

Children's Hope Initiative Report - June 2019

Visions Plus:

Total youth referred to program: 11

Average Age: 19.5

Male: 40% Female: 60%

Latin: 40% Caucasian: 30% African-American: 20% Asian: 10%

Participant Stories:

KG: This student began as a Visions client, but shortly after leaving the program she found herself homeless and at risk for a relapse of a drug addiction. She called Middle Earth in need of housing, which we helped her find. At this time, we enrolled her in the Visions Plus program since she had involvement with CMO and was within the age range. After several months of work, she is now renting a room and is able to afford groceries without the use of SNAP, has a full time job and is now eligible for benefits and is receiving both medical and dental insurance for the first time in her life. She has also begun to explore college options and has reconnected with her family, so she is adjusting well to adult life.

AH: This student started working with us while she was living at a local youth shelter. She was involved with DCPD as well, and was in need of assistance in transitioning out of state care. Today, she is living comfortably with a friend, is a full-time student at RVCC where she is now the president of the student resource committee, helping other students who are housing or food insecure. She recently acquired a full-time summer job as well, and has been participating in a film-related internship with the Visions Plus program.

Outcomes:

Positive Completions: 3

Negative Terminations: 1

Enrolled Students: 4

Pending Orientation: 3

Got a job: 6

Accepted to college: 3

Issues:

Major concerns are the same as we usually see in programs--students dealing with mental health issues who struggle to show up on a consistent schedule or take advantage of the resources provided. We try to give our students enough leeway to feel comfortable, while still finding ways to keep the motivated towards their goals.

Lunch-Time Mentoring:

Served : 46 youth total for the year
Demographics: Average age: 11.9

63%- Hispanic
7% - Caucasian
5%- Pacific Islander
25%- African American

40%- Bound Brook
35%- Franklin
2%- Bernardsville
23%- Somerville

53%- Male
47%- Female

Participant Stories:

A student was referred to our Lunch Time Mentoring program for anxiety and to receive help with social skills. The student was placed in a 1 on 1 class setting because his anxiety was so severe that he could not properly function in a mainstream classroom. The student was far above his grade level academically but his anxiety did not let him perform to the best of his abilities. This student began meeting with a mentor in December and by May the student had learned how to combat his anxiety and was able to go back into his mainstream classes and participate. This student also was able to make some new friends by showing magic tricks that his mentor had taught him. Although the student still has challenges with his anxiety he has come a long way in just a short few months of working with his mentor. The school has credited much of his improvement to the time he spent with his Lunch Time Mentor.

A youth from MAPs in Somerville was referred to us in need of a positive role model and help with social skills. The youth began the mentoring sessions with a very "I don't care/ it doesn't matter" attitude. Throughout the year the youth began to open up more and enjoy meeting weekly. The youth had a hard time opening up and making friends. The youth and mentor agreed to make small goals to help with this. Some of the goals included: saying hi to 5 people in her classes, asking someone to play cards during break, and eating lunch within a classroom. The youth was able to accomplish all of these goals by the end of the year. She also made one really

good friend in school. The youth and her new friend now socialize outside of school and eat lunch together daily.

A youth from Bound Brook was referred to us for attention seeking behavior and her anxiety. The youth opened up to the mentor right away but the mentor was able to see the behaviors that the teachers were concerned about. The mentor worked with the youth weekly to help combat some of her behaviors like scratching, constantly getting up, hyperventilating, and talking when school work needed to be completed. Some methods that were shown to the youth were : breathing techniques to slow her heart rate, a bracelet to play with instead of scratch, and a countdown that helped her focus on the task at-hand. The youths grades improved and her teachers said that her attention seeking behaviors have become less frequent as the year has progressed.

