Police Working with Youth in Non-Enforcement Roles
Outcome Evaluation 2004 – 2005

Prepared for

The State of Connecticut
Office of Policy and Management

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Introduction

This report summarizes the evaluation of the **Police Working with Youth in Non-enforcement Roles** program funded through the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management. This program for local public agencies provides funds to increase or enhance positive Police interactions with youth outside of the traditional enforcement role. Examples include Police Explorers; Police Academies; Police-led athletics, skill training, or social events for youth; Police participation with youth in adventure activities. A detailed list of participating communities and their program emphasis is provided below.

The projects were expected to work with individuals between the ages of 12 and 18 to foster positive youth development. The evaluation was conducted between September 2004 and August 2005.

Participating Programs

The communities that participated in the program are listed below along with a description of their program emphasis.

Location	Type of Program
Berlin	Berlin Upbeat Police Youth Advisory Committee
Bridgeport	"Screaming Eagles" Cadet Program
Enfield	"Cops aren't Mean, Kids aren't Bad" Youth Advisory Board
Killingly	Resident State Troopers Youth Athletic Club
Middletown	Youth Police Academy
New Haven	Youth Police Academy
Norwich	Youth Police Academy
Plainfield	High School After School Club
Stonington	Youth Advisory Council
Waterford	Waterford Youth Commission

Evaluation Design

The evaluation design involved administering pre-test and post-test surveys to youth who were engaged in youth development activities in the participating communities. Each program was asked to include all youth who had participated in their program in the evaluation. A copy of the survey is included in Appendix 1.

Youth leaders in each program were chosen by program staff and then trained as observer-reporters by the Center for Applied Research to collect Project Activity Sheets. The Project Activity Sheets documented descriptions of the activities between police and youth and

attendance at the programs. A copy of the form completed by youth observers is included in Appendix 2.

The evaluation sought to answer the following questions:

1. Do youth who participate in Police Working with Youth programs report satisfaction with the programs?

2. Do youth who participate in Police Working with Youth programs report improved attitudes toward police following completion of the programs?

3. Do youth who participate in Police Working with Youth programs report improved developmental outcomes following completion of the programs?

4. Based upon the reports collected by youth observers, what kinds of activities are most frequently offered in Police Working with Youth Programs?

Outcomes Included in the Evaluation

It was hypothesized that youth who participated in these programs would likely show changes in three general categories of outcomes (Sabatelli, Anderson, & LaMotte, 2005). These included youth **personal adjustment**, **social competencies**, and positive **adult-youth connections**. The specific outcomes included in the evaluation are listed below according to each of these outcome categories.

Personal Adjustment

It was hypothesized that Police Working with Youth programs would have a positive influence on participants' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as, "the belief in one's capacities to organize and execute the sources of action required to manage prospective situations" (Bandura, 1986). It is a context-specific assessment of competence to perform a specific task or domain (Bandura, 1997). This means that accurate assessments of self-efficacy must be based upon specific skills or skill sets. For this evaluation, one skill set that had been found in an earlier evaluation of Police Working with Youth programs to show positive change was included. This was **self-regulatory efficacy,** which was defined as the ability to resist negative peer pressures.

It was further hypothesized that youth working with police also would develop a greater **sense of mastery** or personal control over their environment. It was thought that the types of recreational, adventure, problem-solving, communication, and social skills that were targeted by Police Working with Youth programs would naturally translate in an enhanced sense of personal control, or the capacity to manage the day-to-day stresses and strains encountered by youth.

It also was anticipated that exposure to the skills emphasized in Police Working with Youth programs would enhance youth participants' feelings of **self-adequacy** and positive self-concept.

Social Competencies

A social competency thought to be affected by Police Working with Youth programs was one's sense of **social responsibility.** Social responsibility involves a commitment to the community and the well-being of others. The emphasis in Police programs on service to others was evident in the community service projects that youth participated in and the skills training youth received in Police Explorer and Police Academy programs.

Adult-Youth Connections

The nature of Police Working with Youth programs is such that youth who become involved spend a good deal of time interacting with adults in a variety of experiences. It was hypothesized that, as a result, youth in these programs would develop **supportive relationships with adults** (staff) and perceive these adults as resources for dealing with social and emotional challenges.

Sample: Characteristics of Youth Participants

The participants in this evaluation were youth who participated in Police Working with Youth programs funded by the State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management between September 2004 and August 2005. A total of 10 programs were evaluated. A total of 141 participating youth completed the pre-test.

The sample was comprised of 84 males (59.6%) and 57 (40.4%) females. Their grade levels in school ranged from fifth grade through college, with ninth grade being the average. Ninety-nine percent (n= 138) of the sample fell within grades seven through twelve. An additional 1.4% of the participants did not report their grade in school. The average age of participants was 14 years. Thirty percent (n= 42) of the youth reported an A grade point average in school and another 49% (n= 69) reported a B grade point average. Nineteen percent (n=26) reported a C average and 2% (n= 3) reported a D average in school. No participants reported an F grade point average. Only one participant did not report her GPA.

