



Truancy, Dropouts and Delinquency:

**Solutions for Policies, Practices and
Partnerships**

April 2006



What is NCSE?

- The National Center for School Engagement
- Promoting truancy prevention and school success
- Improving teachers' skills with homeless and highly mobile youth
- Provide training, evaluation and technical assistance
- NCSE is hosted by the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children



Troubling Statistics

- **70% of suspended youth are chronically truant in the previous 6 months.**
- **97% of expelled youth are chronically truant in the previous year.**
- **80% of dropouts were chronically truant in the past year.**
- **90% of youth in detention for delinquent acts were truant.**

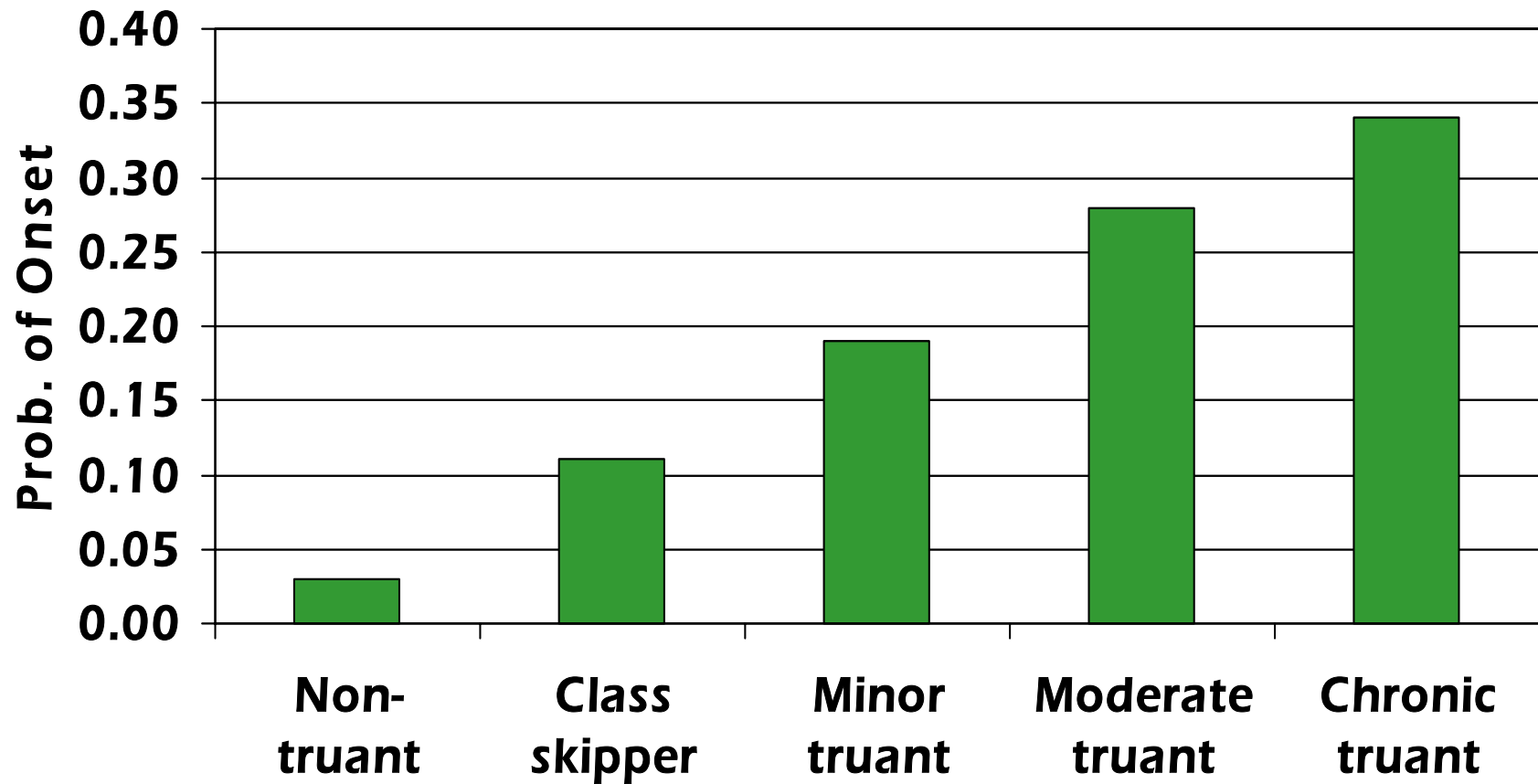


Troubling Statistics

- 25% of all expelled youth will be in youth corrections within 1 year.
- Truants are 2 to 8 times as likely to become adjudicated delinquents.
- Truants aged 12-15 are 10 to 15 times as likely to start marijuana use compared to non-truant or suspended youth or low academic performing youth.



Predicted Probability of Onset of Marijuana Use at Age 14 by Truancy





Effect of Truancy on Later Delinquency

Onset of Serious Assault Crimes

Class Skipper	4.12 times as likely
Minor Truant (1-3 days)	4.03
Moderate Truant (4-9 days)	6.84
Chronic Truant (> 9 days)	12.15



Truancy and Drug Use

Onset of Marijuana Use

- Class Skipper 4.11 times as likely
- Minor Truant (1-3 days) 7.17
- Moderate Truant (4-9 days) 12.37
- Chronic Truant (> 9 days) 16.08



RESULTS-BASED TRUANCY PROGRAM

Principles that guide the work:

- Diversity is valued
- Families are actively involved
- Youth are treated with respect
- Collaboration with the community is critical



TRUANCY REDUCTION PROGRAM



Needs & Capacities

Family:
Need information
Values re: school,
Essential for
attendance

School:
Value engagement
Learning environ.

Student:
Academic abilities,
Social, Behavioral,
peers, JJ

Community:
Courts
Law enforcement
CBOs,

Strategies

Inform about
Policies
Create attendance
contracts

SARBs
Alt. Ed.
Credit/grading
Attachment

Peer Mentoring/
Tutoring
Incentives
Sanctions

Public education,
media
Outreach

Milestones

Engaged in solutions
Engaged in child's
Learning,
Understands policies

Attendance
Attachment
Achievement

Improved
attendance,
grades, behavior
Feeling attached

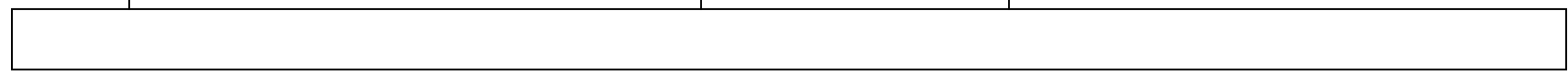
Community
involvement
with youth, resources
accessed, etc.

