RESEARCH TO ACTION:

USING DATA TO INFORM ACHIEVEMENT GAP AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING & PRACTICE

INTENT OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAM REPORT

- This report includes information regarding achievement gap afterschool participants and program sites, fidelity and quality of implementation, and program outputs and participant outcomes. It is intended to summarize the larger and more technical evaluation report, *Sharing Our Success Evaluation Report, 2014-2015.*

- The report seeks to provide national-level program information that can guide discussions - within and between Ys and schools, between Ys and Y-USA technical advisors/program, and between Y-USA technical advisors/program and Y-USA evaluators - and thus enhance implementation and potentially future outcomes.

CONTENTS

ACHIEVEMENT GAP AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM: HOW IT WORKS

The Y's **Achievement Gap Afterschool Program (AG ASP**) is an out-of-school-time program for Kindergarten-8th graders, and is designed to be particularly effective with high-need youth. It is one of four Y-USA sponsored programs designed to reduce the achievement gap that, in total, provided programming and services to 262 program sites and 10,979 children and youth in 2014-2015. **AG ASP was implemented through 29 YMCAs and 41 separate program sites to provide services to 3,774 youth.**
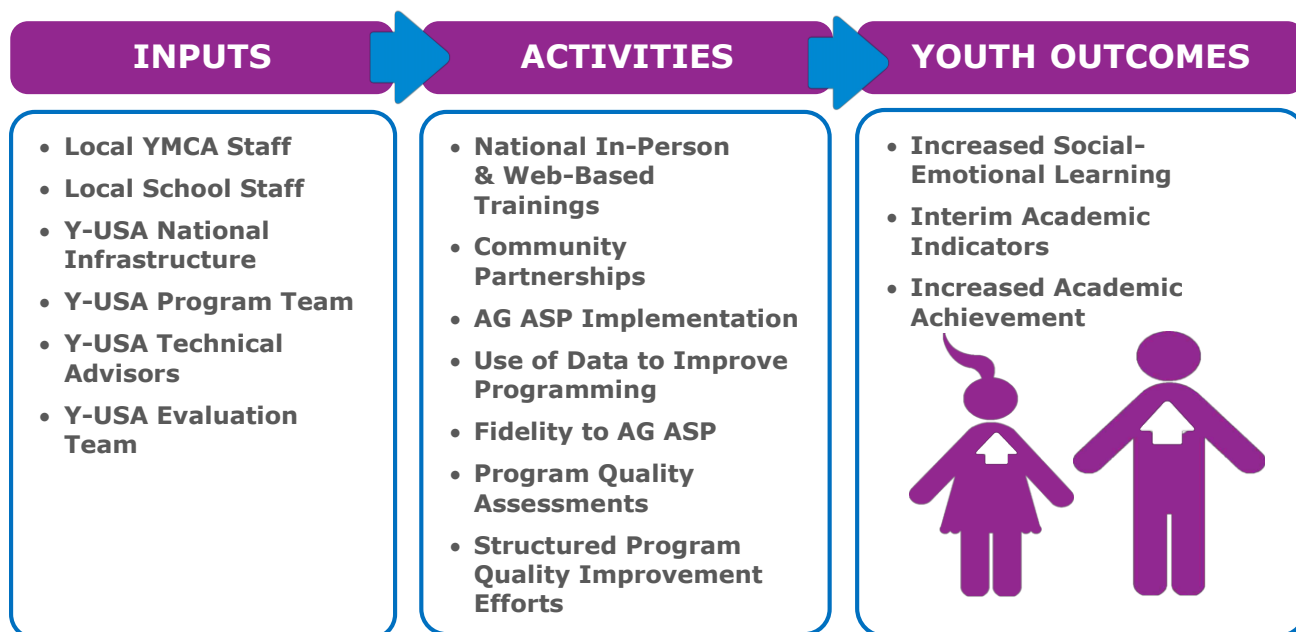
The goal of AG ASP is to improve student academic achievement and develop social-emotional learning (SEL) skills. This is accomplished through a structured afterschool program that provides academic enrichment opportunities, academic assistance (i.e., tutoring), and structured quality programming that builds and enhances social-emotional skills. Figure 1 presents an overview of how AG ASP inputs and activities lead to positive youth outcomes (e.g., increased SEL, increased academic achievement). Similar to all YMCA core youth-serving programs, the overall goal is to nurture the full potential of all youth. For a more detailed discussion regarding AG ASP's implementation activities, along with more information regarding data presented in this report, please see the *AG ASP Sharing Our Success Evaluation Report, 2014-2015*.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

As part of a **comprehensive utilization-focused evaluation**, Y-USA's Research and Evaluation Department collects and analyzes data continuously to improve program performance and youth outcomes.

This document presents data and information on program activities, outputs, and outcomes for the 2014-2015 program year and is intended to promote discussion between Y-USA program and evaluation personnel, local YMCA staff, and participating schools in order to improve programming in general, and for the 2015-2016 AG ASP program year in particular.

FIGURE 1. HOW AG ASP WORKS TO IMPROVE YOUTH OUTCOMES

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	YOUTH OUTCOMES
• Local YMCA Staff • Local School Staff • Y-USA National Infrastructure • Y-USA Program Team • Y-USA Technical Advisors • Y-USA Evaluation Team	• National In-Person & Web-Based Trainings • Community Partnerships • AG ASP Implementation • Use of Data to Improve Programming • Fidelity to AG ASP • Program Quality Assessments • Structured Program Quality Improvement Efforts	• Increased Social-Emotional Learning • Interim Academic Indicators • Increased Academic Achievement

WHO PARTICIPATED IN AG ASP?

In the 2014-2015 school year, 41 Ys from 29 Associations in 18 states served 3,774 participants in AG ASP. **The *final analysis sample included 3,568 youth*** who both consented and attended more than 10 sessions.

The sample was racially and ethnically diverse (See Table 1), with Hispanic/Latino representing the majority (38%), and with sizable African-American (27%) and Caucasian (21%) populations. There was also a sizable population where Spanish was the primary language spoken at home (23%). *At least three out of every four AG ASP participants were eligible for a free or reduced lunch*.

TABLE 1. YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS (N=3,568)

Gender	Girls	47%
	Boys	48%
	Not Reported	5%
Race/Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino	38%
	African-American/Black	27%
	Caucasian/White	21%
	Two or More	10%
	Not Reported	2%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	Yes	76%
	No	11%
	Not Reported	13%
School Type	Title I Schools	100%

Note. Race/Ethnicities with one percent or less are not listed.

AG ASP GRADES SERVED AND REASONS FOR REFERRAL

The majority of AG ASP participants were in kindergarten through 4th grade (See Table 2).

While the program benefits all youth, youth with academic challenges are especially targeted for AG ASP participation (See Table 2). ***For 40 percent of the participants, the priority factor for referral was a non-proficient reading or math score.***

The remainder of AG ASP participants had a priority factor related to attendance or behavior, a factor labeled 'other', and for a notable percentage (i.e., 30%), the factor was not known or not documented in the program data management system.

TABLE 2. GRADES SERVED & PRIORITY FACTOR FOR REFERRAL (N=3,568)

Grade		
	Kindergarten	16%
	First	17%
	Second	19%
	Third	19%
	Fourth	15%
	Fifth	12%
Priority Factor	Non-Proficient Reading Score	28%
	Non-Proficient Math Score	13%
	Other Priority Factor	19%
	5+ Behavioral referrals	4%
	5 + School Absences	3%
	5+ School Tardies	2%
	Not Reported	30%

Note. Grades with one percent or less of student population are not included in the table (i.e., Pre-K, 7th, & 8th graders).

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

TABLE 3. PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

	Average	Range
Grades Served	--	K- 8th grade
Program Weeks	36	19-39
Program Days	147	68-184
Participants per Site	87	17-212

On average*, **youth attended 87 full-days out of 147***, which results in a 59 percent full-day participation rate[1]. Based on past research[2], and practitioner experience, AG ASP sets an individual full-day attendance goal of 80 percent. AG ASP operationalizes full-day as youth attending at least 2.5 hours each day or more; anything less is considered partial attendance. Thirty-three percent or 1,111 youth met this goal. Finally, on average, program sites served 87 students.

---

[1] It should be noted that the youth attend an average of 71% of days when attendance also includes full and partial days. Separate analyses investigating the relationship of attendance/dosage to student achievement and SEL development is currently underway.

[2] Reisner, E., White, R.N., Russell, C.A., & Birmingham, J. (2004). Evaluation of programs supported by The After-School Corporation. Washington, D.C.: Policy Studies Associates.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

The average ASP participant was likely to be in first through third grade, eligible for free or reduced lunch, and referred to the program due to academic priority factors.

- AG ASP is serving high-need youth, as demonstrated by the high percentange eligble for free or reduced lunch (at least 76%) and the high percentage with a non-proficient math or reading score listed as the priority factor for referral (40%).

- Better documentation of the priority factor(s) for which students are selected or referred to the program would help meet program requirements to target those most in need. Additionally, more tailored approaches and how program sites work with different populations could be better understood. A substantial number – almost half - were rated as other (19%) or not reported (30%) over this past school year.

- Consistent attendance has been a difficult hurdle to overcome for most afterschool programs. This is particularly the case for AG ASP since full-day attendance translates into 2.5 program hours or more. While only 33 percent of students met this goal, it is noteworthy that this is a substantial increase from the prior year when only 20 percent met this goal.

- Daily attendance rates substantially improve to 71 percent when partial-day and full-day youth are counted. To further improve attendance, it is recommended that program sites and YMCAs share successful strategies, which could include possible participant and class-level incentives, and by further increasing connections to local schools and school staff.

HOW WELL DID Ys IMPLEMENT THE AG ASP PROGRAM MODEL?

PROGRAM FIDELITY

AG ASP's fidelity measure is ***designed to provide program sites with critical information regarding how well they are implementing*** <u>***core domains and activities***</u> ***of the AG ASP program model***. The fidelity measure was a simple yes/no assessment in the 2014-2015 program year. As displayed in Table 4, both local YMCA staff (site) and Y-USA staff (Technical Advisors or TAs) assess fidelity. Association level YMCA staff also complete fidelity measures but their scores are not included in the table below. Fidelity is scored in three categories: (1) program implementation, (2) program operation, and (3) program administration.

Thirty-six of the 41 AG ASP sites had both program site and Y-USA ratings in fall 2014. The percent of Ys responding "Yes" to each fidelity item, and average domain and overall fidelity scores, are listed in Table 4[3].

TABLE 4. PROGRAM FIDELITY RATINGS (FALL 2014) BY PROGRAM SITE AND Y-USA STAFF (N=36)

		Site	Y-USA
Implementation	1. Students receive 30 minutes of daily physical activity.	94%	91%
	2. Students receive 30-45 minutes of homework help daily.	100%	94%
	3. Students receive 30 minutes of tutoring 1-2x/week, as needed.	81%	64%
	4. Students receive 30-45 minutes of health and wellness activities bi-monthly.	100%	79%
	5. Students receive 60-90 minutes of academic and social enrichment (21st century skills, global learning, service learning, arts, leadership development, college career readiness, etc.) twice per week.	92%	58%
	6. Students receive 30-45 minutes of math and literacy enrichment daily.	94%	73%
	7. Program operates five days per week.	100%	100%
	8. Program operates a minimum of 2.5 hours per day.	100%	97%
	Average Program Implementation Score	**95%**	**82%**
Operations	1. A minimum of 1:12 staff to participant ratio for all activities.	75%	73%
	2. Maintains and revises implementation plan with school and Y staff.	94%	91%
	3. Local YMCA maintains a FT site director who works at the school (fully dedicated to program implementation).	92%	91%
	4. Activities are aligned to the school day, planned with students' teachers.	86%	82%
	5. Priority for enrollment is given to youth who are referred by school liaison and meet one or more of the five priority areas.	78%	91%
	6. Program is operated at a local school that was selected based on need.	100%	100%
	7. School liaison is a certified teacher.	92%	88%
	8. New and existing staff are trained in program model and undergo continuous training and development.	94%	64%
	9. Plan in place for optimizing the percentage of students who will have an 80% or higher program full-time attendance rate.	92%	79%
	10. Principals and teachers involved in student recruitment.	92%	82%
	Average Program Operation Score	**89%**	**84%**

---

[3] In the most recent meta-analysis on universal SEL programs, which included over 213 studies, Durlak et al. (2011) found two critical moderators that differentiated successful from unsuccessful programs: (1) program fidelity, and (2) Sequenced, Active, Focused, and Explicit (SAFE) program and staff practices. AG ASP used this research base to implement both program fidelity and quality measures.

		Site	Y-USA
Administrative	1. Maintains and revises program budget as needed and submits changes to Y-USA.	92%	85%
	2. Student and program attendance is tracked daily and reported bimonthly.	92%	94%
	3. Partner school provides student academic data as necessary (grades, standardized test scores, attendance, etc.).	92%	70%
	4. Completes additional required evaluation tasks including: enrollment form/data collection waiver/photo release; DESSA assessments; fidelity checklists; PQA.	75%	64%
	5. Local Y staff attend Y-USA in-person trainings on program model and participate in all training webinars and ongoing learning opportunities.	97%	100%
	Average Administrative Score	**89%**	**82%**
	Overall Average Fidelity Score	**91%**	**83%**

Fidelity ratings are adequate overall and by fidelity domain. However, when you assess discrete AG ASP implementation activities (i.e., item-level), there are two noteworthy issues. First, seven out of 23 fidelity items received an average rating of 75 percent or less by Y-USA staff. Of these seven fidelity items, two were also rated 75 percent or lower by program site staff and are bolded in the table below. Seventy-five percent was chosen because this represents a substantial number of sites not implementing specific AG ASP activities (9 or more out of 36 sites).

TABLE 5. IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES BEING IMPLEMENTED BY 75% OR LESS OF AG ASP PROGRAM SITES

Activity/Item	Rating	Fidelity Domain
Students receive 30 minutes of tutoring 1-2x/per week, as needed	64%	Implementation
Students receive 60-90 minutes of academic and social enrichment twice per week	58%	Implementation
Students receive 30-45 minutes of math and literacy enrichment daily	73%	Implementation
A minimum of 1:12 staff to participant ratio for all activities	73%	Operations
New and existing staff are trained in program model and undergo continuous training and development	64%	Operations
Partner school provides student academic data as necessary (grades, standardized tests score, attendance, etc.)	70%	Administrative
Complete additional required evaluation tasks including: enrollment form/data collection waiver/photo release; DESSA assessments; fidelity checklists; PQA	64%	Administrative

Second, there was also a distinct difference between ratings by program site and Y-USA staff. Y-USA technical advisors' ratings are lower for every fidelity domain and overall, and even exhibit double digit differences in 10 AG ASP implementation activities (i.e., 10 out of the 23 items or 43 percent of all fidelity activities). The 10 items, listed in descending order in terms of percent difference, are listed below (Table 6). Each fidelity domain is also identified for each AG ASP implementation activity. At the domain level, only program implementation exhibited a double digit difference (i.e., 13%).

TABLE 6. PERCENT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN Y-USA AND SITE RATINGS

Activity/Item	% Difference	Fidelity Domain
Students receive 60-90 minutes of academic and social enrichment twice per week	34%	Implementation
New and existing staff are trained in program model and undergo continuous training and development	30%	Operations
Partner school provides academic data as necessary	22%	Administrative
Students receive 30-45 minutes of health and wellness activities bi-monthly	21%	Implementation
Students receive 30-45 minutes of math and literacy enrichment daily	21%	Implementation
Students receive 30 minutes of tutoring 1-2x/week, as needed	17%	Implementation
Priority for enrollment is given to youth who are referred by school liaison and meet one or more of the five priority areas	13%	Operations
Plan in place for optimizing the percentage of students who will have an 80% or higher program full-time attendance rate	13%	Operations
Complete additional required evaluation tasks including: enrollment form/data collection waiver/photo release; DESSA assessments; fidelity checklists; PQA	11%	Administrative
Principals and teachers involved in student recruitment	10%	Operations

PROGRAM QUALITY

AG ASP used Weikart Center's School-Age Program Quality Assessment (S-PQA) to assess four quality domains: (1) safe environment; (2) supportive environment; (3) interaction; and (4) engagement. Staff completing the protocol select from 1, 3, or 5 with higher numbers indicating higher quality in each of the four domains. AG ASP uses this standardized assessment protocol to guide an overall continuous program quality improvement (PQI) process.

Table 7 provides *average PQA ratings for both fall and spring assessments* by type of staff (i.e., program site staff (site) and Y-USA staff for the 2014-2015 school year).

TABLE 7. AVERAGE RATINGS BY PQA DOMAIN (N=41)

Quality Domain	Site	Y-USA
Safe Environment	4.4	4.1
Supportive Environment	3.9	3.1
Interaction	3.9	3.1
Engagement	3.1	3.4

Overall, quality ratings were relatively high, and, similar to the fidelity measure, program site staff ratings tended to be higher than Y-USA TA ratings. In general, there were also higher averages for more basic quality domains (e.g., safe and supportive environment) than higher level domains such as engagement. The data suggest that more targeted efforts for positive and engaging program elements and staff practices[4] could improve overall program quality and youth engagement, which has been identified as a key component to successful youth programs.

Note that the PQA is a tool that informs program and staff practices throughout the year. *The fall PQA assessment guides a school year-long quality improvement process* in terms of program and staff practices across key quality indicators. Fall to spring ratings from sites showed increases in three of four domains. Please see Figure 2, which displays growth in positive staff interaction over time and by rater.

FIGURE 2. PQA INTERACTION DOMAIN SCORE OVER TIME, BY RATER
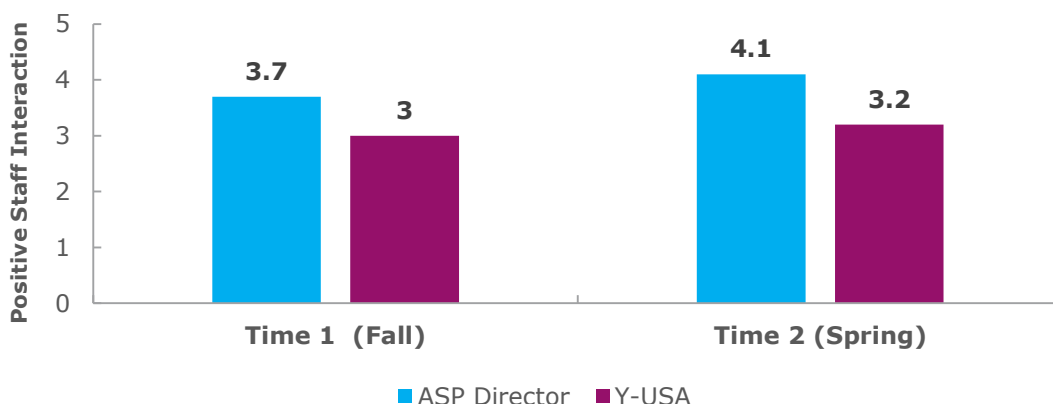
A similar growth pattern by rater over the program year occurred in the safe environment and supportive environment domains. One difference to this general pattern is that, for engagement, the program site ratings decreased in the spring while Y-USA ratings also decreased, but not by as much. This striking difference for youth engagement will be further explored in upcoming analyses. However, in sum, *data from both program site directors*

---

[4] Y-USA recently piloted a youth worker competency toolkit and the positive results for both programs and youth means YMCAs across the country will begin receiving this training starting in January 2016.

and Y-USA suggest improvements in program quality over the AG ASP year. As with program fidelity, program and technical advisors are encouraged to look at the discrete item/activity level for each domain to assess if they can improve in specific parts of the overall quality categories of safe environment, supportive environment, interaction, and engagement.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

The average program was rated moderately high in terms of overall fidelity to the AG ASP model. However, upon close inspection - when one looks at the individual item or activity level - there are challenges in implementing some of the basic program activities. There are also some substantial differences between Y-USA and program site staff implementation ratings.

- Moving forward, program sites should work closely with Y-USA to track and improve implementation in those areas where warranted. This includes intervention guidelines and activities that fall below certain standards (e.g., 75%), and where there are substantial differences between raters in AG ASP implementation activities.

Data also demonstrate that the program quality improvement process facilitated by the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality and Y-USA is helping program sites improve organizational and youth development practice. AG ASP programs could build on this programmatic strength to further improve youth development and social-emotional practice.

- An association level YMCA staff member and the program site directors receive extensive training provided by the Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. They are also provided with the skills and resources to take this back and train their own staff (i.e., train the trainer model). Y-USA needs to make sure these trainings are being implemented for all youth workers, especially when there is staff turnover. Based on fidelity scores for this implementation activity, it appears that training of front line staff can be improved (See Tables 5 and 6).