This sample was mainly Caucasian (56%, n=79). Among the remaining participants, 14% (n= 20) were African American, 15% (n= 21) were Hispanic/Latino, 3% (n= 4) were Asian, and 4% (n= 5) were American Indian. Another 7% (n= 10) reported "other." Two participants (1.4%) did not report their ethnicity. In addition to these demographics, youth also were asked to report their family status, or the caregivers living with them in the home. The majority (50%, n= 70) reported living with both their mother and father. About 26% (n= 36) reported living with their mother only, and another 13% (n= 18) reported living with their mother and stepfather. A little over 2% (n= 3) reported living with their father and stepmother. The remaining youth lived with other relatives (7%, n=10), foster parents (1%, n=1), or non-relatives (1.5%, n=2). One participant did not answer this question.

Measures

Measures included in the evaluation are described below.

Self-Regulatory Efficacy. A variety of general measures of self-efficacy have been utilized in past research. However, measures of specific types of self-efficacy typically show higher validity and reliabilities and are thus more useful in research and evaluation than general measures (Bandura, 1997; Bandura et al., 1999, Bandura, 2001, Muris, 2001). Bandura (1997) reported that self-efficacy includes both knowing what to do in a particular situation and having confidence that one can carry out those tasks. One of four scales originally developed by Bandura (1990) to assess specific types of youth self-efficacy was used in this evaluation to measure self-regulatory efficacy. Self-regulatory efficacy refers to the capacity to resist negative peer pressures.

Mastery. Sense of mastery has been studied extensively in past research and found to be a strong predictor on one's ability to cope with stressful situations. The sense of mastery scale was developed by Pearlin and Schooler (1978) and is one of the most widely used measures of personal coping. It assesses one's sense of personal control over, or capacity to manage, stressful situations and events.

Feelings of Adequacy. This scale measures an individual's feelings of adequacy or inadequacy in social settings. Adequacy was expected to be a more accurate measure of self concept than more global measures because it emphasizes specific social settings. A shortened 10-item version, derived from the original 20-item instrument, was used because it had been shown in previous research to be reliable and valid (Skolnick & Shaw, 1970). However, several items did not perform as well as expected in the present evaluation so an abbreviated five-item version was used in all data analyses.

Social and Personal Responsibility. The Social and Personal Responsibility Scale measures the degree to which youth assume personal and social responsibility in a variety of settings. The scale includes five subscales that assess attitudes on social welfare, duty, personal competence, efficacy, and performance. It is designed for youth ages 12-18 (or in grades 6-12). Only the total scale score, and not subscale scores, was used in the present evaluation. The alpha reliability for the total scale was reported by the scale developers to be .83 (Conrad & Hedin, 1981).

Perceived Social Support. The Scale of Perceived social support was developed by Canty-Mitchell and Zimet (2000). The scale measures individuals' perceptions of the amount of social support received from non-family adults. In this instance, the items were focused on the Police and other adults who worked with youth in the Police Working with Youth Programs.

Instrument Reliabilities

Pre-test and post-test reliability coefficients for the outcome measures are reported in Table 1. Overall, the alpha coefficients indicated good to excellent internal consistency, ranging between .70 and .90.

Table 1. Pre-Test and Post-Test Instrument Reliabilities.

Measure	Number of Items	Pre-Test α n=140	Post-Test α n=110	Sample Items
Self-Regulatory Efficacy	8	.88	.88	How well can you resist peer pressure to drink beer, wine, or liquor?
Mastery	6	.77	.73	I can do just about anything I really set my mind to.
Feelings of adequacy	5	.70	.74	How often do you feel sure of yourself?
Social and Personal Responsibility	21	.85	.89	Some teens feel bad when they let people who depend on them down.
Social Support	4	.88	.90	There is a special person around when I am in need.

Evaluation Results

The results of the evaluation are reported in the following sections.

I. Participants' Satisfaction with the Police Programs

Satisfaction with various aspects of the police programs was examined as one way of gaining insight into how the youth experienced these particular programs. Specifically, participants' retrospective reports of their experiences with and feelings about the programs were examined. Questions exploring these issues were included on the post-test survey that was administered to all participants at the end of the project year. Participants were asked to "think about what it had been like for you in the program this past year." Overall, participants reported a high degree of satisfaction with the Police Working with Youth Programs. The following table shows the percentage of youth who agreed with each statement.

	Percent Who Said Yes
Made friends in the program	92%
Felt accepted and supported	99%
Felt like I belonged	99%
Felt safe	99%
Were involved in stimulating and engaging activities	90%
Police officer(s) really cared about me	96%
Felt part of a community	95%
There was a police officer who helped me solve my problems	80%

Participants were also asked to rate, on a 10-point scale ranging from "completely satisfied" (10) to "completely dissatisfied" (1), how they would rate their overall satisfaction with the program. The mean score on this item was $\bar{x}$ = 9.0, indicating a high level of overall satisfaction with the programs.

Who was Most Satisfied with the Police Programs?

In an effort to better understand whether certain subgroups of youth who in participated in the programs might have been more satisfied than other subgroups, participants' scores on the 10-point overall satisfaction item were used for further analysis. Using this overall satisfaction score, contrasts were conducted based on participants' sex (male, female), grade level in school, grade point average (A,B,C, etc.), length of time in the program, and racial/ethnic background. The only significant difference found was for racial/ethnic background. African American and Hispanic/Latino youth were significantly more likely than white youth to report overall satisfaction with the Police Working with Youth Programs [$F_{(2,53)}$= 3.29; $p < .05$]. There were no significant differences between African American and Hispanic/Latino youth scores.