Results

Youth are in
school and out
of the
juvenile justice
system

PROCESS EVALUATION

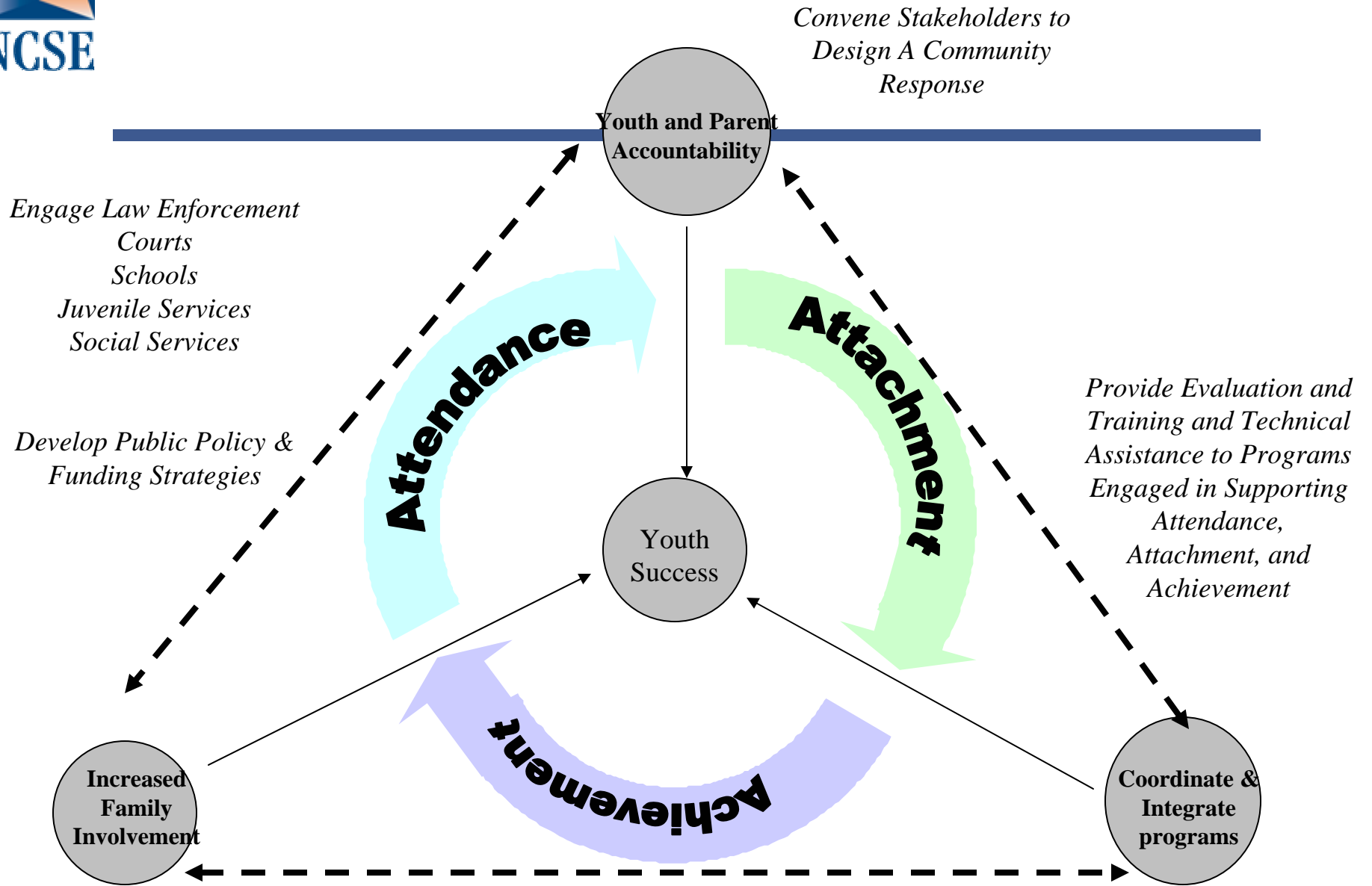
OUTCOME EVALUATION





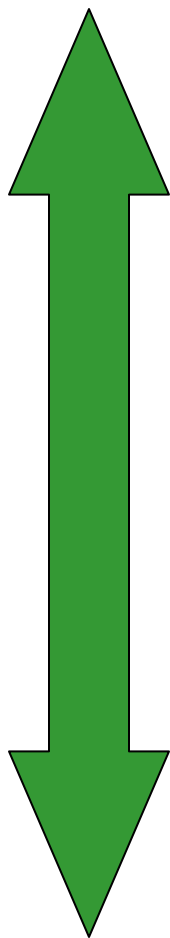
Solutions for Truant Youth

Strengthening Networks –Building Capacity - Supporting Youth -Creating Cycles of Success





Major Truancy Reduction Strategies



Collaborations for Planning: Schools, Courts, Police

Public Awareness Activities: School & community

Short Term Interventions

SARBs

Knock and Talk

Parent-student Workshop/ Contracting

Home Visits

Mediation

Truancy Centers

Longer Term Interventions: Case Management, Support Services

Court Interventions: Parent arrest, detention of youth, fines , D&N petitions, CHINS petitions, Driver's License revocation

[Home](#) | [Students](#) | [Reports](#) | [Help](#) | [Log Out](#)
(Heather MacGillivray - Denver - User)

Welcome!

If you have any suggestions for enhancements to TRAIN please let us know!
Contact us at jodih@what-works.org



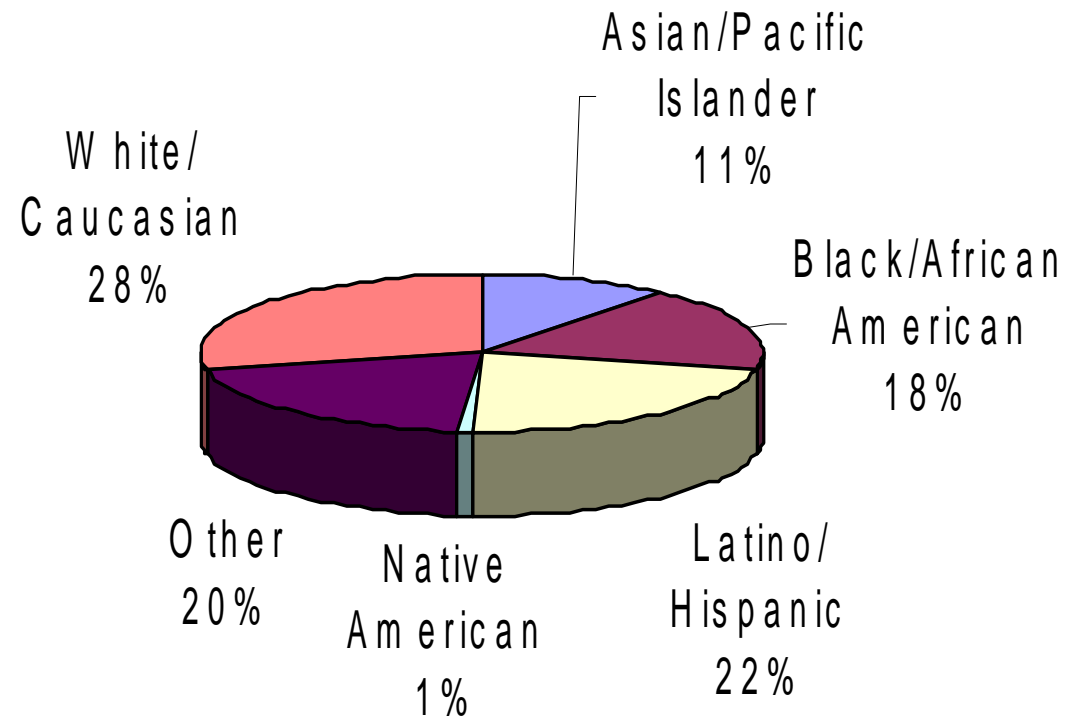


Data Background

- **The following data are based on 595 students entered into an online database (TRAIN) from all 7 demonstration sites.**
- **Except where noted, these data represent all intake data since the project's inception in 2000.**

