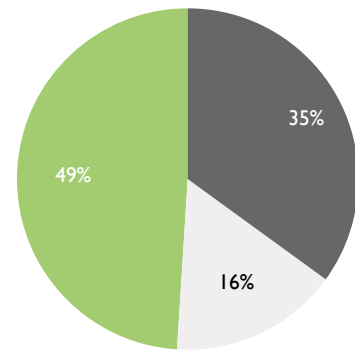
Figure 3 shows the percentage of youth that increased, decreased, or did not change their expectation to resist unsafe sex. *Just under half (49%) increased their expectation to resist unsafe sex, but still satisfying the outcome.*

Figure 3. Expectation to Resist Unsafe Sex

OUTCOME STATUS: ACHIEVED

Forty-nine percent (49%) of youth completing *Safer Choices* increased their expectation to resist unsafe sex, satisfying the outcome for this intervention.

- Decreased Expectation to Resist (35%)
- No Change (16%)
- Increased Expectation to Resist (49%)



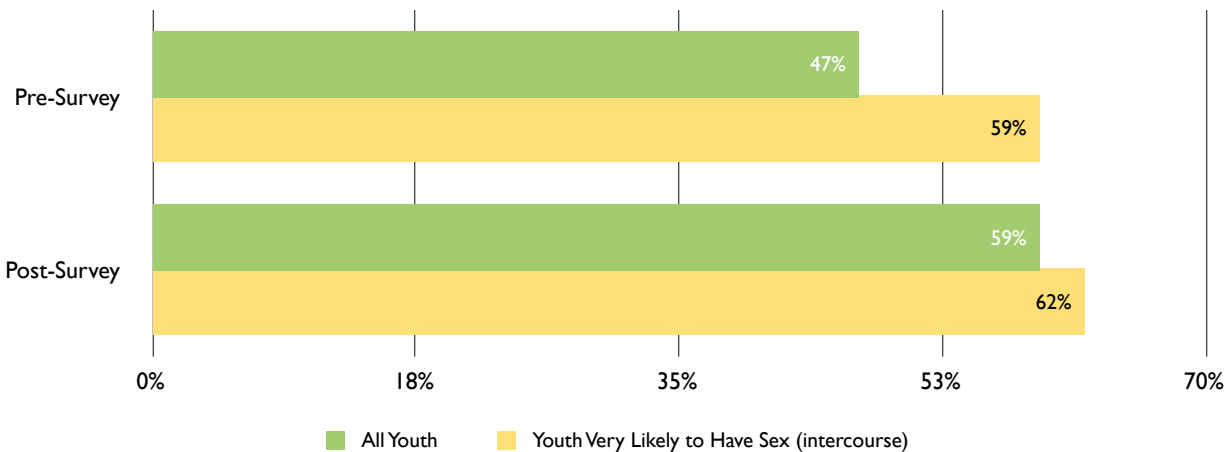
OUTCOME 3: PERCENTAGE OF SEXUALLY ACTIVE YOUTH LIKELY TO ACCESS FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES WILL INCREASE BY 10%

Outcome 3 states that the percentage of youth that say they are likely to receive family planning services within the next 12 months will increase by 10% (i.e., 10 percentage points).

Figure 4 shows the percentage of youth that said they were *somewhat or very likely* to access family planning services. These percentages show that (1) as might be expected sexually-active youth were slightly more likely to access family planning services and (2) the increase from pre- to post-survey was substantial (over 10%) only among all youth, a finding that does not make much intuitive sense. This increase was largely due to the large increase in the percentage of youth that were somewhat likely to access a clinic -- from 26% (pre-survey) to 39% (post-survey). This suggests that among those that were not sure if they were going to have sex in the next 12 months, if they choose to have sex, they would access a clinic to get birth control or STI testing.

Among sexually-active youth, the percentage that said they would be likely to access family planning services increased just 3-percentage points -- from 59% to 62%.

Figure 4. Percent of Youth Likely or Very Likely to Access Family Planning Services - All Youth vs. Youth Likely to Have Sex



OUTCOME STATUS: NOT ACHIEVED

The percentage of sexually-active youth that said they were likely or very likely to receive family planning services in the next 12 months increased by just 3%, short of the goal of 10%. While this increase was not sufficient to meet the intervention's goal, it, nevertheless, was a positive finding. Additionally, a twelve point increase was observed among all youth -- that is, whether or not the youth was likely to have sex or not.

