

EVALUATION OF THE TEN STEPS RITES OF PASSAGE PROGRAM
FOR THE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTHWEST INDIANA

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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Report. The purpose of this report is to evaluate the outcomes and processes associated with the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program (TSRPP) for young African American males, which is currently being implemented in the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northwest Indiana. The result of this comprehensive evaluation is a determination of the extent to which the TSRPP improved participants' student achievement, behavior and adaptive functioning. In addition, an evaluation of the processes associated with the TSRPP is provided via the use of student focus groups, mentor surveys and a Council of Elders interview protocol. Finally, specific areas of development are discussed along with a specific action plan for developing those identified areas.

Evaluation Report Summary of Findings. The results of this evaluation point to two key findings: (1) programmatic data collection and data monitoring is a weakness and therefore an area in need of development and (2) participants must have prolonged exposure to the program for optimal results to be achieved (e.g. approximately 18 months or longer).

The data collection and data monitoring weaknesses pertain to a lack of consistent and thorough reporting in a single data management source such as a file drawer or an electronic database. Ideally, as the program director and the program coordinators work to improve their data collection, data monitoring and data maintenance procedures, every participant will have benchmark and milestone data outcomes stored in an electronic file such as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Currently the director and the coordinators are working with an external evaluator to ensure that sufficient, comprehensive and consistent data are being collected in such a way that the program will eventually be not just "data rich" but "information rich".

The second key finding is based on the fact that statistically significant academic improvements were found (e.g., English, reading and mathematics) for participants with prolonged exposure, and the results of the psycho-social and adaptive functioning assessments (e.g., BASC-2) indicate that participants with prolonged exposure had higher self-reliance and better parent relations than youth who had less exposure to the program. These results were found even after statistically controlling for age and therefore controlling for the potential intervening effects of maturation. Furthermore, older participants (ages 15 to 17) with prolonged exposure had lower depression, higher self-esteem, and lower social stress than similarly aged youth with less exposure to the program. Since one of the primary goals of the TSRPP is to build community leaders and to strengthen parent relations, these findings are consistent with the mission of the program and suggest that long term participation in the TSRPP has a positive effect on the academic achievement, psycho-social functioning and the overall basic character of young

African American males who live in the inner-city of Northwest Indiana (Gary, East Chicago and Hammond). The summary table on page iii outlines the specific program outcomes.

In addition to the outcome findings, this evaluation also addressed three process questions. The first question asked what is working well in the TSRPP and why. The results of this evaluation suggest that at least some of the Rites of Passage, the specific components of the program, are working well because the data suggest that they are helping to increase participants' grades, improve their behavior and improve their mental health. In addition, the activities and the field trips are working well because they get the youth interested, which helps to "hook them" into the program as well as provide them with opportunities to go places and see things that they would not have otherwise had. Furthermore, the mentor program appears to be working well for those who have a mentor match given that the youth appraise their relationships with their mentors as favorable and vice versa, and the youth mentioned in the focus groups that having a mentor is important to them so that they can learn how to become leaders and men. Therefore at least some of the programmatic components appear to be appropriate and appear to be effective.

The second question asked what is not working well. The results of this evaluation suggest that the ability of the youth and the mentors to meet regularly appears to be jeopardized by scheduling issues and therefore the program may have some logistical weaknesses. A second weakness of the program pertains to the lack of participation by some of the Council of Elders members. Since the Council members set the guidelines for the program and participate in the Rites of Passage ceremonies, a strengthened Council may help to improve the effectiveness of the program. Finally, despite the fact that youth with prolonged exposure to the TSRPP were significantly associated with more favorable outcomes, the degree to which youth participated in the specific internal programmatic activities relating to the Rites of Passage were not consistently measured and therefore no specific evidence exists to determine the actual fidelity of the program implementation.

The third and final process question asked what can be fixed and what is outside of the control of the program staff. Some of the challenges mentioned by Council of Elders members include a lack of resources, and money in particular, which is likely outside of the control of the staff. However, by improving the data collection and reporting process, program staff will be better positioned to secure additional funding. By conducting this extensive evaluation and providing this report to all stakeholders, the agency is showing a commitment to obtain the data necessary for continual improvement. As a result, the primary weakness identified in this evaluation will be ameliorated and therefore detailed information regarding youth participation in the various TSRPP-related activities and events, including contacts with mentors, can be linked to specific youth outcomes such as those measured via this evaluation study.

Summary of Evaluation Outcome Findings

Objective	Rites	Met objective	Evidence
Improved grades	Mental & Personal	Partially	Significant improvements in English, math and science with prolonged exposure to program
Decrease discipline referrals	Personal, physical, mental & emotional	Yes	Significant decrease in behavioral referrals
Decrease unexcused absences	Personal, physical & mental	NA	The integrity of the data was questionable. However, attendance was not an area of concern given that unexcused absence rates were very low.
Normal to low social stress	Social, mental & physical	Yes	Normal levels found and significantly lower social stress with prolonged exposure for older group
Normal to low external locus of control	Personal & physical	Partially	Normal levels found for younger group only
Normal to low depression	Emotional & physical	Partially	Marginally significantly lower depression with prolonged exposure for older group
Normal to low anxiety	Emotional & physical	Yes	Normal levels found
Normal to high self-reliance	Personal, emotional & cultural	Yes	High self-reliance for younger group and significantly higher self-reliance with prolonged exposure
Normal to low inadequacy	Personal, mental & physical	Yes	Normal levels found
Normal to high self-esteem	Personal & historical	Partially	Although very low levels were found, prolonged exposure was statistically significantly associated with higher self-esteem for the older group
Normal to high interpersonal relations	Social & spiritual	Yes	Normal levels found
Normal to high relations with parents	Social, emotional & spiritual	Yes	Normal levels found and significantly higher parent relations with prolonged exposure
Positive perceptions of TSRPP	All rites	Yes	Favorable responses on the Youth Survey

Limitations, Strengths and Action Plan for Improvement. The primary limitation of this evaluation is the lack of a quasi or true experimental design given that no pure control group was utilized for determining the effectiveness of the program. However, a pre-experimental design with a longitudinal component was used in order to determine participant academic and behavioral growth over time, and to determine psycho-social outcomes as a function of prolonged exposure to the program. With that being said, given the lack of a pure control group, no causal relationships can be confirmed in this evaluation.

One of the primary strengths of this evaluation is the fact that very comprehensive data were collected, which were specifically linked to many of the Rites of Passage as well as to psycho-social factors in general. Also, the multiple data sources allowed for triangulation of the data and therefore helped to validate the overall findings of the evaluation given that the different data sources were found to be consistent and statistically significantly correlated in several key outcomes. Therefore the convergent validity of the data provides indirect evidence of the internal validity of the evaluation.

Based on the findings of this evaluation, step one of the action plan for improvement consists of further developing the data collection, data monitoring and data maintenance process, given that the ability to obtain valuable information relative to programmatic strengths and weaknesses depends on obtaining thorough, comprehensive and high quality data for all participants in the program. Efforts are currently under way whereby the TSRPP program coordinators and director are working in tandem with the external evaluator to begin a data-based benchmarking process that consists of a data inventory checklist monitored by the program director, and files for all participants that contain basic demographic information, behavior-related outcomes, academic-related outcomes, and youth involvement in programmatic activities.

Step two of the action plan pertains to specific programmatic modifications or improvements from the Council of Elders down to the daily activities associated with the TSRPP. A commitment by the Council of Elders to consistently participate in the governance process and to directly interact with the program youth is a critical piece in the process. Through the leadership of the Council of Elders, the program director and the program coordinators, data collection efforts may be improved and strategies for improving the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship will be more effective. The first mentor-related opportunity for improvement is to make the scheduling process more efficient so that mentors and mentees will be able to meet regularly. Another opportunity for improvement pertains to the rigorousness of the mentor recruitment process, which may require more extensive marketing of the program (assuming the funds are in place for such marketing), and the development of a mentor recruitment committee or council whose single focus is on the recruitment, training and retention of mentors.

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Evaluating the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program

Introduction

Purpose of the report. The purpose of this report is to evaluate the outcomes and processes associated with the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program (TSRPP) for young African American males, which is currently being implemented in the Boys and Girls Clubs of Northwest Indiana. The result of this comprehensive evaluation is a determination of the extent to which the TSRPP improved participants' student achievement, behavior and adaptive functioning. In addition, an evaluation of the processes associated with TSRPP is provided via the use of student focus groups, mentor surveys and a Council of Elders interview protocol. Finally, specific recommendations for future practice are provided for the purpose of continual improvement.

Organization of the report. This report contains several sections that pertain to the evaluation of the TSRPP. The first section outlines the purpose of the TSRPP and provides the specific evaluation hypotheses to be tested and the questions to be addressed. The next section provides a comprehensive overview of the data collection sources that were used to obtain the data for this evaluation study. The third section discusses the reliability and validity of the data sources. The fourth section provides the evaluation analysis results by data collection source. The fifth and final section integrates the findings of all the data sources and provides the overall interpretations of the findings, the limitations associated with the findings and recommendations for future practice.

Purpose of the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program (TSRPP)

The purpose of the TSRPP is to provide African American male mentors to young African American males, expose the young men to opportunities that they would not normally experience (e.g., field trips to college campuses), and teach them specific skill sets such as martial arts, financial literacy and life skills. The ultimate goal of the TSRPP is to develop the minds, bodies and souls of young African American males so that they may become good husbands, good fathers, and self-reliant leaders within their communities. The logic model, in which the TSRPP is grounded, is presented on page 29 in the Appendix.

Evaluation Outcome Hypotheses: This evaluation study tests the following research hypotheses pertaining to the TSRPP:

1. TSRPP participants will show a statistically significant improvement in their academic achievement as measured by semester grades in the core subjects.
2. TSRPP participants will show a statistically significant decrease in discipline referrals as measured by the number of discipline referrals reported by teachers by semester.