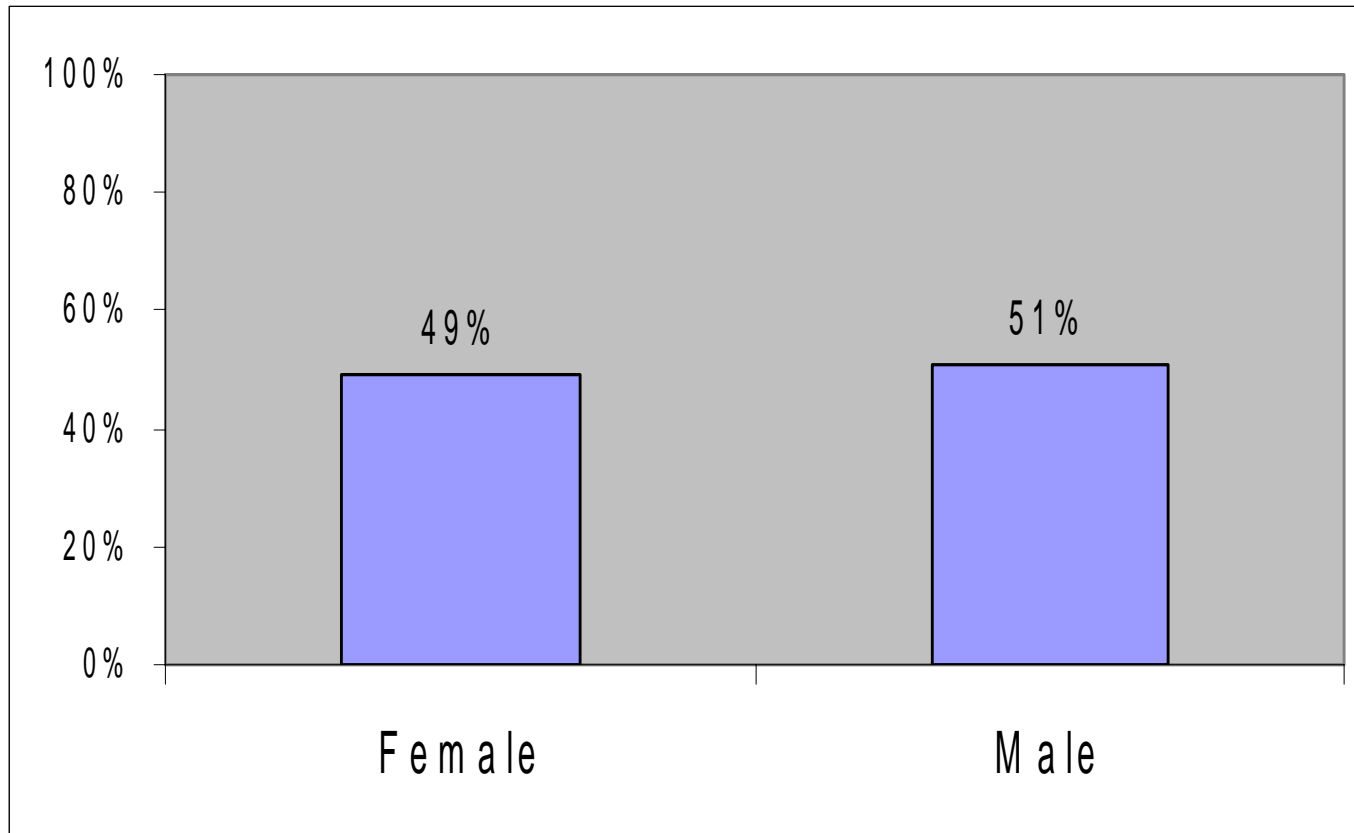


Ethnicity



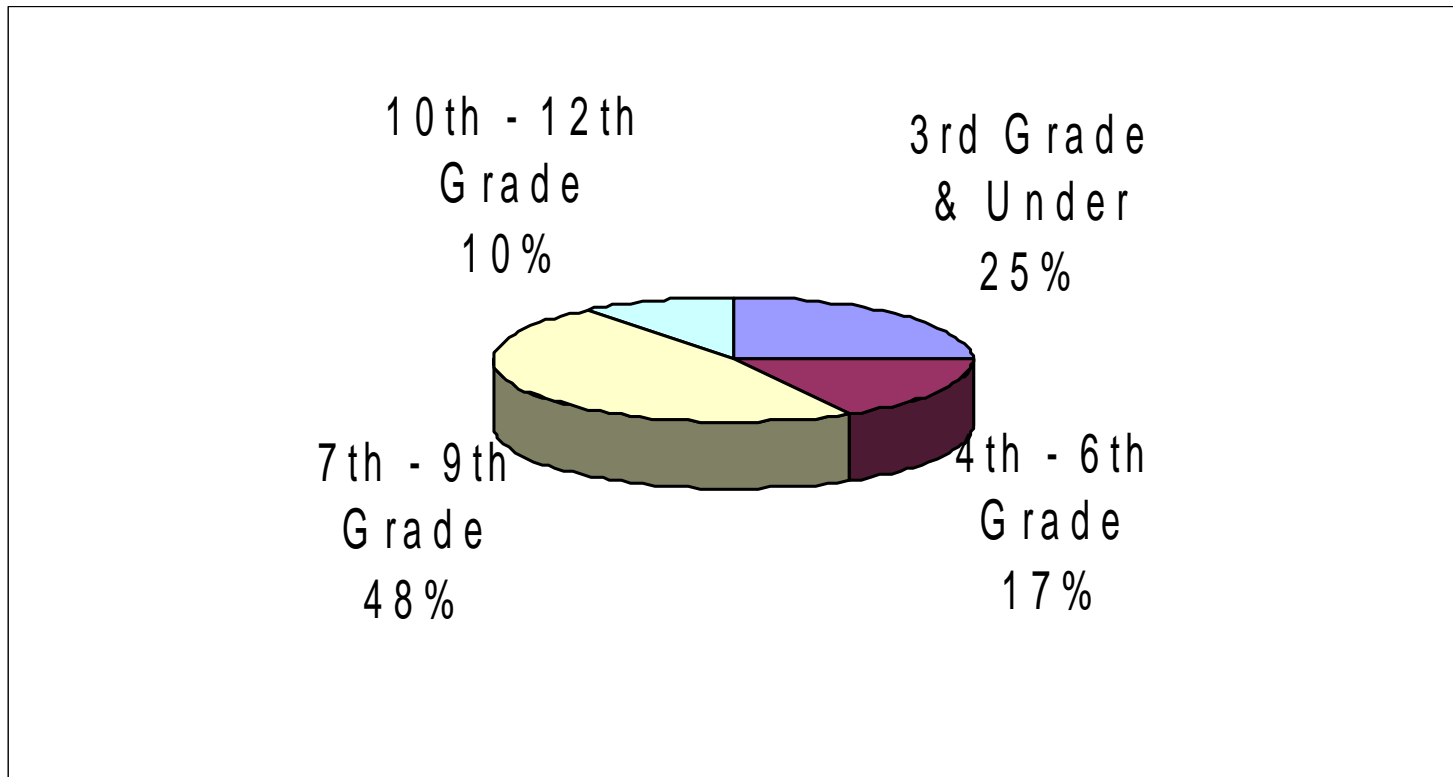


Gender



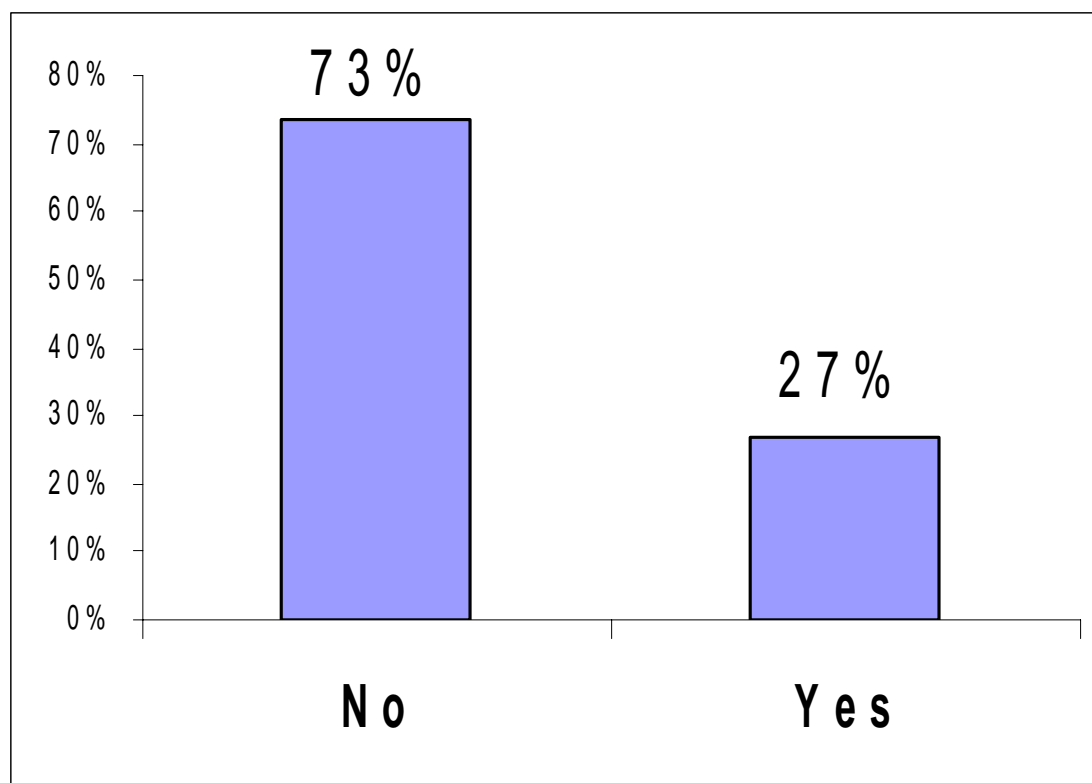


Grade



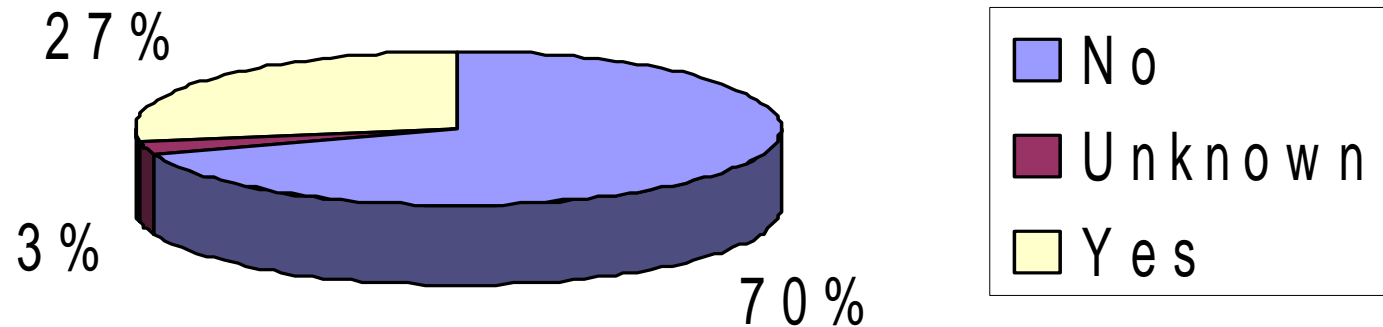