The average scores of each group are represented in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Average Scores on Overall Program Satisfaction for Different Ethnic/Racial Groups.

Ethnic/Racial Group	N	$\bar{x}$
White	44	8.52
African Am.	7	9.71
Hispanic/Latino	5	10.00

II. Changes in Attitudes toward Police

An important goal of Police Working with Youth Programs was to enhance young peoples' perceptions about the police. The pre-test and post-test evaluation surveys administered to youth who participated in the police programs included 10 items that asked specifically about attitudes toward the police. The items were derived from a survey originally conducted with New York City Police (Fine, et al. 2003). To determine whether or not youth reported significant changes on any of the ten items, t-tests for related samples were computed for each item individually. The results indicated that youth reported significant changes on four of the ten items. The findings are summarized below in Table 3.

Table 3. Average Scores on Each Item Pertaining to Youth's Attitudes toward the Police.

Police in my community…	Pre-Test	Post-Test	t	Sig.
respect people like me	3.18	3.36	1.99	.05
are here to help protect people like me	3.42	3.45	.32	n/s
are more willing to threaten someone like me	3.34	3.32	-.14	n/s
sometimes will allow crimes to happen without stopping them	3.34	3.25	-.70	n/s
do their jobs well	3.28	3.43	1.49	n/s
enjoy being police officers	3.18	3.42	2.34	.05
unfairly use abusive language with some people	3.09	3.21	.89	n/s
I …				
feel comfortable when I see the police on the streets	3.10	3.39	2.26	.05
do not really think about the police I see on the streets	2.79	2.50	-2.36	.05
worry that the police I see on the streets will bother my friends or me	3.22	3.16	-.45	n/s

The above results suggest that youth felt more comfortable with, and respected by, the police as a result of their involvement in the Police Working with Youth Programs.

III. Youth Outcome Results

This evaluation was designed to assess changes in participants who completed the Police Working with Youth programs in 2005. Indicators of the youth development outcomes described earlier were administered to youth involved in the "Police" programs at the beginning and end of the project year. Statistical analyses, involving youth between the ages of 12 and 18, were conducted using repeated measures analysis with pre-test and post-test scores

as the within subjects factor. Each outcome measure was examined separately. The repeated measures analyses on each outcome measure were repeated several times with a separate between subjects factor included each time. This was done so that subgroup differences among youth participants could be examined. The between subjects grouping factors examined included: sex, length of time in the program, grade level in school, overall grade point average, and race/ethnicity.

Several grouping factors were reduced to fewer categories than were originally present in the data in order to ensure relatively equal subgroup sizes for statistical power purposes. For instance, grade level was reduced to three groups that included: (1) grades 5, 6 and 7; (2) grades 8 and 9; and (3) grades 10, 11, and 12. In addition to the issue of equal groups, it was thought that these sub-groupings also represented differing developmental levels among youth. Grade point average was collapsed into three groups: (1) A-average, (2) B- average, and (3) C-average because 98% of the sample fell within these three categories. The race/ethnicity categories were also collapsed into two groups: (1) White and (2) African American and Hispanic Latino. Other racial/ethnic subgroups were excluded due to very small numbers. Again, this was done to ensure adequate subgroup sample sizes. Also, preliminary comparisons indicated that African American and Hispanic/ Latino youth did not differ statistically on any of the outcome measures included in the evaluation.

Self-Regulatory Efficacy

A significant two-way interaction was found between time and ethnic/racial group status [$F_{(2, 57)} = 9.47$; $p < .001$]. African American and Hispanic/Latino youth were significantly more likely to increase their scores on self-regulatory efficacy following completion of the program than were white youth. These results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Changes in Self-Regulatory Efficacy Scores Following Program Completion for Youth in Different Ethnic/Racial Groups.

Ethnic/Racial Group	N	Pre-Test	Post-Test
White	47	51.74	50.21
African Am.& Hispanic/Latino	13	38.54	48.92

Another significant two-way interaction was found between time and grade level [$F_{(2, 64)} = 7.93$; $p < .001$]. Youth in the lower grades were significantly more likely to improve their scores on self-regulatory efficacy following completion of the program than were youth in the higher grades (see Table 5).

Table 5. Changes in Self-Regulatory Efficacy Scores Following Program Completion for Youth in Different Grade Levels.

Grade Level in School	N	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Grades 5-7	15	38.40	47.47
Grades 8-9	26	51.96	49.73
Grades 10-12	26	51.11	50.81

These results indicate that those most likely to improve their capacity to resist negative peer pressures following completion of the programs were younger (grades 5-7) and from minority (African American or Hispanic/Latino) backgrounds.

Sense of Mastery

A significant two-way interaction was found between time and racial/ethnic background [$F_{(1, 53)} = 4.95$; $p < .05$]. This indicated that African American and Hispanic/Latino youth were more likely to increase their scores on the sense of mastery measure following completion of the program. In contrast, white youth who completed the program remained essentially unchanged on this outcome (see Table 6).