3. TSRPP participants will show a statistically significant decrease in the number of unexcused absences as reported by teachers by semester.
4. TSRPP participants will show normal to low levels of social stress as measured by the BASC-2.
5. TSRPP participants will show normal to low levels of external locus of control as measured by the BASC-2.
6. TSRPP participants will show normal to low levels of depression as measured by the BASC-2.
7. TSRPP participants will show normal to low levels of anxiety as measured by the BASC-2.
8. TSRPP participants will show normal to high levels of self-reliance as measured by the BASC-2.
9. TSRPP participants will show normal to low levels of inadequacy as measured by the BASC-2.
10. TSRPP participants will show normal to high levels of self-esteem as measured by the BASC-2.
11. TSRPP participants will show normal to high levels of interpersonal relations as measured by the BASC-2.
12. The TSRPP participants will show normal to high relations with parents as measured by the BASC-2.
13. Participants will have positive perceptions regarding the TSRPP as measured by the Youth Survey and Youth Focus Group.

Evaluation Process Questions: This evaluation study addresses the following research questions pertaining to the TSRPP:

1. What is working well in the TSRPP and why?
2. What is not working well in the TSRPP and why?
3. What can be fixed and what is outside of the control of the program staff so that resources may be allocated appropriately?

Evaluation Data Sources

This evaluation utilized multiple data collection tools such as structured surveys, qualitative interviews and focus groups. The data collection tools that were used for this study and the sources of information associated with each data collection tool is outlined in Table 1. The quantitative data were primarily used to test the evaluation hypotheses while the qualitative data were primarily used to address the evaluation questions. In addition, the two data collection methods (quantitative and qualitative) were triangulated (e.g., compared and contrasted) in order to determine the overall effectiveness of the TSRPP.

Table 1. Data Collection Instruments and Data Sources

Source	Data collection tool
Youth/Mentees	Researcher made youth survey
Youth/Mentees	Researcher made focus group protocol
Youth/Mentees	Attitude to school (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Attitude to teacher (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Social stress (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	External locus of control (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Depression (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Anxiety (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Self-reliance (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Sense of inadequacy (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Self-esteem (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Interpersonal relations (BASC-2)
Youth/Mentees	Relations with parent (BASC-2)
Mentors	Pre-existing mentor survey
Teachers	Student grades
Teachers	Student attendance
Teachers	Student discipline record
Council of Elders	Interview protocol

Youth Survey. A youth survey was created by the program evaluator using pre-existing program evaluation surveys from the *Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory*. The templates were modified to so that they would be more applicable to the TSRPP. The purpose of the youth survey was to (1) measure participants' perceptions about their mentors and the program in general, (2) measure participants' perceptions regarding education-related and career-related issues and (3) determine reasons for participating in the TSRPP. Finally, the information gathered from the youth survey was used in combination with the BASC-2 data and the school-related data (achievement, attendance and discipline referrals) in order to determine if a relationship exists between participants' perceptions of the program and their academic and adaptive functioning.

BASC-2 Student Form (SRP). In addition to the youth survey, the adaptive functioning of the participants was assessed using a pre-existing psychological measurement tool known as the BASC-2. The BASC-2 is a comprehensive behavior assessment for children (BASC) that consists of a set of rating scales and forms including the Teacher Rating Scales (TRS), the Parent Rating Scales (PRS) and the Self-Report of Personality (SRP). For the purposes of this evaluation study the youth completed the SRP questionnaire. The SRP is appropriate for youth between grades 6 through college. This assessment instrument was used in order to measure the adaptive functioning of the TSRPP participants. Additional information about the BASC-2 can be obtained at <http://psychcorp.pearsonassessments.com>.¹

Youth Focus Groups. A youth focus group protocol was developed by the program evaluator with the input of the program director. The youth focus groups were conducted in order to gain an in-depth perspective from the youth regarding their experiences and perceptions of the TSRPP. The youth focus groups also provided a data source for determining future recommendations for improving the TSRPP.

Youth School Grades and Attendance. Data from the teachers were used for this study including student grades, attendance and discipline data. Data were collected at multiple points in time in order to determine changes or growth in student achievement and changes in attendance and behavior. All of the school-related data were provided by the teachers and were tracked in a database system so that longitudinal data analyses could be conducted.

Mentor Survey. A mentor survey was adopted from the *Mass Mentoring Partnership, Mentoring A-Z Training Manual*. The purpose of the mentor survey was to measure mentors' perceptions regarding their relationship with their mentees, their mentor training experiences, and the demands associated with being a mentor.

Council of Elders Interview Survey. The Council of Elders is an integral part of the TSRPP. The Council meets monthly to discuss various components of the TSRPP and to vote on the processes associated with the program such as criterion for field trip eligibility of youth. The Council members discuss recruitment strategies for obtaining high quality mentors, progress reports, and budget information. A focus group protocol was developed by the program evaluator with the input of the program director in order to obtain in-depth information from the Council members relative to their role on the Council, and their perceptions of the TSRPP relative to the program challenges and the effectiveness of the program.

¹ Reynolds, C. R., & Kamphaus, R. W. (2004). *Behavior assessment system for children* (2nd ed.). Minneapolis, MN: Pearson.

Reliability and Validity of the Data

The reliability and the validity of the quantitative data sources are discussed in this section of the report. The integrity of the evaluation findings are dependent on the reliability and the validity of the data sources.

The reliability of the BASC-2 student report form (SRP) was measured by conducting a reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha, which measures the consistency of the participants' responses to each scale. The reliability coefficient for each of the scales of interest is provided in Table 2. The results indicate that all but one of the scales (e.g., interpersonal relations) had adequate reliability, and many of the scales had good or excellent reliability.

Table 2. BASC-2 SRP Reliability Analysis Results

Source	<i>N</i>	No. of items	α	Reliability
Attitude to school	37	7	0.76	Good
Attitude to teachers	37	9	0.85	Excellent
Locus of control	37	9	0.80	Excellent
Depression	37	11	0.78	Good to excellent
Anxiety	37	13	0.83	Good to excellent
Sense of inadequacy	37	10	0.69	Fair to moderate
Self-esteem	37	5	0.66	Moderate
Self-reliance	37	8	0.70	Moderate
Social stress	37	10	0.86	Excellent
Relations with parents	37	10	0.74	Moderate to good
Interpersonal relations	37	7	0.57	Below fair

Note: Participants under 12 years of age were excluded from these analyses given that the version of the BASC-2 used for this evaluation study was normed on youth 12 and up. The qualitative reliability interpretations are based on the criterion provided by Ponterotto & Ruckdeschal (2007).²

In addition to the formal reliability analyses, three validity scales were computed: (1) the F Index; (2) the L Index and (3) the V Index. The F Index measures the degree to which a child may have responded to the items in an over negative manner. The L Index is designed to measure the extent to which the child may have responded in a socially desirable manner. Finally, the V Index consists of a set of nonsensical items and therefore this scale measures the

² Joseph G. Ponterotto and Daniel Ruckdeschel, "An Overview of Coefficient Alpha and a Reliability Matrix for Estimating Adequacy of Internal Consistency Coefficients with Psychological Research Measures," *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 105 (2007): 997-1014.

degree to which a child may have responded in a careless manner, or may not have understood the questions.

The results for each of the three indexes are provided in Table 3. The results indicate that all 37 youth had F index scores that fell into the acceptable range. For the L Index, 32 of the participants' had scores in the acceptable range and four had cautionary scores; although, none of the participants had scores that fell into the extreme caution range. The results for the V Index indicate that 33 of the participants had acceptable scores, while three had cautionary scores and an additional two had extreme cautionary scores. Therefore the vast majority of the participant BASC-2 data is assumed to be valid. While, it is not known whether the two extreme cautionary V Index scores were due to a lack of understanding or carelessness, it is important to note that those youth with extreme caution V Index scores were relatively young (both 13 years of age) with one being in sixth grade and the other being in eighth grade.

Table 3. Validity Analysis of the BASC-2

Index	Acceptable	Caution	Extreme caution
F Index	37	0	0
L Index	32	4	0
V Index	33	3	2

Note: Participants under 12 years of age were excluded from these analyses given that the version of the BASC-2 used for this evaluation study was normed on youth 12 and up. The total for L Index is based on 36 participants given that one participant did not answer the items associated with this index.

In addition to the validity indexes, correlations were run between each of the BASC-2 scales in order to examine the degree to which the scales are correlated. It is expected that if the responses are valid, some of the scales will be moderately to substantially correlated. For example, self-esteem and sense of inadequacy are expected to be negatively correlated while social stress and external locus of control are expected to be positively correlated. The correlation matrix is provided on page 30 in the Appendix. The results indicate that the scales were moderately to highly correlated where expected, which provides indirect evidence of construct validity (e.g., the assessment tool is measuring what it is supposed to measure).

The reliability of the Youth Survey was evaluated by computing a Cronbach's alpha for those items measuring the participants' perceptions of the TSRPP. The results in Table 4 indicate that the reliability of the items measuring participants' perceptions of the TSRPP was excellent. Therefore youth responses on the Youth Survey are assumed to be highly reliable.

Table 4 . Youth Survey Reliability Analysis Results

Source	<i>N</i>	No. of items	α	Reliability
Youth survey	46	7	0.81	Excellent

Note: The qualitative reliability interpretations are based on the criterion provided by Ponterotto & Ruckdeschal (2007).

Evaluation Analysis Results

Youth Survey. The youth survey was completed by a total of 46 participants. The response rate by Club is provided in Table 5. The results indicate that 100% participation was achieved for the Gary Club and the Hammond Club, and 95.5% participation was achieved for the East Chicago Club³.

Table 5. Participation Rate in Youth Survey by Club

Club	<i>n</i>	<i>N</i>	Participation rate
East Chicago	21	22	95.5%
Gary	9	9	100.0%
Hammond	16	16	100.0%

On the youth survey, there was a set of items asking participants to indicate why they participate in the TSRPP by checking all of the reasons that apply. The participants' summarized responses are presented in rank order in Figure 1. The results indicate that the primary reason selected was to learn how to become a leader. Therefore the main reason why youth participate in the TSRPP was consistent with the primary purpose of the program, which is to develop community leaders, and not simply to have somewhere to hang out with friends. This particular finding suggests that the uniqueness of the TSRPP from the Club in general, is evident in the minds of the program participants. The second most common reason was because there are interesting activities, which is one of the strategies used by the Club to engage students, encourage participation and build relationships. Participants were also likely to say that they participate in the program because they need a role model to teach them how to make difficult decisions and/or because their parents thought it would be good for them.