HOW DID AG ASP IMPACT YOUTH?

The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) was used to measure social-emotional skills of AG ASP participants. This measure calculates a total score, entitled Social-Emotional Composite (SEC), based on <u>eight</u> social and emotional factors or domains:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Personal Responsibility
- Decision Making
- Relationship Skills
- Goal-Directed Behavior
- Optimistic Thinking
- Social Awareness

Student scores on SEC and each of the DESSA variables can place them in one of three groupings based on a nationally normed sample: strength, typical, or need for instruction. Since students are assessed in the fall and spring, **staff can use the fall assessment to help with programming at both the group and individual levels.**

DESSA

Based on national standards, each youth is placed into one of three groups based on their scores:

- Strength (>60)
- Typical (42-59)
- Need for Instruction (41 and under)

This section presents youth DESSA data to answer two major questions:

1. DID YOUTH SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING IMPROVE?

Yes, analyses demonstrated that there was a statistically significant increase in DESSA SEC scores from pre- to post-test, or more simply stated**, social-emotional scores substantially increased from fall 2014 to spring 2015**[5]. This means the increase in scores was large enough that it was likely due to one, or several, of the AG ASP program components.[6]

FIGURE 3. DESSA SEC SCORE DISTRIBUTION

---
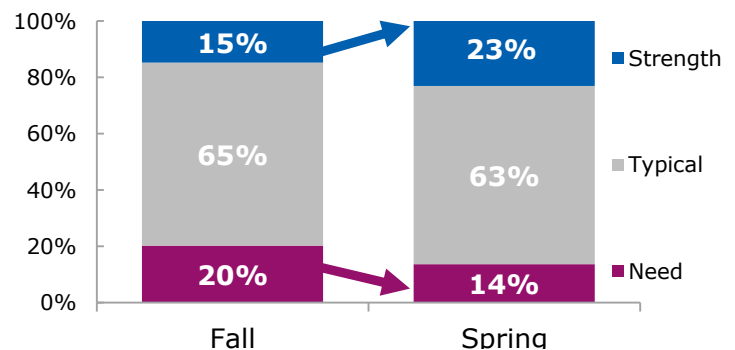
[5] A paired samples t-test found a statistically significant increase from pre- to post-test (t (1,994) = -12.95, $p < .001$).
[6] In order to be able to state that AG ASP definitively caused student increases in DESSA scores (or standardized tests), a more rigorous research design is needed. Specifically, Y-USA would need to implement a randomized controlled trial or quasi-experimental design. Y-USA is currently pursuing funding to conduct such a study in order to increase the evidence base for AG ASP.

Figure 3, the distribution of youth's pre- and post-test DESSA SEC scores, illustrates that the **percentage of youth within the strength range increased from 15% at pre-test to 23% at post-test – _which translates into an additional 160 youth within the strength range_.** Meanwhile, the number of youth within the need range decreased from 20% to 14% or, more concretely stated, the **number of youth within the need range by the end of the AG ASP program year decreased by 120 youth**. Thus, in total, AG ASP helped 280 youth, or 14 percent of students who completed both DESSAs (N=1,995), to positively change 'grouping category'. This was based on a nationally-normed sample, which means a large number of students demonstrated positive change to such an extent that they moved out of need and into the typical range, or out of need or typical and into the strength category.

Each of the eight SEL domains also demonstrated statistically significant improvements over the course of the AG ASP program (p<.001), and each grade demonstrated improvement, although not all were significant given the small sample size (e.g., n=21 for 6th graders).

2. DID YOUTH INTERIM ACADEMIC INDICATORS IMPROVE?

The goal of AG ASP is to improve participant's social-emotional learning and academic achievement[7], and to ultimately reduce the achievement gap. SEL growth is strongly associated with academic growth; a recent meta-analysis demonstrated that SEL programs led to increased academic achievement test scores, on average by 11-percentile points[8]. **What needs further research, however, is _how_ SEL skills and capacities lead to academic gains**. To investigate how these skills and capacities may lead to increased academic achievement, Y-USA, in collaboration with Devereux, developed three interim academic indicators to test whether these variables transmitted increased SEL to increased achievement. These variables included: school **a**ttachment, school **c**onduct, and self-**e**fficacy (ACE). Moreover such variables are good proxies to assess if there is movement toward improvements in academic mindsets, behaviors, and performance while student academic achievement data is being collected and analyzed.

Analyses demonstrated that all three ACE interim academic indicators significantly improved (_p_<.001). To illustrate this change, as with the overall SEC score, the percent of youth who scored in the strength, typical, and need range in fall 2014 can be compared to the percent that scored in these categories in spring 2015. In Figure 4, the change in the

---

[7] Y-USA's evaluation team is still in the process of collecting academic data for the 2014-2015 school year. This includes data on student attendance and standardized test performance. Y-USA will analyze and present this data as an addendum to the *AG ASP Sharing Our Success Evaluation Report, 2014-2015*.
[8] Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K.B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*(1), 405-432.

score distribution is displayed for each ACE indicator rather than listing percentages for both pre- and post-test.

FIGURE 4. SCORE DISTRIBUTION FOR INTERIM ACADEMIC INDICATORS (ACE)
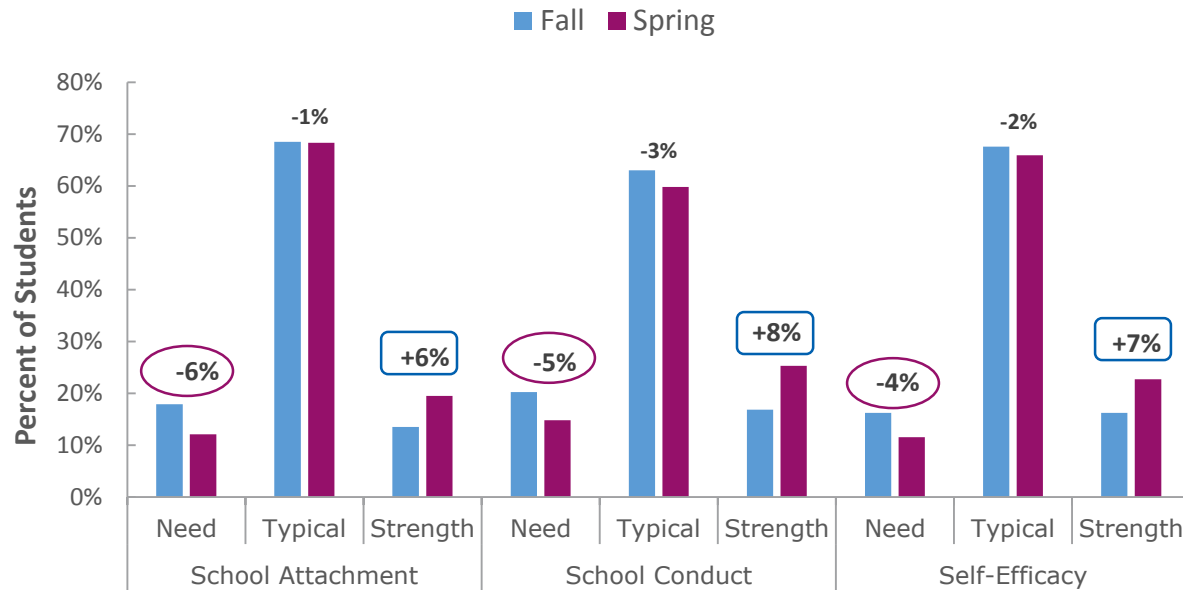
As can be seen from the score distributions, for each interim academic indicator, the percent of youth in the need for instruction category decreased between four to six percent, while the percent of youth in the strength category increased between six to eight percent. Meanwhile, the percent of youth in the typical category stayed relatively even (i.e., between one to three percent decrease, which is offset by students leaving either the need category or entering the strength category). *This pattern strongly suggests that youth are gaining the types of SEL skills and capacities that can translate into improved academic achievement*.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

Analyses demonstrated that participating AG ASP youth significantly and substantially improved in their overall social-emotional learning (SEC score), in each of the eight corresponding domains, as well as in interim academic indicators (ACE).

• AG ASP needs to implement a rigorous evaluation in order to causally link positive changes for participants to the AG ASP program. *Inference regarding causation requires the utilization of more rigorous designs*, such as quasi-experimental designs or randomized controlled trials, along with adherence to strict guidelines around methodological issues (e.g., baseline equivalence on analytic sample). Y-USA is

currently searching and applying for funding to provide the resources necessary for such a comprehensive evaluation.

- Results should also be interpreted cautiously since only 56% of participants completed both pre- and post-DESSA tests. ***Program sites need to substantially increase the percent of students taking both DESSA assessments.***

MOVING FORWARD

On a programmatic and practice level, overall, the data suggest the AG ASP program model is working to increase interim academic indicators and social-emotional learning. Program sites should be excited about the fact that since the seven initial pilots in the 2012-2013 school year, AG ASP expanded to ***41 program sites for the 2014-2015 school year, and experienced significant gains in SEL and interim academic indicators.*** Program sites also demonstrated adequate program fidelity and good program quality data. These are very positive results as the program has scaled extensively over the last three years.

As the national program report update also shows, there are areas that can be improved. These improvements could result in more positive gains in youth's SEL, academic mindsets and behavior, and ultimately, academic achievement. The data presented in this report identify some of these areas. Program sites' personal experiences should be used to augment this data to identify and prioritize areas that program sites feel they can address immediately, and over time, with realistic program improvement plans.

Given the current state of program readiness and capacity, there is serious traction for growth in the number of Y associations and program sites implementing AG ASP. As the program scales, the thousands of youth benefitting become tens of thousands, and real progress can be made toward substantially reducing the achievement gap.

As AG ASP moves forward into its fourth program year, it is a good time period to 'Take Stock' or an inventory of what has been accomplished to date, and to identify the areas that can lead to even more positive program and youth outcomes. This document, in particular the following appendices, are intended to promote discussion within sites, across sites, and between sites and their technical advisors in order to celebrates successes and identify and prioritize the next steps for enhanced program implementation.

Program strengths (Appendix A) and opportunities for improvement (Appendix B) can be used to help sites focus programmatic efforts in order to continue to improve programming and reduce the achievement gap. Prior to these appendices though, it is important to note

that Y-USA has already implemented a number of enhancements to help YMCAs and program sites better implement AG ASP and improve youth outcomes.

- Y-USA has implemented a more nuanced fidelity measure for 2015-2016. This more sensitive measure **moves beyond simple yes/no designations to a range (1-4) to better capture degree of AG ASP implementation**. The measure will better identify a program site's true level of implementation, and provide more actionable feedback for program sites to improve their performance and thus child outcomes.

- For the 2015-2016 school year, the Weikart Center has agreed to make available all Youth Worker Method webinars, which are part of their training series. **These free web-based trainings will help train front line staff improve in program quality practices**. Y-USA encourages sites to take advantage of this great opportunity.

- **Y-USA also recently developed and piloted a youth worker competency training,** which will soon be available and very beneficial in fostering and promoting high-quality youth development practices. The training aligns YMCA youth development principles and practices with S.A.F.E practices. These trainings also come with materials that leadership can take back and train their program staff to further develop their competencies and skills.

APPENDIX A: AG ASP PROGRAM STRENGTHS

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- ✓ Significant and substantial increases in SEL scores (SEC)

- ✓ Significant and substantial increases in all eight SEL or DESSA domains

- ✓ Significant increases in interim academic indicators (ACE – School Attachment, School Conduct, & Self-Efficacy)

- ✓ 100% students from Title I schools

- ✓ Extremely high consent rates

- ✓ Considerable improvement in meeting 80% full-day attendance goal

- ✓ Adequate fidelity ratings

- ✓ Good program quality ratings and use of PQI to improve the program

- ✓ Emphasis on deep & intentional partnerships with schools

- ✓ Close collaboration and partnerships with innovative SEL and youth development organizations

- ✓ Flexible, multi-component program that has potential for national scaling

- ✓ Intentional focus on developing academic achievement & SEL / character development

APPENDIX B: OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE AG ASP OUTCOMES

Issue	Local Y Opportunity	Y-USA Opportunity
ASP target population is high-need youth (non-proficient test scores, low-income status, Title I)	Programs could more consistently document reasons for referral. Programs could identify and use priority factors to inform practice at both the class and individual levels.	Y-USA already changed the enrollment forms to require program sites to enter yes or no for every criteria. Y-USA may need to provide more guidance regarding % high-need youth served, in particular for research grant requirements.
Social-Emotional Learning (structured social emotional learning opportunities)	Program sites should dedicate specific daily time to SEL activities and lessons. Program sites should share activities, materials, and curriculum to facilitate implementation of strong SEL practices. At this stage of implementation, peer-to-peer exchanges of information and resources will be required to scale effectively.	Y-USA needs to encourage and make the on-line SEL support materials easier to access and use. Y-USA can help foster and develop learning communities for program sites to improve SEL programming as well as other aspects of the AG ASP program. (Please note recent & upcoming changes to Apperson website, which hosts DESSA.)
ASP Program Fidelity	Program sites need to focus on and emphasize fidelity to AG ASP at the specific activity level. Program site should create plans on how they can fully comply with all program activities and requirements and ensure their understanding corresponds to Y-USA.	Y-USA has substantially improved the fidelity measure for this school year. Y-USA needs to continue to discuss how the fidelity process and measure can be improved and shared/used with local site directors.
Increase the evidence base of AG ASP	Program sites can increase consistency and quality of data entry. Program sites can agree to participate in rigorous research studies when Y-USA receives funding.	Y-USA can improve and/or replace the program data management (PDM) system. Y-USA will seek and obtain funding for a rigorous evaluation of AG ASP.

RESEARCH TO ACTION:

USING DATA TO INFORM ACHIEVEMENT GAP SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION PROGRAMMING & PRACTICE

INTENT OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAM REPORT

- This report includes information regarding achievement gap summer learning loss prevention participants and program sites, fidelity and quality of implementation, and program outputs and participant outcomes. It is intended to summarize the larger and more technical evaluation report, *Sharing Our Success, 2015 Summer Learning Loss Prevention Report.*

- This report also provides national-level information that can be used to guide discussions - within and between Ys and schools, between Ys and Y-USA technical advisors/program, and between Y-USA technical advisors/program and Y-USA evaluators – and thus enhance implementation and potentially improve outcomes.

CONTENTS

ACHIEVEMENT GAP SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION PROGRAM: HOW IT WORKS

The Y's **Achievement Gap Summer Learning Loss Prevention (SLLP)** program is a six-week academic and enrichment program designed for rising first through fifth graders from low-income families. It is one of four Y-USA sponsored programs designed to reduce the achievement gap that, in total, provided programming and services to 262 program sites and 10,979 children and youth. **SLLP was implemented through 58 YMCAs and 96 separate program sites to provide services to 3,349 youth.**

The goal of SLLP is to prevent summer learning loss for rising first through fifth graders from low-income families through a combination of literacy instruction (using the Four Blocks Model[1]), quality enrichment activities aligned to literacy instruction, and positive youth development opportunities at a site within their local community. Figure 1 below presents an overview of how SLLP inputs and activities lead to improved youth outcomes (e.g., improved literacy skills, increased self-confidence). For a more detailed discussion regarding SLLP's implementation activities, along with more information regarding data presented in this report, please see *Sharing Our Success: 2015 Summer Learning Loss Prevention Program Evaluation Report.*

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

As part of a **comprehensive utilization-focused evaluation**, Y-USA's Research and Evaluation Department collects and analyzes data continuously to improve program performance and youth outcomes.

This document presents data and information on program activities, outputs, and outcomes for the 2015 program year and is intended to promote discussion between Y-USA Program and Evaluation personnel, local YMCA staff, and participating schools in order to improve programming in general, and for the 2016 SLLP program year in particular.

---

[1] The Four Blocks Literacy curriculum was created by Wake Forest University. The model integrates four distinct ways of developing literacy skills – guided reading, self-selected reading, writing, and phonics.

FIGURE 1. HOW SLLP WORKS TO IMPROVE YOUTH OUTCOMES

INPUTS	→	ACTIVITIES	→	YOUTH OUTCOMES
• Commitment of Local Y and Partnership Agreement with Local School • Local YMCA Staff • Certified Teachers • Volunteers • Y-USA National Infrastructure • Y-USA Program Team • Y-USA Technical Advisors • Y-USA Evaluation Team		• Community Partnerships and Connections • Staff Training • SLLP Implementation • Fidelity to the SLLP Model • Program Quality Assessments • Use of Data to Improve Programming		• Improved Literacy & Reading Skills • Enhanced Motivation to Learn • Increased Self-Confidence Through Skill-Building • Improved Physical Activity and Healthy Eating

WHO PARTICIPATED IN SLLP?

In the 2015 program year, 96 sites across 58 Associations in 29 states served 3,349 participants in SLLP. The final analysis sample included 2,521 youth who had parental consent to participate in the evaluation, attended at least one full day session, and were served at a site that ran the core SLLP program model.

The sample was racially and ethnically diverse (See Table 1), with a majority being African-American, and with sizable Hispanic/Latino and Caucasian populations. Ten percent of children had Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 12 percent received English Language Learner (ELL) services. *At least three out of every four SLLP participants were eligible for free or reduced price school meals through the National School Lunch Program.*

TABLE 1. YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS (N=2,521)

Gender	Girls	50%
	Boys	50%
	Not Reported	0%
Race/ Ethnicity	African-American/Black	32%
	Hispanic/Latino	25%
	Caucasian/White	25%
	Other	5%
	Two or More	9%
	Not Reported	4%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	Yes	77%
	No	11%
	Not Reported	12%

SLLP GRADES SERVED AND LITERACY SKILLS

SLLP targets early grade struggling readers. Three quarters are rising (entering) first and second graders, and many scored in the lower 20th percentile of the program-administered literacy skills assessment at the start of the program (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. GRADES SERVED & PERCENT AT OR BELOW 20TH PR (N=2,521)

Grade	Percent of Total Participants	Percent Starting At or Below 20th PR
First	37%	37%
Second	39%	59%
Third	17%	59%
Fourth	5%	73%
Fifth	2%	58%

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Based on past research and practitioner experience, consistent attendance is important to achieve the intended program outcomes. SLLP sets an individual <u>full-day</u> attendance goal of 85 percent. SLLP operationalizes full-day as youth attending both the morning and afternoon portions of the program; AM only and PM only attendance are also recorded to track students that do not attend the full day. Across grades, ***62 percent of participants met the attendance goal.*** Finally, on average, program sites served 34 students and most participating programs served rising first and second graders.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

SLLP participants are likely to be eligible for free or reduced price school meals, in first through second grade, and have consistent attendance rates.

- Data demonstrated a sizable population of children with IEPs and those receiving ELL services; however, these items were not answered by about one third of children's parents. Improved data collection around these items would provide Y-USA with a better understanding of the impact of SLLP on specific subgroups of students.

- The attendance goal was met by 62 percent of children. While an improvement from prior years, there were still 1,563 participants that did not meet this goal. To further improve attendance, which essentially equals dosage, Y-USA should identify and widely share successful strategies from sites with at least 75 percent of participants meeting the attendance goal.

HOW WELL DID Ys IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM MODEL?

PROGRAM FIDELITY

SLLP's fidelity measure is ***designed to provide program sites with critical information regarding how well they are implementing <u>core domains and activities</u> of the SLLP program model***. Fidelity was assessed during week two of the program across four domains: (1) program implementation; (2) administrative fidelity; (3) program fidelity; and (4) operational/procedural fidelity. The measure included a yes/no scale for the implementation and administrative categories and a four-point rating scale for the program and operational categories, with higher numbers indicating higher fidelity. As displayed in Table 3, both local Site Director Supervisors (site) and Y-USA staff (Technical Advisors or TAs) assess fidelity.

Seventy-eight of the 96 SLLP sites were included in the national sample. Ten sites were excluded because they offered the program in a camp setting with modified afternoon enrichment activities, and 8 sites were excluded because they offered fewer than six weeks of the SLLP program. Table 3 lists the percent of site staff and Y-USA staff responding "Yes" to the yes/no fidelity items, as well as the average score for the four-point rating scale fidelity items. Category averages are also included.