Table 6. Changes in Sense of Mastery Scores Following Program Completion for Youth in Different Ethnic/Racial Groups.

Ethnic/Racial Group	N	Pre-Test	Post-Test
White	45	22.82	22.67
African Am.& Hispanic/Latino	10	19.20	21.70

Social Support from Significant Non-family Adults

A significant main effect for time [$F_{(1, 58)} = 2.79$; $p < .05$] indicated that all youth, regardless of their sex, grade level, grade point average, or ethnic/racial background, reported an increase in their means scores. Average scores among all youth increased from 16.29 to 17.46 on the social support measure.

Social Responsibility

A significant two-way interaction was found between time and average grades in school (GPA) [$F_{(2, 51)} = 3.49$; $p < .05$]. An inspection of Table 7 below indicates that participants who had a B-average in school improved slightly in the sense of social responsibility at the end of the

program. However, the biggest change was among participants who reported having a C-average in school. This group reported the largest decline in their sense of social responsibility following completion of the program.

Table 7. Changes in Sense of Social Responsibility Scores Following Program Completion for Youth with Different Grade Point Averages.

Overall Grade Point Average in School	N	Pre-Test	Post-Test
A	20	69.95	69.15
B	24	63.33	64.79
C	10	64.90	59.30

Characteristics of Youth in Lower Grades or from Minority Ethnic/Racial Backgrounds

These above results indicating more positive changes for some groups of youth as opposed to others prompted some additional questions. Specifically, what other characteristics might describe those youth in lower grades or from minority ethnic/racial backgrounds who had reported the most change on several outcome measures? Chi square analyses were conducted to asses how youth in lower grades might differ from youth in higher grades and how minority youth might differ from white youth.

Youth in lower grades were significantly more likely to: (1) report being African American or Hispanic rather than white [$\chi^2(2) = 23.24$; $p < .001$], (2) live in an alternative family arrangement such as with mother-only or with father and step-mother rather than with two biological parents [χ^2, $(10) = 17.98$; $p < .05$], and (3) have participated in the program for a longer period of time (1 to 2 years as opposed to 3 months) [$\chi^2(10) = 18.63$; p, .05].

African American or Hispanic/Latino youth were significantly more likely to: (1) be in the lower grades (5-7 rather than 8-9 or 10-12) [$\chi^2(2) = 24.79$; $p < .001$], or (2) have spent more time in the program than white youth (1 to 2 years versus 3 months) [$\chi^2(4) = 19.60$; $p < .001$].

It appears that the youth who were most likely to benefit from the Police programs shared several additional attributes in common. In addition to being younger (in lower grades at school) and having minority ethnic/racial backgrounds, they were also more likely to have spent more time in the program and lived in non-traditional family arrangements.

IV. Youth Observer Reports of Program Activities

An important goal of this evaluation was to gain a better understanding of the activities that youth participated in while attending Police Working with Youth Programs. Each program was expected to recruit several youth who would serve as observers and complete regular reports on what had occurred in their programs. A participant-observer report form was developed to assist youth observers with this task (see Appendix 2 for a copy of the form). The form included the name of the program, the location of the activity, number in attendance, type of activity, and a description of what occurred during the activity. Staff and youth observers were also expected to attend several training sessions sponsored by OPM and conducted by the Youth Development Training and Resource Center and the Center for Applied Research. In addition to providing information about basic youth development principles, these sessions provided youth observers with a basic overview of their tasks, instructions on how to complete the observation forms, and opportunities to ask questions and receive clarification.

Youth documentation of activity sheets were submitted from 8 of the 10 towns examined in this evaluation: Berlin, Bridgeport, Enfield, Killingly, Middletown, Plainfield, Stonington, and Waterford.

The following activities were found to occur regularly in the Police programs that participated in the evaluation.

Planning Meetings

Of these 8 towns, all (100%) conducted planning meetings. Meetings were held with youth to discuss goals for the project year. Youth chose what activities they would be involved in and when they would occur. They then helped with organizing specific details of the upcoming events. For instance, youth helped plan future meetings, created "plans of action" to recruit other youth into the program, helped select fund raising events and field trips.

Training Sessions

Most (88%) of the programs offered training sessions. Training sessions generally included an orientation to the Police Working with Youth programs. The youth also received training (knowledge and skill building) in such areas as: learning how to conduct a meeting, effective communication skills, internet safety, public speaking, building team work, community safety, resources available in their communities, disabilities and diversity issues, drugs and alcohol, social skills, and dealing with stress.

Some of the programs provided specialized training focused on police work and the police profession. One town provided youth with a "crime-scene investigation" experience, where they learned to recognize specifics about their surroundings. Youth learned how to finger print and had the chance to fingerprint their peers. Youth were also able to learn about detective

work and working with K-9's in law enforcement. They also learned how to perform military drills, marching movements, salutes, and direct traffic.

Field Trips

Most (75%) of the Police Working with Youth programs went on field trips. The field trips tended to fall into two categories: (1) Recreational: Ice skating, sleigh riding, bowling, rafting, hiking, hayrides, golf lessons, restaurants, and movies, and (2) Educational: Pequot Museum, Mystic Aquarium, tour of historic Boston, tour of Police Stations and a trip to a youth prison, where youth learned first-hand how individuals their own age live while incarcerated.