Outcomes:

93% of Youth will experience increased satisfaction with grades (goal 70%)
93% of Youth will have improved interactions with adults in school (goal 70%)
93% of Youth will have improved interactions with adults at home (goal 70%)
80% of Youth will have improved interactions with other youth (goal 70%)
86% of Youth will have increased self esteem (goal 70%)

Issues:

Youth are younger with much more serious mental health needs and system involvement. Because of this, we were not comfortable with having youth alone during the summer. We referred out to other services including our after-school program but not all were eligible. Consequently we developed a Lunch-Time Mentoring summer program that will help to maintain contact with the youth and bridge the gap of services over the summer until they return to school. The program includes groups at Spring Reigns for Life and swim lessons. In addition they will receive one-to-one time with a mentor to do fun activities.

Promise Plus:

Number of Cases Referred 13

Opened: 6

Towns:

Franklin: 0 YTD: 2

Raritan: 1 YTD: 2
Bound Brook: 0 YTD: 0
Bridgewater: 0 YTD: 1
Somerville: 0 YTD: 0
Hillsborough: 0 YTD: 1

NUMBER OF CASES CLOSED: 2 YTD: 4

Positive: 1 Positive YTD: 3
Neutral: 1 Neutral YTD: 1
Neutral: 0 YTD: 0

DEMOGRAPHICS:

YTD: Male- (83%) Female- (17%)

Average Age: 17

Race: AA (83%) Hispanic (17%) Caucasian (0%)

SUMMARY OF GROUP TOPICS/ACTIVITIES, SPEAKERS, & EVENTS HELD FOR THE MONTH:

Maintaining Employment, Resume Writing, Application Process, Interviewing, Problem Solving, Active Listening, Conflict Resolution, Cooperate with Others, Taking Accountability, Credit History, Understanding the Law, Mass Incarceration, Tax 101, Decision Making, Rental Agreements, Probation, Leadership, Substance Abuse, Reducing Stress, Self Image, Family Community Services, Job Hunting, Informal Counseling, Internship, Site Visit, Career Research, Health Care, Exit Interviews, OG is a 16 year old youth from Franklin Township. He was referred to the Middle Earth Promise-Plus program for school and employment help. OG struggles with communication skills and this got in the way with not only school but made it more difficult to build relationships. Staff focused on building those skills by running groups and slowly putting him in public settings such as the 4-H Agricultural Fair. OG will be graduating this May and plans on enlisting in the Army.

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and slowly putting him in public settings such as the 4-H Agricultural Fair. OG will be graduating this May and plans on enlisting in the Army.

CS is a 16 year old youth from Hillsborough. He comes from a single family low income home and his father is incarcerated. He was referred to the Middle Earth Promise-Plus program because of school issues and early run-ins with the police. Staff focused on Decision making, character education and providing support and mentorship. CS was upset that he was unable to attend his end of the year school trip because his mother was unable to afford it. Middle Earth was able to provide a trip alternative to Six Flags. CG has made significant progress in program and wants to intern with Pop Warner as an Assistant Football or computer engineering.

Outcomes:

- 1) 80% of Participants will achieve their individual program plan and goals

100% of the youth shown substantial or moderate improvement toward individual personal goals established during phase one of the program.

- 2) 80% of participants will demonstrate Improvement in social and Life skills

100% of youth who successfully complete phase 3 of the program showed improvement in social and Life skills. This is based on Pre and Post Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment scores.

- 3) 85% of participants will successfully complete the Promise program which includes life-skills training, completing a resume, participating in paid internship OR finding employment.

3 youth successfully completed the Promise program, out of the 3 youth 2 found full-time employment and 1 youth successfully completing Job training but decided against internship for personal reasons. 3 youth are currently enrolled and 2 youth are in the orientation phase of the program.

- 4) 80% of participants will increase their knowledge of job readiness and job skills.

100% of youth increased their knowledge of job readiness and job kills. This is based on Pre and Post test information.

- 5) 80% of participants will report positive feelings about the program.

100% of youth participants who completed the program reported positive feedback about the program.

Issues:

The number of referrals is growing rapidly. CMO is also providing a lot of referrals which makes for participants with much more mental health needs.