TABLE 3. PROGRAM FIDELITY RATINGS BY PROGRAM SITE AND Y-USA STAFF

	Fidelity Item	Site (N=78)	Y-USA (N=76)
Implementation	Student safe passage (or transportation) plan established & maintained	96%	99%
	School Partnership Agreement was developed with the school and submitted prior to program start date	87%	82%
	Certified teachers and quality teacher assistants were hired prior to program start date	94%	95%
	Quality enrichment leaders were hired prior to program start date	97%	97%
	Plan to submit final budget in place	95%	99%
	Average Program Implementation Score	**94%**	**94%**
Administrative	Collected and entered enrollment forms prior to start date	83%	97%
	Collected and entered consent forms for youth participation in program evaluation prior to start date	86%	99%
	Record attendance daily and submit to PDM weekly	90%	92%
	Complete Week 2 Program Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Program Quality Checklist	90%	75%
	Complete Week 2 Four Blocks Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Four Blocks Checklist	88%	76%
	Complete STAR Testing (completed week 1 and plan for week 6)	95%	95%
	Action plan in place to collect and enter Youth and Family Outcomes Survey (week 6)	94%	100%
	Action plan in place to collect and enter Caregiver Satisfaction Surveys (week 6)	94%	100%
	Average Administrative Score	**90%**	**92%**
Program	Deliver 2.5 hours of Four Blocks literacy instruction	3.9	3.9
	Deliver 4.5 hours of enrichment (aligned to literacy)	3.6	3.0
	Deliver moderate/intensive Physical Fitness: 1 hour (minimum) per day	3.8	3.7
	Deliver Art/Music: 2 hours (minimum) per week	3.9	3.7
	Deliver Character Development: 1 hour (minimum) per week	3.9	3.5
	Deliver Nutrition Education: 1 hour (minimum) per week	3.8	3.6
	Deliver Field Trips: 1 trip (minimum) per week	4.0	3.9
	Use Leveled Readers	3.8	3.6
	Average Program Score	**3.8**	**3.6**
Operational	Provide a healthy breakfast, lunch and snack consistent with HEPA standards	3.9	3.9
	Maintain a minimum 1:8 staff to participant ratio for all program activities	3.9	3.8
	All staff directly responsible for the program delivery are trained in the program model	3.5	3.4
	Lead Teacher and Teacher Assistant are trained in the Four Blocks literacy model	3.3	3.6
	Local Y staff person (e.g. Site Director) attends Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars	3.5	3.5
	Average Operational Score	**3.6**	**3.6**

Fidelity ratings are strong overall and by fidelity category. Both among site staff and Y-USA staff, most yes/no items had ratings over 90% and most four-point rating scale results were at or above 3.5. There were discrepancies among raters for two items, however. Y-USA staff gave a lower rating to two items in the Administrative category: *Complete Week 2 Program Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Program Quality Checklist* and *Complete Week 2 Four Blocks Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Four Blocks Quality Checklist* than site staff (75% vs. 90% and 76% vs. 88%, respectively). It is possible Y-USA scored these items lower because completion of these checklists and the plans to complete them moving forward were not well communicated to Y-USA staff during the site visit.

PROGRAM QUALITY

SLLP used Y-USA's Program Quality Checklist as well as the Four Blocks Quality Checklist to assess to what degree the program's activities were being implemented. The **Program Quality checklist assesses** four quality categories: (1) safe environment; (2) supportive environment; (3) interaction; and (4) engagement. Quality was assessed during weeks two and four.

The Four Blocks Quality checklist assesses the degree to which the delivery of the Four Blocks literacy curriculum was of high-quality, including items for each of the following categories: (1) Working with Words; (2) Guided Reading; (3) Self-Selected Reading; and (4) Writing. Staff completing either of these protocols select from 1, 3, or 5 on a rating scale with higher numbers indicating higher quality.

Table 4 provides average Program Quality and Four Blocks Quality ratings for each assessment point by type of staff (i.e., program site staff (site) and Y-USA staff).

TABLE 4. AVERAGE RATINGS BY QUALITY CATEGORY

Quality	Site Week 2 (n=76)	Site Week 4 (n=76)	Y-USA (n=77)
PROGRAM QUALITY OVERALL SCORE	**4.3**	**4.5**	**4.0**
Safe Environment	4.4	4.7	4.2
Supportive Environment	4.3	4.5	4.1
Interaction	4.5	4.6	4.2
Engagement	4.0	4.3	3.2
	Site Week 2 (n=75)	**Site Week 4 (n=76)**	**Y-USA (n=78)**
FOUR BLOCKS QUALITY OVERALL SCORE	**4.3**	**4.5**	**4.0**
Working with Words	4.4	4.7	4.2
Guided Reading	4.5	4.6	4.2
Self-Selected Reading	4.2	4.4	3.9
Writing	4.1	4.3	3.9

Program quality ratings were relatively high across both raters and slightly increased between week two and week four. Site level ratings also tended to be higher than Y-USA TA ratings. However, engagement ratings were consistently lower than the other domains across both raters. The data suggest that more targeted efforts for positive and engaging program elements and staff practices could improve overall program quality and youth engagement, which has been identified as a key component to successful youth programs. Four Blocks quality ratings increased over the course of the program, and similar to program quality, site level ratings were higher than Y-USA ratings.

In sum, ***data from both site staff and Y-USA suggest SLLP is being implemented to a high-degree of quality.***

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

The average program was rated moderately high in terms of overall fidelity to the SLLP model.

- There are two specific items from the administrative category that need improvement. These items focus on collecting program quality data. It is currently difficult to know if this is more of an implementation or communication issue as noted above. Moving forward, there should be clearer communication between site staff and Y-USA staff in terms of which evaluation processes and protocols are accomplished and when.

Data also demonstrate that overall quality is rated highly among sites as well as Y-USA staff.

- One of the notable areas of challenge was the discrepancy among raters in terms of youth engagement. It is important to recognize that engagement is a higher-level area of program quality and, as such, Y-USA should make an effort to implement trainings and practices to support sites in developing practices that engage youth during the summer.

HOW DID SLLP IMPACT YOUTH?

Literacy skills were assessed with Renaissance Learning's STAR assessments. The STAR Reading and Early Literacy Assessments are computer-adaptive tests that are widely used in K-12 schools. Participant's literacy skills were assessed during the first and final weeks of the program. Rising first grade students took the STAR Early Literacy assessment, which assesses early literacy skills in ten domains. Students entering second grade or above took the STAR Reading assessment for independent readers. This assesses literacy skills in five domains. The domains for each assessment are listed in the table below.

To measure change in literacy skills, *percentile rank (PR) scores were used*. Percentile rank scores provide an indicator of performance compared to all students in a particular grade by ranking the student relative to other STAR test-takers nationwide. Comparing student percentile rank at the two time-points allows for a determination of how student scores increased compared to same-age peers. *Increases in percentile rank mean that a student is 'catching up' to their peers.*

STAR ASSESSMENT DOMAINS

STAR Early Literacy

- Alphabetic Principle
- Concept of Word
- Early Numeracy
- Paragraph-Level Comprehension
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Sentence-Level Comprehension
- Structural Analysis
- Visual Discrimination
- Vocabulary

STAR Reading

- Analyzing Argument and Evaluating Text
- Analyzing Literary Text
- Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning
- Understanding Author's Craft
- Word Knowledge and Skills

TO WHAT EXTENT DID YOUTH MAKE GAINS IN THEIR LITERACY & READING ACHIEVEMENT?

Analyses demonstrated that there was a statistically significant increase in STAR scores in first through third grades, from pre- to post-test[2]. Or more simply stated; ***reading scores substantially increased over the six-week program***. This means the increase in scores was large enough that it was likely due to one of, or several, of the SLLP program components.[3] However, it is important to note that 30 percent of students' data was excluded from analyses due to students not having pre- and post-test data or because they were tested more than once during either testing window.

As shown in Table 5, the percent of children increasing their pre- to post-percentile rank (PR[4]) by grade illustrates that ***overall, the majority of participants demonstrated increased literacy skills and moved ahead in their rank***, which is compared to same-age peers. In total, 1,133 children demonstrated improved literacy skills at the time of the post-test, compared to the pre-test. In the case of those participants that took STAR Reading, those participants who moved up in their ranking were determined to have done so among a nationwide sample of one million children.

TABLE 5. STAR INCREASES IN PR

Grade	Percent of Participants Increasing PR (Overall)	Percent of Participants Increasing PR (Starting at or below 20th)
1st	72%	88%
2nd	64%	67%
3rd	58%	62%
4th	44%	46%
5th	63%	64%
All Grades	65%	69%

Larger PR increases were seen across grades for those children starting the program at or below the 20th percentile, meaning they were performing below 80 percent of their peers nationwide. Of the 920 participants in this category, 69 percent moved up in PR. Table 5 shows the increases by grades and overall for this group.

The average pre- and post-Grade Equivalent (GE[5]) scores are illustrated in Figure 2[6]. GE scores are presented below to match reporting in previous years. Although GE scores are not the preferred way of reporting academic gains or losses, they are thought to be quickly

---

[2] A paired samples t-test found a statistically significant (p<.001) increase from pre- to post-test in first through third grades. Significance at second grade should be interpreted with caution, as the distribution of scaled score differences from pre to post did not meet the preferred levels of normality desired for determining significance.

[3] In order to be able to state that SLLP definitively caused student increases in STAR scores, a more rigorous research design is needed. Specifically, Y-USA would need to implement a randomized controlled trial or quasi-experimental design.
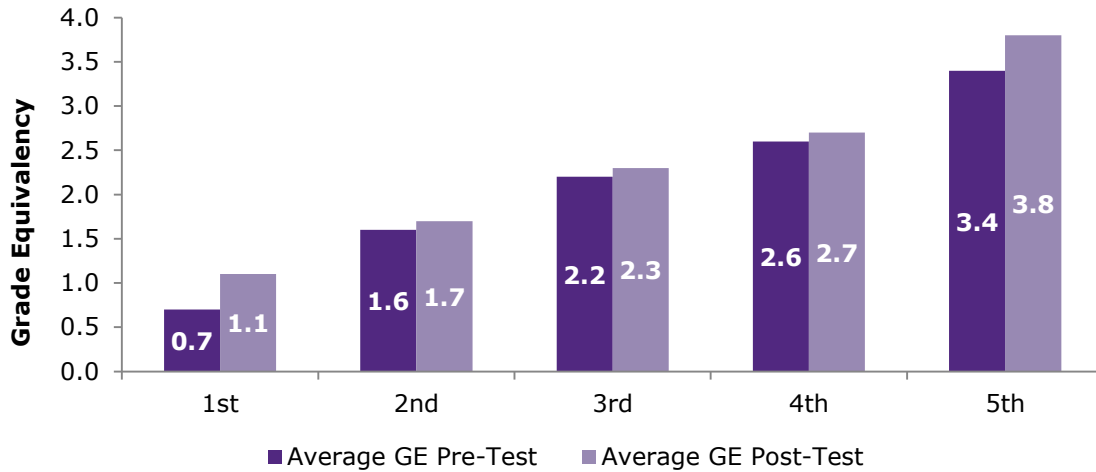
[4] Percentile Rank (PR) compares a student's scaled score to other students in the same grade nationwide. It ranges from 1 to 99 and indicates the percent of students in the same grade whose scores are lower than the score of a particular student.

[5] Grade Equivalents (GE) indicate the average grade placement of a student for whom a particular score is typical, relative to test takers nationwide. These scores indicate the grade level and then the month of the school year. For example, a GE of 4.7 indicates a student is performing similarly to an average student in fourth grade during the seventh month of the academic year. GE scores should be interpreted carefully, as they are often misunderstood as conveying information about what a student knows or can do (Renaissance Learning, Inc., 2014).

[6] Since the STAR Early Literacy assessment administered to rising first grade participants assesses their pre-literacy skills, GE scores, which are meant to reflect performance of school-age children, have not been developed for this assessment. The STAR Early Literacy Technical Manual provides a SS to GE conversion table for the sole expressed purpose of matching readers to books. The manual states that the conversion table should not be used to make decisions about reading achievement.

comprehensible to a wide variety of audiences. GE scores are reported as *grade level.month of the school year* (e.g., a GE of 2.1 is interpreted as performing similarly to that of a typical second grader after the first month of the school year). For example, the average second grade participant in Figure 2 below increased from performing similar to a first grade student in their sixth month of the school year to a first grade student in their seventh month.

FIGURE 2. AVERAGE PRE- AND POST-GRADE EQUIVALENCY (GE) BY GRADE[7]
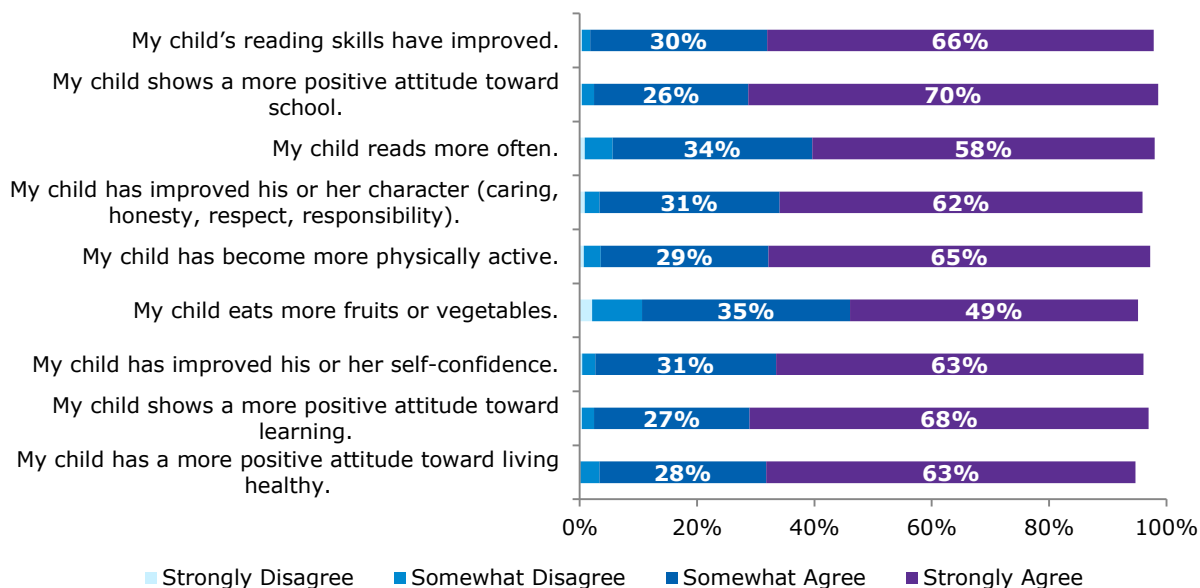

Average GE Pre-Test   Average GE Post-Test

YOUTH AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

Parents/caregivers were asked to rate how much SLLP helped their children develop a variety of academic skills and behaviors as well as other positive and healthy behaviors (e.g., physical activity, healthy eating). A total of 1,198 parents/caregivers completed the survey, which represents 48 percent of consented participants (See Figure 3 for results from select items).

---

[7] If comparing GE scores across years, consider that this year's scores may be calculated slightly different than the previous year due to the re-norming that is reflected in assessments taken in 2015. It should also be noted that the increase at fifth grade is due to a combination of one student that had an exceptionally high increase in their scaled score and the extremely small sample size (N=57). Results should be interpreted with caution.
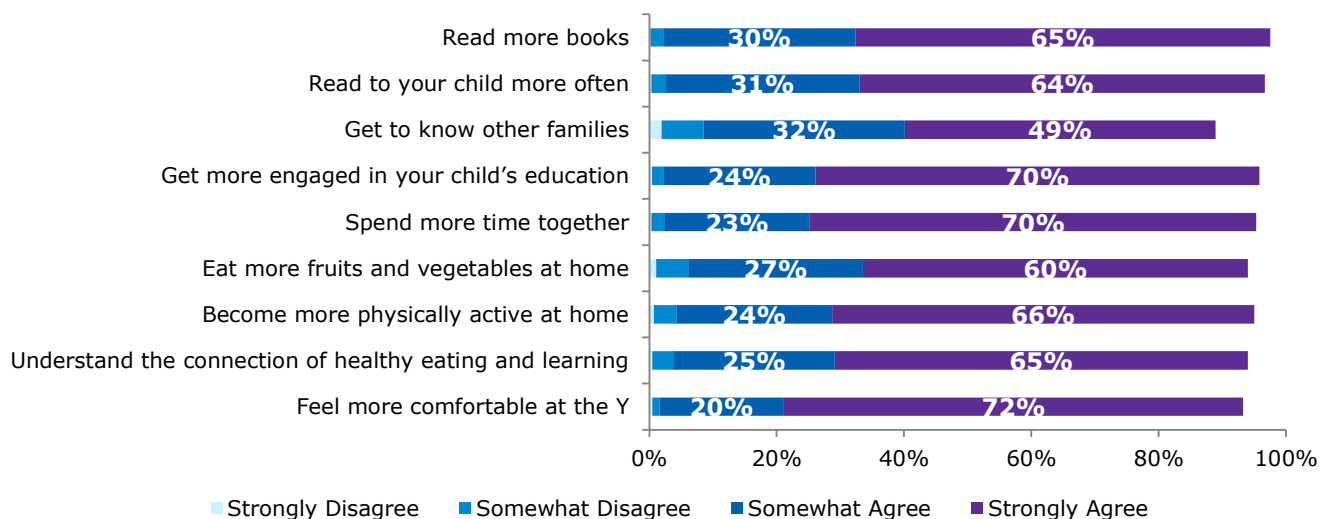
FIGURE 3. CAREGIVER RESPONSES TO HOW SLLP HELPED THEIR CHILDREN

Statement	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
My child's reading skills have improved.	30%	66%
My child shows a more positive attitude toward school.	26%	70%
My child reads more often.	34%	58%
My child has improved his or her character (caring, honesty, respect, responsibility).	31%	62%
My child has become more physically active.	29%	65%
My child eats more fruits or vegetables.	35%	49%
My child has improved his or her self-confidence.	31%	63%
My child shows a more positive attitude toward learning.	27%	68%
My child has a more positive attitude toward living healthy.	28%	63%

Legend: ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Caregiver responses ***indicate strong agreement that the SLLP program had an impact on key academic attitudes and behaviors***. This includes greater than 90 percent agreement that the program helped their child to read more often, have a more positive attitude about school, and improve their self-confidence. These positive endorsements suggest the program makes an important difference in children's attitude (e.g., shows a more positive attitude toward school) and learning behaviors (e.g., reads more often) that can translate into improved reading success as demonstrated by the improvements in STAR assessments.

The Youth and Family Outcomes survey also asked caregivers about how the program helped their family better prepare their children for school and educational success (See Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. CAREGIVER RESPONSES TO HOW SLLP HELPED THEIR FAMILIES

Statement	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Read more books	30%	65%
Read to your child more often	31%	64%
Get to know other families	32%	49%
Get more engaged in your child's education	24%	70%
Spend more time together	23%	70%
Eat more fruits and vegetables at home	27%	60%
Become more physically active at home	24%	66%
Understand the connection of healthy eating and learning	25%	65%
Feel more comfortable at the Y	20%	72%

Legend: ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Parents and caregivers rated the SLLP program very highly in terms of its ability to positively impact their families. SLLP helped caregivers to develop habits such as reading to their child more and getting more engaged in their child's education. These are important behaviors that will help their children to succeed in school.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

Analyses demonstrated that first through third grade SLLP participants significantly and substantially improved in their overall demonstration of literacy skills. This improvement is seen to a greater extent for those children performing at the lowest level (relative to their peers) at the beginning of the program. Similarly, caregiver surveys suggest the program positively impacted both the children participating in the program and their families. This consistency in positive outcomes, when coupled with adequate program implementation and strong quality data, suggest a positive SLLP impact on youth academic achievement.

- SLLP needs to implement a rigorous evaluation in order to causally link all of these positive changes to the SLLP program. ***Inference regarding causation requires the utilization of more rigorous evaluation designs***, such as quasi-experimental designs or randomized controlled trials. Y-USA is currently searching and applying for funding to provide the resources necessary for such a comprehensive evaluation.

- Additional training and support may be needed to ensure accurate administration of the STAR assessments. Thirty percent of student STAR data was excluded from analyses due to students not having both pre- and post-tests or because the student was assessed more than once during either testing window and the difference between the scaled scores for each test was more than the Conditional Standard Error. ***Program sites should work to increase the percent of students taking both STAR assessments.***

MOVING FORWARD

On a programmatic and practice level, overall, the data suggest the SLLP program model is working to increase student reading scores and helping them to develop key academic and social skills. Program sites should be excited about the fact that since the six initial pilots in the summer of 2012, SLLP expanded to ***96 program sites for the summer of 2015, and experienced significant gains in literacy scores.*** Program sites also demonstrated high program fidelity and strong program quality data. These are very positive results as the program has scaled extensively over the last three years.