Club Events

All (100%) of the programs had special club events held specifically for participants. Many (63%) of the programs held festivities to celebrate holidays, such as Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas parties, pumpkin decorating, and a Valentine's Day dance. The Police Working with Youth programs also sponsored other small celebrations such as a welcome home party for an officer who served in Iraq. Club events also included sports-related organized activities, such as relay races, volley ball games, and laser tag.

Community Service Activities

Many (63%) of the Police programs engaged youth in activities within their own communities that were intended to give participants a sense of ownership in their hometowns. These activities included cleaning up playgrounds, developing a teen reading area in the local library, giving input to a landscaping project in the center of town, holding a community picnic, and volunteering at booths in the local fair. Additionally, one town sponsored a late teen-night activity as a drug-free alternative activity for youth.

During the winter holiday season, 50% of the Police Working with Youth programs held food and/or toy drives, such as "Stuff a Cruiser." Some also participated in volunteer work throughout the project year, which included volunteering to assist the American Legion and the Lion's club.

Meaningful Involvement

In 63% of the programs, youth were also provided a sense of ownership and affiliation in their particular "Police Working with Youth" groups. They helped choose official logos, received special t-shirts, and assisted in the fitting and ordering of their uniforms.

Youth Engagement with Police

Although a basic goal of the Police Working with Youth programs was to bring youth and police together in meaningful ways, it was noteworthy that many programs (63%) made a

concerted effort to teach youth about police. Youth participants were introduced to officers, including detectives, chiefs, and captains. Youth were provided "question and answer" sessions with police where they could learn about the profession and discuss misconceptions youth have about police. Youth were given opportunities to spend recreation time with officers to facilitate more positive relationships between youth and police. A primary emphasis in this regard was to teach youth participants new ways to communicate with police.

Summary of Findings

The major findings of the evaluation are summarized below.

- Youth generally found participating in Police Working with Youth programs to be a very positive experience. When asked to retrospectively report on their year in the program, well over 90% reported feeling safe, accepted, a sense of belonging, and part of a community. Most made new friends, were involved in stimulating activities, and felt supported by the staff.

- African American and Hispanic/Latino youth were significantly more likely than white youth to report overall satisfaction with the Police Working with Youth Programs.

- Most participants reported significant changes in their attitudes toward police on four of the ten survey items included in the evaluation to assess this dimension. Youth reported feeling significantly more respected by police officers and more comfortable in their presence. They also expressed greater awareness that police officers enjoy their work.

Analyses that included the entire sample of youth who participated in the Police Working with Youth Programs indicated significant changes on four of the five youth outcomes included in the evaluation. However, in most instances it was subgroups of youth rather than the entire sample of youth who indicated significant changes on these outcomes. The one exception was on the social support measure.

- All youth who completed both pre-tests and post-tests indicated that they perceived the level of social support they received from significant, non-family adults in their lives to have increased.

The other changes reported by youth were more specific to subgroups of youth.

- African American and Hispanic/Latino youth were significantly more likely than white youth to report increases in their self-regulatory efficacy and sense of mastery. Self-regulatory efficacy refers to one's ability to resist negative peer pressures and a sense of mastery refers to one's belief that stressful situations in life can be effectively managed.

- Another subgroup comparison that was significant was between youth who were in the lower grades in school (grades 5-7) and those who were in higher grades (grades 7-8

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and 9-12). Youth in grades five through seven were significantly more likely to report an increase in self-regulatory efficacy than were youth in higher grades. That is, younger youth were more likely to increase their capacities to resist negative peer pressures.

- A third subgroup comparison that was significant was between youth who were performing better in school versus those were performing less well in school as indicated by their reported grade point average. Youth who reported a C-average in school, as opposed to a higher average, were most likely to report a decline in their overall sense of social responsibility. Social responsibility refers to one's commitment to, and actions toward, helping the community and fostering the well-being of others.

These above results prompted additional questions as to what other characteristics might describe youth who appeared to benefit most from the programs.

- Youth in lower grades were significantly more likely to: (1) be African American or Hispanic rather than white, (2) live in an alternative family arrangement such as mother-only or father and step-mother rather than with two biological parents, and (3) have participated in the program for a longer period of time (1 to 2 years as opposed to 3 months).

- African American or Hispanic/Latino youth were significantly more likely to: (1) be in the lower grades (5-7 rather than older grades), or (2) have spent more time in the program than white youth (1 to 2 years versus 3 months).

Finally, youth participant-observers who completed forms describing activities in their programs reported the following results.

- All Police Working with Youth Programs offered youth opportunities to become meaningfully involved in the programs. This included active participation in planning meetings in which youth took an active role in deciding the types of activities, tasks, and projects that would be completed during the program year. Involvement was further reinforced in some programs by engaging youth in the selection of official logos, and wearing special t-shirts and uniforms.

- All programs also offered youth participants opportunities to engage in stimulating and interesting activities. These included various club events, field trips, and community service projects.

- Another noteworthy finding was that the majority of Police Working with Youth programs also included a more structured training component in addition to what might be referred to as a recreational component. This structured component not only included teaching youth specific police and law enforcement skills (traffic control,

police investigation techniques), it also targeted the acquisition of more general knowledge and skills such as communication skills, public speaking, resistance to drugs and alcohol, and dealing with stress.