³ Three East Chicago participants moved during the data collection phase of this evaluation. Since the Youth Survey was administered first, only one participant had moved prior to having completed the Youth Survey.

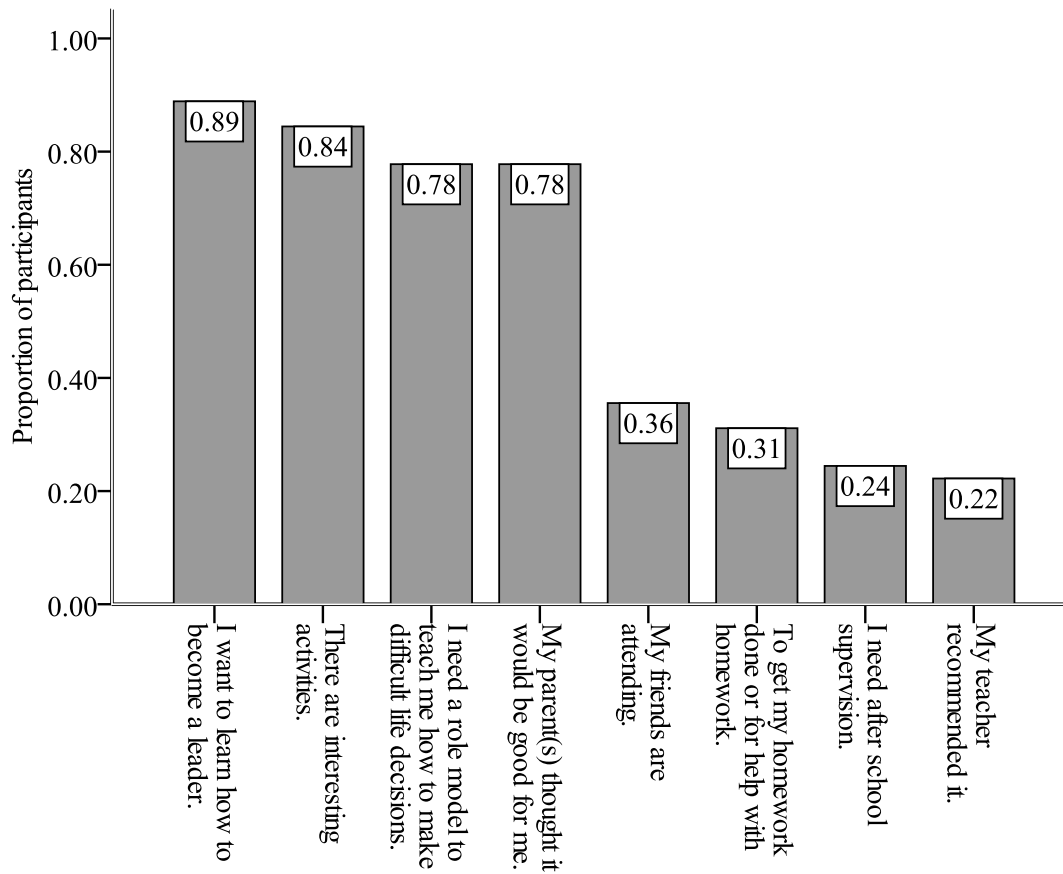


Figure 1. The bars represent the proportion of youth who selected the reason for attending the TSRPP. Participants were told to select all reasons that apply.

The next set of items on the youth survey measured the participants' perceptions about the program. These items were based on a 5-point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (coded as one) to strongly agree (coded as five). The descriptive statistics for these items are provided in Table 6. The results indicate that on average, students agreed to strongly agreed with all of the items. The low and high values indicate that there was a wide range of perceptions for five of seven items, given that at least one person strongly disagreed with the statement (e.g., low value of one). However, none of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed that they are proud to be a part of the TSRPP or that they have learned a lot of important things in the TSRPP. This finding suggests that even youth who may not enjoy the program may at least recognize some of the benefits of participating in the program.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics for Youth Perceptions of TSRPP

Item	Low	High	Mean	<i>SD</i>
I enjoy participating in the TSRPP	1	5	4.52	0.78
I am proud to be a part of the TSRPP	3	5	4.85	0.47
I feel safe saying what I think while participating	1	5	4.37	1.06
I have learned a lot of important things in the TSRPP	3	5	4.78	0.47
I feel safe in the TSRPP	1	5	4.50	0.91
I am doing better in school since I joined the TSRPP	1	5	4.17	1.08
I am happier since I joined the TSRPP	1	5	3.98	0.88

Participants were also asked a set of school-related items and a question about how they feel about themselves. These items were based on the same 5-point likert scale. The descriptive results in Table 7 indicate that on average, participants disagreed to strongly disagreed that education is not as important as people say; participants tended to agree that they study hard for tests; and participants tended to agree to strongly agree that they get their homework done on time, they plan to go to college, they enjoy going to school and they feel good about themselves.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Youth Perceptions about Education and Self

Item	Low	High	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Education is not as important as people say	1	5	1.57	1.22
I study hard for tests	1	5	3.80	1.03
I get my homework done on time	2	5	4.30	0.63
I plan to go to college	3	5	4.91	0.42
I enjoy going to school	2	5	4.25	0.94
I feel good about who I am	3	5	4.84	0.48

In order to determine the relationship between participants' perceptions of the TSRPP and their perceptions of education and themselves, the program related Youth Survey items were correlated with the education and self perception Youth Survey items. The correlation matrix is provided on page 31 in the Appendix. The results indicate that participants' responses to the item "Education is not as important as people say" was significantly and negatively correlated with participants' responses to the following Youth Survey items:

- I enjoy participating in the TSRPP, $r = -.45$, $p = .002$ (moderate relationship).
- I am proud to be a part of the TSRPP, $r = -.50$, $p < .001$ (moderate to substantial relationship).

- I feel safe saying what I think while participating in the TSRPP, $r = -.41, p = .005$ (moderate relationship).
- I have learned a lot of important things in the TSRPP, $r = -.33, p = .025$ (moderate relationship).
- I feel safe in the TSRPP, $r = -.34, p = .023$ (moderate relationship).

Participants' responses to the item "I get my homework done on time" was significantly and positively related to their level of enjoyment in the TSRPP, $r = .36, p = .014$ (moderate relationship) and marginally significantly related to the following Youth Survey items.

- I feel safe saying what I think while participating in the TSRPP, $r = .25, p = .098$ (weak to moderate relationship).
- I have learned a lot of important things in the TSRPP, $r = .28, p = .056$ (weak to moderate relationship).

Participants' responses to the item "I enjoy going to school" was statistically significantly and positively related to participants' feeling safe in the TSRPP, $r = .41, p = .006$ (moderate relationship) and marginally significantly related to participants' being happier since they joined the TSRPP, $r = .29, p = .055$ (moderate relationship).

Finally, the results indicate that participants' responses to the item "I feel good about who I am" was statistically significantly and positively correlated with the following Youth Survey items:

- I feel safe saying what I think while participating in the TSRPP, $r = .32, p = .036$ (moderate relationship).
- I have learned a lot of important things in the TSRPP, $r = .37, p = .013$ (moderate relationship).
- I feel safe in the TSRPP, $r = .39, p = .009$ (moderate relationship).
- I am doing better in school since I joined the TSRPP, $r = .35, p = .022$ (moderate relationship).
- I am happier since I joined the TSRPP, $r = .35, p = .020$ (moderate relationship).

Overall these results indicate that youth who provided more favorable ratings of the TSRPP were more likely to disagree that education is not as important as people say, more likely to agree that they get their homework done, more likely to agree that they enjoy going to school and more likely to agree that they feel good about themselves.

BASC-2 Student Form (SRP). The BASC-2 (SRP) was utilized for this evaluation in order to measure the adaptive functioning of the young African American male participants in the TSRPP. In addition, the results of this assessment served as a benchmark measure for future evaluations. The BASC-2 was completed by the majority of the participants; however, the

responses rates were not 100% given that the BASC-2 was administered approximately two to four weeks after the Youth Survey and some of the participants were no longer in the program due to mobility.

The BASC-2 was completed by a total of 39 participants. The response rate by Club is provided in Table 8. The results indicate that the East Chicago Club achieved a 68.2% participation rate, the Gary Club achieved a 100% participant rate and the Hammond Club achieved a 100% participation rate. However, 3 of the 16 participants from the Hammond Club were not included in the analyses because they were younger than 12 years of age, and the BASC-2 is intended for use with populations aged 12 to 21. At least three of the participants from the East Chicago Club had moved prior to the administration of the BASC-2⁴, which accounts for three of the seven participants without BASC-2 data.

Table 8. Participation Rate in BASC-2 (SRP) by Club

Club	<i>n</i>	<i>N</i>	Participation rate
East Chicago	15	22	68.2%
Gary	9	9	100.0%
Hammond	16	16	100.0%

Since 12 to 14 year old participants had a different set of scoring criteria than 15-18 year old participants, the descriptive statistics are presented by age category. The results for the younger participants are provided in Table 9. The percentile column is the estimated percentile associated with the mean rating for each dimension, based on the percentiles provided in the manual. The results indicate that 12 to 14 year old participants fared best in the area of self-reliance⁵. However, the results in Table 9 also indicate that the younger participants fared worst with regard to self-esteem and depression. The mean self-esteem rating was very low and the depression mean rating was slightly elevated.

⁴ The BASC-2 was administered approximately two weeks after the Youth Survey was administered.

⁵ In the Council of Elders focus group, one of the Elders, who is currently the President of the Boys and Girls Club of Northwest Indiana, stated that a primary goal of the program is to develop the participants' self-reliance. Therefore these results support the notion that the TSRPP-related activities are appropriately targeting a primary youth outcome of interest.