OTHER FINDINGS

Several other items on the survey, while not directly measuring a specific outcome are important in evaluating the impact *Safer Choices* had on participants. These items measured teens' (1) intended behavior, and (2) intent to access family planning services.

INTENDED BEHAVIOR

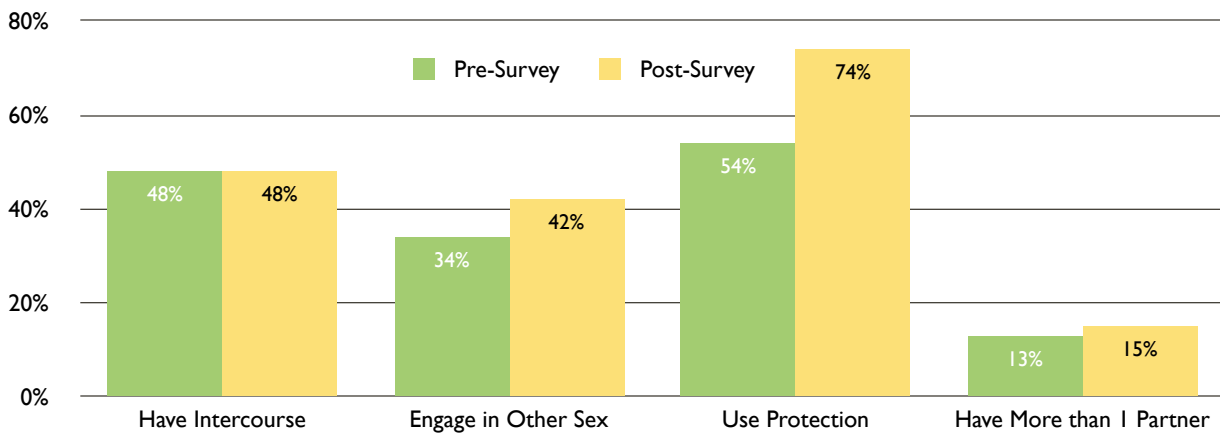
We also asked participants how likely they were to (1) have sexual intercourse, (2) engage in other forms of sex (e.g., oral or anal), (3) use protection against pregnancy and/or STIs, and (4) have more than one sex partner within the next twelve months.

Figure 5 shows the percentage of youth that indicated that they were “Very Likely” to do these things. There was a moderate change from pre- to post-survey on those indicating they were very likely to engage in other forms of sex (increase from 34% to 44%) and a modest increase in the percentage that said they would have more than one sexual partner (increase from 13% to 15%), but these changes were not in the desired direction. There was, however, a large increase (20-percentage points) in the percentage of youth that were very likely to use protection against pregnancy or STIs if they have sex in the next 12 months.

ACCESSING FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

By the time of the post-survey, roughly one-third (34%) of youth indicated that they were not likely to visit a local clinic or doctor to receive family planning services. The large percentage of teens that were *not likely* to visit a local clinic or doctor to get birth control or get tested for an STI is not necessarily a negative finding. For these youth, we also wanted to know some of the

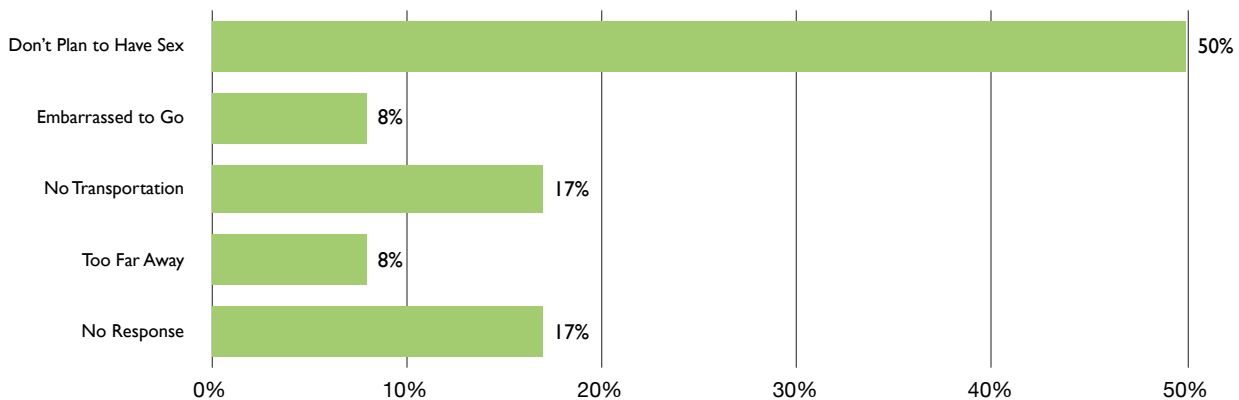
Figure 5. Behavioral Intent: Percentage Indicating “Very Likely” to Do the Following in the Next 12 Months



reasons why they were not likely to receive family planning services in the next six months.