- Finally, many programs also made concerted efforts to impact youth participants' perceptions of police and the police profession through question and answer sessions and interviews with patrolmen, detectives, chiefs, and captains. It appears that this effort was at least somewhat successful given the survey results that indicated youth changed their perceptions about police in several areas (please refer to Table 3 for details).

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from this evaluation of Police Working with Youth programs.

First, an especially large majority of youth found participating in Police Working with Youth programs to be a very positive experience. Well over 90% reported feeling safe, accepted, a sense of belonging, and part of the community. A sense of safety among participants is especially important because previous research has indicated that a safe environment is an important element of successful youth programming (Gambone et al., 2004; Vandell, et al., 2005). Most participants made new friends, were involved in stimulating activities, and felt supported by the staff. Youth from minority backgrounds (African American, Hispanic/Latino) were especially supportive of the programs. Youth also reported positive changes in their attitudes toward police on several items included in the evaluation survey.

With regard to positive youth outcomes, the entire sample of youth reported significant increases in the amount of social support they received from significant, non-family adults. This is an important finding because supportive relationships with staff and other non-familial adults is another frequently identified characteristic of effective youth programs (Anderson-Butcher, et al., 2004; Catalano et al., 2002; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Loder & Hirsch, 2003; Noam & Fiore, 2004; Rhodes, 2004; Roth, et al, 1998).

Subgroups of youth, most notably minority youth and younger participants in lower grade levels, reported additional positive changes. Both of these subgroups reported positive changes in self-regulatory efficacy. Additionally, minority youth also reported positive changes in their sense of mastery over stressful life situations. The capacity to resist negative peer pressures and to feel confident in managing difficult life situations are the types of personal coping resources and protective factors that have been found to promote healthy adolescent development (Benson, 2002; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Larson, 2000; McLaughlin, 2000).

Some results were notably different from the results obtained in an earlier evaluation of Police Working with Youth Programs that was conducted in 2002 through 2004. In that earlier evaluation, neither minority youth nor younger youth reported significant changes following completion of the programs compared to other youth. It is not clear what might account for this

difference. It might be that these programs have made a concentrated effort to tailor the programs to the needs of different subgroups. Alternatively, the findings might reflect differences in the samples of youth included in each evaluation. For instance, only four of the communities included in the current evaluation also participated in the earlier one (Bridgeport, Killingly, Plainfield, and Waterford). Thus, most communities in the current evaluation were different from the ones that participated in the earlier evaluation. Furthermore, the current evaluation included a smaller sample of youth. Whereas the earlier evaluation included 17 programs and a total of 367 youth, the present evaluation involved only 10 programs and a total of 141 youth. In any event, it is important to highlight these differences because they highlight the fact that different police programs are able to work successfully with different subgroups of youth.

The data also suggested that one subgroup of youth might not be responding well to the Police programs. Youth who reported doing more poorly in school, as indicated by lower grade point averages, showed decreased scores on the social responsibility outcome. That is, youth participants with lower grades in school showed a decline in their commitment to, and actions toward, helping the community and fostering the well-being of others following completion of the programs. Although the meaning of this single finding remains unclear, it suggests that programs may want to give some additional attention to assessing the needs of those individuals who enter the programs with less academic success.

The observational data provided by youth participant-observers indicated that all Police Working with Youth Programs offered youth opportunities to become meaningfully involved in the program and engage in stimulating and interesting activities. Meaningful involvement and engagement in stimulating activities have been shown to be two additional core components found in successful youth programs (Catalano et al., 2002; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Eccles, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; O'Donoghue, Kirshner, & McLaughlin, 2002; Roth, et al, 1998; Walker et al., 2005).

Based upon the survey and observational data, it appears that the Police Working with Youth programs involved in this evaluation have incorporated many of the core components identified in prior research to be present in high quality youth programs. Safety, feeling supported by staff, a sense of meaningful involvement, and engagement in stimulating and challenging activities are all important elements of effective youth programs.

As in any evaluation, the findings also raise additional questions. We still do not know what motivates youth to become involved in Police Working with Youth programs in the first place. Nor do we know what kinds of individuals are most likely to enroll, participate regularly, and complete the program. Furthermore, are there other characteristics, in addition to age and ethnicity that might differentiate those who do well in the program from those who do less well?

A process evaluation would be useful in addressing the questions posed above, such as who participates and why. Furthermore, additional efforts directed toward collecting attendance data could address the question of whether regular (in contrast to infrequent) attendance improves youth outcomes.

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YOUTH WORKING WITH POLICE QUESTIONNAIRE
POST-TEST 2005

Please carefully read and fill out the following questionnaire. The reason for this survey is to improve youth programs in the state. Your honest answers are important. Thanks.