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for BASC-2 Scales for Participants Aged 12-14 ($n = 23$)

Item	Low	High	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Percentile
Attitude to school	34	64	45.74	9.72	42nd
Attitude to teacher	35	75	46.74	10.83	45th
Locus of control	36	69	47.96	9.67	51st
Depression	40	72	47.74	8.69	59th
Anxiety	34	65	46.48	8.82	44th
Inadequacy	36	73	46.57	9.02	45th
Self-esteem	13	40	34.30	6.69	8th
Self-reliance	33	70	53.70	10.97	63rd
Social stress	35	76	48.22	11.22	48th
Relations with parents	36	65	51.91	8.12	50th
Inter-personal relations	32	62	52.13	8.46	50th

The results for the older group (15 to 17 year olds), which are presented in Table 10, indicate that the older participants did not fare as well as the younger participants. Again, self-esteem is very low. Also, external locus of control is slightly elevated and self-reliance is low.

Table 10. Descriptive Statistics for BASC-2 Scales for Participants Aged 15-18 ($n = 14$)

Item	Low	High	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Percentile
Attitude to school	32	55	42.50	6.25	28th
Attitude to teacher	33	68	45.71	10.24	39th
Locus of control	37	67	50.07	9.45	58th
Depression	40	66	46.71	6.68	54th
Anxiety	34	79	48.93	12.52	53rd
Inadequacy	36	61	47.71	8.33	52nd
Self-esteem	27	40	36.14	5.26	10th
Self-reliance	29	67	45.86	10.93	31st
Social stress	34	62	47.00	9.92	44th
Relations with parents	36	67	50.00	8.51	45th
Inter-personal relations	43	62	53.29	7.00	51st

Since the expected outcomes were not found for the older participants, amount of exposure to the program was examined as a possible variable of interest. Specifically, the participants' number of days in the program was correlated with each of the BASC-2 outcomes for those in the older group. The results indicate that self-esteem was substantially and statistically significantly correlated with the length of time that participants were enrolled in the program, $r = .54, p = .035$, in that longer participation in the program was associated with higher self-esteem. The results also indicate that external locus of control was moderately correlated with length of time in the program in that prolonged exposure was associated with lower external locus of control, $r = -.38, p = .109$ ⁶. Finally, self-reliance was moderately and marginally significantly correlated with the length of time that participants were enrolled in the program, $r = .41, p = .093$, in that longer participation in the program was associated with higher self-reliance.

Also of interest is the fact that depression was moderately and marginally significantly associated with length of time in the program, $r = -.48, p = .059$, in that more time in the program was associated with lower depression. In addition, social stress was strongly and statistically significantly associated with length of time in the program, $r = -.72, p = .004$, in that more time in the program was associated with lower social stress. Furthermore, relations with parents was moderately and marginally significantly associated with length of time in the program, $r = .46, p = .064$, in that more time in the program was associated with better parent relations.⁷

Finally, when looking at all of the participants (younger and older combined) with available BASC-2 data and length of enrollment data ($n = 30$), statistically significant relationships were found for self-reliance, $r = .34, p = .027$, and relations with parents, $r = .34, p = .028$, after controlling for age. Therefore after taking into account the effects of maturation, prolonged exposure to the TSRPP is associated with statistically significantly higher self-reliance and better relations with parents for participants of all ages.

Youth Focus Groups. Youth focus groups were conducted at the individual Clubs with the TSRPP participants. A set of 10 questions were addressed that pertained to the participants' definition of manhood and their perceptions of the program and the impact that the program has had on their lives. The number of participants who participated in the focus groups by Club, and the grade levels represented are outlined in Table 11.

⁶ This finding was reported despite a lack of statistical or marginal significance given that the effect size was not worthy (e.g., moderate effect).

⁷ It is interesting to note that stronger participant agreement on the Youth Survey that grades improved since participating in the TSRPP was associated with more favorable parent relations. These findings in combination with the academic achievement data presented later in the paper suggest that more time in the program results in improved grades, which then leads to better parent relations. It is also important to note that relations with parents was statistically significantly or marginally significantly correlated with all of the other BASC-2 scales after controlling for participant age. Therefore improving parent relations holds promise for improving all other facets of the participants' lives.

Table 11. Representation of Participants by Club for Youth Focus Group

Club	<i>n</i>	Grade levels
East Chicago	4	8th, 9th, & 10th
Gary	5	8th, 9th, & 11th
Hammond	11	5th, 8th & 9th

The first two questions asked participants about their definition of manhood and how their definition might be different from their peers who have not participated in the TSRPP. The responses indicate that participants define manhood as taking care of one's responsibilities, being able to take care for one self and being accountable. Participants also said that others' definitions would likely be different because they probably don't know what it means to be a man. For example, participants said that other youth would define a man as someone who has possessions (money, car, etc.), having babies and women.

When asked what they like best about the TSRPP, participants were most likely to mention the field trips, lock downs, martial arts, and having someone to talk to about things (e.g., someone to help teach them to be men). A lock down is when the boys spend the night at the Club. Conversely, when asked what they liked least most of the boys mentioned the long meetings and/or speeches. In addition, the younger boys were also likely to mention martial arts as something they like least because of the high level of discipline required.⁸ Therefore martial arts was mentioned as a most favorite and a least favorite by participants. Again, younger participants were more likely to say they didn't like martial arts while older participants were more likely to say that it was one of their favorite aspects of the TSRPP. Finally, when asked how they would change the program, they were most likely to mention the following:

- More field trips
- More lock downs
- More flexibility in scheduling and weekend opportunities
- Fewer long meetings
- More collaboration between Clubs
- Have more people speak about their life as a child⁹
- No change; keep as is

⁸ When discussing this finding with one of the program coordinators, his response was "That is why they need it." Also, while conducting the focus group, it was apparent that the younger participants need to develop self-control, which confirms the need for having the martial arts component. The older participants were more likely to see the impact of martial arts on their self-confidence and their ability to control themselves (e.g., self-regulation).

⁹ While conducting the Hammond Club focus group, the participants were very interested in the interviewer's childhood. At the end of the interview, they asked what the interviewer's childhood was like, if she did drugs, belonged to a gang, etc. They were very interested in knowing how she came to be.

Participants were also asked to explain how they have changed since they started the TSRPP and if they believe that participating in the program has changed their lives. One of the resounding themes from the focus group was that grades improved, confidence improved, decision making improved, and they are not fighting with others as much or getting into trouble as much.¹⁰ A couple of the participants indicated that their ability to speak in public has dramatically improved, particularly due to increased self-confidence and increased opportunities to speak in public. Other comments pertained to being better able to “keep things in order”, “control temper”, becoming calmer, and having a better attitude. All of the participants felt as if the program had changed their lives for the better. Finally, one of the participants said “Yes; given my focus to helping others”.

When asked to state why they joined the TSRPP, participants were likely to say that they wanted to learn how to become a leader and/or a man, because they need/want a mentor, and/or because they enjoy the activities. One of the participants explained “To stay safe from the streets and be around more positive black males.”

Participants were also asked if they would recommend the TSRPP to other young men. The majority of the participants said yes because of the opportunities associated with participating in the program (field trips to colleges, activities, etc.) and because it helped them (the participants) to become men. One of the participants specifically said “Yes, because you learn life skills”. Another participant said “Yes, because it would change their life and they will be successful”. However, one of the participants said “No, because they might not like it.”

Finally, participants were asked to indicate what they would be doing if not in the TSRPP. The comments consisted of playing basketball¹¹, playing video games, getting into trouble, fighting, doing nothing, playing sports at the Club anyway, doing homework, and/or participating in some other type of club or organized program.

Youth School Grades and Attendance. Academic semester grades, school attendance and school discipline referral data were collected for participants of the TSRPP. However, the integrity of the attendance data was questionable given that it was not clear if documented absences were excused or unexcused. Table 12 provides the percentage of participants by Club that had both pre and post academic achievement data for this evaluation. The results indicate that the 100% of the participants are represented for East Chicago and Gary, and the vast majority of participants are represented for Hammond (81.3%).

¹⁰ This particular response is consistent with the school-related data in which student discipline referrals statistically significantly decreased.

¹¹ It is important to note that the Hammond Club participants said that they would be playing basketball outside, which is where a lot of trouble happens due to gang presence, drugs, etc. However, none of the participants from the other two Clubs mentioned that there was trouble associated with playing basketball at the park.

Table 12. Representation of Participants by Club for Academic Achievement

Club	<i>n</i>	<i>N</i>	Participation rate
East Chicago	22	22	100.0%
Gary	9	9	100.0%
Hammond	13	16	81.3%

The attendance and behavior participation rates presented in Table 13 indicate that data for only 40.9% of the participants was available for East Chicago Club members, 100.0% was available for Gary Club members and 56.3% was available for Hammond Club members.

Table 13. Representation of Participants by Club for Attendance and Behavioral Referrals

Club	<i>N</i>	<i>N</i>	Participation rate
East Chicago	9	22	40.9%
Gary	9	9	100.0%
Hammond	9	16	56.3%

The academic achievement data were analyzed in two ways. First, the most recent data were analyzed by comparing Semester 1 to Semester 2 for the 2009-2010 academic year for English (includes reading), mathematics, science and social studies. Second, data from students with two full years of academic grades (four semesters) were analyzed in order to determine the prolonged effects of participation in the TSRPP. The grades were numerically coded as follows: A (11); A- (10); B+ (9); B (8); B- (7); C+ (6); C (5); C- (4); D+ (3); D (2); D- (1); and F (0).

Table 14 provides the overall findings when comparing Semester 1 (2009-2010) grades to Semester 2 (2009-2010) grades. The results indicate that none of the changes were statistically significant and therefore no significant decreases or increases in overall student performance were found, $p > .05$. On average, performance tended to stay at the C level (C- to C+ range).