Figure 6 shows that the most common reason given for not getting family planning services was that they didn't plan to have sex within then next 12 months (50%). Seventeen percent (17%) indicated that they were not likely to go because they didn't have transportation.

Figure 6. Reasons Why Teens Won't Receive Family Planning Services in the Next 12 Months



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Safer Choices met 1 out of 3 outcomes. Even so, this evaluation showed that the intervention had a positive impact on teens' knowledge of STI and pregnancy prevention and on teens' expectation to resist unsafe sex.

Among the key findings of this evaluation are as follows:

- ▶ Forty percent (40%) increased their overall knowledge of pregnancy and disease prevention. Despite this being a positive finding, the results falls short of meeting the first outcome for *Safer Choices*.
- ▶ Teens' knowledge of STIs and pregnancy prevention increased by 7%.
- ▶ Roughly half (49%) increased their expectation to resist unsafe sex, satisfying the second outcome for *Safer Choices*.
- ▶ The percentage of sexually-active youth that said they were likely or very likely to receive family planning services in the next 12 months increased by just 3%, short of the goal of 10% established by the third outcome.
- ▶ The most common reason given for not accessing family planning services was that that they did not expect to have sex in the next 12 months. Half indicated as much.
- ▶ The percentage of teens that indicated that they would use protection if they had sex in the next twelve months increased by 20% -- from 70% to 80%.

RECOMMENDATIONS

No recommendations are offered at this time.

Unity in the Community

UNITY IN THE COMMUNITY

The long-term goal of *Unity in the Community* is to reduce the number of teenage pregnancies each year by promoting and supporting positive youth development. Thirty pre-sexually active and sexually-active youth (ages 12-19) are recruited to create and implement various community activities and events. A core group of youth serve as peer leaders and are responsible for monitoring the progress of the community projects. Approximately 30 youth dedicate at least 25 hours to community service.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

We evaluated *Unity in the Community* locally using both a participant feedback survey and a focus group. This methodology was designed to measure the program goals (outcomes) identified in **Table I**.

The survey asked participants:

- ▶ What they learned in the intervention and whether they felt they acquired leadership skills as a result of participating in the intervention;
- ▶ Whether or not participating in the intervention changed the way they view their school, work, or community, as well as how the intervention changed the way they view themselves and their future;
- ▶ What aspects of the intervention -- meetings, working with the community, etc. -- they found most or least enjoyable;
- ▶ What they liked most or least about the intervention; and
- ▶ How they would rate the intervention overall.

The focus group was conducted with four participants and held at Planet Youth on June 16, 2011. The focus group was conducted to gather in-depth information about participants' reactions to *Unity in the Community*, in particular what youth thought of the intervention and what they learned from their experience engaging in local community service projects. The focus group was tape-recorded to ensure that participants' comments were recorded accurately.

Table 1. Measurable Outcomes for *Unity in the Community*

OUTCOME	HOW IT IS MEASURED
1. Project will provide at least 30 youth with skill-building opportunities through community service/service learning activities.	CFLC records; not examined directly by the local evaluation
2. At least 25% of youth participating in the program will complete 25 hours of volunteer time.	CFLC records; not examined directly by the local evaluation
3. At least 75% of youth will indicate that they acquired new skills as a result of participating in <i>Unity in the Community</i> .	Participant feedback survey; items on survey asking whether they learned new skills and whether the intervention changed the way they view their abilities
4. At least 60% of youth will indicate that they learned how to set and accomplish goals as a result of participating in <i>Unity in the Community</i> .	Participant feedback survey; items on survey asking whether they learned how to set and accomplish goals and whether the intervention changed the way they view their future
5. At least 75% of youth will indicate that they learned valuable leadership experience as a result of participating in <i>Unity in the Community</i> .	Participant feedback survey; items on survey asking if they received leadership experience
6. Participants completing this intervention will discuss the impact <i>Unity in the Community</i> had on them, including, for instance, how the intervention improved their leadership skills, what skills they learned, and how their experienced affected their outlook towards their education and/or community. Participants will also provide information that can be used to improve the intervention. Information will be collected via a focus group with between 6 and 10 participants.	Focus group

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

We collected 16 feedback surveys from participants. Participants completing the survey ranged in age from 16 to 22 years old. Females made up the majority of participants (i.e., 56%). In terms of race and ethnicity, 87% were self-identified as Hispanic, the remaining 13% were White.