Parents Living Together





School Discipline Problems

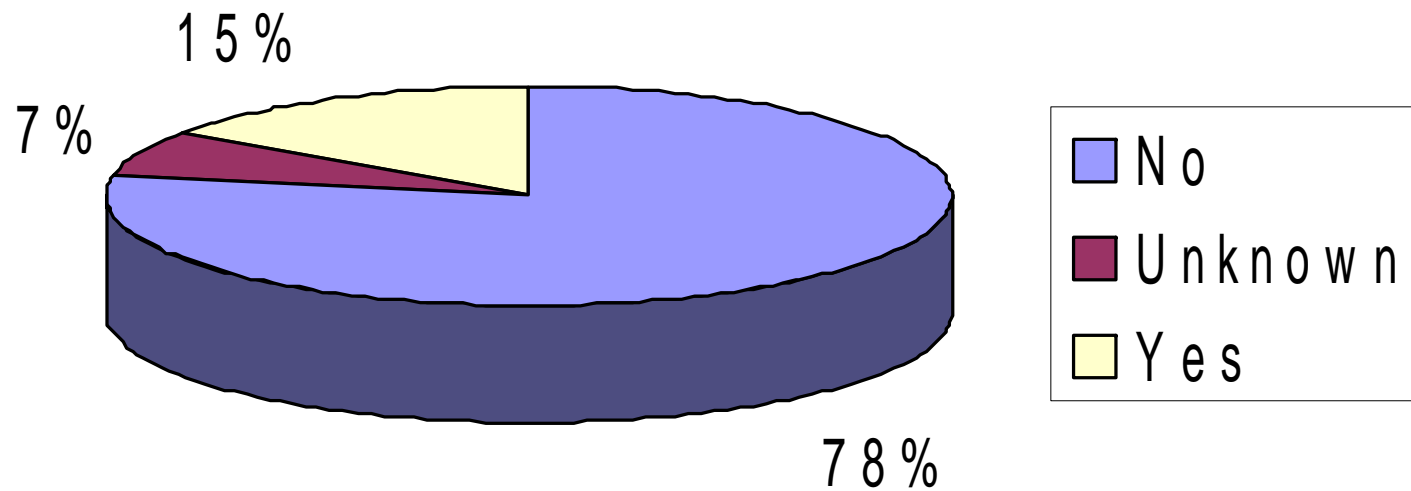


Note: 284 students had information filled out for this category.