Table 14. Paired Samples *t*-test Results for Academic Achievement

Subject	S1 mean	S2 mean	Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
English (ELA and reading)	6.01	6.40	0.39	-1.20	44	0.238
Mathematics	5.76	5.88	0.12	-2.62	44	0.795
Science	6.04	5.64	-0.40	1.17	41	0.249
Social studies	5.39	5.41	0.01	0.02	41	0.981

The next set of analyses pertains to the academic achievement of nine participants who have two full years of academic data (four semesters). The results for English are presented in Figure 2. As can be seen in the time series chart, aggregate student performance increased substantially from the first year (Semesters 1 and 2) to the second year (Semesters 3 and 4). The change over time was found to be statistically significant, $F(3, 24) = 3.51, p = .031$. These results also indicate that while aggregate English performance was equivalent to approximately a D+ in the first year, aggregate English performance was equivalent to approximately a C+ in the second year. Furthermore, these results suggest that the effect of participating in the TSRPP on academic achievement in English (and reading) may be delayed or long term effects.

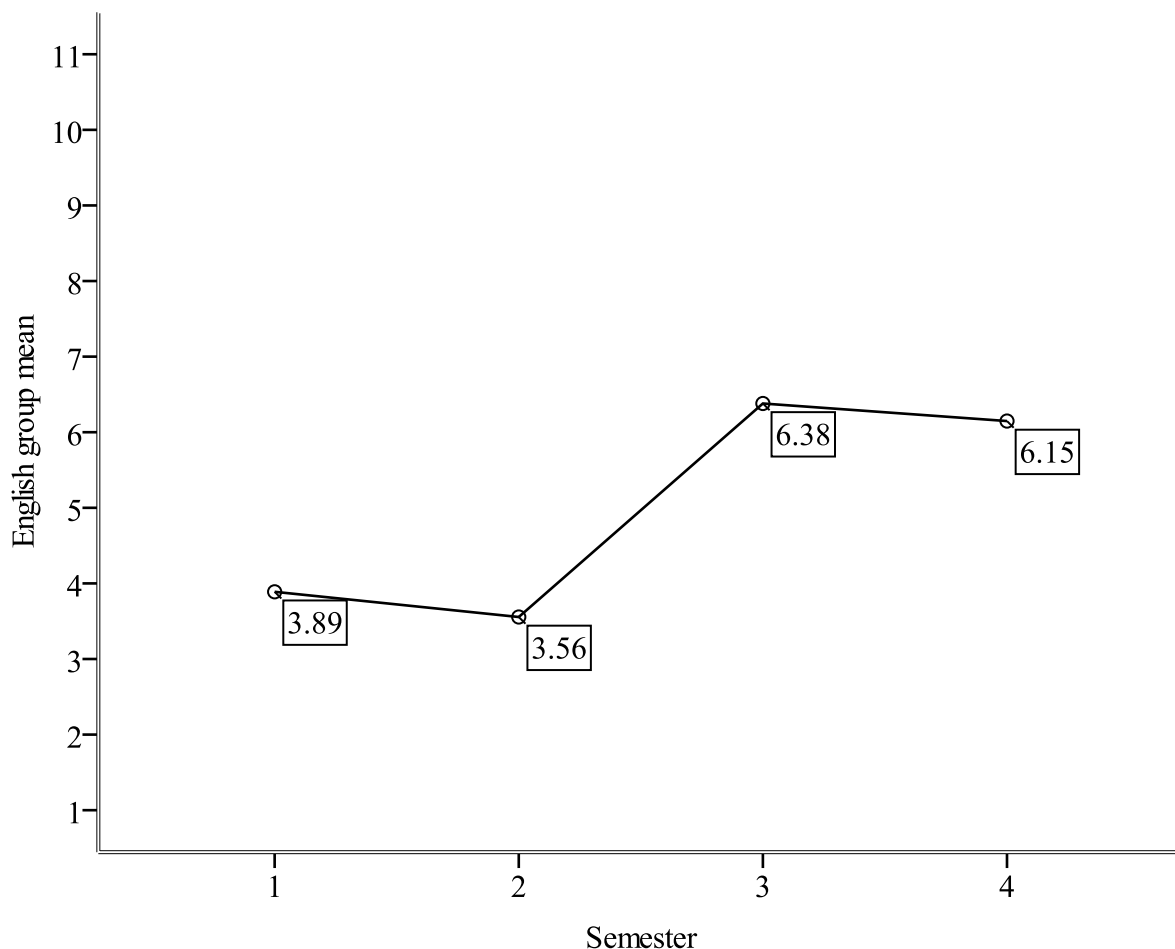


Figure 2. Aggregate English performance for youth participating in the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program by semester.

The results for mathematics are presented in Figure 3. The time series results indicate that aggregate student performance increased steadily over time. The change over time was found to be statistically significant, $F(3, 24) = 12.70, p = .007$. These results also indicate that while

aggregate mathematics performance was approximately equivalent to a D+ in the first semester (Semester 1 in 2008-2009), aggregate mathematics performance was equivalent to approximately a B- by the fourth semester (Semester 2 in 2009-2010). Furthermore, these results suggest that the positive effect of participating in the TSRPP on academic achievement in mathematics may be cumulative and therefore increase over time.

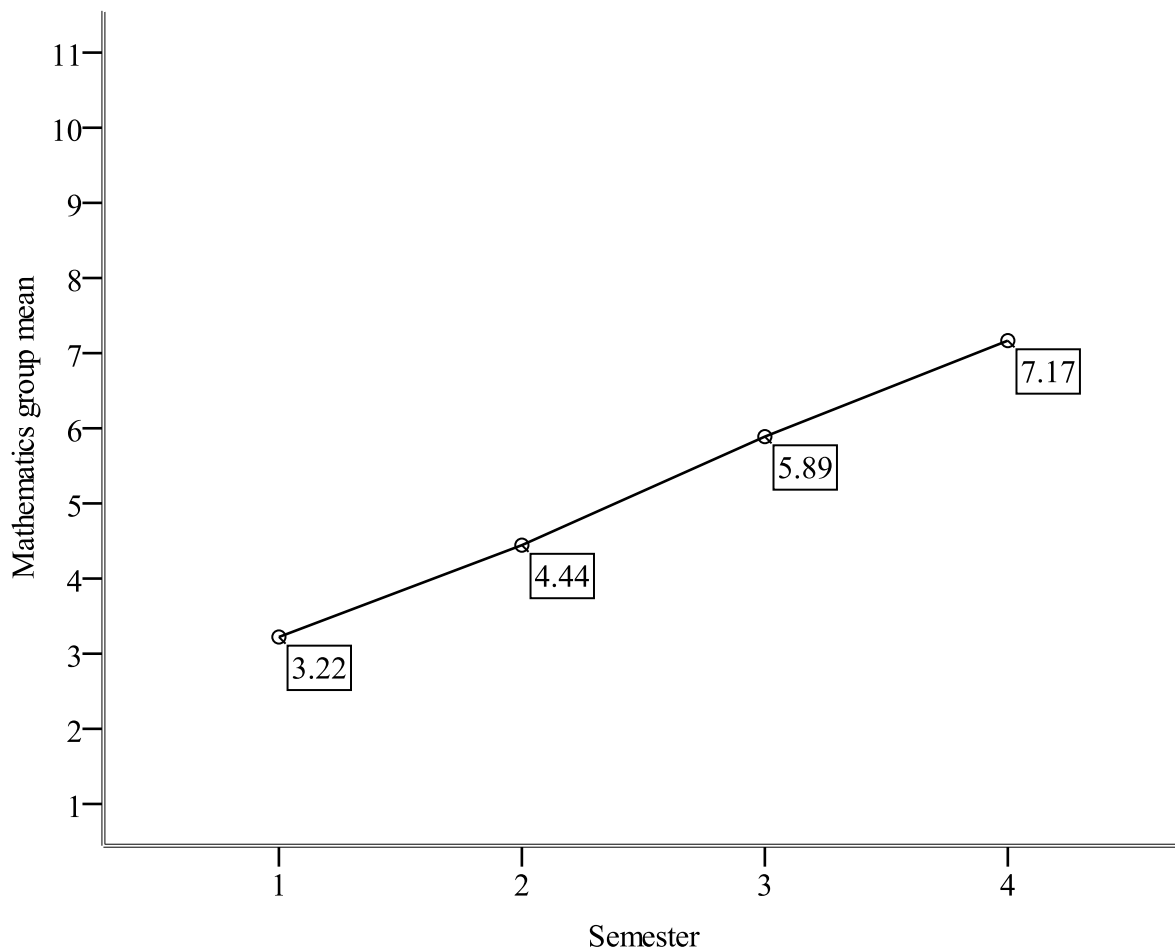


Figure 3. Aggregate mathematics performance for youth participating in the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program by semester.

The science results are featured in Figure 4; however, there were only seven participants who had two full years of data for science. The results indicate that aggregate student performance increased substantially from the first year (Semesters 1 and 2) to the second year (Semesters 3 and 4). The change over time was found to be marginally significant, $F(3, 18) = 2.78, p = .071$. These results also indicate that while aggregate science performance was equivalent to approximately a D in the first year, aggregate science performance was equivalent to

approximately a C in the second year. Finally, these results suggest that the positive effect of participating in the TSRPP on science achievement may be delayed or long term effects.