As the national program report also shows, there are areas that can be improved. These improvements could result in more positive gains in students' literacy skills and key academic and social skills. The data presented in this report identify some of these areas. Program site's personal experiences should be used to augment this data to identify and prioritize areas that they feel they can address immediately, and over time, with realistic program improvement plans.

Given the current state of program readiness and capacity, there is serious traction for growth in the number of Y associations and program sites implementing SLLP. As the program scales, the thousands of youth benefitting become tens of thousands, and substantial progress can be made toward reducing the achievement gap.

As SLLP moves forward for planning its fifth program year, it is a good time to 'Take Stock' or inventory of what has been accomplished to date, and to identify the areas that can lead to even more positive program and youth outcomes. This document, in particular the following appendices, are intended to promote discussion within sites, across sites, and between sites and their technical advisors in order to celebrate successes and identify and prioritize the next steps for enhanced program implementation.

Program strengths (Appendix A) and opportunities for improvement (Appendix B) can be used to help sites focus programmatic efforts in order to continue to improve programming and reduce the achievement gap.

APPENDIX A: SLLP PROGRAM STRENGTHS

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- ✓ Significant increases in literacy assessment scores for first through third grades

- ✓ Relatively high consent rates

- ✓ Improving attendance rates

- ✓ High Program Fidelity ratings

- ✓ Strong Program Quality and Four Blocks Quality ratings

- ✓ Flexible, multi-component program that has potential for national scaling

- ✓ Intentional focus on developing academic achievement & social / character development

APPENDIX B: OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE SLLP OUTCOMES

Issue	Local Y Opportunity	Y-USA Opportunity
Attendance	YMCAs could find ways to increase attendance (e.g., offer transportation)	TAs could share site attendance strategy successes with struggling sites that are challenged by consistent student attendance.
	Programs could communicate the importance of attending the full program at the time of enrollment and throughout the summer.	Y-USA can emphasize the importance of messaging to parents and enrolling students who can commit to attending the full program.
STAR Reading Assessments	Program sites should plan for pre-and post-test assessments and make parents aware of these dates to increase the number of students with assessments at two time points.	TAs can work with local Ys to ensure they have testing dates set before the program launches and ensure sufficient computers and staff are available on those days.
	Program staff should not test students repeatedly at the pre- or post-test.	Y-USA can continue to train local Y staff on the appropriate methods for administering the STAR assessments to ensure the most accurate results.
Increase the evidence base of SLLP	Program sites can increase consistency and quality of data entry.	Y-USA can improve and/or replace the program data management (PDM) system.
	Program sites can agree to participate in rigorous research studies when Y-USA receives funding.	Y-USA will seek and obtain funding for a rigorous evaluation of SLLP.

2015-2016 AG AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM FULL FIDELITY CHECKLIST

DIRECTIONS: A response for each question is required, comments/reasons for rating are optional.

SITE DIRECTOR: This checklist is to be completed by the end of the 1st month after PROGRAM LAUNCH (October).

ASSOCIATION LEVEL STAFF: This checklist is to be completed at the end of October and January. Checklists not completed within those months will be considered incomplete.

Y-USA: This checklist is to be completed during site visits.

GROUP
SESSION INFORMATION

Date Fidelity Check Completed _____   *Conducted by* _____

Role _____

A. Program Implementation Fidelity (How we structure what we do)	Yes	No	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
1. Implementation plan is developed with school and Y staff and includes all of the program components *(Physical activity: 30 minutes daily; Homework help: 30-45 minutes daily; Math and literacy enrichment: 30-45 minutes daily; Tutoring: 30 minutes 1-2 times per week, as needed; Health and wellness activities: 30-45 minutes twice a month; Arts education: 1 hour per week ; 21st century skills: Two times per week; Global learning: Once per week; Leadership development: Once per week; College and career readiness: Two times per month; Service learning: One project per quarter; Family engagement: Ongoing)*	○	○	
2. Program schedule is reviewed and includes all of the program components relevant to that week/month *(Physical activity: 30 minutes daily; Homework help: 30-45 minutes daily; Math and literacy enrichment: 30-45 minutes daily; Tutoring: 30 minutes 1-2 times per week, as needed; Health and wellness activities: 30-45 minutes twice a month; Arts education: 1 hour per week ; 21st century skills: Two times per week; Global learning: Once per week; Leadership development: Once per week; College and career readiness: Two times per month; Service learning: One project per quarter; Family engagement: Ongoing)*	○	○	

	Yes	No	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
3. Local YMCA maintains a full-time Afteschool Site Director who works at the school, fully dedicated to the site to guide daily program implementation	○	○	
4. Program operates at a local school that was selected based on need	○	○	
5. School liaison is a certified teacher at the school in which the program operates	○	○	
6. Priority for enrollment is given to youth who are referred by school liaison and meet at least one of the five priority factors	○	○	
7. Principals and teachers are involved with student recruitment	○	○	
8. A plan is in place to optimize the percentage of individual students with an 80% or higher full-time attendance rate, as evidenced by check in with site director and local Y staff	○	○	
9. Program operates five days a week for the academic school year	○	○	
10. Program operates a minimum 2.5 hours a day	○	○	
B1. Administrative/Procedural Fidelity (How we support what we do)	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments/ Reasons for Rating**
1. Program budget submitted using Y-USA budget template	○	○	
2. Individual student and overall program attendance tracked daily and reported twice a month	○	○	
3. Enrollment Forms completed and stored at the site for all participants enrolled in PDM	○	○	
4. Data Collection Consents completed and stored at the site for all participants enrolled in PDM	○	○	
5. Photo Releases completed and stored at the site for all participants enrolled in PDM	○	○	
6. Site director has access to the DESSA online system (Apperson Evo) in order to complete DESSAs for each participant per the evaluation calendar	○	○	

	1	2	3	4	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
7. Site director and association level staff have access to the PQA online system (Weikart Online Scores Reporter) in order to complete the School-Age Program Quality Assessment (S-PQA) per the evaluation calendar	○	○			
8. Site is following the plan to collect student academic data (standardized test scores and school attendance) from partner school per the evaluation calendar	○	○			

B2. Administrative/Procedural Fidelity (How we support what we do)	1	2	3	4	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
1. Site Director attends in-person Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	Site Director did not attend Y-USA in-person training and did not complete any online trainings or e-learnings	Site Director did not attend Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director attended Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director attended Y-USA in-person training and completed all online trainings and e-learnings	
	○	○	○	○	
2. Site Director Supervisor attends Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	Site Director Supervisor did not attend Y-USA in-person training and did not complete any online trainings or e-learnings	Site Director Supervisor did not attend Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director Supervisor attended Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director Supervisor attended Y-USA in-person training and completed all online trainings and e-learnings	
	○	○	○	○	
3. Association level staff attends local Y training on program model and participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	Association Staff did not receive any local Y in-person training and did not complete any online trainings	Association Staff did not receive any local Y in-person training but completed some online trainings	Association Staff received in-person local Y training and completed some online trainings	Association Staff received in-person local Y training and completed all online trainings	
	○	○	○	○	

	1	2	3	4	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
4. Group leaders attend local Y training on program model and participate in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	No group leaders were trained, in-person or online	No group leaders received local Y in-person training, but most or all completed some or all online trainings	Most or all group leaders received in-person local Y training and most or all completed some or all online trainings	All group leaders received both in-person local Y training and completed all online trainings	
	○	○	○	○	
5. School liaison participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	School liaison did not complete any online trainings	School liaison completed less than half of online trainings	School liaison completed more than half but not all online trainings	School liaison completed all online trainings	
	○	○	○	○	
C1. Program Fidelity (What We Do)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments/ Reasons for Rating**
1. Activities are aligned to the school day, planned with participants' teachers	There is no evidence that supports alignment in program implementation	There is some evidence that alignment is in place demonstrated by a written document or outline that identifies some activities planned for the year	An alignment strategy is in place, but it lacks specifics on regular meetings, Y staff involvement in school sponsored training, or collaboration on school day alignment to tutoring and enrichment activities	An alignment strategy is in place, with specifics on regular meetings, Y staff involvement in school sponsored training, and collaboration on school day alignment to tutoring and enrichment activities	
	○	○	○	○	
2. A minimum 1:12 staff to participant ratio is maintained for all activities	Maintains a higher ratio at all times during the day (e.g., 1:13 or higher)	Maintains a higher ratio for more than half of the day (e.g., 1:13 or higher)	Maintains a higher ratio for less than half of the day (e.g., 1:13 or higher)	Maintains 1:12 or better ratio at all times during the day	
	○	○	○	○	
3. Deliver 30-45 minutes of homework help every program day	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
	○	○	○	○	

	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
4.Deliver 30-45 minutes of math and literacy enrichment every program day	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
	○	○	○	○	
5. Deliver 30 minutes of physical activity every program day	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
	○	○	○	○	
6. Deliver tutoring for 30 minutes or more per child every week, as needed	0- 10 minutes per week	11-20 minutes per week	21-29 minutes per week	30-60+ minutes per week	
	○	○	○	○	
7. Deliver arts education for one hour per week	0- 20 minutes per week	21-30 minutes per week	31-59 minutes per week	60+ minutes per week	
	○	○	○	○	
8. Deliver 30-45 minutes of health and wellness activities twice a month	0- 20 minutes per month	21-30 minutes per month	31-59 minutes per month	60+ minutes per month	
	○	○	○	○	

C2. Program Fidelity (What We Do)	Yes	No	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
1. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of 21st Century Skills- Two times per week	○	○	
2. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of Global Learning- One time per week	○	○	
3. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of Leadership Development- One time per week	○	○	
4. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of College and Career Readiness- Two times per month	○	○	
5. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of Service Learning- One project per quarter	○	○	
6. Evidence in program schedule of Family Engagement- Ongoing	○	○	

RESEARCH TO ACTION:

USING DATA TO INFORM ACHIEVEMENT GAP SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION PROGRAMMING & PRACTICE

INTENT OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAM REPORT

- This report includes information regarding achievement gap summer learning loss prevention participants and program sites, fidelity and quality of implementation, and program outputs and participant outcomes. It is intended to summarize the larger and more technical evaluation report, *Sharing Our Success, 2015 Summer Learning Loss Prevention Report.*

- This report also provides national-level information that can be used to guide discussions - within and between Ys and schools, between Ys and Y-USA technical advisors/program, and between Y-USA technical advisors/program and Y-USA evaluators – and thus enhance implementation and potentially improve outcomes.

CONTENTS

ACHIEVEMENT GAP SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION PROGRAM: HOW IT WORKS

The Y's **Achievement Gap Summer Learning Loss Prevention (SLLP)** program is a six-week academic and enrichment program designed for rising first through fifth graders from low-income families. It is one of four Y-USA sponsored programs designed to reduce the achievement gap that, in total, provided programming and services to 262 program sites and 10,979 children and youth. **SLLP was implemented through 58 YMCAs and 96 separate program sites to provide services to 3,349 youth.**

The goal of SLLP is to prevent summer learning loss for rising first through fifth graders from low-income families through a combination of literacy instruction (using the Four Blocks Model[1]), quality enrichment activities aligned to literacy instruction, and positive youth development opportunities at a site within their local community. Figure 1 below presents an overview of how SLLP inputs and activities lead to improved youth outcomes (e.g., improved literacy skills, increased self-confidence). For a more detailed discussion regarding SLLP's implementation activities, along with more information regarding data presented in this report, please see *Sharing Our Success: 2015 Summer Learning Loss Prevention Program Evaluation Report.*

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

As part of a **comprehensive utilization-focused evaluation**, Y-USA's Research and Evaluation Department collects and analyzes data continuously to improve program performance and youth outcomes.

This document presents data and information on program activities, outputs, and outcomes for the 2015 program year and is intended to promote discussion between Y-USA Program and Evaluation personnel, local YMCA staff, and participating schools in order to improve programming in general, and for the 2016 SLLP program year in particular.

---

[1] The Four Blocks Literacy curriculum was created by Wake Forest University. The model integrates four distinct ways of developing literacy skills – guided reading, self-selected reading, writing, and phonics.

FIGURE 1. HOW SLLP WORKS TO IMPROVE YOUTH OUTCOMES

INPUTS	→	ACTIVITIES	→	YOUTH OUTCOMES
• Commitment of Local Y and Partnership Agreement with Local School • Local YMCA Staff • Certified Teachers • Volunteers • Y-USA National Infrastructure • Y-USA Program Team • Y-USA Technical Advisors • Y-USA Evaluation Team		• Community Partnerships and Connections • Staff Training • SLLP Implementation • Fidelity to the SLLP Model • Program Quality Assessments • Use of Data to Improve Programming		• Improved Literacy & Reading Skills • Enhanced Motivation to Learn • Increased Self-Confidence Through Skill-Building • Improved Physical Activity and Healthy Eating

WHO PARTICIPATED IN SLLP?

In the 2015 program year, 96 sites across 58 Associations in 29 states served 3,349 participants in SLLP. The final analysis sample included 2,521 youth who had parental consent to participate in the evaluation, attended at least one full day session, and were served at a site that ran the core SLLP program model.

The sample was racially and ethnically diverse (See Table 1), with a majority being African-American, and with sizable Hispanic/Latino and Caucasian populations. Ten percent of children had Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 12 percent received English Language Learner (ELL) services. *At least three out of every four SLLP participants were eligible for free or reduced price school meals through the National School Lunch Program.*

TABLE 1. YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS (N=2,521)

Gender	Girls		50%
	Boys		50%
	Not Reported		0%
Race/ Ethnicity	African-American/Black		32%
	Hispanic/Latino		25%
	Caucasian/White		25%
	Other		5%
	Two or More		9%
	Not Reported		4%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	Yes		77%
	No		11%
	Not Reported		12%

SLLP GRADES SERVED AND LITERACY SKILLS

SLLP targets early grade struggling readers. Three quarters are rising (entering) first and second graders, and many scored in the lower 20th percentile of the program-administered literacy skills assessment at the start of the program (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. GRADES SERVED & PERCENT AT OR BELOW 20TH PR (N=2,521)

Grade	Percent of Total Participants	Percent Starting At or Below 20th PR
First	37%	37%
Second	39%	59%
Third	17%	59%
Fourth	5%	73%
Fifth	2%	58%

PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Based on past research and practitioner experience, consistent attendance is important to achieve the intended program outcomes. SLLP sets an individual <u>full-day</u> attendance goal of 85 percent. SLLP operationalizes full-day as youth attending both the morning and afternoon portions of the program; AM only and PM only attendance are also recorded to track students that do not attend the full day. Across grades, ***62 percent of participants met the attendance goal.*** Finally, on average, program sites served 34 students and most participating programs served rising first and second graders.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

SLLP participants are likely to be eligible for free or reduced price school meals, in first through second grade, and have consistent attendance rates.

- Data demonstrated a sizable population of children with IEPs and those receiving ELL services; however, these items were not answered by about one third of children's parents. Improved data collection around these items would provide Y-USA with a better understanding of the impact of SLLP on specific subgroups of students.

- The attendance goal was met by 62 percent of children. While an improvement from prior years, there were still 1,563 participants that did not meet this goal. To further improve attendance, which essentially equals dosage, Y-USA should identify and widely share successful strategies from sites with at least 75 percent of participants meeting the attendance goal.

HOW WELL DID Ys IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM MODEL?

PROGRAM FIDELITY

SLLP's fidelity measure is **designed to provide program sites with critical information regarding how well they are implementing <u>core domains and activities</u> of the SLLP program model**. Fidelity was assessed during week two of the program across four domains: (1) program implementation; (2) administrative fidelity; (3) program fidelity; and (4) operational/procedural fidelity. The measure included a yes/no scale for the implementation and administrative categories and a four-point rating scale for the program and operational categories, with higher numbers indicating higher fidelity. As displayed in Table 3, both local Site Director Supervisors (site) and Y-USA staff (Technical Advisors or TAs) assess fidelity.

Seventy-eight of the 96 SLLP sites were included in the national sample. Ten sites were excluded because they offered the program in a camp setting with modified afternoon enrichment activities, and 8 sites were excluded because they offered fewer than six weeks of the SLLP program. Table 3 lists the percent of site staff and Y-USA staff responding "Yes" to the yes/no fidelity items, as well as the average score for the four-point rating scale fidelity items. Category averages are also included.

TABLE 3. PROGRAM FIDELITY RATINGS BY PROGRAM SITE AND Y-USA STAFF

	Fidelity Item	Site (N=78)	Y-USA (N=76)
Implementation	Student safe passage (or transportation) plan established & maintained	96%	99%
	School Partnership Agreement was developed with the school and submitted prior to program start date	87%	82%
	Certified teachers and quality teacher assistants were hired prior to program start date	94%	95%
	Quality enrichment leaders were hired prior to program start date	97%	97%
	Plan to submit final budget in place	95%	99%
	Average Program Implementation Score	**94%**	**94%**
Administrative	Collected and entered enrollment forms prior to start date	83%	97%
	Collected and entered consent forms for youth participation in program evaluation prior to start date	86%	99%
	Record attendance daily and submit to PDM weekly	90%	92%
	Complete Week 2 Program Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Program Quality Checklist	90%	75%
	Complete Week 2 Four Blocks Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Four Blocks Checklist	88%	76%
	Complete STAR Testing (completed week 1 and plan for week 6)	95%	95%
	Action plan in place to collect and enter Youth and Family Outcomes Survey (week 6)	94%	100%
	Action plan in place to collect and enter Caregiver Satisfaction Surveys (week 6)	94%	100%
	Average Administrative Score	**90%**	**92%**
Program	Deliver 2.5 hours of Four Blocks literacy instruction	3.9	3.9
	Deliver 4.5 hours of enrichment (aligned to literacy)	3.6	3.0
	Deliver moderate/intensive Physical Fitness: 1 hour (minimum) per day	3.8	3.7
	Deliver Art/Music: 2 hours (minimum) per week	3.9	3.7
	Deliver Character Development: 1 hour (minimum) per week	3.9	3.5
	Deliver Nutrition Education: 1 hour (minimum) per week	3.8	3.6
	Deliver Field Trips: 1 trip (minimum) per week	4.0	3.9
	Use Leveled Readers	3.8	3.6
	Average Program Score	**3.8**	**3.6**
Operational	Provide a healthy breakfast, lunch and snack consistent with HEPA standards	3.9	3.9
	Maintain a minimum 1:8 staff to participant ratio for all program activities	3.9	3.8
	All staff directly responsible for the program delivery are trained in the program model	3.5	3.4
	Lead Teacher and Teacher Assistant are trained in the Four Blocks literacy model	3.3	3.6
	Local Y staff person (e.g. Site Director) attends Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars	3.5	3.5
	Average Operational Score	**3.6**	**3.6**

Fidelity ratings are strong overall and by fidelity category. Both among site staff and Y-USA staff, most yes/no items had ratings over 90% and most four-point rating scale results were at or above 3.5. There were discrepancies among raters for two items, however. Y-USA staff gave a lower rating to two items in the Administrative category: *Complete Week 2 Program Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Program Quality Checklist* and *Complete Week 2 Four Blocks Quality Checklist and plan for Week 4 Four Blocks Quality Checklist* than site staff (75% vs. 90% and 76% vs. 88%, respectively). It is possible Y-USA scored these items lower because completion of these checklists and the plans to complete them moving forward were not well communicated to Y-USA staff during the site visit.

PROGRAM QUALITY

SLLP used Y-USA's Program Quality Checklist as well as the Four Blocks Quality Checklist to assess to what degree the program's activities were being implemented. The **Program Quality checklist assesses** four quality categories: (1) safe environment; (2) supportive environment; (3) interaction; and (4) engagement. Quality was assessed during weeks two and four.

The Four Blocks Quality checklist assesses the degree to which the delivery of the Four Blocks literacy curriculum was of high-quality, including items for each of the following categories: (1) Working with Words; (2) Guided Reading; (3) Self-Selected Reading; and (4) Writing. Staff completing either of these protocols select from 1, 3, or 5 on a rating scale with higher numbers indicating higher quality.

Table 4 provides average Program Quality and Four Blocks Quality ratings for each assessment point by type of staff (i.e., program site staff (site) and Y-USA staff).