OUTCOME 1: PROVIDE AT LEAST 30 YOUTH WITH SKILL-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

The first outcome states that 30 youth will be involved in *Unity in the Community* and participate in the activities. This information was collected and maintained by CFLC, not the local evaluation, and was reported in their annual report to the Office of Family Planning. It is, therefore, not reported in this evaluation report.

OUTCOME STATUS: NOT EVALUATED LOCALLY

This outcome was not evaluated locally.

OUTCOME 2: AT LEAST 25% WILL COMPLETE 25 HOURS OF VOLUNTEER TIME

Like the first outcome, the second outcome was measured by examining CFLC's attendance records. Like the first outcome, this information was collected and maintained by CFLC, not the local evaluation, and was reported in their annual report to the Office of Family Planning. It is, therefore, not reported in this evaluation report.

OUTCOME STATUS: NOT EVALUATED LOCALLY

This outcome was not evaluated locally.

OUTCOME 3: AT LEAST 75% WILL INDICATE THEY ACQUIRED NEW SKILLS

The third outcome, measured by a participant satisfaction survey, states that at least 75% of participants will indicate that they acquired new skills in *Unity in the Community*. Results from the 16 surveys suggest that this outcome was met, with 100% of youth

indicating that they learned new skills (i.e., a little or a lot). Three-quarters (75%), in fact, indicated that they learned a lot of new skills while in the intervention.

Related questions on the survey also suggest that youth learned new skills. For example:

- ▶ 100% of participants said they learned more about their own skills and abilities: 31% said “Yes, a little”; 69% said “Yes, a lot”.
- ▶ All of the participants (100%) said that the intervention changed the way they view their own skills and abilities: 31% said “Yes, a little”; 69% said “Yes, a lot”.

OUTCOME STATUS: ACHIEVED

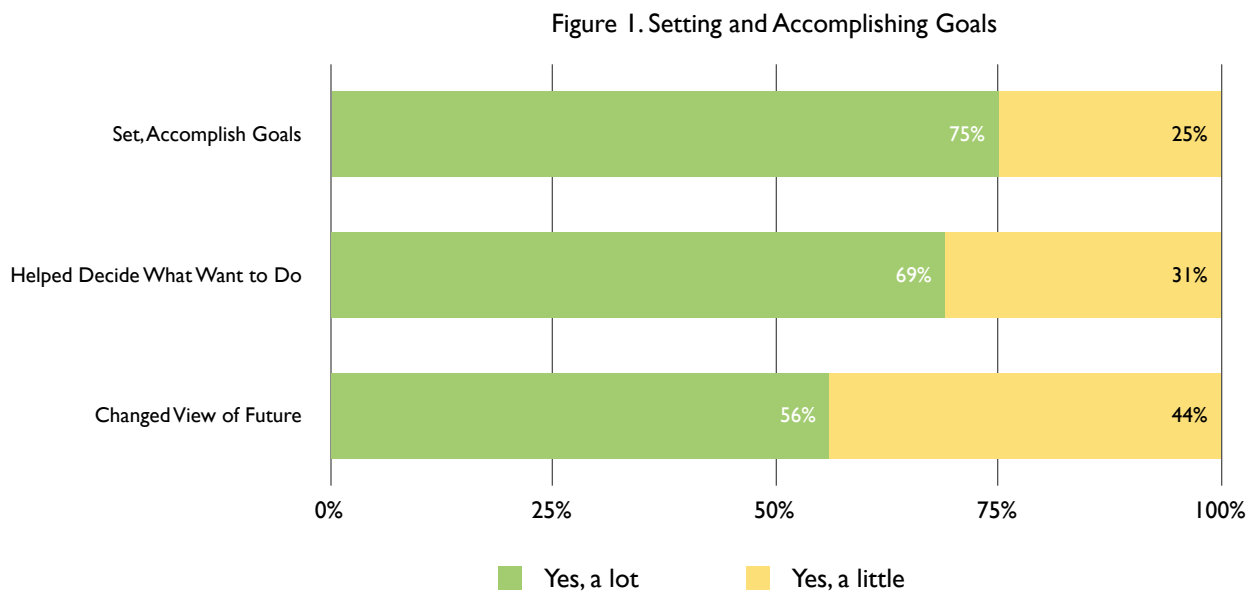
This outcome was achieved. All of the participants felt that they acquired new skills in the intervention.