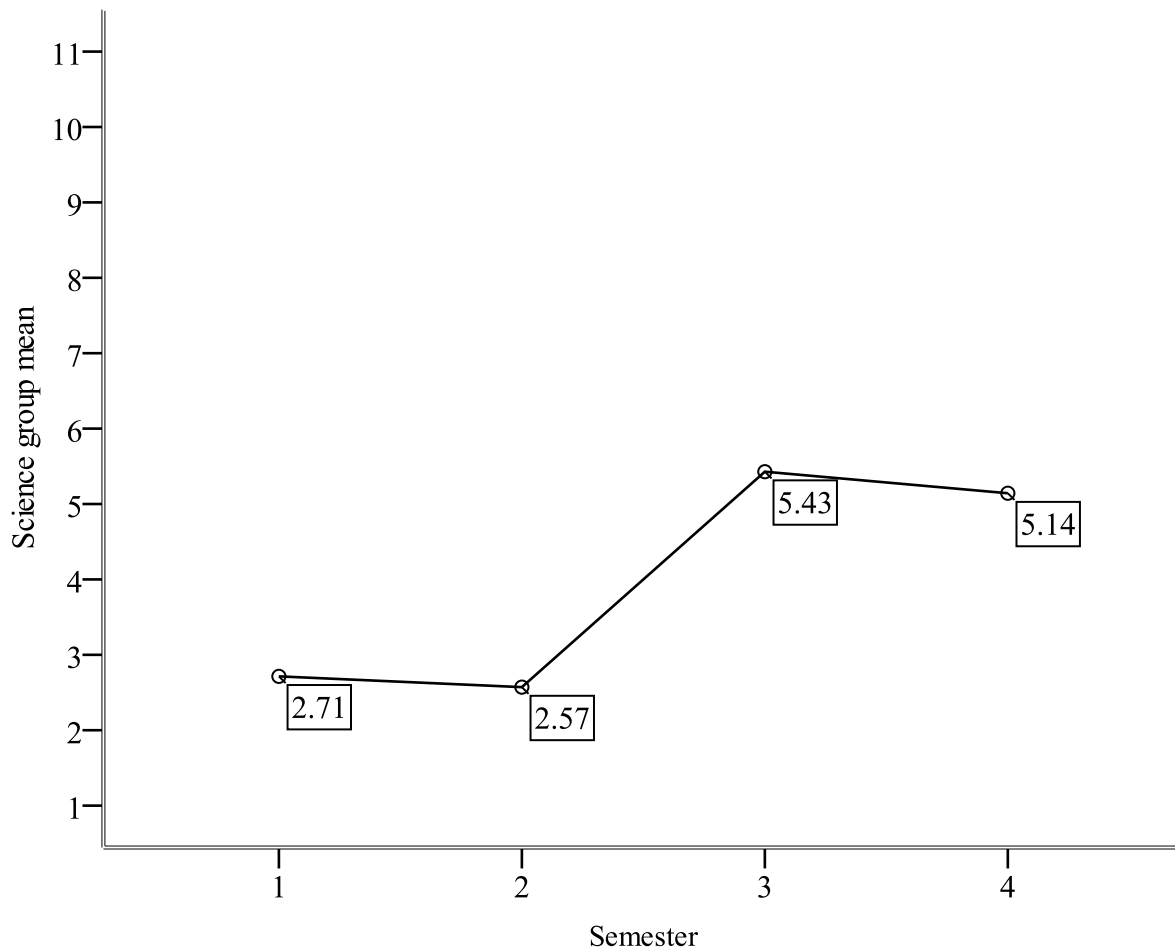


Figure 4. Aggregate science performance for youth participating in the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program by semester.

Finally, the time series social studies performance is displayed in Figure 5; however, only seven participants had two full years of social studies performance data. The results indicate that the TSRPP appears to have had a minimal and/or short term effect only on aggregate student social studies performance. Aggregate student performance increased steadily from Semester 1 to Semester 3, but dropped back down to the Semester 2 level. Specifically, social studies performance went from approximately a D to approximately a C-. The changes in performance over time were not statistically significant, $F(3, 18) = 0.86, p = .482$.

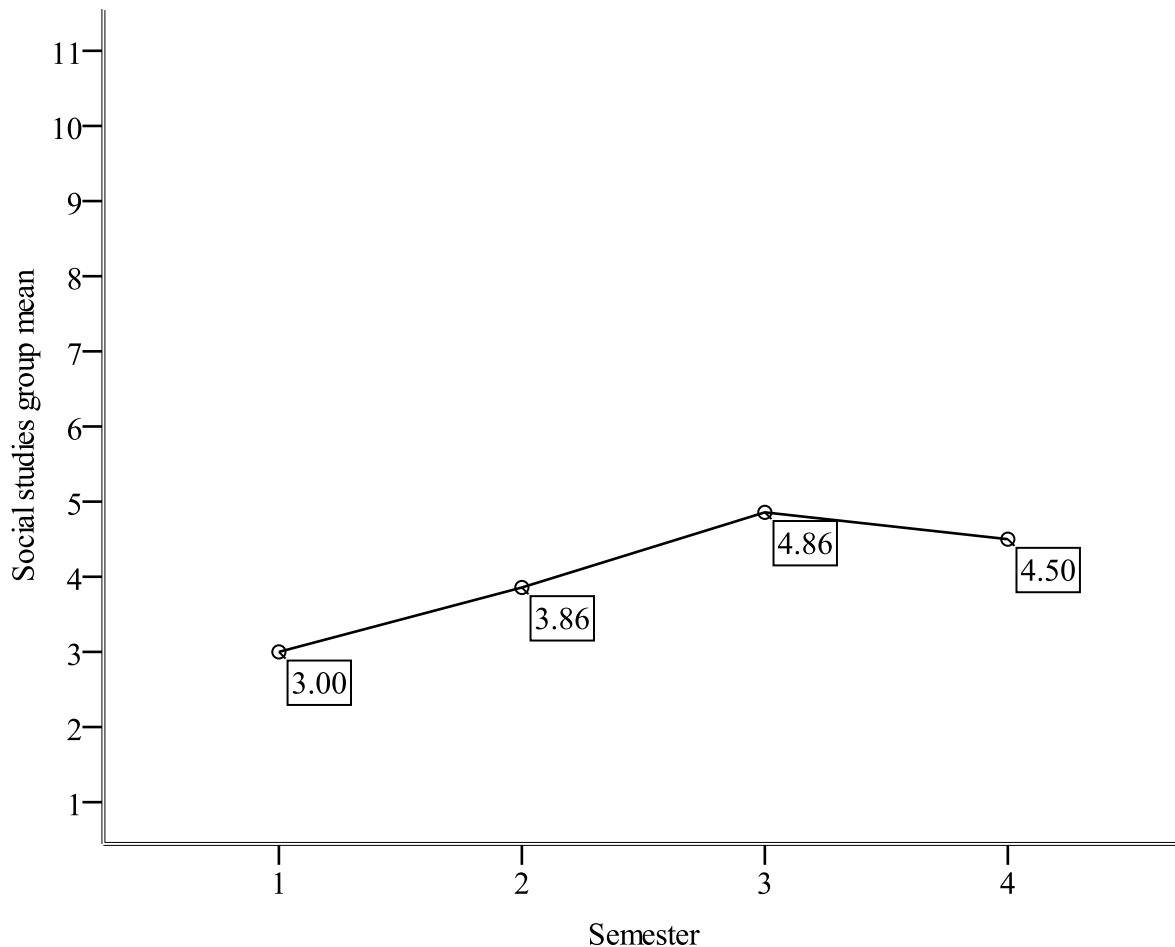


Figure 5. Aggregate social studies performance for youth participating in the Ten Steps Rites of Passage Program by semester.

Additional data was provided for some of the youth from the East Chicago Club ($n = 7$),¹² which include previous versus current grade point average (GPA) and current class rank. The current GPA and class rank are based on the most recent term (Semester 2, 2009-2010). The results in Table 15 indicate that participants' grade point averages increased from 2.16 to 2.43, on average. The current class rank was converted to a percentile. The results indicate that all of the participants were in the upper half of the distribution based on their academic performance. In fact, the sample mean percentile rank of 70.71 is statistically significantly higher than an average class percentile rank of 50%, $t(6) = 17.23$, $p < .001$.

¹² This evaluation has shed light on the type, quality and quantity of data that are critical for evaluating the TSRPP, and other programs as well. Therefore by conducting this evaluation, the staff has identified weaknesses relative to data collection and management, which will be remediated moving forward.

Table 15. Previous vs. Current Grade Point Average and Current Class Rank/Percentile

Item	Low	High	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Previous GPA	1.61	2.83	2.16	0.37
Current GPA	2.17	2.83	2.43	0.25
Class percentile	57.0	88.0	70.71	10.78

Figure 2 indicates those with the lowest GPAs showed the most growth. The data points featured in the scatter plot also indicate only one student had a decrease in his GPA (previous GPA of 2.83 with a decrease of 0.66). However, all of the other participants had increases in their GPAs with one participant having an increase as much as 1.22.

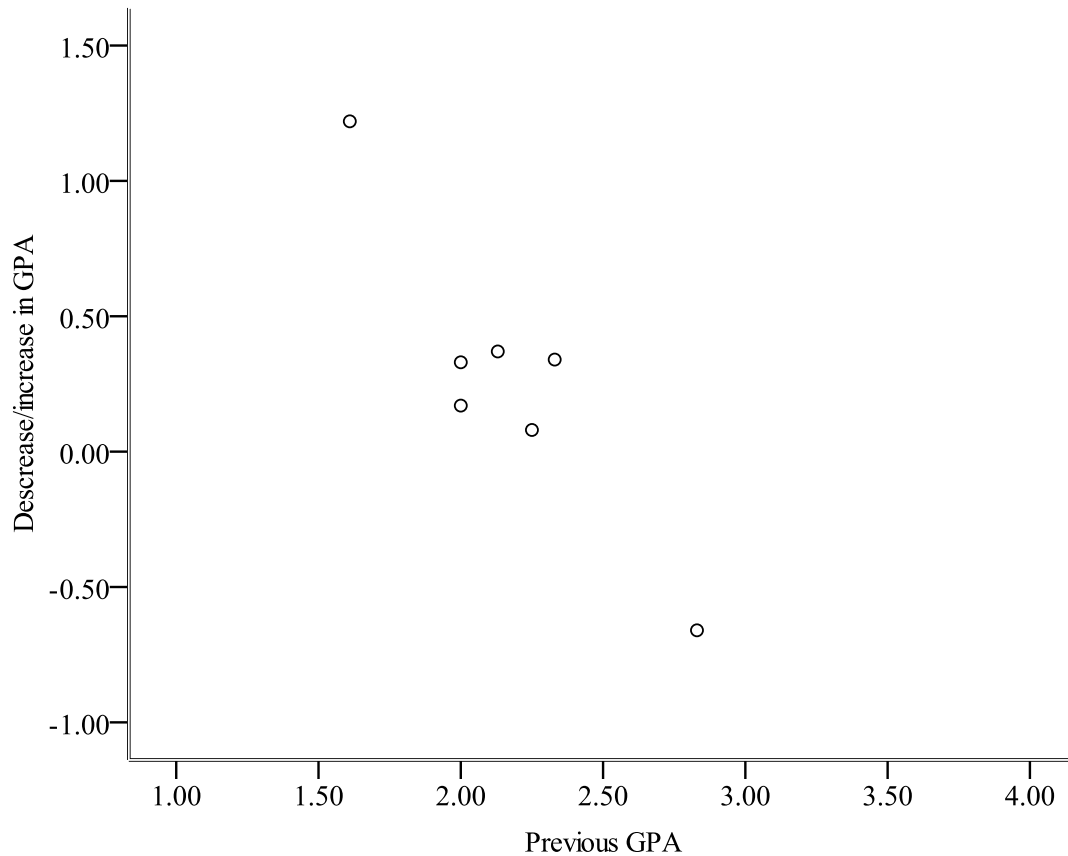


Figure 6. Youth previous grade point average compared to amount of change from the previous grade point average to the current grade point average.