TABLE 4. AVERAGE RATINGS BY QUALITY CATEGORY

Quality	Site Week 2 (n=76)	Site Week 4 (n=76)	Y-USA (n=77)
PROGRAM QUALITY OVERALL SCORE	**4.3**	**4.5**	**4.0**
Safe Environment	4.4	4.7	4.2
Supportive Environment	4.3	4.5	4.1
Interaction	4.5	4.6	4.2
Engagement	4.0	4.3	3.2
	Site Week 2 (n=75)	**Site Week 4 (n=76)**	**Y-USA (n=78)**
FOUR BLOCKS QUALITY OVERALL SCORE	**4.3**	**4.5**	**4.0**
Working with Words	4.4	4.7	4.2
Guided Reading	4.5	4.6	4.2
Self-Selected Reading	4.2	4.4	3.9
Writing	4.1	4.3	3.9

Program quality ratings were relatively high across both raters and slightly increased between week two and week four. Site level ratings also tended to be higher than Y-USA TA ratings. However, engagement ratings were consistently lower than the other domains across both raters. The data suggest that more targeted efforts for positive and engaging program elements and staff practices could improve overall program quality and youth engagement, which has been identified as a key component to successful youth programs. Four Blocks quality ratings increased over the course of the program, and similar to program quality, site level ratings were higher than Y-USA ratings.

In sum, ***data from both site staff and Y-USA suggest SLLP is being implemented to a high-degree of quality.***

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

The average program was rated moderately high in terms of overall fidelity to the SLLP model.

- There are two specific items from the administrative category that need improvement. These items focus on collecting program quality data. It is currently difficult to know if this is more of an implementation or communication issue as noted above. Moving forward, there should be clearer communication between site staff and Y-USA staff in terms of which evaluation processes and protocols are accomplished and when.

Data also demonstrate that overall quality is rated highly among sites as well as Y-USA staff.

- One of the notable areas of challenge was the discrepancy among raters in terms of youth engagement. It is important to recognize that engagement is a higher-level area of program quality and, as such, Y-USA should make an effort to implement trainings and practices to support sites in developing practices that engage youth during the summer.

HOW DID SLLP IMPACT YOUTH?

Literacy skills were assessed with Renaissance Learning's STAR assessments. The STAR Reading and Early Literacy Assessments are computer-adaptive tests that are widely used in K-12 schools. Participant's literacy skills were assessed during the first and final weeks of the program. Rising first grade students took the STAR Early Literacy assessment, which assesses early literacy skills in ten domains. Students entering second grade or above took the STAR Reading assessment for independent readers. This assesses literacy skills in five domains. The domains for each assessment are listed in the table below.

To measure change in literacy skills, **percentile rank (PR) scores were used**. Percentile rank scores provide an indicator of performance compared to all students in a particular grade by ranking the student relative to other STAR test-takers nationwide. Comparing student percentile rank at the two time-points allows for a determination of how student scores increased compared to same-age peers. **Increases in percentile rank mean that a student is 'catching up' to their peers.**

STAR ASSESSMENT DOMAINS

STAR Early Literacy

- Alphabetic Principle
- Concept of Word
- Early Numeracy
- Paragraph-Level Comprehension
- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Sentence-Level Comprehension
- Structural Analysis
- Visual Discrimination
- Vocabulary

STAR Reading

- Analyzing Argument and Evaluating Text
- Analyzing Literary Text
- Comprehension Strategies and Constructing Meaning
- Understanding Author's Craft
- Word Knowledge and Skills

TO WHAT EXTENT DID YOUTH MAKE GAINS IN THEIR LITERACY & READING ACHIEVEMENT?

Analyses demonstrated that there was a statistically significant increase in STAR scores in first through third grades, from pre- to post-test[2]. Or more simply stated; *reading scores substantially increased over the six-week program*. This means the increase in scores was large enough that it was likely due to one of, or several, of the SLLP program

components.[3] However, it is important to note that 30 percent of students' data was excluded from analyses due to students not having pre- and post-test data or because they were tested more than once during either testing window.

As shown in Table 5, the percent of children increasing their pre- to post-percentile rank (PR[4]) by grade illustrates that *overall, the majority of participants demonstrated*

TABLE 5. STAR INCREASES IN PR

Grade	Percent of Participants Increasing PR (Overall)	Percent of Participants Increasing PR (Starting at or below 20th)
1st	72%	88%
2nd	64%	67%
3rd	58%	62%
4th	44%	46%
5th	63%	64%
All Grades	65%	69%

increased literacy skills and moved ahead in their rank, which is compared to same-age peers. In total, 1,133 children demonstrated improved literacy skills at the time of the post-test, compared to the pre-test. In the case of those participants that took STAR Reading, those participants who moved up in their ranking were determined to have done so among a nationwide sample of one million children.

Larger PR increases were seen across grades for those children starting the program at or below the 20th percentile, meaning they were performing below 80 percent of their peers nationwide. Of the 920 participants in this category, 69 percent moved up in PR. Table 5 shows the increases by grades and overall for this group.

The average pre- and post-Grade Equivalent (GE[5]) scores are illustrated in Figure 2[6]. GE scores are presented below to match reporting in previous years. Although GE scores are not the preferred way of reporting academic gains or losses, they are thought to be quickly

---

[2] A paired samples t-test found a statistically significant (p<.001) increase from pre- to post-test in first through third grades. Significance at second grade should be interpreted with caution, as the distribution of scaled score differences from pre to post did not meet the preferred levels of normality desired for determining significance.

[3] In order to be able to state that SLLP definitively caused student increases in STAR scores, a more rigorous research design is needed. Specifically, Y-USA would need to implement a randomized controlled trial or quasi-experimental design.
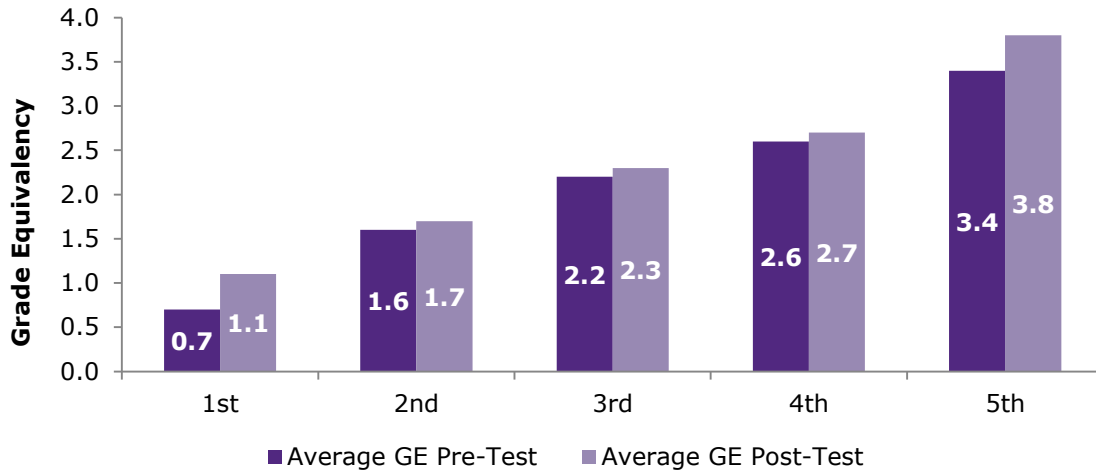
[4] Percentile Rank (PR) compares a student's scaled score to other students in the same grade nationwide. It ranges from 1 to 99 and indicates the percent of students in the same grade whose scores are lower than the score of a particular student.

[5] Grade Equivalents (GE) indicate the average grade placement of a student for whom a particular score is typical, relative to test takers nationwide. These scores indicate the grade level and then the month of the school year. For example, a GE of 4.7 indicates a student is performing similarly to an average student in fourth grade during the seventh month of the academic year. GE scores should be interpreted carefully, as they are often misunderstood as conveying information about what a student knows or can do (Renaissance Learning, Inc., 2014).

[6] Since the STAR Early Literacy assessment administered to rising first grade participants assesses their pre-literacy skills, GE scores, which are meant to reflect performance of school-age children, have not been developed for this assessment. The STAR Early Literacy Technical Manual provides a SS to GE conversion table for the sole expressed purpose of matching readers to books. The manual states that the conversion table should not be used to make decisions about reading achievement.

comprehensible to a wide variety of audiences. GE scores are reported as *grade level.month of the school year* (e.g., a GE of 2.1 is interpreted as performing similarly to that of a typical second grader after the first month of the school year). For example, the average second grade participant in Figure 2 below increased from performing similar to a first grade student in their sixth month of the school year to a first grade student in their seventh month.

YOUTH AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

Parents/caregivers were asked to rate how much SLLP helped their children develop a variety of academic skills and behaviors as well as other positive and healthy behaviors (e.g., physical activity, healthy eating). A total of 1,198 parents/caregivers completed the survey, which represents 48 percent of consented participants (See Figure 3 for results from select items).

---

[7] If comparing GE scores across years, consider that this year's scores may be calculated slightly different than the previous year due to the re-norming that is reflected in assessments taken in 2015. It should also be noted that the increase at fifth grade is due to a combination of one student that had an exceptionally high increase in their scaled score and the extremely small sample size (N=57). Results should be interpreted with caution.
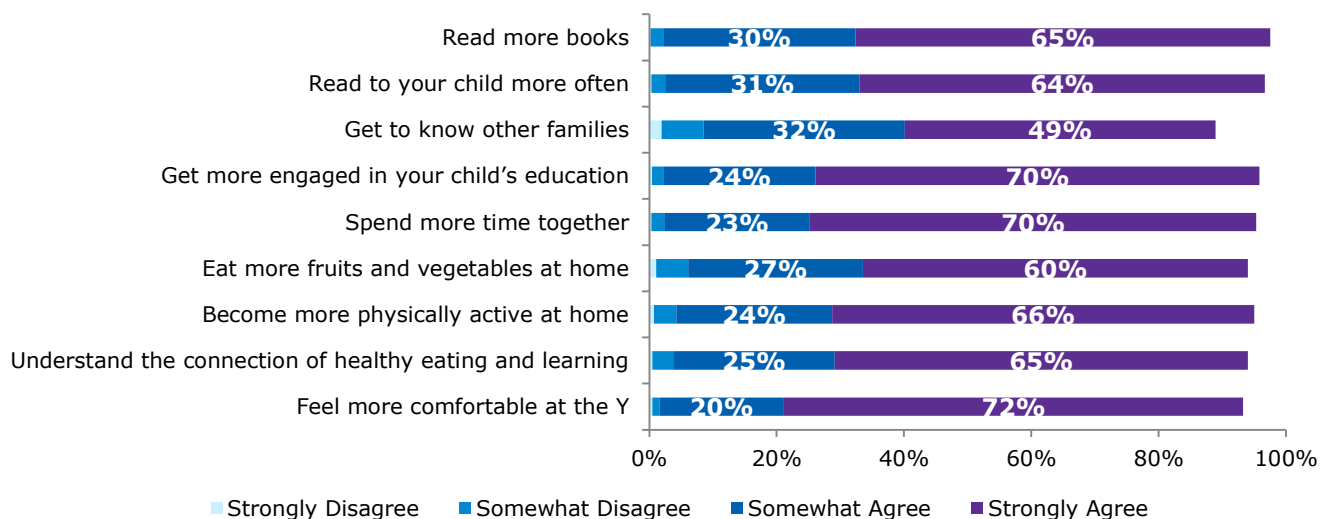
FIGURE 3. CAREGIVER RESPONSES TO HOW SLLP HELPED THEIR CHILDREN

	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
My child's reading skills have improved.	30%	66%
My child shows a more positive attitude toward school.	26%	70%
My child reads more often.	34%	58%
My child has improved his or her character (caring, honesty, respect, responsibility).	31%	62%
My child has become more physically active.	29%	65%
My child eats more fruits or vegetables.	35%	49%
My child has improved his or her self-confidence.	31%	63%
My child shows a more positive attitude toward learning.	27%	68%
My child has a more positive attitude toward living healthy.	28%	63%

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Caregiver responses ***indicate strong agreement that the SLLP program had an impact on key academic attitudes and behaviors***. This includes greater than 90 percent agreement that the program helped their child to read more often, have a more positive attitude about school, and improve their self-confidence. These positive endorsements suggest the program makes an important difference in children's attitude (e.g., shows a more positive attitude toward school) and learning behaviors (e.g., reads more often) that can translate into improved reading success as demonstrated by the improvements in STAR assessments.

The Youth and Family Outcomes survey also asked caregivers about how the program helped their family better prepare their children for school and educational success (See Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. CAREGIVER RESPONSES TO HOW SLLP HELPED THEIR FAMILIES

	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Read more books	30%	65%
Read to your child more often	31%	64%
Get to know other families	32%	49%
Get more engaged in your child's education	24%	70%
Spend more time together	23%	70%
Eat more fruits and vegetables at home	27%	60%
Become more physically active at home	24%	66%
Understand the connection of healthy eating and learning	25%	65%
Feel more comfortable at the Y	20%	72%

■ Strongly Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Parents and caregivers rated the SLLP program very highly in terms of its ability to positively impact their families. SLLP helped caregivers to develop habits such as reading to their child more and getting more engaged in their child's education. These are important behaviors that will help their children to succeed in school.

SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

Analyses demonstrated that first through third grade SLLP participants significantly and substantially improved in their overall demonstration of literacy skills. This improvement is seen to a greater extent for those children performing at the lowest level (relative to their peers) at the beginning of the program. Similarly, caregiver surveys suggest the program positively impacted both the children participating in the program and their families. This consistency in positive outcomes, when coupled with adequate program implementation and strong quality data, suggest a positive SLLP impact on youth academic achievement.

- SLLP needs to implement a rigorous evaluation in order to causally link all of these positive changes to the SLLP program. ***Inference regarding causation requires the utilization of more rigorous evaluation designs***, such as quasi-experimental designs or randomized controlled trials. Y-USA is currently searching and applying for funding to provide the resources necessary for such a comprehensive evaluation.

- Additional training and support may be needed to ensure accurate administration of the STAR assessments. Thirty percent of student STAR data was excluded from analyses due to students not having both pre- and post-tests or because the student was assessed more than once during either testing window and the difference between the scaled scores for each test was more than the Conditional Standard Error. ***Program sites should work to increase the percent of students taking both STAR assessments.***

MOVING FORWARD

On a programmatic and practice level, overall, the data suggest the SLLP program model is working to increase student reading scores and helping them to develop key academic and social skills. Program sites should be excited about the fact that since the six initial pilots in the summer of 2012, SLLP expanded to **96 program sites for the summer of 2015, and experienced significant gains in literacy scores.** Program sites also demonstrated high program fidelity and strong program quality data. These are very positive results as the program has scaled extensively over the last three years.

As the national program report also shows, there are areas that can be improved. These improvements could result in more positive gains in students' literacy skills and key academic and social skills. The data presented in this report identify some of these areas. Program site's personal experiences should be used to augment this data to identify and prioritize areas that they feel they can address immediately, and over time, with realistic program improvement plans.

Given the current state of program readiness and capacity, there is serious traction for growth in the number of Y associations and program sites implementing SLLP. As the program scales, the thousands of youth benefitting become tens of thousands, and substantial progress can be made toward reducing the achievement gap.

As SLLP moves forward for planning its fifth program year, it is a good time to 'Take Stock' or inventory of what has been accomplished to date, and to identify the areas that can lead to even more positive program and youth outcomes. This document, in particular the following appendices, are intended to promote discussion within sites, across sites, and between sites and their technical advisors in order to celebrate successes and identify and prioritize the next steps for enhanced program implementation.

Program strengths (Appendix A) and opportunities for improvement (Appendix B) can be used to help sites focus programmatic efforts in order to continue to improve programming and reduce the achievement gap.

APPENDIX A: SLLP PROGRAM STRENGTHS

AREAS OF STRENGTH

- ✓ Significant increases in literacy assessment scores for first through third grades

- ✓ Relatively high consent rates

- ✓ Improving attendance rates

- ✓ High Program Fidelity ratings

- ✓ Strong Program Quality and Four Blocks Quality ratings

- ✓ Flexible, multi-component program that has potential for national scaling

- ✓ Intentional focus on developing academic achievement & social / character development

APPENDIX B: OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE SLLP OUTCOMES

Issue	Local Y Opportunity	Y-USA Opportunity
Attendance	YMCAs could find ways to increase attendance (e.g., offer transportation)	TAs could share site attendance strategy successes with struggling sites that are challenged by consistent student attendance.
	Programs could communicate the importance of attending the full program at the time of enrollment and throughout the summer.	Y-USA can emphasize the importance of messaging to parents and enrolling students who can commit to attending the full program.
STAR Reading Assessments	Program sites should plan for pre-and post-test assessments and make parents aware of these dates to increase the number of students with assessments at two time points.	TAs can work with local Ys to ensure they have testing dates set before the program launches and ensure sufficient computers and staff are available on those days.
	Program staff should not test students repeatedly at the pre- or post-test.	Y-USA can continue to train local Y staff on the appropriate methods for administering the STAR assessments to ensure the most accurate results.
Increase the evidence base of SLLP	Program sites can increase consistency and quality of data entry.	Y-USA can improve and/or replace the program data management (PDM) system.
	Program sites can agree to participate in rigorous research studies when Y-USA receives funding.	Y-USA will seek and obtain funding for a rigorous evaluation of SLLP.

2015-2016 AG AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM FULL FIDELITY CHECKLIST

DIRECTIONS: A response for each question is required, comments/reasons for rating are optional.

SITE DIRECTOR: This checklist is to be completed by the end of the 1st month after PROGRAM LAUNCH (October).

ASSOCIATION LEVEL STAFF: This checklist is to be completed at the end of October and January. Checklists not completed within those months will be considered incomplete.

Y-USA: This checklist is to be completed during site visits.

GROUP
SESSION INFORMATION

Date Fidelity Check Completed _____   *Conducted by* _____

Role _____

A. Program Implementation Fidelity (How we structure what we do)	Yes	No	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
1. Implementation plan is developed with school and Y staff and includes all of the program components *(Physical activity: 30 minutes daily; Homework help: 30-45 minutes daily; Math and literacy enrichment: 30-45 minutes daily; Tutoring: 30 minutes 1-2 times per week, as needed; Health and wellness activities: 30-45 minutes twice a month; Arts education: 1 hour per week ; 21st century skills: Two times per week; Global learning: Once per week; Leadership development: Once per week; College and career readiness: Two times per month; Service learning: One project per quarter; Family engagement: Ongoing)*	○	○	
2. Program schedule is reviewed and includes all of the program components relevant to that week/month *(Physical activity: 30 minutes daily; Homework help: 30-45 minutes daily; Math and literacy enrichment: 30-45 minutes daily; Tutoring: 30 minutes 1-2 times per week, as needed; Health and wellness activities: 30-45 minutes twice a month; Arts education: 1 hour per week ; 21st century skills: Two times per week; Global learning: Once per week; Leadership development: Once per week; College and career readiness: Two times per month; Service learning: One project per quarter; Family engagement: Ongoing)*	○	○	

	Yes	No	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
3. Local YMCA maintains a full-time Afteschool Site Director who works at the school, fully dedicated to the site to guide daily program implementation	○	○	
4. Program operates at a local school that was selected based on need	○	○	
5. School liaison is a certified teacher at the school in which the program operates	○	○	
6. Priority for enrollment is given to youth who are referred by school liaison and meet at least one of the five priority factors	○	○	
7. Principals and teachers are involved with student recruitment	○	○	
8. A plan is in place to optimize the percentage of individual students with an 80% or higher full-time attendance rate, as evidenced by check in with site director and local Y staff	○	○	
9. Program operates five days a week for the academic school year	○	○	
10. Program operates a minimum 2.5 hours a day	○	○	
B1. Administrative/Procedural Fidelity (How we support what we do)	**Yes**	**No**	**Comments/ Reasons for Rating**
1. Program budget submitted using Y-USA budget template	○	○	
2. Individual student and overall program attendance tracked daily and reported twice a month	○	○	
3. Enrollment Forms completed and stored at the site for all participants enrolled in PDM	○	○	
4. Data Collection Consents completed and stored at the site for all participants enrolled in PDM	○	○	
5. Photo Releases completed and stored at the site for all participants enrolled in PDM	○	○	
6. Site director has access to the DESSA online system (Apperson Evo) in order to complete DESSAs for each participant per the evaluation calendar	○	○	