OUTCOME 4: AT LEAST 75% WILL LEARN HOW TO SET AND ACCOMPLISH GOALS

The fourth outcome states that at least 60% of youth will indicate that they learned how to set and accomplish goals. Since participants help plan and organize the community service activities, CFLC expects that youth will learn about goal-setting during the intervention. Goal-setting may be very personal -- as in learning how to set and accomplish personal goals -- or relate to group goals -- for example, holding an activity or event.

To measure this outcome, we asked participants to tell us whether or not they felt they learned how to set and accomplish goals. We also asked whether or not the intervention helped them decide what they want to do with their life and whether or not the intervention changed how they view their future.

Figure 1 shows how youth responded to these items. Note that in terms of setting and accomplishing goals, 100% of youth indicated that their experience in the intervention taught them how to set and accomplish goals. Seventy-five percent (75%) indicated it helped them a lot. These percentages are even higher than last year when only 53% said that the intervention helped them a lot to accomplish and set goals.



OUTCOME STATUS: ACHIEVED

This outcome was achieved. All of the participants (100%) indicated that the intervention helped them learn how to set and accomplish goals, satisfying Outcome 4 of the local evaluation.

OUTCOME 5: AT LEAST 75% WILL INDICATE THEY RECEIVED VALUABLE LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

The fifth outcome states that at least 75% of youth will indicate that they acquired valuable leadership experience as a result of being a part of *Unity in the Community*. To measure this outcome, we asked participants whether or not they gained valuable leadership experience in the intervention. We also asked them a related question -- that is, whether or not they felt more comfortable working in a group because of the intervention.

- ▶ 90% agreed that they learned valuable leadership experience -- 20% said "a little"; 73% said "a lot".
- ▶ 100% of participants agreed that their experience in the intervention made them feel more comfortable working in a group -- 27% said "a little"; 73% said "a lot".

OUTCOME STATUS: ACHIEVED

This outcome was achieved. Nearly all of the intervention's participants (90%) indicated that they learned valuable leadership experience by participating in *Unity in the Community*, satisfying Outcome 5 for this intervention. Nearly three-quarters (73%) indicated that they learned a lot of leadership experience.

OUTCOME 6: PARTICIPANTS WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION VIA A FOCUS GROUP

The final outcome reflects the goal of obtaining information that can be used to improve *Unity in the Community*. The results below are highlights from the focus groups and reflect the main ideas expressed by participants. Additional comments from the open-ended questions from the feedback survey have also been added.

Question 1. Tell us why you joined and how you heard about Unity in the Community.

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Youth we asked indicated that they learned about Planet Youth and Unity in the Community from friends or from staff at Planet Youth, who informed them about the community service learning experience.

CONCLUSION

Teens' responses indicate that they learned about the intervention from either friends or directly from staff at Planet Youth. This suggests that word-of-mouth and direct referrals to the intervention from staff have been effective, but that other means of promoting the intervention have not.

Question 2. To start off, what do you think the purpose of this program was?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Youth described the intervention as "a place where you get help, and you learn how to help others." Others stressed that the intervention ultimately helps youth get experience that they can use to get a job.

Youth recounted many of the activities that they had been involved in during the year, including the Harvest Festival, Day of the Child, Winterfest, and presenting at city council meetings and Sacramento. They also talked about the planning and research they did for the events, including developing and distributing flyers and planning activities (e.g., Harvest Festival).

CONCLUSION

Youth believed that the intervention would help them find employment. Equally important was that the intervention gave them the opportunity to help others. Some youth specifically mentioned that they enjoyed working with children (e.g., Day of the Child).

Question 3. What are some of the things you enjoyed about being in this program?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Youth enjoyed working as a team, Planet Youth staff, and helping others in the community.

- ▶ “I love how the center, or Planet youth, it’s always like involved in the community and the events that are coming up because I love participating.”
- ▶ “Working with children in the community”
- ▶ “Helping others and making a difference”
- ▶ “Helping others”
- ▶ Another youth mentioned that working together with the others in the program was the most enjoyable thing.

Comments regarding staff focused on how the youth felt that Planet Youth were there to help.

- ▶ “I like the fact that the staff goes with us to the event.”
- ▶ “They will always help someone

CONCLUSION

Youth focused on helping others, CFLC staff, and the experience they had working with other youth when thinking about what they enjoyed most about *Unity in the Community*.