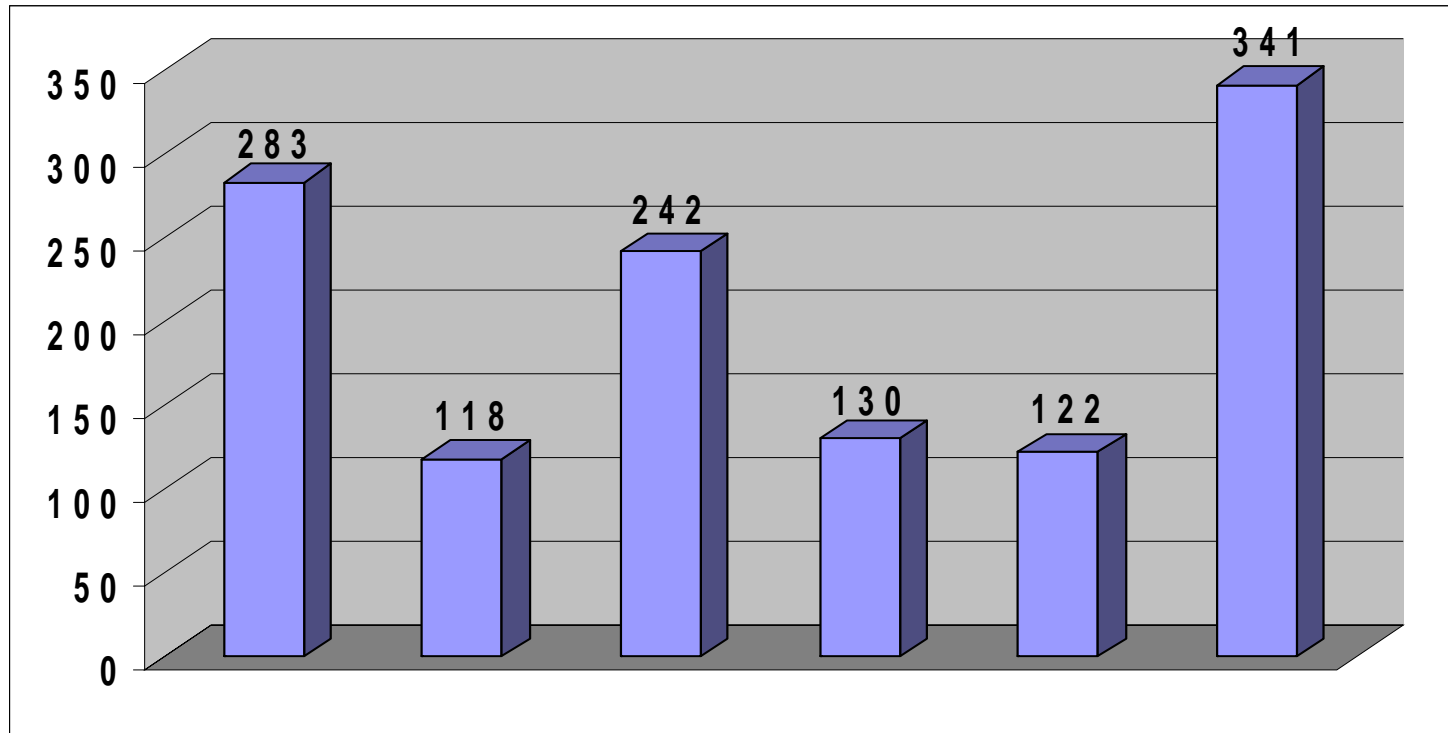
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Juvenile Justice Involvement





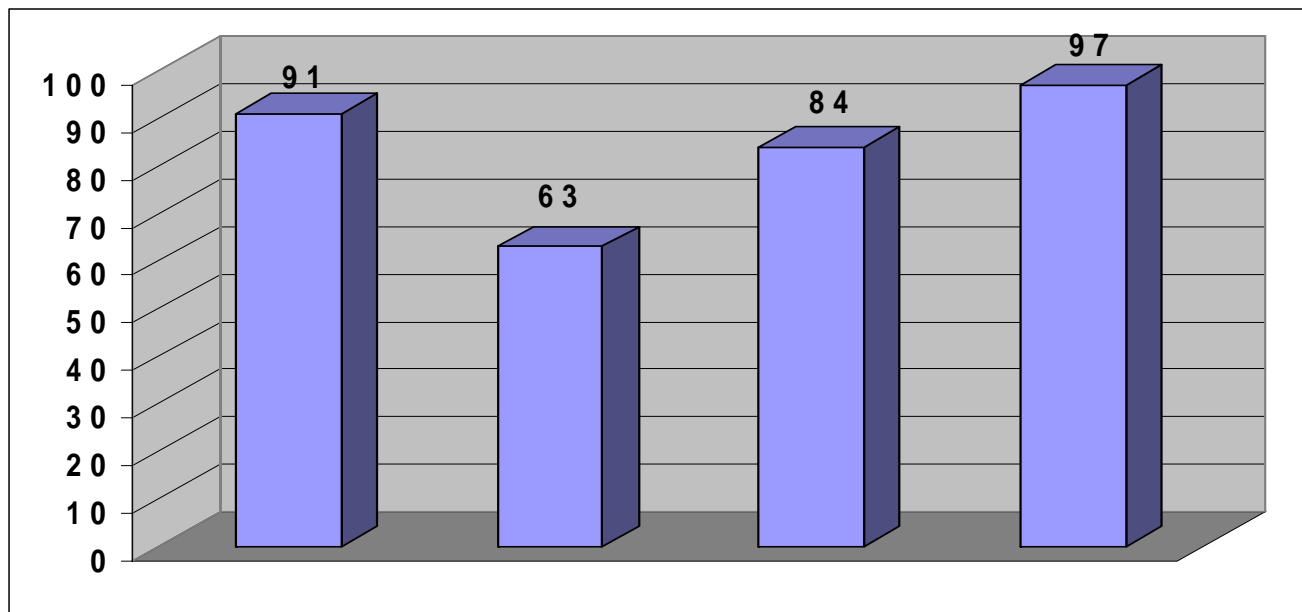
Numbers of Students with Common Challenges



Family Stressors (283), Mobility (118), Emotional Stability (242), Family Relationship (130), Peer Relationship (122), Academic Problems (344)



Number of Students with Less Common Challenges



Living Situation (91), Been Bullied (63),
Transportation (84), Chronic Illness (97)



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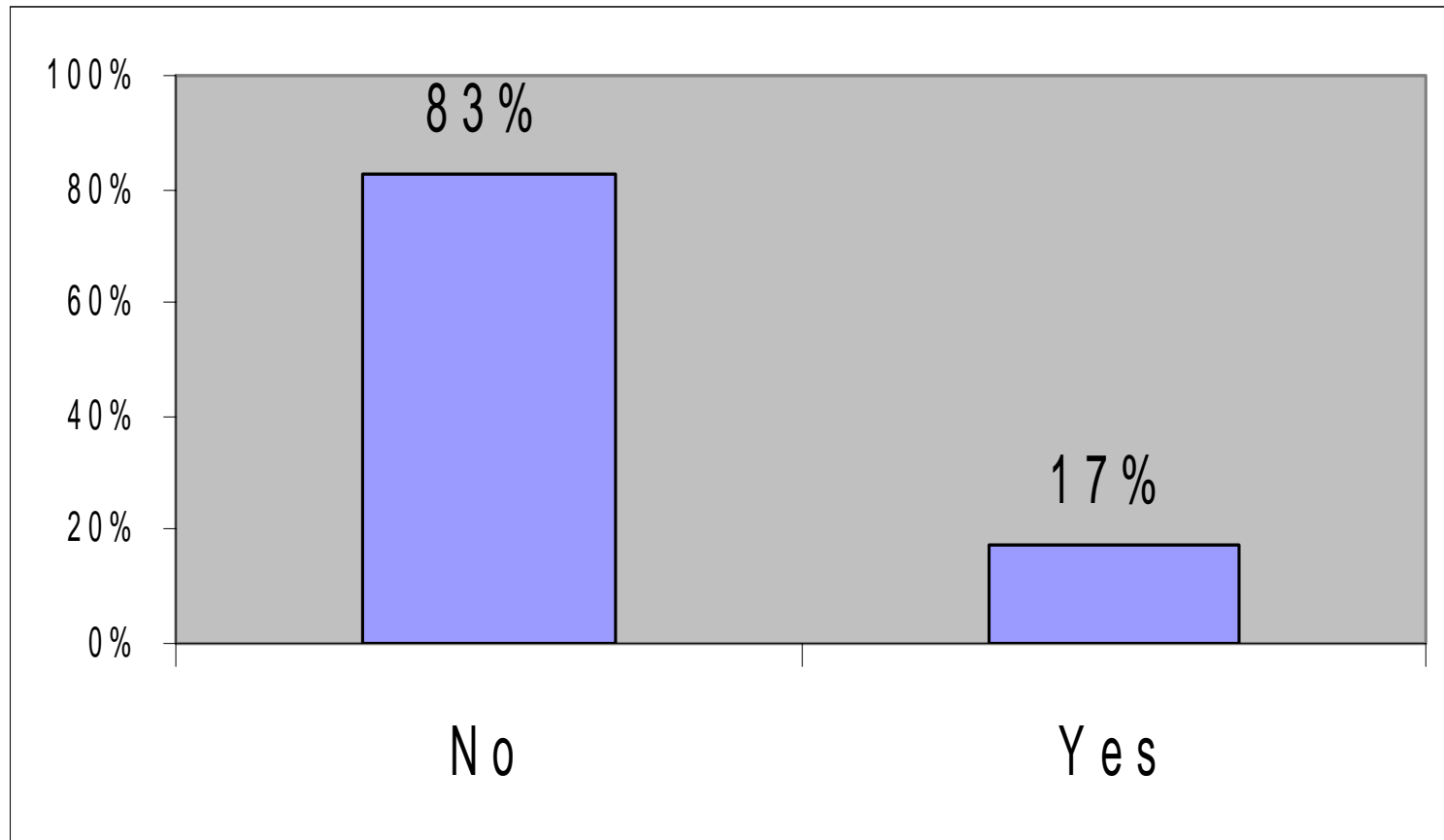
Gender Differences in Bullying