	1	2	3	4	
7. Site director and association level staff have access to the PQA online system (Weikart Online Scores Reporter) in order to complete the School-Age Program Quality Assessment (S-PQA) per the evaluation calendar	○	○			
8. Site is following the plan to collect student academic data (standardized test scores and school attendance) from partner school per the evaluation calendar	○	○			
B2. Administrative/Procedural Fidelity (How we support what we do)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments/ Reasons for Rating**
1. Site Director attends in-person Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	Site Director did not attend Y-USA in-person training and did not complete any online trainings or e-learnings	Site Director did not attend Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director attended Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director attended Y-USA in-person training and completed all online trainings and e-learnings	
	○	○	○	○	
2. Site Director Supervisor attends Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	Site Director Supervisor did not attend Y-USA in-person training and did not complete any online trainings or e-learnings	Site Director Supervisor did not attend Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director Supervisor attended Y-USA in-person training and completed some online trainings and e-learnings	Site Director Supervisor attended Y-USA in-person training and completed all online trainings and e-learnings	
	○	○	○	○	
3. Association level staff attends local Y training on program model and participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	Association Staff did not receive any local Y in-person training and did not complete any online trainings	Association Staff did not receive any local Y in-person training but completed some online trainings	Association Staff received in-person local Y training and completed some online trainings	Association Staff received in-person local Y training and completed all online trainings	
	○	○	○	○	

	1	2	3	4	
4. Group leaders attend local Y training on program model and participate in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	No group leaders were trained, in-person or online	No group leaders received local Y in-person training, but most or all completed some or all online trainings	Most or all group leaders received in-person local Y training and most or all completed some or all online trainings	All group leaders received both in-person local Y training and completed all online trainings	
	○	○	○	○	
5. School liaison participates in all training webinars and ongoing e-learning opportunities per curriculum training guides	School liaison did not complete any online trainings	School liaison completed less than half of online trainings	School liaison completed more than half but not all online trainings	School liaison completed all online trainings	
	○	○	○	○	
C1. Program Fidelity (What We Do)	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Comments/ Reasons for Rating**
1. Activities are aligned to the school day, planned with participants' teachers	There is no evidence that supports alignment in program implementation	There is some evidence that alignment is in place demonstrated by a written document or outline that identifies some activities planned for the year	An alignment strategy is in place, but it lacks specifics on regular meetings, Y staff involvement in school sponsored training, or collaboration on school day alignment to tutoring and enrichment activities	An alignment strategy is in place, with specifics on regular meetings, Y staff involvement in school sponsored training, and collaboration on school day alignment to tutoring and enrichment activities	
	○	○	○	○	
2. A minimum 1:12 staff to participant ratio is maintained for all activities	Maintains a higher ratio at all times during the day (e.g., 1:13 or higher)	Maintains a higher ratio for more than half of the day (e.g., 1:13 or higher)	Maintains a higher ratio for less than half of the day (e.g., 1:13 or higher)	Maintains 1:12 or better ratio at all times during the day	
	○	○	○	○	
3. Deliver 30-45 minutes of homework help every program day	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
	○	○	○	○	

4.Deliver 30-45 minutes of math and literacy enrichment every program day	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
	○	○	○	○	
5. Deliver 30 minutes of physical activity every program day	0- 10 minutes per day	11-20 minutes per day	21-29 minutes per day	30+ minutes per day	
	○	○	○	○	
6. Deliver tutoring for 30 minutes or more per child every week, as needed	0- 10 minutes per week	11-20 minutes per week	21-29 minutes per week	30-60+ minutes per week	
	○	○	○	○	
7. Deliver arts education for one hour per week	0- 20 minutes per week	21-30 minutes per week	31-59 minutes per week	60+ minutes per week	
	○	○	○	○	
8. Deliver 30-45 minutes of health and wellness activities twice a month	0- 20 minutes per month	21-30 minutes per month	31-59 minutes per month	60+ minutes per month	
	○	○	○	○	

C2. Program Fidelity (What We Do)	Yes	No	Comments/ Reasons for Rating
1. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of 21st Century Skills- Two times per week	○	○	
2. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of Global Learning- One time per week	○	○	
3. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of Leadership Development- One time per week	○	○	
4. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of College and Career Readiness- Two times per month	○	○	
5. Evidence in program schedule and/or observation of Service Learning- One project per quarter	○	○	
6. Evidence in program schedule of Family Engagement- Ongoing	○	○	

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP WITH OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS

BLAKE DOHRN, YMCA OF THE USA, TECHNICAL ADVISOR

Youth Development is the **social-emotional, cognitive,** and **physical** process that all youth **uniquely** experience from **birth to career**; nourishing their need to be loved, spiritually grounded, educated, competent, and healthy.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ROADMAP
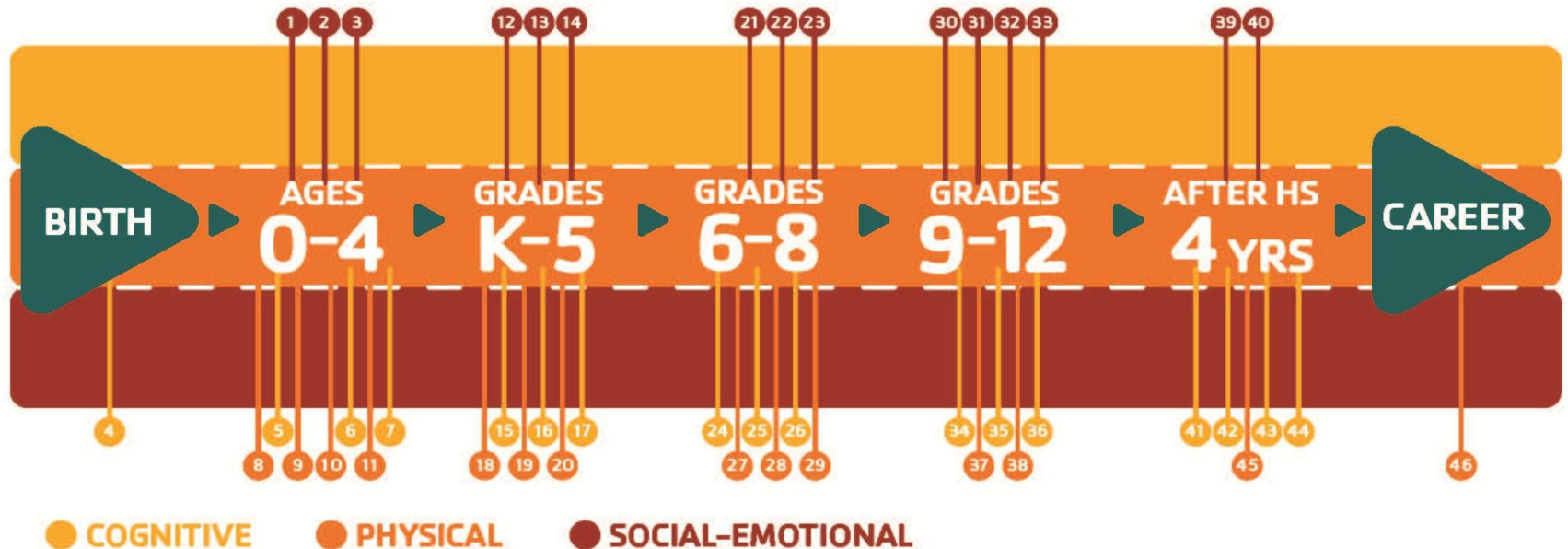
Youth Development is the social-emotional, cognitive, and physical processes that all youth uniquely experience from birth to career. A successful development process fulfills children and teens' innate need to be loved, spiritually grounded, educated, competent, and healthy.

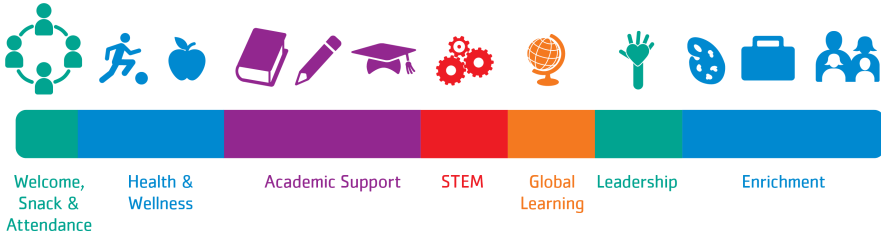|	Social/Emotional	Cognitive	Physical
0 – 4 (age)	1. Forms positive attachment to a caregiver 2. Makes eye contact and responds to social engagement 3. Responds to environmental stimulation	4. Has a caregiver that sings, reads, and talks to them. 5. Actively explores surroundings 6. Develops basic recognition of letters numbers, and shapes 7. Receives effective preschool preparation.	8. Receives quality pre-natal care 9. Achieves basic developmental markers, including crawling, walking, and weight gains 10. Has access to lifelong basic dental/health/eye care 11. Has a routine of healthy eating, playing, and sleeping
K – 5 (Grades)	12. Exhibits a desire to learn 13. Forms positive peer relationships 14. Engages in activities that strengthen social emotional competencies	15. Attends Kindergarten 16. Reads at grade-level by the end of 3rd grade 17. Sets academic expectations of good grades	18. Has access to healthy foods 19. Masters fine and gross motor skills through activity 20. Learns basic safety habits
6 – 8 (grades)	21. Has a positive non-parent adult mentor 22. Has positive peer influence 23. Participates in leadership-building activities	24. Has an expectation of attending college 25. Masters Algebra 1 26. Self-directs part of his/her learning	27. Self directs healthy eating 28. Is engaged in positive physical activity 29. Establishes resistance to risk-taking activities
9 – 12 10 (grades)	30. Develops healthy values including, caring, honesty, and responsibility 31. Feels supported by others 32. Feels empowered 33. Connects with community, school, and/or church	34. Passes most of his/her classes 35. Masters a "favorite" subject 36. Masters math and/or science	37. Establishes a peer group that supports healthy habits. 38. Engages in activities that promote mental health (service learning, sleeping, and faith).
Post-Secondary	39. Begins working on a career plan 40. Develops time- and stress-management skills	41. Has a financial plan to support post- secondary studies 42. Makes strong connections with a postsecondary institution 43. Has a career plan 44. Transitions into career of choice	45. Establishes a peer group that supports healthy habits 46. Engage in activities that promote mental health

OPPORTUNITY WALK

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP
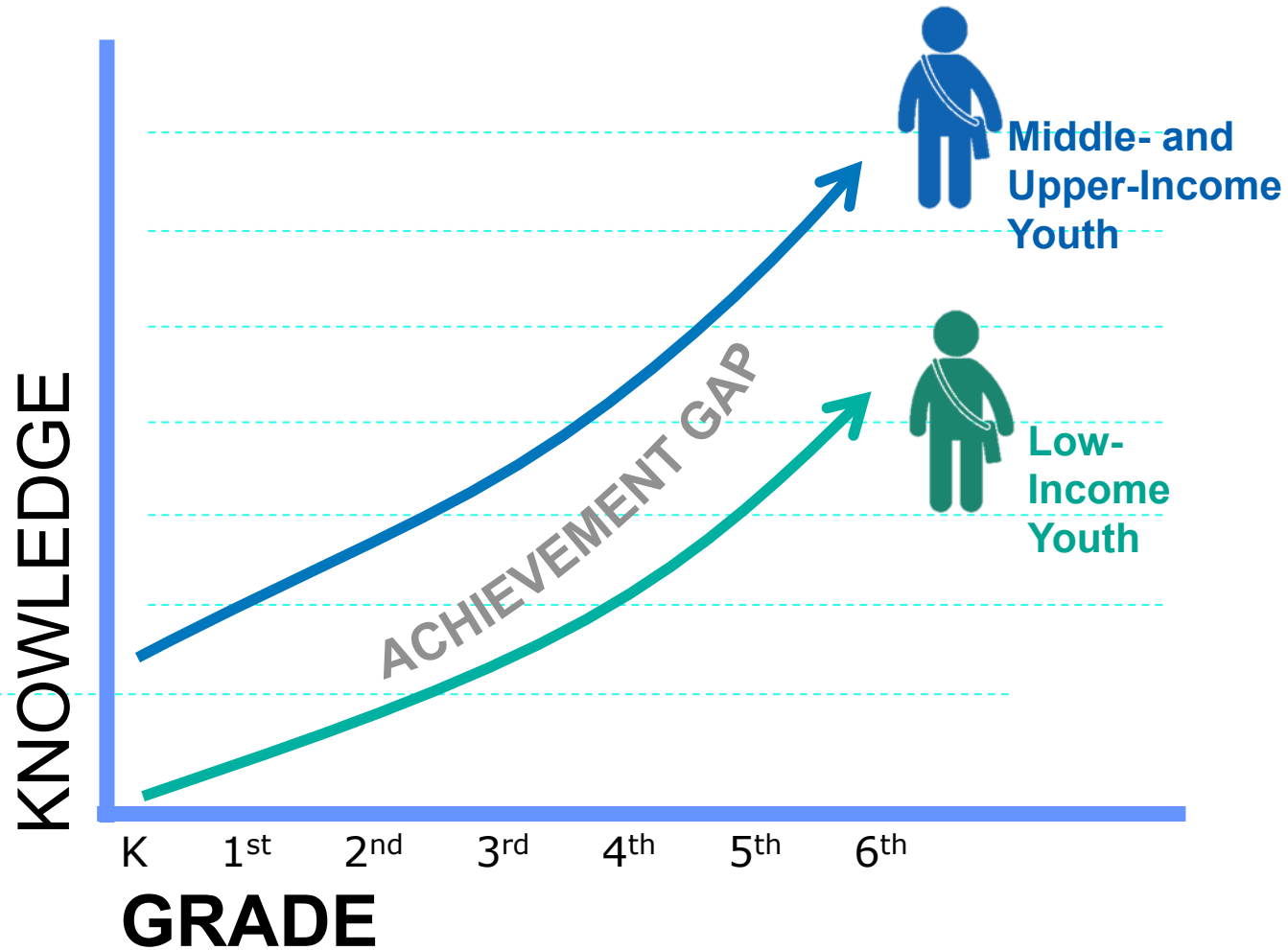
DISCUSSION

Consider how the Achievement Gap impacts your local community:

- What are the gaps?

- How are they impacting broader community issues?

- Who is aware and who needs to be aware?

- How is/can your organization be part of the solution?

ACHIEVEMENT GAP PROGRAMS

AFTERSCHOOL SIGNATURE PROGRAM gives kids and teens a safe place to go in the afternoon. But it also helps them realize who they are and what they can achieve, with a balanced program built on academic intervention, health, and enrichment programming.

Welcome, Snack & Attendance | Health & Wellness | Academic Support | STEM | Global Learning | Leadership | Enrichment

SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION PROGRAM helps elementary students reading below grade level. The program focuses on phonics, writing and reading to boost literacy skills, with enrichment activities to support physical and social emotional growth.

Welcome, Breakfast & Attendance | Literacy | Lunch | Enrichment | Closing
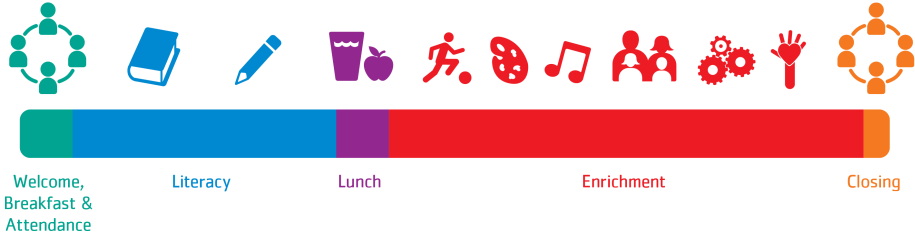
POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY ™, a partnership between the Y and the national nonprofit BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life), doesn't just tackle summer learning loss—it builds strong youth, academically, physically, and emotionally. The program partners with local schools to support K-8 students in literacy, math, enrichment activities in STEM and the arts, along with a health curriculum.

Breakfast & Community Time | Literacy | Math | Lunch & Recreation | STEM | Arts | Health
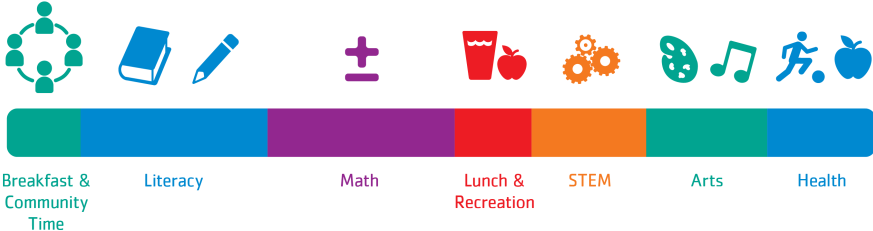
Early Learning Readiness for Family, Friend and Neighbor Caregivers is a research-based community program that gives young children (not in facility-based childcare), high-quality physical, emotional and cognitive experiences. It also equips their caregivers with the confidence, tools and support they need to be these children's first teacher, ensuring they start kindergarten ready to learn.

Welcome Circle | Interactive Enrichment for Children & Caregivers | Closing Circle

Transformation Must Be:
Measured – Intentional - Modeled

WHY EVALUATE PROGRAMS?

To verify that you're doing what you think you're doing, to improve, and to demonstrate program outcomes

VERIFY
Learn whether or not a program is meeting its goals and objectives

IMPROVE
Track fidelity to the model, ensure quality, and improve the program by identifying what is and is not working

DEMONSTRATE
Identify positive changes in program participants for yourselves, your community, funders, media, etc.

HOW WE LEARN AND GROW TOGETHER

WHAT WE DO (Y-USA)…

- Provide ongoing research and evaluation support, including data collection and tracking tools and technical assistance

- Provide summaries of data through PDM on-demand reports and year-end comprehensive reports

WHAT WE HELP YOU DO (LOCAL YMCAs)….

- Submit accurate data on time, use data to inform local program improvement processes

- Help you to use your data and reports to leverage future funding, develop key partnerships, and describe your work to others in a clear way

WHO BENEFITS FROM EVALUATION?

- Youth and their families…the main focus!
  - We support their development, school success, and nurture their full potential

- Local Ys
  - Understand what is working, what is not, and course-correct

- Schools and other collaborators
  - Help them achieve their goals for youth

- The Y Movement
  - Y-USA learns what Ys need to succeed
  - We make a nationwide difference as a movement in closing the achievement gap

ACHIEVEMENT GAP EVALUATION

SLLP	ASP	ELR	PSA
•Attendance	•Attendance	•Attendance	•Attendance
•Fidelity	•Fidelity	•Fidelity	•Fidelity
•Quality	•Quality	•Quality	•Quality
•Caregiver Satisfaction	•Caregiver Satisfaction	•Caregiver Satisfaction	•Caregiver Satisfaction
•Youth Development Outcomes •Youth and Family Outcomes	•Youth Development Outcomes •DESSA	•Youth Development Outcomes •ASQ •Child and Caregiver Outcomes	•Youth Development Outcomes •Caregiver Survey •Youth Survey
•Academic Outcomes •STAR Reading	•Academic Outcomes •Standardized Test Scores		•Staff Survey •Academic Outcomes •STAR Reading •STAR Math

Achievement Gap Evaluation Strategy (2015-2016)

PROGRAM GOAL	EVALUATION GOAL	Y-USA PROGRAM	HOW ARE WE MEASURING THIS?	WHAT MEASUREMENT TOOLS WILL WE BE USING?	WHERE IS DATA ENTERED?	WHO WILL BE MEASURING/ COLLECTING DATA?	WHEN SHOULD WE BE MEASURING/COLLECTING THEM?
IMPROVE QUALITY YOUTH PROGRAMMING	Participant Demographics and Attendance	All Programs	Program Enrollment	Enrollment Forms	Y-USA PDM SYSTEM	Program Staff	Enrollment: Beginning of program year
			Program Attendance (goal: 80%)	Sign-in Sheets			Attendance: Daily
	Assess caregiver satisfaction	All Programs	Caregiver Feedback	Caregiver Satisfaction Survey	Y-USA PDM SYSTEM	Caregivers	End of program year
	Assess program fidelity and quality	All Programs	Fidelity (subscales differ by program)	Y-USA Fidelity Checklist	Y-USA PDM SYSTEM	Local Y & Y-USA Staff	Several times during program year
			Quality (subscales differ by program)	Y-USA Quality Checklist	Y-USA PDM SYSTEM	Local Y & Y-USA Staff	Several times during program year
				Weikart Center School-Age Program Quality Assessment Tool (S-	PQA Online Scores Reporter		
IMPROVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES	Assess changes in social and emotional skills and dimensions of well-being	Afterschool Program	Social-Emotional Indicators *Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Personal Responsibility, Decision Making, Goal-directed Behavior, & Optimistic Thinking*	The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)	Compass + S.E.L. System	Program Staff	Fall & Spring
	Assess youth and family outcomes	Summer Learning Loss Prevention Program	Youth Development, including: youth development, literacy, healthy behaviors, family support	Y-USA Youth & Family Outcomes Survey	Y-USA PDM SYSTEM	Program Staff	End of program year
	Assess child development and social-emotional skills, and screen for potential developmental delays	Early Learning Readiness Program	Developmental and Social-Emotional indicators	Age appropriate Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE)	ASQ Website	Program Staff	Fall & Spring
IMPROVE YOUTH ACADEMIC OUTCOMES	Assess changes in academic outcomes	Afterschool Program	Academic Performance Indicators *School Attachment/ Belonging School Conduct Self-Efficacy*	The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) ACE Scale	Compass + S.E.L.	Program Staff	Fall & Spring
			Standardized test scores	School-administered	Customized Adobe Acrobat Forms	Program Staff	Once a program year*
			School attendance	School attendance			
	Assess student literacy	Summer Learning Loss Prevention Program	Student reading level	STAR Reading Assessment-Early Literacy (1st grade) & Reading Assessment (other)	Renaissance Learning's STAR System	Program Staff	Once a program year*