Question 4. What are some things we could change -- perhaps, add to or subtract from -- the program to make it even better?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Youth provided suggestions to improve the intervention. Among these are the following:

- (1) **Consistent Staff Leadership.** A few youth mentioned that they always seemed to be working with a different Planet Youth staff member. When asked further about this, the youth indicated that even though it would have been better to have just one staff leader, they all admitted that the rotating leadership meant that they felt comfortable going to any of the staff members with questions..
- (2) **Consider Additional Activities and Projects.** Youth suggested that they do a community clean-up project, something that was also proposed last year by youth. They also suggested doing a project involving or somehow related to recycling. Several youth also mentioned that drugs and alcohol problems are serious issues in the community and should be addressed through *Unity in the Community*.

CONCLUSION

Youth had only two suggestions about how to improve the community service program, and then only one -- that of a adding new projects -- that was agreed upon by all youth.

Question 5. What are some of the most important things you have learned in this program?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Youth mentioned that they thought the program was all about helping to get a job, but it turned out to be much more. The indicated the learned the following:

- ▶ Learned about politics, politicians, and political systems while preparing for the city council and Sacramento presentations.
- ▶ How to do research
- ▶ Team-building
- ▶ Self-Confidence
- ▶ Communication skills. One youth mentioned that when she started the intervention she was quiet, but the program has helped her to open up and be more outgoing.

CONCLUSION

Youth were able to identify several important things that they learned while participating in the community service intervention.

OUTCOME STATUS: ACHIEVED

This outcome was achieved. Participants in the focus group provided information that will be useful in helping Planet Youth improve its community service program.

OTHER FINDINGS

In addition to the items relating to the outcomes, we also asked participants questions about their experience in *Unity in the Community*.

ENJOYABLE ACTIVITIES

Table 2 shows that a majority of participants found each aspect "very enjoyable", and it compares this year's results with those obtained last year (FY 2009-2010). In every instance the percentage of participants indicating "Very Enjoyable" was higher this year than last year, suggesting that any improvements that have been made appeared to have been effective.²

Table 2. How Enjoyable Were the Following Activities for You?

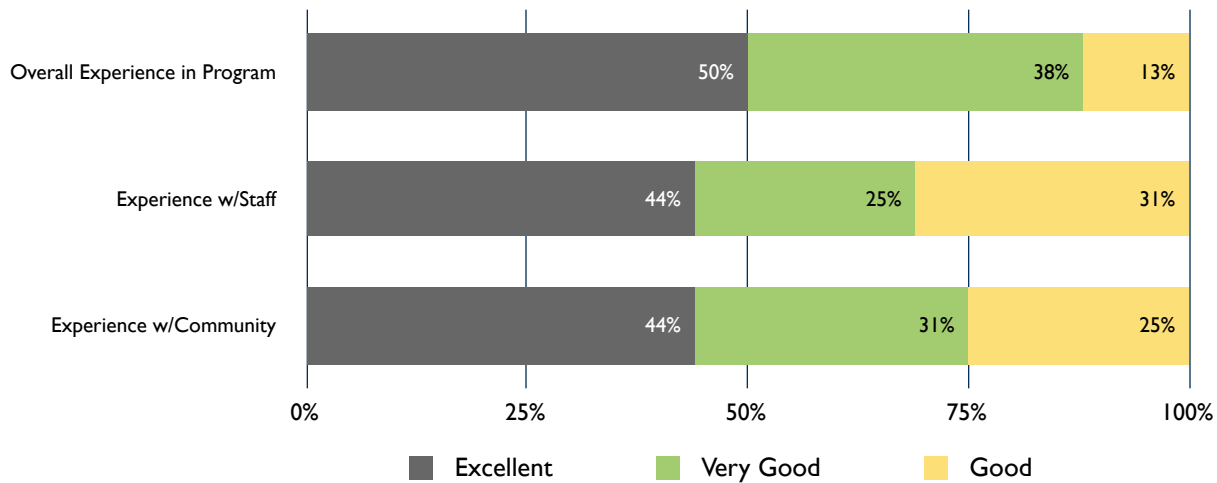
SURVEY ITEM	% "VERY ENJOYABLE" (FY 2009-2010)	% "VERY ENJOYABLE" (FY 2010-2011)
Meeting new people	79%	81%
Working with community members	63%	88%
Working with staff from Planet Youth	83%	93%
Working in a group-setting with others my age	56%	100%
Meeting regularly to discuss our projects.	56%	94%
Learning about my community	67%	88%
Providing presentations to the community	44%	81%
Identifying needs in my community	50%	88%
Planning the community projects and events	72%	88%

² We also examined whether or not these responses differed by gender but found no statistically significant difference between how males and females responded to these items.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

In another set of questions, we asked participants to rate their overall experience in the intervention, their experience with staff, and their experience with community members. **Figure 2** suggests that youth enjoyed their experiences overall. No one rated their experience as “Poor” or “Very Poor”.