Boys were significantly more likely to have had problems with bullying than girls. (45 boys vs. 23 girls)

In general, boys were bullied due to their small size and gang activity relative to girls who were bullied more by members of the opposite sex, sometimes involving sexual harassment/violence.

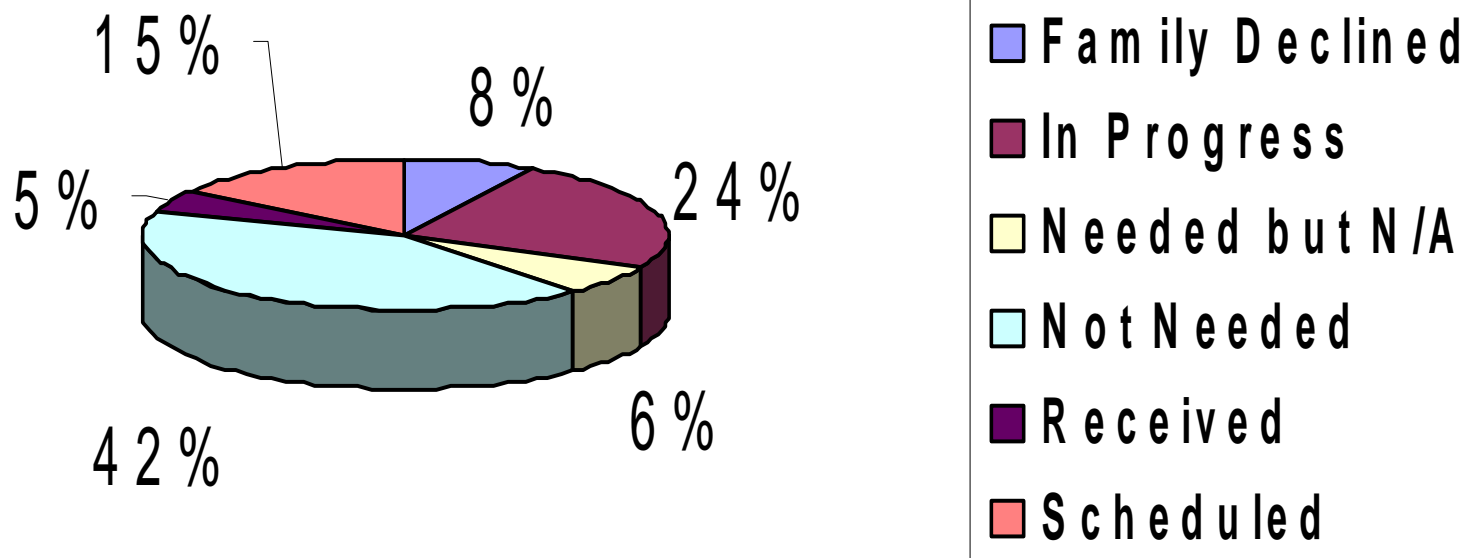


Individual Education Plan



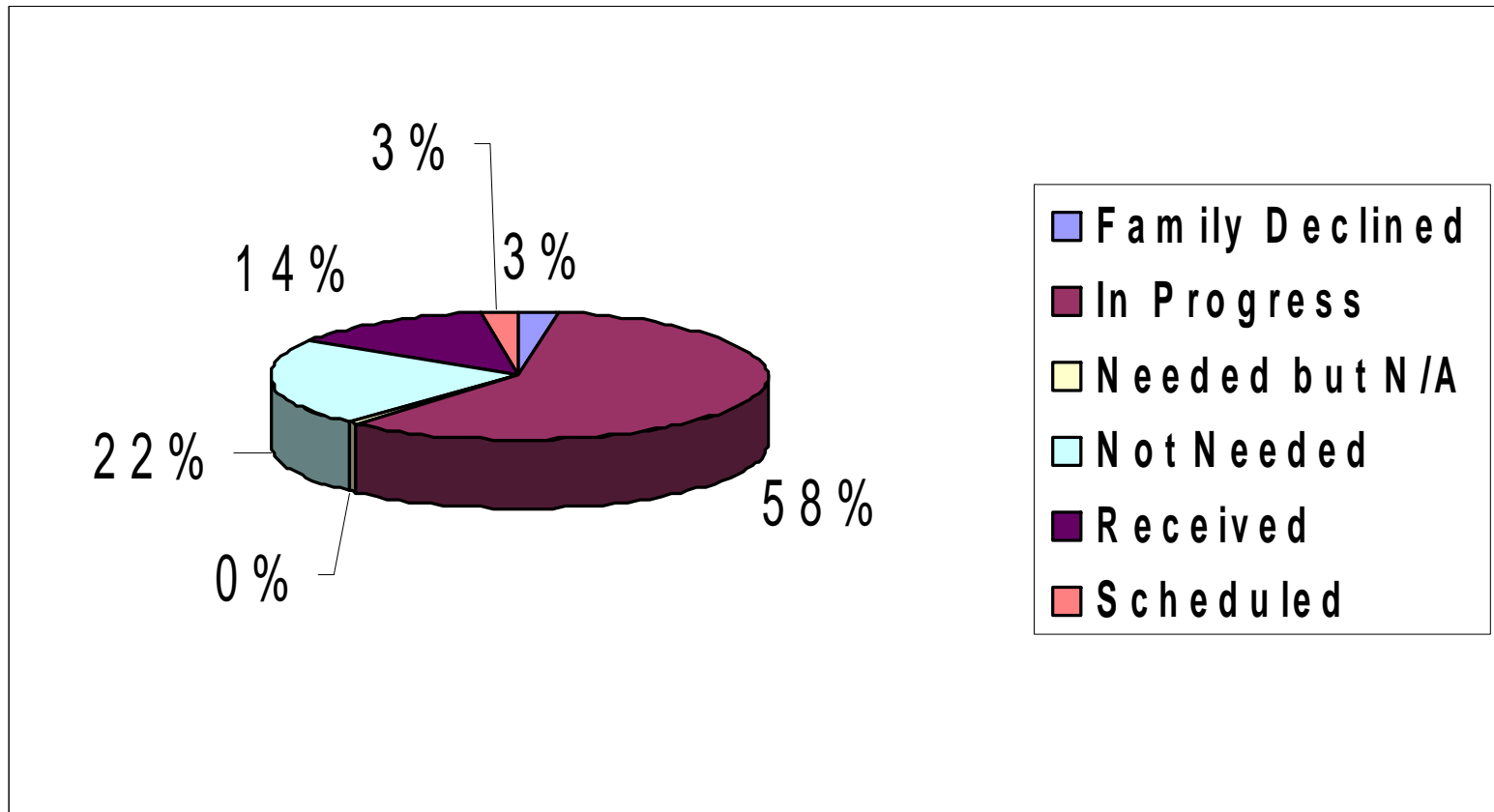


Mental Health Services





Case Management Services





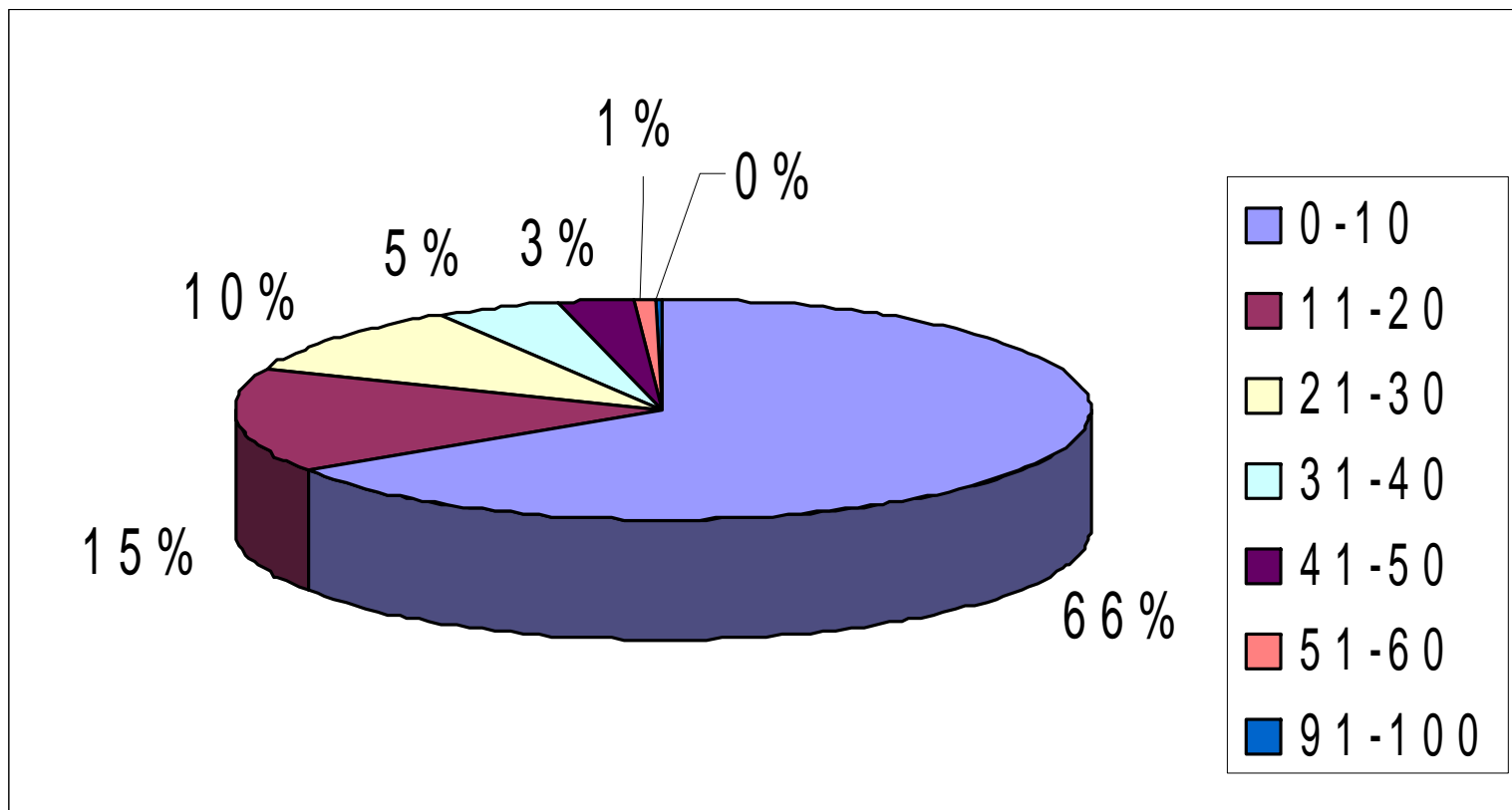
Improvements

Of 520 update records, the greatest number of improvements were made in:

- **Academic Achievement (135)**
- **Emotional Stability (116)**
- **Improving Peer Relationships (113)**
- **Family Relationship(111) / Family Stressor (108)**



Number of Contact Hours over the Last 3 Months





Attachment Surveys

- **The following data come from attachment surveys that are administered to students in three intensive sites: Houston, Jacksonville, and Seattle.**
- **The information is preliminary and largely reflects the Houston and Seattle sites, which serve an older population and at the time of analysis had more surveys submitted.**



Student Challenges

On average, students reported having trouble with:

- **Teachers “a few times” to “once a week”
and**
- **Other Students, Paying Attention, and
Completing Homework “once a week” to
“almost daily”**

They also indicate that class is NOT engaging and they are not interested in the class work.



Education and Aspirations

Students reported that:

- **Education is “very important” to “quite important”**