The first thing we ask for you to complete is an identification number. This ID is important because it enables us to track whether or not your feelings about the center change over time. There are two boxes for your initials, the month, the day, and the year of your birth. For example, if your name is Jane Smith and you were born on July 5, 1989, your id would be JS070589 and you would fill in the boxes as illustrated:

First and Last Initials	Birth Month	Birth Day	Birth Year

Example: ☐ ☐   ☐ ☐   ☐ ☐   ☐ ☐

Please fill in the boxes below with your ID. Note that there are two boxes for the month, day and year. Also, note that if your day or month is a single digit like 5 or 2, just put a zero as shown in the example. **If you are not sure how to fill in the boxes, ask the person giving out this survey to help you.**

First and Last Initials	Birth Month	Birth Day	Birth Year

Your ID: ☐ ☐   ☐ ☐   ☐ ☐   ☐ ☐

Today's date _____

In what town do you live?
_____

Gender: _____ Male   _____ Female

Year of Birth: 19_____

How long have you been involved in this program?
Check the answer that is closest.

_____ 3 months   _____ 1 year
_____ 6 months   _____ 2 years
_____ 9 months   _____ More than 2 years

Grade in school:

_____6   _____10
_____7   _____11
_____8   _____12
_____9   _____ College   _____ Not in school or college

What are your average grades in school:

_____ A (90-100%) or (3.3 to 4.0 grade point average)
_____ B (80-89%) or (2.3 to 3.2 grade point average)
_____ C (70-79%) or (1.3 to 2.2 grade point average)
_____ D (60-69%) or (.3 to 1.2 grade point average)
_____ F (0-59%) or (0 to .2 grade point average)
_____ Not in school

Race / Ethnicity: Check the one that best applies:

_____ White (not Hispanic / Latin)
_____ Black (not Hispanic / Latin)
_____ Hispanic / Latin
_____ Asian
_____ American Indian
_____ Other

YOUR FAMILY:
Family Status: Check the line that best describes the adults living in your house right now.

_____ Mother and Father   _____ Foster Parents
_____ Mother only   _____ Mother and Stepfather
_____ Father only   _____ Father and Stepmother
_____ Other relatives   _____ Other: unrelated (Please
                                               describe) _____

REMEMBER CHECK ONE ANSWER ONLY PER LINE

The next set of questions give you choices about what you feel or think in different situations
LOOK CAREFULLY AT THE SAMPLE QUESTION BEFORE ANSWERING and CAREFULLY READ THE
DIRECTIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN. There are two steps to completing this survey.

First decide whether you are most like the answers on the left or the answers on the right, but do not mark anything
yet.

Second, after you have decided which side you are most like, select whether the answer is always true or sometimes
true for you and place a check in that box.

FOR EACH LINE THERE SHOULD BE ONLY ONE BOX CHOSEN

Always True for me	Some times true for me				Some times true for me	Always true for me
☐	☐	some teens worry about their grades	BUT	other teens don't seem to worry about their grades	☐	☐

Always True for me	Sometimes True for me				Sometimes True for me	Always True For me
☐	☐	**Some teenagers feel bad when they let people down who depend on them**	**BUT**	**Other teenagers don't let it bother them so much**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens think it's the responsibility of the community to take care of people who can't take care of themselves**	**BUT**	**Other teens think that everyone should take care of themselves**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens are interested in doing something about school problems**	**BUT**	**Other teens don't really care to get involved in school problems**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**In a group situation, some teens let others do most of the work**	**BUT**	**Other teens help a group all they can**	☐	☐

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Always True for me	Sometimes True for me		BUT		Sometimes True for me	Always True For me
☐	☐	**Some teens seem to find time to work on other people's problems**	BUT	**Other teens find taking care of their own problems more than enough to do**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens are interested in what other students in class have to say**	BUT	**Other teens don't care that much about what other students have to say**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens are interested in doing something about the problems in the community**	<u>BUT</u>	**Other teens are not that interested in working on problems in the community**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens carefully prepare for community and school assignments**	BUT	**Other teens usually don't prepare that much**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens would rather not present ideas in a group discussion**	BUT	**Other teens feel comfortable in presenting ideas in a group discussion**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens let others know when they can't keep an appointment**	BUT	**Other teens don't call ahead when they can't make it**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens think that people should only help people they know –like close friends and relatives**	BUT	**Other teens think people should help people in general, whether they know them personally or not**	☐	☐

Always True for me	Sometimes True for me				Sometimes True for me	Always True For me
☐	☐	**For some teens, it seems too difficult to keep commitments**	**BUT**	**Other teens somehow manage to keep commitments**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens' ideas are almost always listened to by a group**	**<u>BUT</u>**	**Other teens have a hard time getting a group to pay attention to their suggestions**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens don't think they have much to say about what happens to them**	**BUT**	**Other teens feel that they can pretty much control what will happen in their lives**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens don't think it makes much sense to help others unless you get paid**	**BUT**	**Other teens think you should help others even if you get paid for it**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens are good at helping people**	**BUT**	**Other teens don't see helping others as one of their strong points**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens feel obligated to carry out tasks assigned to them by the group**	**BUT**	**Other teens don't feel bound by group decisions**	☐	☐

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Always True for me	Sometimes True for me		BUT		Sometimes True for me	Always True For me
☐	☐	**Some teens think when good things happen it is because of something that they did**	**BUT**	**Other teens think there seems to be no reasons for good things happening, it is just luck when things go well**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens prefer to have someone clearly lay out their assignments**	**BUT**	**Other teens prefer to make up their own lists of things to do**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens are not that worried about finishing jobs they promised they would do**	**BUT**	**Other teens would feel really bad about not finishing jobs they promised they would do**	☐	☐
☐	☐	**Some teens think they are able to help solve problems in the community**	**BUT**	**Other teens don't think they can do anything about them because a few powerful people decide everything**	☐	☐