The results of the attendance and discipline referral analyses are presented next. Table 16 provides the paired samples *t*-test results for attendance and discipline referrals. The results indicate that attendance remained relatively the same and therefore no significant change was detected, $t(13) = 0.82, p = .426$. However, the mean number of referrals decreased significantly, $t(22) = 2.89, p = .009$. Furthermore, a statistically significant and substantial relationship was found between length of time in the program and the decrease in discipline referrals, $r = -.58, p = .010$ after controlling for individual differences in baseline discipline referrals. Therefore increased participation in the program is associated with decreased discipline referrals.

Table 16. Paired Samples *t*-test Results for Attendance and Discipline Referrals

Source	S1 mean	S2 mean	Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Attendance	0.69	1.48	0.79	1.66	20	0.107
Discipline referrals	1.15	0.63	-0.52	-2.82	26	0.009

Mentor Survey. A Mentor Survey was used to try to gauge the perceptions of the mentors regarding the TSRPP. Data were collected from a total of six mentors. Table 17 provides the descriptive statistics based on the mentors' responses to the Mentor Survey where higher values reflect stronger agreement (e.g., strongly agree = 5; strongly disagree = 1). The results in Table 16 indicate that the mentors responded very favorably on average. However, as previously indicated, this survey was based on the input of only six mentors.

Table 17. Descriptive Statistics for Mentor Survey

Item	Low	High	Mean	<i>SD</i>
I enjoy spending time with my mentee	4	5	4.33	0.52
I have a good relationship with my mentee	3	5	4.17	0.75
I care about my mentee	5	5	5.00	0.00
I have provided guidance/consultation to my mentee	3	5	4.33	0.82
I am available for my mentee when he needs me	4	5	4.67	0.52
I respect my mentee	5	5	5.00	0.00
My mentee respects me	3	5	4.50	0.84
I enjoy participating in the mentor program	4	5	4.67	0.52
Requirements of the mentor program are too demanding	1	3	1.50	0.84
I am proud to be a part of the TSRPP	5	5	5.00	0.00
I had a mentor when I was growing up	1	5	3.50	1.98
I have made a positive difference in my mentee's life	3	5	3.83	0.98

Council of Elders Interview Survey. Six Council members completed the Council of Elders interview survey. The purpose of the survey was to solicit Council members' perceptions about the purpose of the Council, how they have contributed to the Council, their experiences on the Council, and their perceptions of the benefits and challenges associated with being a Council member.

The findings of the survey indicate that the Council members agreed that the purpose of the Council is to provide strategic direction for the TSRPP and to set the expectations for the program. In addition, the Council participates in the TSRPP ceremonies that are held for the youth as they successfully complete a Rite of Passage. Therefore the Council serves as an executive functioning committee and the Council members serve personally as members of the most important component of the TSRPP, which is the ceremonial component.

The Council members indicated that the expectations of the TSRPP in which they set, are to encourage parental interaction¹³, encourage independence of the youth¹⁴, promote a lifestyle change, develop the leadership capabilities of participants, develop positive mental attitudes and interactions, offer ceremonies to formally acknowledge and celebrate the successful completion of Rites, and expose youth to opportunities that they would not otherwise have such as visiting colleges and going on other field trips.

Some of the Council members indicated that the greatest benefit for the youth is the mentor program, which exposes African American male youth to positive role models who are also African American males. In addition, those members who have been more intimately involved on the committee agreed that positive outcomes have been seen, which have been very rewarding. In fact, when one of the Council members was asked if participating on the Council has been a rewarding experience for him, he explained:

Getting to know some of the young men and observe their progress and growth into manhood over the years as they mature and come to their "own light". To see their excitement when they earn their martial arts recognition as well as being inducted into the program through the various ceremonies. This serves to encourage me to know that there are generations of young African American men preparing to step up and continue to be leaders in our communities.

The challenges mentioned by some of the Council members include obtaining the financial resources needed to efficiently and effectively run the program, recruiting high quality mentors,

¹³ The BASC-2 data provided evidence that prolonged exposure to the TSRPP was associated with significantly more positive parent relations, which suggests that the program staff are effectively encouraging parental interaction.

¹⁴ The BASC-2 data provided evidence that prolonged exposure to the TSRPP was associated with significantly more favorable self-reliance scores.

securing full participation of the Council members, and some times having a lack of direction on the part of the Council. These results indicate that there is opportunity for improvement with regard the program itself as well as with regard to the composition, cohesiveness and workings of the Council of Elders specifically.

Conclusions

Summary of evaluation findings. The results of this evaluation point to two key findings: (1) programmatic data collection and data monitoring is an area in need of development and (2) participants must have prolonged exposure to the program for optimal results to be achieved (e.g. approximately 18 months or longer).

The data collection and data monitoring weaknesses pertain to a lack of consistent and thorough reporting in a single data management source such as a file drawer or an electronic database. Ideally, as the program director and the program coordinators work to improve their data collection, data monitoring and data maintenance procedures, every participant will have benchmark and milestone data outcomes stored in an electronic file such as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Currently the director and the coordinators are working with an external evaluator to ensure that sufficient, comprehensive and consistent data are being collected in such a way that the program will eventually be not just “data rich” but “information rich”.

The second key finding is based on the fact that statistically significant academic improvements were found (e.g., English, reading and mathematics) for participants with prolonged exposure, and the results of the psycho-social and adaptive functioning assessments (e.g., BASC-2) indicate that participants with prolonged exposure had higher self-reliance and better parent relations than youth who had less exposure to the program. These results were found even after statistically controlling for age and therefore controlling for the potential intervening effects of maturation. Furthermore, older participants (ages 15 to 17) with prolonged exposure had lower depression, higher self-esteem, and lower social stress than similarly aged youth with less exposure to the program. Since one of the primary goals of the TSRPP is to build community leaders and to strengthen parent relations, these findings are consistent with the mission of the program and suggest that long term participation in the TSRPP has a positive effect on the academic achievement, psycho-social functioning and the overall basic character of young African American males who live in the inner-city of Northwest Indiana (Gary, East Chicago and Hammond). The summary table on page 26 outlines the specific program outcomes.

In addition to the outcome findings, this evaluation also addressed three process questions. The first question asked what is working well in the TSRPP and why. The results of this evaluation suggest that at least some of the Rites of Passage, the specific components of the program, are

working well because the data suggest that they are helping to increase participants' grades, improve their behavior and improve their mental health. In addition, the activities and the field trips are working well because they get the youth interested, which helps to "hook them" into the program as well as provide them with opportunities to go places and see things that they would not have otherwise had. Furthermore, the mentor program appears to be working well for those who have a mentor match given that the youth appraise their relationships with their mentors as favorable and vice versa, and the youth mentioned in the focus groups that having a mentor is important to them so that they can learn how to become leaders and men. Therefore at least some of the programmatic components appear to be appropriate and appear to be effective.

The second question asked what is not working well. The results of this evaluation suggest that the ability of the youth and the mentors to meet regularly appears to be jeopardized by scheduling issues and therefore the program may have some logistical weaknesses. A second weakness of the program pertains to the lack of participation by some of the Council of Elders members. Since the Council members set the guidelines for the program and participate in the Rites of Passage ceremonies, a strengthened Council may help to improve the effectiveness of the program. Finally, despite the fact that youth with prolonged exposure to the TSRPP were significantly associated with more favorable outcomes, the degree to which youth participated in the specific internal programmatic activities relating to the Rites of Passage were not consistently measured and therefore no specific evidence exists to determine the actual fidelity of the program implementation.

The third and final process question asked what can be fixed and what is outside of the control of the program staff. Some of the challenges mentioned by Council of Elders members include a lack of resources, and money in particular, which is likely outside of the control of the staff. However, by improving the data collection and reporting process, program staff will be better positioned to secure additional funding. By conducting this extensive evaluation and providing this report to all stakeholders, the agency is showing a commitment to obtain the data necessary for continual improvement. As a result, the primary weakness identified in this evaluation will be ameliorated and therefore detailed information regarding youth participation in the various TSRPP-related activities and events, including contacts with mentors, can be linked to specific youth outcomes such as those measured via this evaluation study.

Summary of Evaluation Outcome Findings

Objective	Rites	Met objective	Evidence
Improved grades	Mental & Personal	Partially	Significant improvements in English, math and science with prolonged exposure to program
Decrease discipline referrals	Personal, physical, mental & emotional	Yes	Significant decrease in behavioral referrals
Decrease unexcused absences	Personal, physical & mental	NA	The integrity of the data was questionable. However, attendance was not an area of concern given that unexcused absence rates were very low.
Normal to low social stress	Social, mental & physical	Yes	Normal levels found and significantly lower social stress with prolonged exposure for older group
Normal to low external locus of control	Personal & physical	Partially	Normal levels found for younger group only
Normal to low depression	Emotional & physical	Partially	Marginally significantly lower depression with prolonged exposure for older group
Normal to low anxiety	Emotional & physical	Yes	Normal levels found
Normal to high self-reliance	Personal, emotional & cultural	Yes	High self-reliance for younger group and significantly higher self-reliance with prolonged exposure
Normal to low inadequacy	Personal, mental & physical	Yes	Normal levels found
Normal to high self-esteem	Personal & historical	Partially	Although very low levels were found, prolonged exposure was statistically significantly associated with higher self-esteem for the older group
Normal to high interpersonal relations	Social & spiritual	Yes	Normal levels found
Normal to high relations with parents	Social, emotional & spiritual	Yes	Normal levels found and significantly higher parent relations with prolonged exposure
Positive perceptions of TSRPP	All rites	Yes	Favorable responses on the Youth Survey

Limitations, Strengths and Action Plan for Improvement. The primary limitation of this evaluation is the lack of a quasi or true experimental design given that no pure control group was utilized for determining the effectiveness of the program. However, a pre-experimental design with a longitudinal component was used in order to determine participant academic and behavioral growth over time, and to determine psycho-social outcomes as a function of prolonged exposure to the program. With that being said, given the lack of a pure control group, no causal relationships can be confirmed in this evaluation.