Figure 2. Participants’ Rating of Their Experiences in the Intervention



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation revealed that *Unity in the Community* met its objectives. Among the key findings of this evaluation included:

- ▶ 100% of youth indicating that they learned new skills (i.e., a little or a lot); 75% said they learned a lot of new skills.
- ▶ 100% of youth indicated that their experience in the intervention taught them how to set and accomplish goals.
- ▶ 90% agreed that they learned valuable leadership experience -- 20% said “a little”; 73% said “a lot”.
- ▶ 100% of participants agreed that their experience in the intervention made them feel more comfortable working in a group -- 27% said “a little”; 73% said “a lot”.
- ▶ 93% of youth said that working with Planet Youth staff was very enjoyable.
- ▶ Participants in the focus group provided suggestions about how the intervention could be improved, with perhaps the main suggestion being that CFLC needs to offer community projects involving a community cleanup or projects relating to substance abuse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The only recommendation that can be offered for this intervention comes from the youth themselves. Youth were in agreement that other projects and activities could be offered, including those that focus on recycling, community cleanup, and substance abuse.



Parents of Literate, Artistic Youth

PARENTS OF LITERATE, ARTISTIC YOUTH (PLAY)

Combining elements of art, literature, parenting skills, and teen pregnancy prevention, Parents of Literate, Artistic Youth (PLAY) reaches to 20 teen mothers at Ortega High School in Lake Elsinore with 21 weeks of curriculum. Facilitated by Michele Worth and Sarah Slocum, PLAY aims to (1) strengthen mother-child interaction, (2) encourage teen mothers to delay subsequent pregnancies, and (3) improve participants' art and literacy skills.

As a youth development strategy, PLAY provides teen mothers with an opportunity to enhance their self-confidence as parents, express themselves creatively, and learn skills and competency through art projects and reading. PLAY includes activities designed to help teen mothers visualize and develop goals. Many of these activities involve art projects; other activities aim to develop reading skills in the mother and child.

PLAY was administered at the Cal-Safe school in Murrieta.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

PLAY was evaluated via a focus group discussion. The questions for the focus group asked participants about various aspects of the program, including what they learned about reading to their infant/toddler, what they thought of some of the activities and projects, and how they think the intervention could be improved. Journal entries from girls in the intervention were also used, as their entries provide more detail about their experiences in PLAY.

The focus group was conducted with 4 volunteers from the class on January 19th, 2011 at the Cal-Safe school in Murrieta. The focus group discussion was short, lasting only about 20 minutes, and was conducted during session time. **Table 1** below identifies the outcome for PLAY.

Table 1. Measurable Outcomes for PLAY

OUTCOME	HOW IT IS MEASURED
1. Participants completing this intervention will discuss the impact PLAY had on them, including, for instance, their ability to communicate and bond with their child and delay subsequent pregnancy. Participants will also provide information that can be used to improve PLAY. Information will be collected via a focus group conducted by the local evaluation consultant.	Focus group

OUTCOME 1: PARTICIPANTS WILL PROVIDE INFORMATION VIA A FOCUS GROUP

The results below are highlights from the focus groups and reflect the main ideas expressed by participants.

Question 1. What did you learn about selecting books for your child?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Girls in the program indicated that they received approximately 10 books this year. However, they provided few details about what they learned about selecting books for their children, even though they admitted they talked about it in class. They only mentioned that they learned that they need to spend time with their child reading and to select books that engage the youth.

Comments made in their journals reveal that they practiced reading aloud to their child and applied the techniques taught in PLAY.