****REMEMBER THE QUESTIONS JUST COMPLETED SHOULD HAVE ONLY **ONE**
ANSWER CHECKED FOR EACH LINE. ****

PLEASE CONTINUE TO
THE NEXT PAGE

The next questions are about pressures you might experience. Read these questions carefully and then CIRCLE the answer that best describes you.							
22. How well can you resist peer pressure to do things in school that can get you into trouble?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
23. How well can you resist peer pressure to smoke cigarettes?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
24. How well can you resist peer pressure to drink beer, wine, or liquor?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
25. How well can you resist peer pressure to smoke marijuana?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
26. How well can you resist peer pressure to use pills (uppers, downers)?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
27. How well can you resist peer pressure to have sexual intercourse?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
28. How well can you control your temper?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well
29. How well can you stop yourself from skipping school when you feel bored or upset?	1 Not well at all	2	3 Not too well	4	5 Pretty well	6	7 Very Well

For the next set of questions, CIRCLE the answer that best describes what you think or feel.				
30. I have little control over the things that happen to me	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
31. There is really no way I can solve some of the problems I have	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
32. There is little I can do to change many of the important things in my life	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
33. I often feel helpless in dealing with the problems of life	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
34. Sometimes I feel that I am being pushed around in life	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
35. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
36. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

For the next set of questions, please CIRCLE the answer that best shows how you feel.					
37. How often do you worry about whether other people like to be with you	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
38. How often do you feel sure	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
39. How often do you feel confident that someday people you respect will look up to you and respect you	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
40. How often do you feel self –conscious	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
41. How often do you feel that you have handled yourself well at a party	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
42. How often are you troubled with shyness	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
43. How often are you comfortable when starting a conversation with people you don't know	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
44. When you speak in a class discussion, how often do you feel sure of yourself	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never

CONTINUE

45. When you have to talk in front of a group of people your own age or in front of the class, how often are you pleased with your performance?	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never
46. How often do you worry about how well you get along with other people	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Once in a great while	Practically never

These questions are about adults in your life. Please circle the answer that best shows what you think.					
47. There is a special person around when I am in need	Rarely or never	A little bit	Sometimes	A good part of the time	Always
48. There is a special person with whom I can share my joys and sorrows	Rarely or never	A little bit	Sometimes	A good part of the time	Always
49. There is a special person who is a real source of comfort to me	Rarely or never	A little bit	Sometimes	A good part of the time	Always
50. There is a special person in my life that cares about my feelings	Rarely or never	A little bit	Sometimes	A good part of the time	Always

Please CIRCLE the answer that best shows what you think about the police in your community				
Police in my community…				
51. Respect people like me	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
52. Are here to help protect people like me	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
53. Are more willing to threaten someone like me	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
54. Sometimes will allow crimes to happen without stopping them	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
55. Do their jobs well	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
56. Enjoy being police officers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
57. Unfairly use abusive language with some people	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

58. I feel comfortable when I see the police on the streets	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
59. I do not really think about the police I see on the streets	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
60. I worry that the police I see on the streets will bother my friends or me	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

These last questions ask you to think about what it has been like for you in the program this last year. People circle your answer to each question.

61. Did you make friends in the program?   Yes   No

62. Did you feel accepted and supported in the program?   Yes   No

63. Did you feel like you belonged?   Yes   No

64. Did you feel safe in the program?   Yes   No

65. Were you involved in stimulating and engaging activities?   Yes   No

66. Did you feel like the police officer(s) really cared about you? Yes No

67. Did you feel like part of a community?   Yes   No

68. Was there a police officer who helped you solve your problems? Yes No

69. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the program?

Completely   Completely
Satisfied   Dissatisfied
   10   9   8   7   6   5   4   3   2   1

70. How have you changed from being involved in this program?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for completing this survey.

Promoting Positive Relations between Police and Youth
Documentation of Project Activities

Directions: Complete this form for each <u>new activity</u>. For example, if there are two activities at one meeting, complete two forms. Remember to <u>keep a copy for yourself</u>, just in case a copy gets lost in the mail! Return these sheets to the address below by the 1st of each month.

Name of Activity: _____

Date of Activity: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

Place for Activity: _____

Attendance for this activity:
Summary of Attendance
Youth Participants: _____total (_____ males, _____ females)
Police: _____ total (_____ males, _____ females)
Other adults present: _____

Note: Attach list with names and their affiliations

Type of Activity (Check all appropriate):

Planning Meeting _____   Preparation of Materials _____
Recognition celebration _____   Training Session _____
Outreach and recruitment work _____   Club Event _____
Field Trip _____   Other (please specify): _____
Presentation by Group _____   _____
Classroom Session _____

<u>Purpose of Activity:</u> _____

_____

<u>Provide a description of the Activity:</u> (if necessary attach no more than 1 page)

Signatures: _____   _____
                Youth Documenter   Adult Advisor