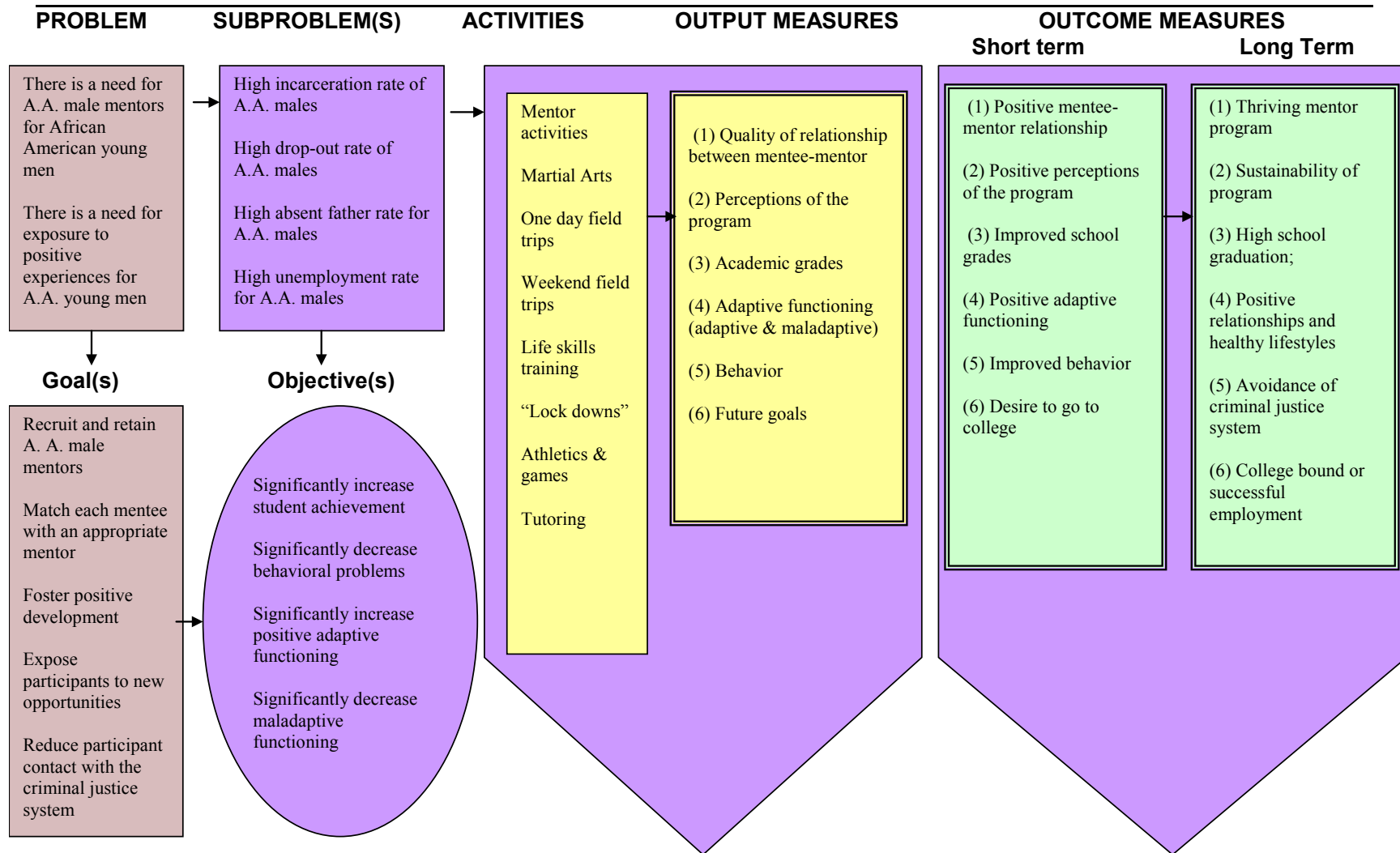
One of the primary strengths of this evaluation is the fact that very comprehensive data were collected, which were specifically linked to many of the Rites of Passage as well as to psycho-social factors in general. Also, the multiple data sources allowed for triangulation of the data and therefore helped to validate the overall findings of the evaluation given that the different data sources were found to be consistent and statistically significantly correlated in several key outcomes. Therefore the convergent validity of the data provides indirect evidence of the internal validity of the evaluation.

Based on the findings of this evaluation, step one of the action plan for improvement consists of further developing the data collection, data monitoring and data maintenance process, given that the ability to obtain valuable information relative to programmatic strengths and weaknesses depends on obtaining thorough, comprehensive and high quality data for all participants in the program. Efforts are currently under way whereby the TSRPP program coordinators and director are working in tandem with the external evaluator to begin a data-based benchmarking process that consists of a data inventory checklist monitored by the program director, and files for all participants that contain basic demographic information, behavior-related outcomes, academic-related outcomes, and youth involvement in programmatic activities.

Step two of the action plan pertains to specific programmatic modifications or improvements from the Council of Elders down to the daily activities associated with the TSRPP. A commitment by the Council of Elders to consistently participate in the governance process and to directly interact with the program youth is a critical piece in the process. Through the leadership of the Council of Elders, the program director and the program coordinators, data collection efforts may be improved and strategies for improving the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship will be more effective. The first mentor-related opportunity for improvement is to make the scheduling process more efficient so that mentors and mentees will be able to meet regularly. Another opportunity for improvement pertains to the rigorousness of the mentor recruitment process, which may require more extensive marketing of the program (assuming the funds are in place for such marketing), and the development of a mentor recruitment committee or council whose single focus is on the recruitment, training and retention of mentors.

APPENDIX

LOGIC MODEL



		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Attitude to school	Pearson Correlation	1	.580**	.364*	.323*	.450**	.481**	-.362*	-.273	.139	-.294*	-.308*
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000	.013	.026	.003	.001	.014	.051	.206	.038	.032
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Attitude to teacher	Pearson Correlation	.580**	1	.405**	.324*	.581**	.585**	-.579**	-.350*	.475**	-.493**	-.548**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000		.006	.025	.000	.000	.000	.017	.001	.001	.000
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Locus of control	Pearson Correlation	.364*	.405**	1	.649**	.716**	.753**	-.505**	-.311*	.704**	-.489**	-.571**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.013	.006		.000	.000	.000	.001	.031	.000	.001	.000
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Depression	Pearson Correlation	.323*	.324*	.649**	1	.504**	.538**	-.488**	-.235	.629**	-.462**	-.673**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.026	.025	.000		.001	.000	.001	.081	.000	.002	.000
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.450**	.581**	.716**	.504**	1	.698**	-.617**	-.205	.636**	-.282*	-.446**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.003	.000	.000	.001		.000	.000	.112	.000	.045	.003
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Inadequacy	Pearson Correlation	.481**	.585**	.753**	.538**	.698**	1	-.494**	-.286*	.437**	-.480**	-.534**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000		.001	.043	.003	.001	.000
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.362*	-.579**	-.505**	-.488**	-.617**	-.494**	1	.051	-.686**	.207	.495**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.014	.000	.001	.001	.000	.001		.382	.000	.109	.001
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Self-reliance	Pearson Correlation	-.273	-.350*	-.311*	-.235	-.205	-.286*	.051	1	-.226	.418**	.317*
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.051	.017	.031	.081	.112	.043	.382		.089	.005	.028
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Social stress	Pearson Correlation	.139	.475**	.704**	.629**	.636**	.437**	-.686**	-.226	1	-.331*	-.642**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.206	.001	.000	.000	.000	.003	.000	.089		.023	.000
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Relations with parents	Pearson Correlation	-.294*	-.493**	-.489**	-.462**	-.282*	-.480**	.207	.418**	-.331*	1	.572**
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.038	.001	.001	.002	.045	.001	.109	.005	.023		.000
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Inter-personal relations	Pearson Correlation	-.308*	-.548**	-.571**	-.673**	-.446**	-.534**	.495**	.317*	-.642**	.572**	1
	Sig. (1-tailed)	.032	.000	.000	.000	.003	.000	.001	.028	.000	.000	
	N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

		Education is not as important as people say	I study hard for tests	I get my homework done on time	I plan to go to college	I enjoy going to school	I feel good about who I am
I enjoy participating in the Rites of Passage program.	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.452** .002 46	-.023 .879 46	.359* .014 46	.039 .800 45	-.011 .943 44	.201 .190 44
I am proud to be a part of the Rites of Passage program.	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.503** .000 46	-.040 .791 46	.100 .509 46	-.076 .619 45	-.097 .530 44	.135 .382 44
I feel safe saying what I think while participating in the Rites of Passage program.	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.410** .005 46	.115 .446 46	.247 .098 46	-.171 .260 45	.127 .412 44	.317* .036 44
I have learned a lot of important things in the Rites of Passage Program.	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.331* .025 46	.031 .837 46	.284 .056 46	.155 .308 45	.206 .180 44	.370* .013 44
I feel safe in the Rites of Passage program.	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.335* .023 46	.044 .774 46	.167 .267 46	-.142 .351 45	.411** .006 44	.390** .009 44
I am doing better in school since I joined the Rites of Passage program.	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.163 .279 46	.012 .939 46	.098 .516 46	.036 .813 45	.246 .108 44	.345* .022 44
I am happier since I joined the Rites of Passage program	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.199 .185 46	.161 .286 46	.168 .264 46	.000 1.000 45	.291 .055 44	.350* .020 44

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).