- ▶ *"Reading to my baby aloud makes me feel that my baby understands me better and how I pronounce [sic] the words and how I say it...So that's why I read to him all loud [sic] so he could understand me."*
- ▶ *"I can't wait to read to my baby and stop every time and ask him questions to see if he understood what I was reading to him. But that's still a long way to go."*
- ▶ *"I read the cow book to Omar the other day, and he actually seemed more interested than before."*
- ▶ *"I showed him one of the books. I showed him the doggy book. He likes the book. I like it too because it's soft for him and because it express [sic] feelings of dogs...It's interesting to know how babies learn when you start to teach them things like from the books. For example, I like to show my baby what a dog dos, barking, what he looks like, how many kinds there are, and ho dogs are in life what their [sic] meant for."*
- ▶ *"Reading to my baby Ramiro and taking time for me to sit down and actually pay attention on [sic] him makes me want to do it daily just because I see a smile on my baby's face."*
- ▶ *"Reading to my baby makes me feel like a good mom that is getting ready my baby to have a better future reading."*

CONCLUSION

Comments from the participants' journal entries provided insight into how they used the books they received. Their comments indicate that they applied the techniques taught in the class about reading to their child. Their comments also indicate that they made a habit of reading to their child.

Question 2. What did you think of the activities you did in PLAY involving reading to your child and playing with puppets?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

The teen mothers mentioned the read-aloud activities they engaged in during the PLAY. They also talked about the puppets that they used. The teen mothers also mentioned that they would have liked to have spent more time with their children during PLAY, suggesting that they would liked to have spent more time doing the read-aloud and hand puppet activities with their children.

CONCLUSION

While the participants enjoyed the read-aloud activities, they suggested that they did not do this enough and wanted more time with their child. This was the same conclusion reached last year regarding the read-aloud and puppet activities.

Question 3. What did you learn from the activities you did in PLAY? What did you like most about PLAY?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

Youth were asked to rate several of the activities they participated in as either “Not Fun”, “Just OK”, or “Fun”. These activities included the haiku project, linoleum blocks project, creative writing journal activity, bookmaking project, and the bathtub soft sculptures project. Responses from the four focus group participants are below. No one rated any of the activities as “Not Fun” so this response is not shown in **Figure 1**. Both the linoleum block project and the bookmaking project were the most highly rated.

With regard to the creative writing journaling activity, some youth found this difficult to do. One teen mother said:

- ▶ *“I think it was a waste of time. That, like has nothing to do with the program. And they’re asking us to write about our outside life.”*

Others understood the benefit of journaling even if it was difficult. For example, one teen mother commented:

- ▶ *“Sometimes writing in the composition book is very difficult! I don’t always need to vent. And it’s hard to think of things to write about. I love the idea and purpose of the book though. It really does help vent and get things off my chest.”*

Figure 1. Number of Participants Rating Each Project as “Fun” and “Just OK” (n=4)



* One participant did not respond to the question about the soft sculptures, so there were only three total responses.

CONCLUSION

The linoleum block project and the bookmaking project were activities that all of the participants enjoyed. The journaling project seemed to divide youth, as did the soft sculptures. Some girls didn’t understand how the journaling was relevant to PLAY, while others understood the benefits of journaling. With regard to the soft sculptures project, one participant felt that they needed more fabric for the project.

Question 4. What could be done to improve PLAY?

RESPONSE SUMMARY

The focus group participants voiced several complaints, which may be taken as implied suggestions about what could be done to improve PLAY. These complaints revolved around the amount of time they had to complete projects and how much time the intervention took away from other school activities. When asked whether or not having PLAY more days each week would be better, one teen mother said that that would not be good because it would make it difficult to get their schoolwork done. Others suggested that journaling should not be required or that only complete one sculpture instead of two to give the youth more time and to reduce the workload.

CONCLUSION

Comments about what could be done to improve PLAY concerned the amount of work that needed to be completed and how much time was available to complete their projects. Similar comments were made last year.

OUTCOME STATUS: ACHIEVED

While not as informative as focus group discussions conducted in the past with PLAY participants, this focus group did provide information about the impact of PLAY and how the intervention can be improved.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The outcome for this intervention was achieved with four participants providing information about what they liked and didn't like about the program through a focus group. In a comment about PLAY, one girl wrote the following in her journal:

- ▶ *"PLAY has been pretty cool, way better than last year I say. But that's just my opinion. I'm pretty sure my friends would agree too...I'm glad I took this class again. I look at it with a totally different point of view. I'm glad I got a second chance."*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on participants' comments, the educators may want to re-evaluate how much time is allocated to each project to ensure that enough time has been allowed to complete each project. Conclusions from this review may lead to (1) some projects being scaled back or eliminated or (2) more session time added to the intervention. Another possible recommendation concerns letting the parents spend more time with their child during the sessions.