AFTERSCHOOL

The **Afterschool** Signature Program (ASP) provides academic support, healthy activities and enrichment opportunities throughout the school year for K through 8th graders, boosting their grades, building social and emotional skills and reducing their risk-taking behaviors.
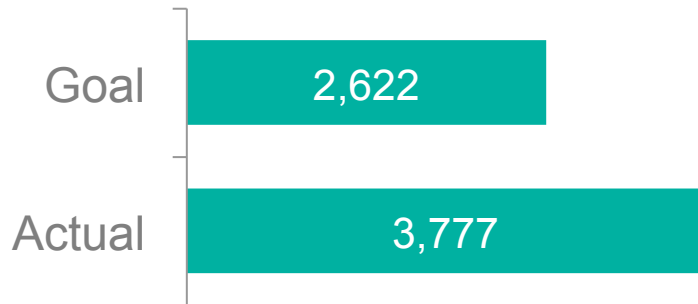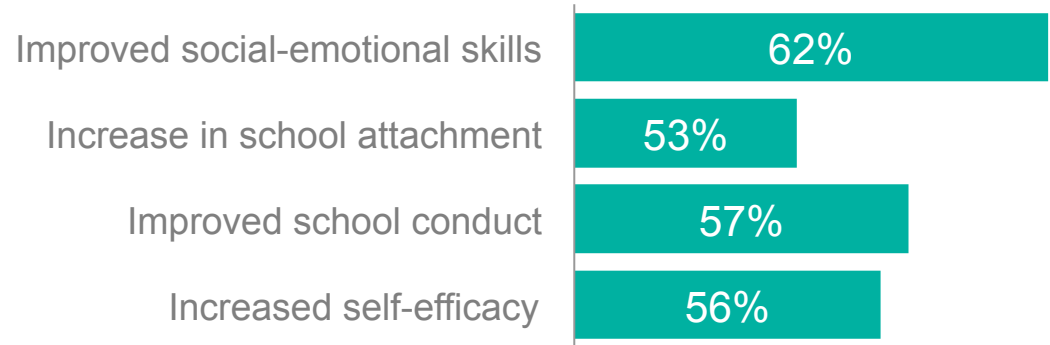
AFTERSCHOOL

Timespan: 2.5–3 hours

| Welcome, Snack & Attendance | Health & Wellness | Academic Support | STEM | Global Learning | Leadership | Enrichment |
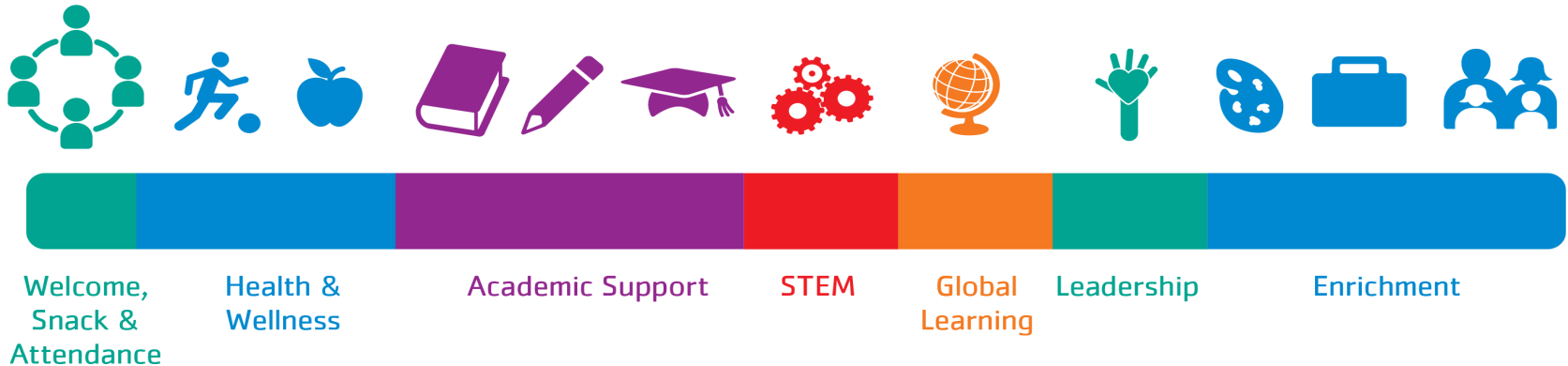
AFTERSCHOOL SIGNATURE PROGRAM

Afterschool Programs provide academic support, healthy activities and enrichment opportunities throughout the school year to K through 8th graders, boosting their grades and reducing their risk-taking behaviors.

ENROLLMENT

Goal	2,622
Actual	3,777

OUTCOMES

Improved social-emotional skills	62%
Increase in school attachment	53%
Improved school conduct	57%
Increased self-efficacy	56%

SITES

Associations	29
Sites	38
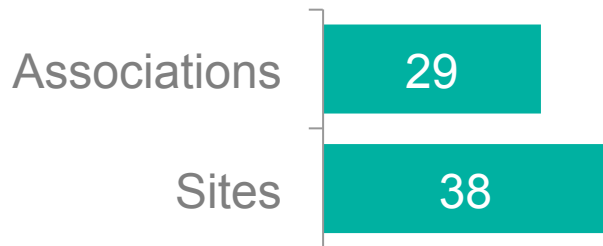
LOCATIONS
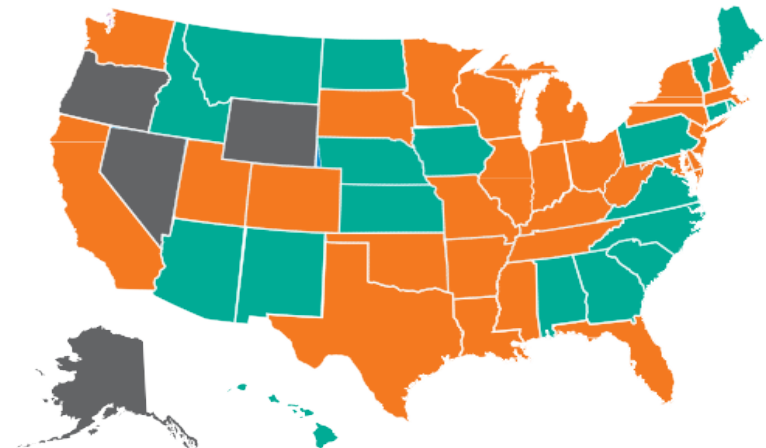
■ **25** States offering the Y's Afterschool Signature Program*
■ **States with Ys offering at least one other Achievement Gap program**

SIGNATURE AFTER SCHOOL – HOW IS IT DIFFERENT

Traditional Approach

- Safe place
- Homework space
- Recreation, play & active
- Some skills development

Signature Program Model - Intentional for academic success

Strategic recruitment (5 priority factors)

Extension of school day

– Engage school leaders, liaison and teachers for program alignment to the school day & data sharing
– A full time dedicated YMCA site director for each school has an office at the school

Schools & children in low-income communities

– Evidence-based dosage
– Impacts test scores & youth development outcomes
– Targets social & emotional skills
– Structured enrichment that is Sequenced, Active, Focused & Explicit (S.A.F.E.)
– Tutoring aligned to school day learning
– Comprehensive data/outcome management systems

WHO WE SERVE

Work with principals, school liaison and teachers to prioritize enrollment for students with one or more of the following priority factors:

- Absences
- Tardiness
- Behavioral Referrals
- State standardized test reading score (Non-Proficient)
- State standardized test math score (Non-Proficient)

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1.Health and Wellness
a. Physical fitness (daily)
b. Wellness/nutrition (2xM)

2.Academic Support
a. Tutoring (1-2xW, 30 min each)
b. Homework help (daily)
c. Math and literacy enrichment (daily)

3.21st Century Skills (2xW)

4.College & Career (2xM)

5.Leadership (1xW)

6.Service Learning (1xQ)

7.Arts (1xW)

8.Global Learning (1xW)

9.Parent/Caregiver Engagement

Academic enrichment components

SCHOOL-BASED STAFF

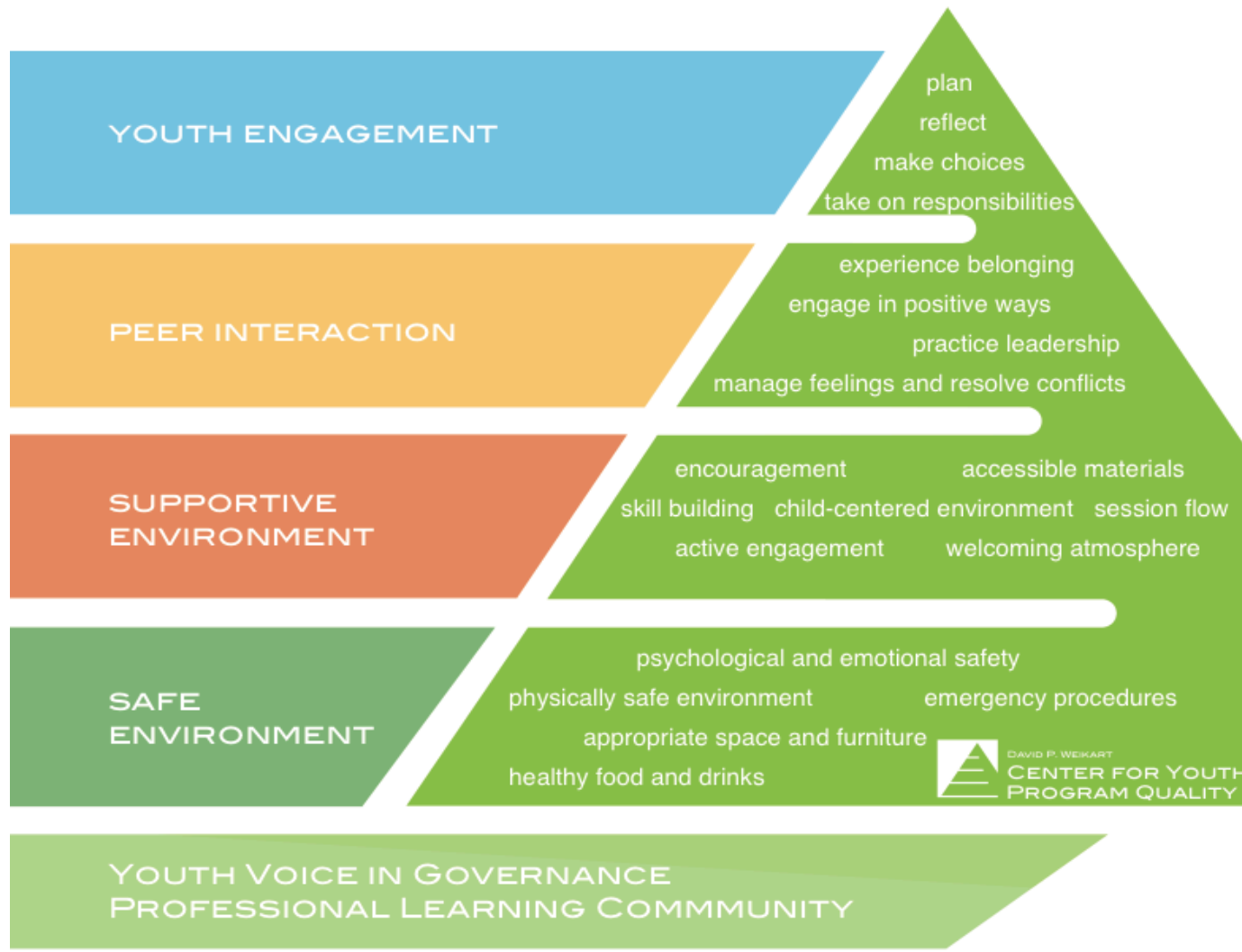| Program Role	Description	Weekly Hours
1 Site Director	Full-time person 100% dedicated to the program site, working with an office in the school to guide daily program implementation during the program year.	Full-time
1 School Liaison	One certified teacher from the partner school is hired to support the alignment of after-school program with school-day instruction. Will also facilitate data collection and student recruitment.	Minimum 5 hours a week, ideally 10
Group leaders	Front-line staff responsible for overall program delivery (1:12 staffing ratio)	17 hours
Tutors	Services for children in K-8th grade in the content subjects of Math and Reading designed to develop grade-level competencies and to teach study skills.	e.g., 2 hrs for every 16 program participants
Volunteers	Caring adults from the community work or volunteer in the program as mentors	As available

NATIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

	National AG ASP Findings
Gender	
Female	47%
Male	48%
Not Reported	5%
Race/Ethnicity	
Hispanic/Latino	38%
African-American/Black	27%
Caucasian/White	21%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Asian	<1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%
Two or More Selected	10%
Not Reported	2%
Primary Language Spoken at Home	
English	73%
Spanish	23%
Other	2%
Not Reported	2%
Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	
Yes	76%
No	11%
Not Reported	13%
Title I Schools	100%

NATIONAL FIDELITY DATA
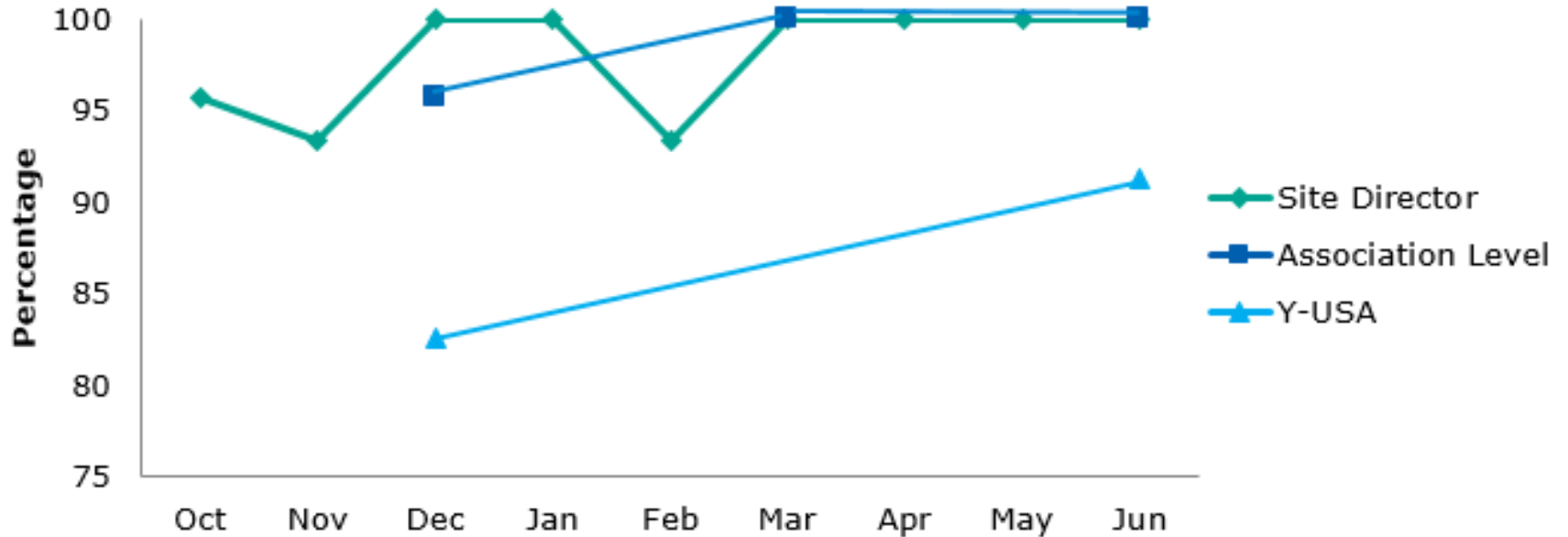
			National AG ASP Findings
		Full Checklist Median	96%
	Local Y	Quick Checklist Median (Range)	100% (53%-100%)
✔ Fidelity	Association Level	Full Checklist Median (Range)	97% (74%-100%)
	Y-USA	Full Checklist Median (Range)	89% (44%-100%)

THE SCHOOL-AGE PQA

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
- plan
- reflect
- make choices
- take on responsibilities

PEER INTERACTION
- experience belonging
- engage in positive ways
- practice leadership
- manage feelings and resolve conflicts

SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT
- encouragement
- accessible materials
- skill building
- child-centered environment
- session flow
- active engagement
- welcoming atmosphere

SAFE ENVIRONMENT
- psychological and emotional safety
- physically safe environment
- emergency procedures
- appropriate space and furniture
- healthy food and drinks

DAVID P. WEIKART CENTER FOR YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY

YOUTH VOICE IN GOVERNANCE
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMMUNITY

© 2011, Forum For Youth Investment

NATIONAL S-PQA DATA

Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)

WHAT IS IT?

- Standardized, strength-based measure of social-emotional competencies (that serve as protective factors) of children in kindergarten through the 8th grade.

- Grounded in social-emotional learning principles and resilience theory.

- Parents, teachers, and out-of-school-time program staff can assess social emotional skills related to school and life success.

WHAT'S IN IT

72 Strength-Based Items Comprise These 8 Scales

- Self-Awareness

- Social-Awareness

- Self-Management

- Goal-Directed Behavior

- Relationship Skills

- Personal Responsibility

- Decision Making

- Optimistic Thinking

NATIONAL DESSA FINDINGS

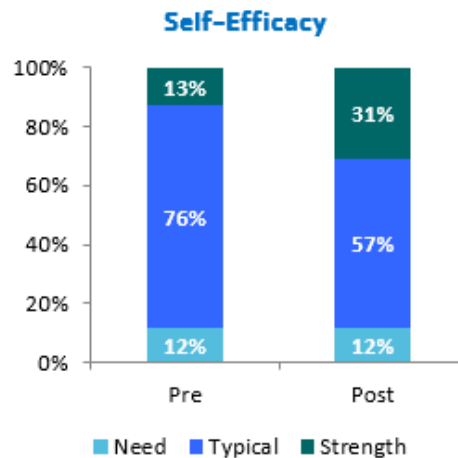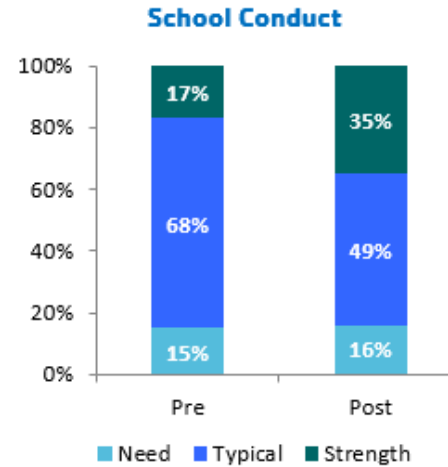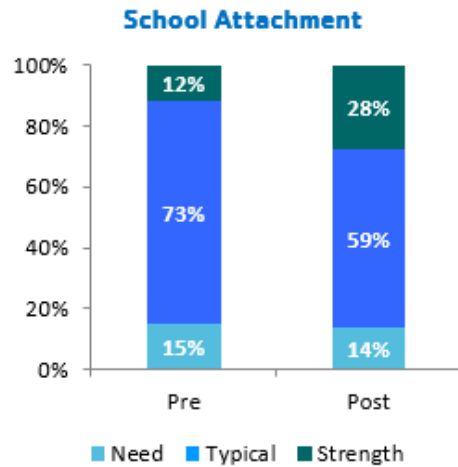## Supporting Participants with SEL Need for Instruction

*Of the 403 participants who began the program with need for instruction in SEL, **160 (62%)** moved to typical or strength over the course of the program year.*

ACE FINDINGS

The ACE (School Attachment, School Conduct, Self-Efficacy) scale is a measure of academic progress, intended to better understand the pathway from social and emotional skills to academic achievement. Students who have met the 80% attendance goal are expected to show improvements from the beginning to end of the school year in their ACE scale scores.