- **That they are almost equally likely to get a good job that they like following high school as they are to complete a 2 and/or 4 year college program and continue with graduate school. In all categories the responses fell between “not sure” and “probably will”**



Attendance

- **Since the project's inception, the average excused absence rate dropped from 4.37 at intake to 3.55 at the first update for the population as a whole.**
- **The average unexcused absence rate dropped from 14.64 at intake to 7.40 at the first update.**



Truancy Center Reduction Efforts Resulted in 65% Decrease in Daytime Crime

Tacoma, WA

- Targeted neighborhood interventions
- Multi-agency collaborative
- Core team at middle school
- Truancy case manager
- Truancy officers and Truancy center



Improved Attendance Resulted in \$120,000 More in School Revenues of Two Target Schools

Contra Costa, CA

- Student Attendance Review Board
- Cooperative relationship with school system & Weed and Seed Program
- Positive attendance staff in schools
- Focus groups with families
- Outreach/public awareness



Sticks and Carrots: Mix and Match

Sticks

Carrots

Fine Parents

Attendance Awards

Arrest Parents

Change Ed. Placement

Contempt Citations

Home Visits + Plan

Withhold TANF

Community Service

File CHINS/PINS

Truancy Center + Assmt

File D & N Petition

School-Home Contracts

School F Grading

After School Programs

No Extra Curric. Act.

Class letters home

Suspensions/.Expulsions

Case Mgmt. Services

Suspend Driving Lic.

Truancy Workshops

The Costs and Benefits of
Three Intensive Interventions
With Colorado Truants



What are the costs of truancy?