ACE Change Over Time

School Attachment

Pre: Need 15%, Typical 73%, Strength 12%
Post: Need 14%, Typical 59%, Strength 28%

School Conduct

Pre: Need 15%, Typical 68%, Strength 17%
Post: Need 16%, Typical 49%, Strength 35%

Self-Efficacy

Pre: Need 12%, Typical 76%, Strength 13%
Post: Need 12%, Typical 57%, Strength 31%

ACE FINDINGS

Across the ACE indicators, there were 39 cases of participants starting in the need for instruction category. By the end of the program year, there were 26 cases that moved up to the typical or strength categories.

SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION

The **Summer Learning Loss Prevention (SLLP)** program helps elementary schools students reading below grade level. The program focuses on phonics, writing and reading to boost literacy skills, with enrichment activities to support physical, cognitive and social emotional growth.
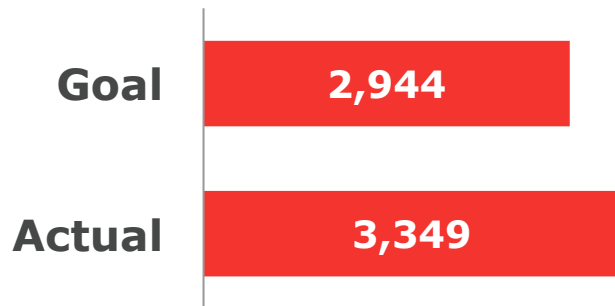
SUMMER LEARNING

Timespan: 7+ hours

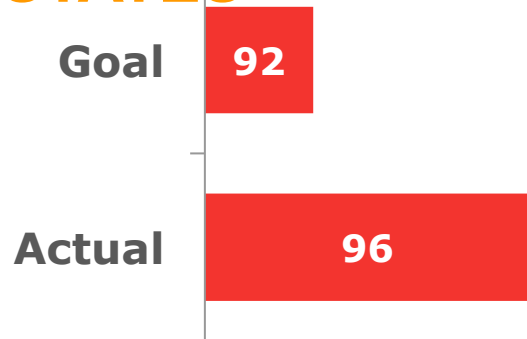| Welcome, Breakfast & Attendance | Literacy | Lunch | Enrichment | Closing |
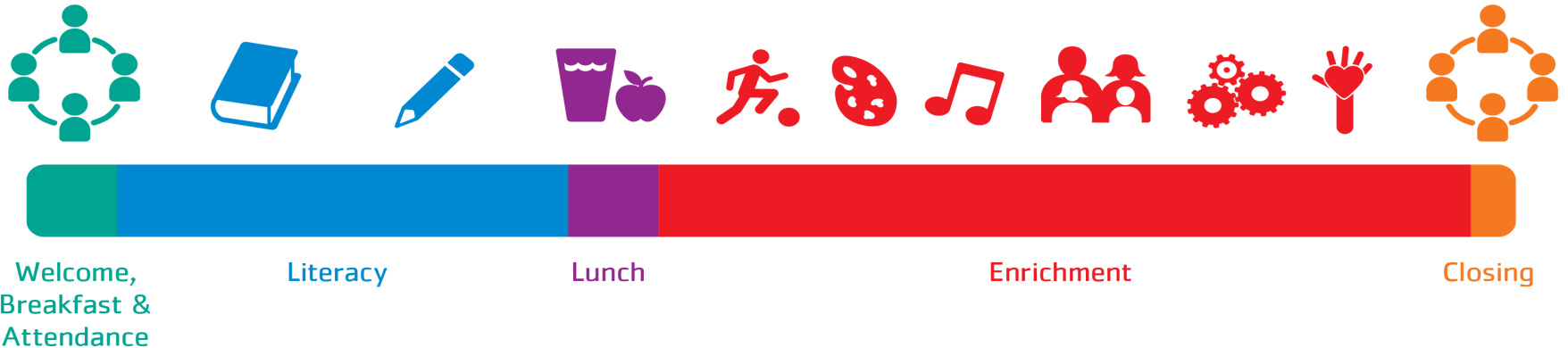
SUMMER LEARNING LOSS PREVENTION

This summer program helps elementary student reading below grade level. The program focuses on phonics, writing and reading to boost literacy skills with enrichment activities to also support physical and social development.
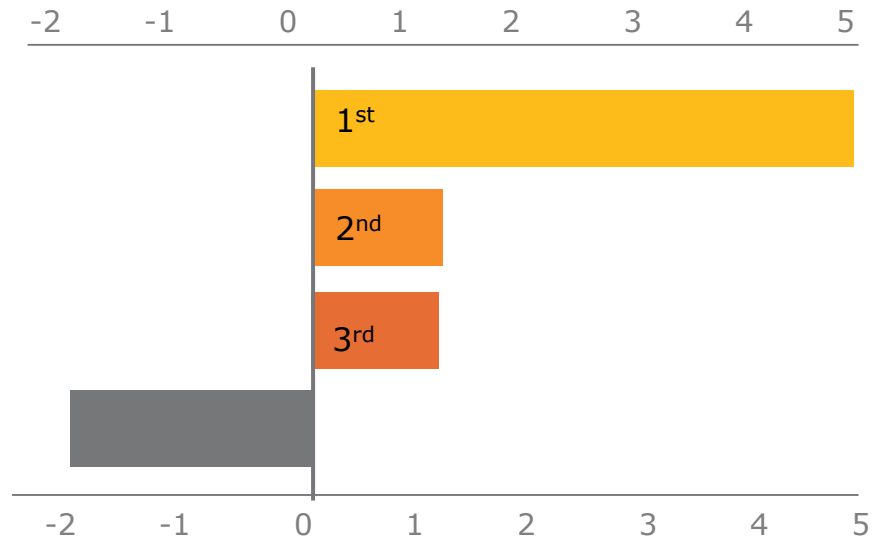
ENROLLMENT

Goal	2,944
Actual	3,349

SITES ACROSS 29 STATES

Goal	92
Actual	96

OUTCOMES

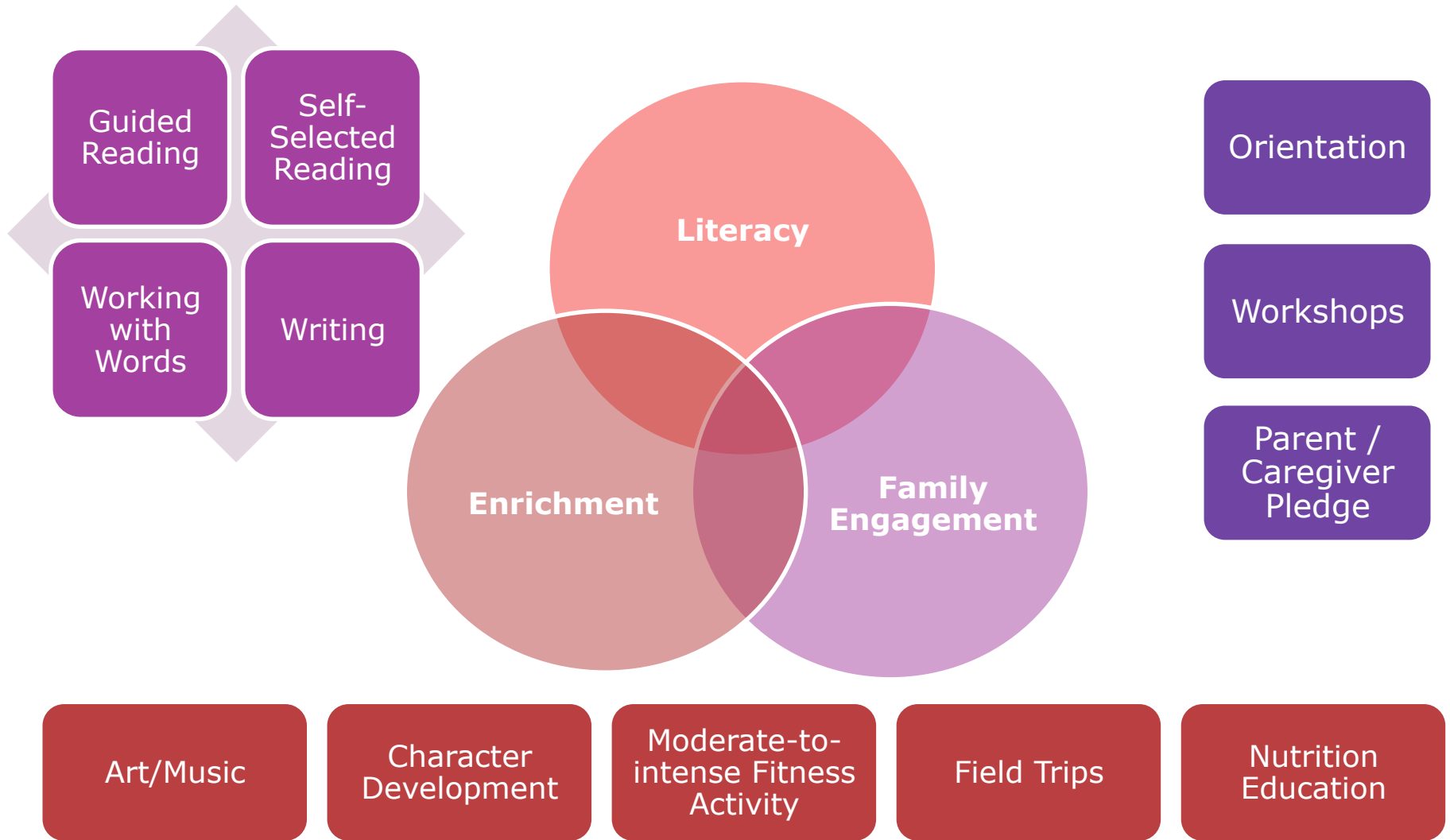|	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5

1st
2nd
3rd

Average Grade Equivalent Gains in Months

Average Summer Learning Loss, Disadvantaged Students without Summer Learning Opportunities

THE SLLP MODEL

Guided Reading

Self-Selected Reading

Working with Words

Writing

Literacy

Enrichment

Family Engagement

Orientation

Workshops

Parent / Caregiver Pledge

Art/Music

Character Development

Moderate-to-intense Fitness Activity

Field Trips

Nutrition Education

A TYPICAL DAY

MORNING CURRICULUM	TIMING
Welcome, Breakfast, Attendance	30 minutes
Guided Reading	40 minutes
Self-Selected Reading	40 minutes
Brain Break	15 minutes
Writing	40 minutes
Working with Words	30 minutes
Brain Break, Transition Time	15 minutes

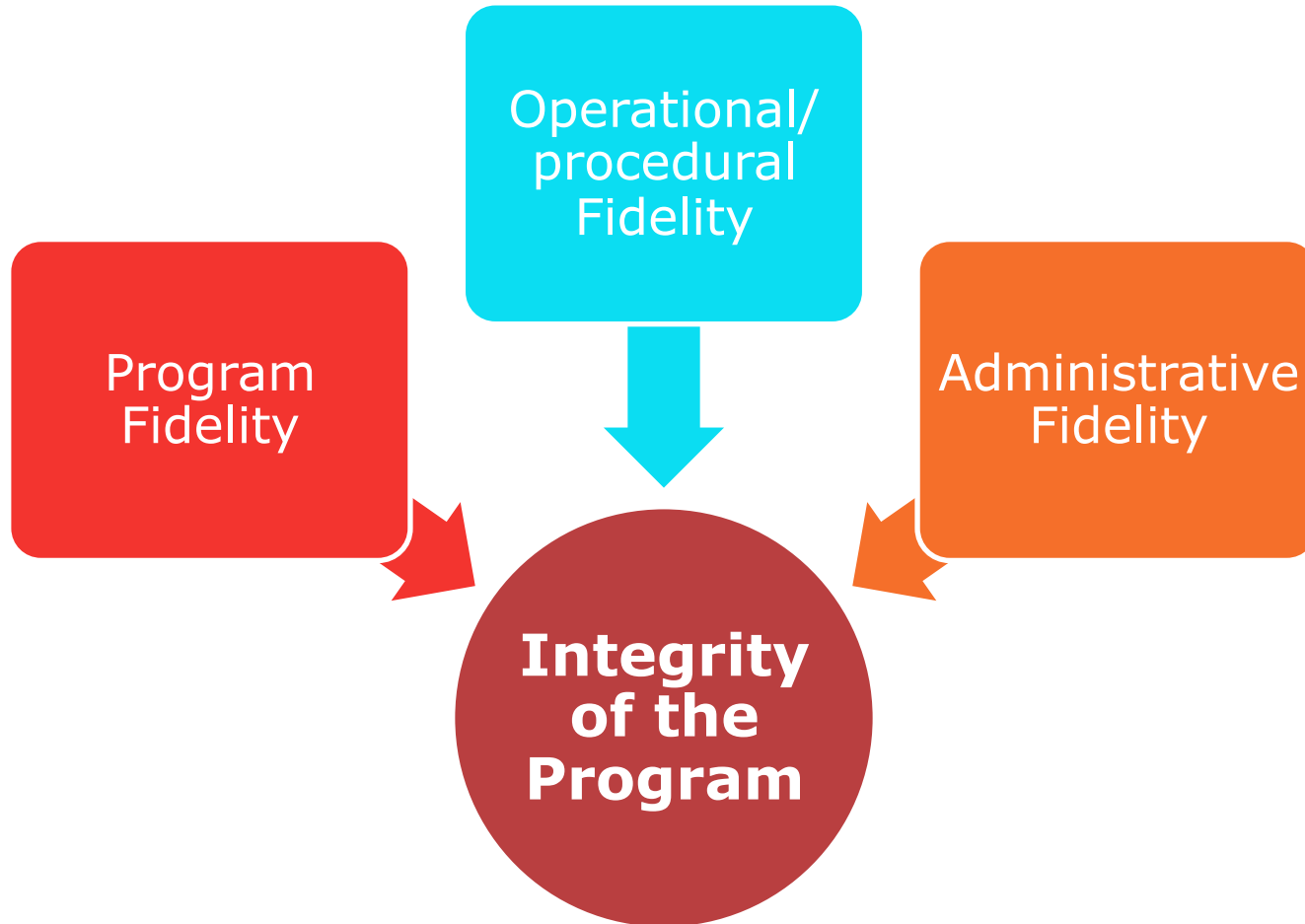| AFTERNOON CURRICULUM	TIMING
Lunch	30 minutes
Physical Activity	60 minutes, Daily
Art/Music Enrichment Activity	60 minutes, 2x per week
Snack	15 minutes
Character Development	60 minutes, 1x per week
Enrichment Activity	30 minutes
Nutrition Education	60 minutes, 1x per week
Dismissal, Family Communication	15+ minutes

Literacy Total = 2.5 HRS/Day

Enrichment Total = 4.5 HRS/Day

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A STUDENT

PROGRAM FIDELITY

Operational/ procedural Fidelity

Program Fidelity

Administrative Fidelity

Integrity of the Program

CATEGORIES OF FIDELITY

Program Fidelity

Operate the program 4 days a week.

- Deliver 2.5 hours of 4 Blocks literacy model instruction each day.
- Deliver 4.5 hours of enrichment (aligned to literacy) each day.
  - Moderate/intensive Physical Fitness: 1 hour (minimum) per day
  - Art/Music: 2 hours (minimum) per week
  - Character Development: 1 hour (minimum) per week
  - Nutrition Education: 1 hour (minimum) per week
  - Field Trip: 1 trip (minimum) per week

CATEGORIES OF FIDELITY

## Operational/Procedural Fidelity

- Enroll students identified as "strategic readers"
- Hire certified lead teachers and quality teacher assistants.
- Hire quality enrichment leaders.
- Operate program at a local school that was selected based on need.
- Provide breakfast, lunch and snack daily.
- Establish student safe passage (or transportation) plan.
- Use leveled readers.
- Train all staff directly responsible for program delivery in the program model.
- Ensure each lead teacher and teacher assistant is trained in the 4 Blocks literacy model.
- Involve principals and teachers to identify and recruit students.
- Maintain a minimum 1:8 staff to participant ratio for all activities.

CATEGORIES OF FIDELITY

Administrative Fidelity

- Submit proposed and final budgets.
- Complete and submit required evaluation documents including:
  - Student Roster (Demographics)
  - Attendance
  - Enrollment Form/Data Collection Waiver
  - Satisfaction Survey
  - Youth Development Survey
  - Quality Checklist (4 Blocks and Program)
  - STAR Testing and Training
- Ensure a local Y staff person (e.g., site director) attends the Y-USA training on program model and participates in all training webinars
- Develop a School Partnership Agreement with the local school partner

PROGRAM QUALITY
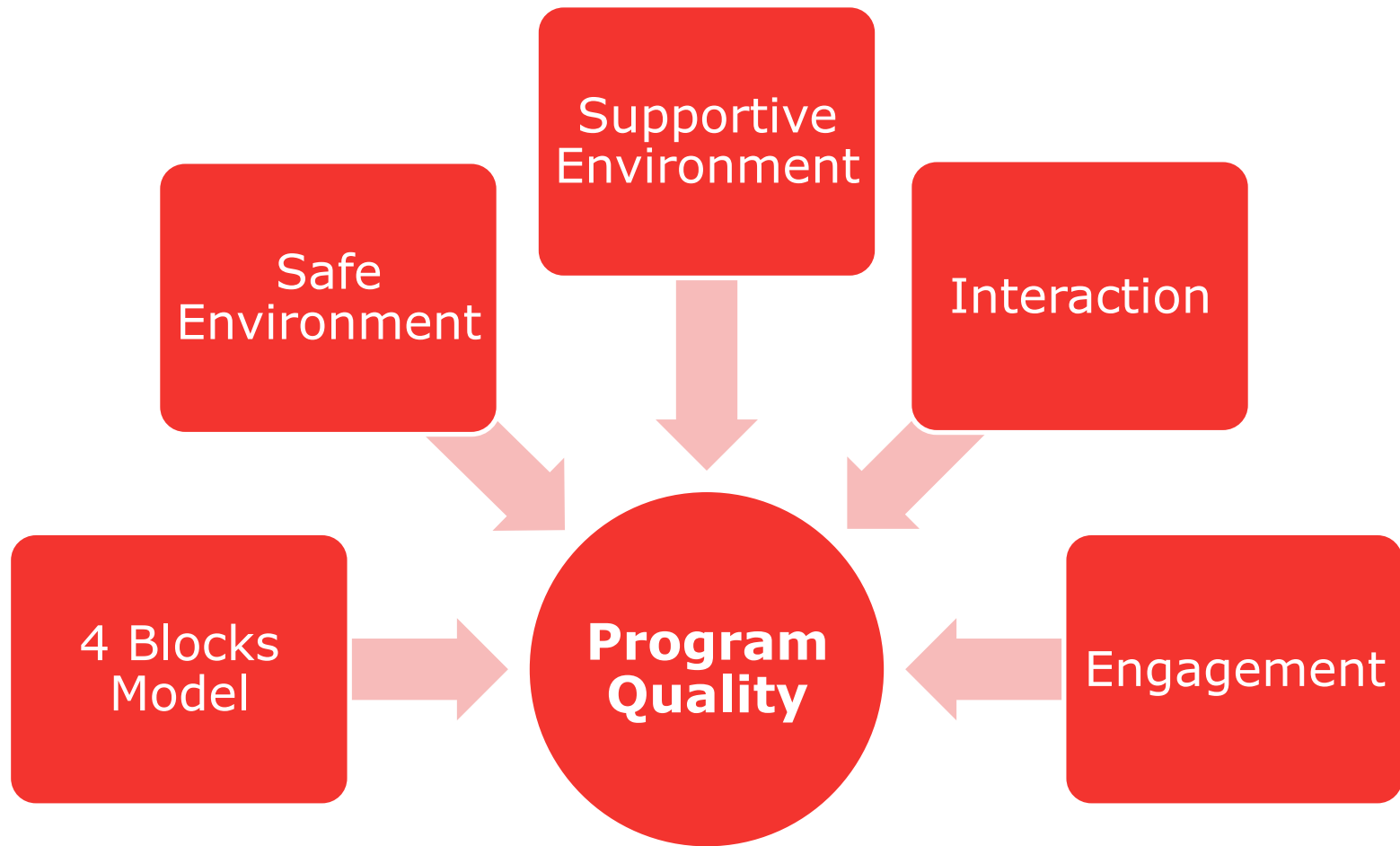
Q&A/ CLOSING

Youth Development is the **social-emotional, cognitive,** and **physical** process that all youth uniquely experience from **birth to career**. A successful development process fulfills the innate need to be loved, spiritually grounded, educated, competent, and healthy.

THANK YOU!

Blake Dohrn, Technical Advisor Y-USA
blake.dohrn@ymca.net