- Short term costs
 - School and court expenditures
 - Cost of sentencing options (detention)
 - Juvenile crime associated with truancy
- Long term costs
 - Adult crime later on
 - Lower income tax revenues
 - Increased social service expenditures



Court: Results

	Adams	Denver	Pueblo
Number of truancy filings '00-'01	217	980	79
Total court cost	\$90 K	\$286 K	\$55 K
Per truant cost	\$413	\$292	\$694
Potential savings (30% success)	\$ 13.5 million	\$63 million	\$5 million
Breakeven success rate	1/504	1/739	1/302
Or one grad every...	2.3 years	.75 years	3.8 years



TRPs: Results

	Adams	Denver	Pueblo
Number of youths served '00-'01	90	84	423
Total program cost	\$49 K	\$54 K	\$768 K
Per truant cost	\$544	\$640	\$1,815
Potential savings	\$7.8 million	\$7.5 million	\$38.8 million
Breakeven success rate	1/383	1/337	1/115
Or one grad every...	4.2 years	4 years	3 months



Truancy Reduction Saves Public Funds

Estimated Per Capita Savings in Public Spending and
Income Taxes For Each Truant Student Who
Completes High School

Adams County, CO- \$208,371

Denver, CO- \$215,649

Pueblo, CO- \$209,550



Policy Change Needs

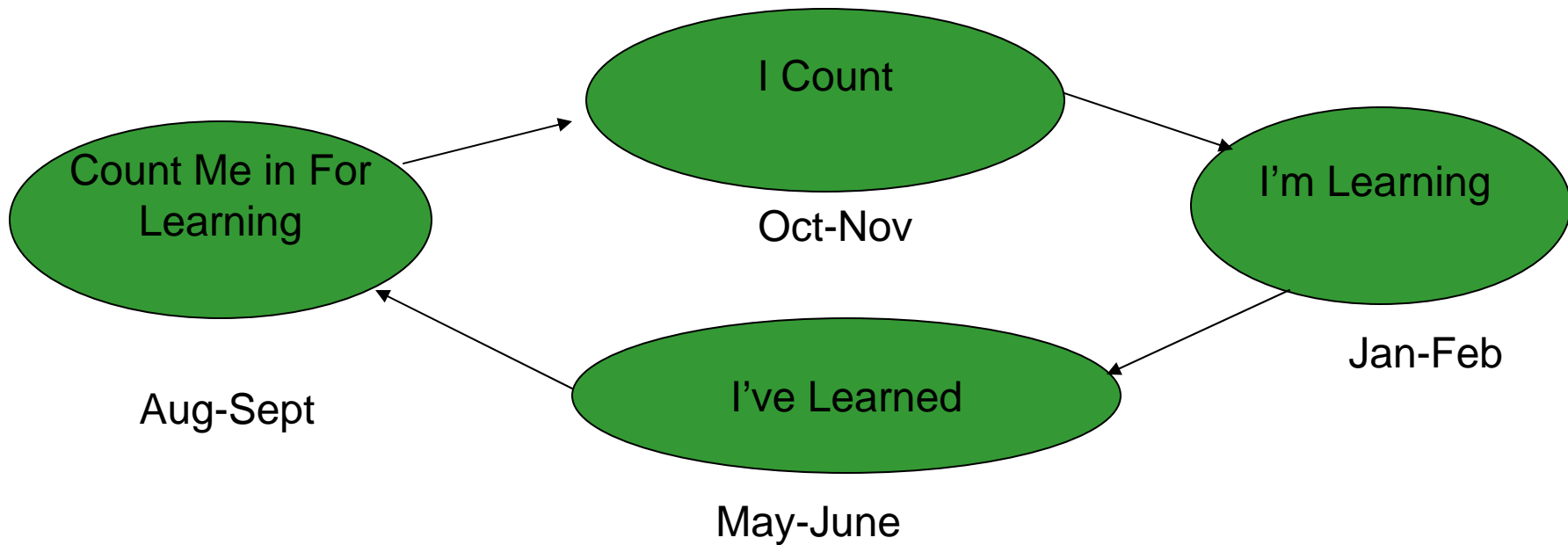
- **End out of school suspensions for being truant**
- **Finance Schools by average daily attendance not one day counts**
- **Documenting attendance and truancy by school & set goals**
- **Less use by courts of detention for truancy**
- **Remove attendance as a factor in grading**
- **Start secondary schools later in the day**
- **Provide partial credit options for students**
- **Conduct a “push out “policy audit of rules and practices**
- **Raise compulsory attendance age to 18**



Count Me In For Learning!

Public Education Campaign for School Engagement

School Year Activity Cycle





Count Me in For Learning

August Prior to School Opening

Example Activities

- Mobile School Enrollment at parks, rec centers, shopping malls, businesses
- Line up business partners for dissemination of Count me In message on shopping bags, fast food bags, posters
- Create give-aways like buttons, book bags, back to school lists, book marks, posters, T-Shirts, etc
- Media events about school enrollment, TV interviews, hotline for where to enroll an school info
- Family potluck dinners and fund nights at schools just before opening





I Count

October-November

Example Activities

- School Count day activities (also state test day activities)
 - Welcome snacks
 - Parent socials and info sharing sessions
 - “I Count” stickers or buttons for all
 - Student led DJ music at lunch
- “I Count” poster & essay contests
- On Learning & staying in school
- “Improve the School” student focus groups
- Teacher- student role swaps
- School climate surveys and discussions





I'm Learning

January-February



Example Activities

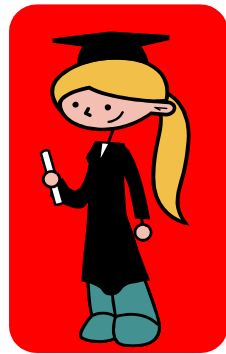
- Attendance & achievement awards
- Mid-Year Completion celebrations
- “Improve the school” parent focus groups
- Learning is Cool poster contest
- Student letters & phone calls to excessively absent students
- Teacher home visits
- Parent- teacher- student evening ice cream socials about learning
- Hands-on learning days





I've Learned

May-June



Example Activities

- HS Graduations make front page and TV news
- School & Business awards and incentives for graduates and continuants (elem-MS; MS-HS)
- What I've Learned essay contests
- What I wanted to learn student focus groups
- School celebrations and awards for attendance, achievement, academic lettering, service learning
- Student speeches, art, music science and math presentations of learning to service clubs, churches, civic groups
- Presentations of Learning a requirement for graduation and continuations





Using a Typology for Truancy Prevention

Overall Steps to Success

- **Assess needs and resources**
- **Develop a logic model**
- **Plan for success around attendance, attachment, achievement**
- **Data-based decision making**
- **Review / change policies**
- **Balance sticks and carrots**
- **Select your interventions**
- **Implement your actions**
- **Public awareness and involvement**



Local Action

Where do we start?

- Know your attendance laws, local policies & their inconsistencies
- Develop a strategic plan across agencies
- Focus on attendance and engagement not just truancy
- Adopt promising practices that “fit” locally
- Create both incentives and graduated sanctions
- Involve students and parents in planning programs to improve attendance and engagement
- Take baselines and track progress



Typical Policies Needing Change

- **End out of school suspensions for being truant**
- **Finance schools by average daily attendance rate, not one day counts**
- **Document attendance and truancy by school and set goals**
- **Less use by courts of detention for truancy**
- **Remove attendance as a factor in grading**
- **Start secondary schools later in the day**
- **Provide partial credit options for students**
- **Conduct a “push out” policy audit of rules and practices**
- **Eliminate “push-out policies” and modify to promote engagement**
- **Raise compulsory attendance age to 18**