



2016-2017 Youth Resource Center Report

Youth Resource Centers provide supervised after-school programming to middle school youth at seventeen sites throughout Dane County. Youth Centers served **3527** youth from June 2016 – June 2017.

After School Programs in the 21st Century: Their Potential and What It Takes to Achieve It, Harvard Family Research Project reports that youth who participate structured after school programming experience:

- **Improved academic achievement**—Participation in after school programs is associated with improved attendance, less disciplinary action, improved work completion, engagement in learning and better grades. *Dane County Youth Centers provide homework help, tutoring, academic support. Most YRCs have regular communication with teachers about student needs and progress.*
- **Improved social and behavioral skills**—Participation in after school programs is associated with fewer behavioral problems and improved social and relationship skills. *DC Youth Centers provide opportunities for youth to learn & practice social skills on a daily basis.*
- **Healthy lifestyles**—Participation in after school programs is associated with increased physical activity, better nutrition and improved body image. *DC Youth Centers provide opportunities for participation in sports, physical activities and learning how to prepare healthy meals.*
- **Reduced risk-taking behavior**—Participation in after school programs can decrease youth participation in risky behaviors including drug and alcohol use, law violations and sexual activity by providing safe, supervised services. *DC Youth Centers are open from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. when youth are more likely to be unsupervised and engage in risky behaviors.*

The research indicates that “three primary and interrelated factors are critical” to maximize the benefits of after school programs:

- Access to and sustained participation in programs. *Dane County Youth Centers are free and located at schools or in neighborhoods within safe walking distance.*
- Quality programming that is structured, supervised, intentional, and provided by well-prepared staff. *Youth Centers provide structured programming by qualified, youth work staff.*
- Partnerships with other community organizations, families and schools. *Dane County Youth Centers collaborate with schools, local businesses, parents, municipal government and other local organizations.*

Fiscal Considerations

Dane County is one of several funding sources for Youth Centers. In 2017, Dane County support for Youth Centers totaled \$149,966 ranging from 6% to 44% of a Youth Center’s annual operating budget depending on the Center. Youth Centers are a cost effective investment in our youth.

The annual cost to DCDHS to serve 3527 youth is \$42.52 or 11 cents a day.

Service Summary

- **3527** middle school youth participated in Youth Center activities
- **23%** of youth participated in Youth Center activities 2 times a week or more

Asset Development Programming

Youth Centers collectively provided **10,411** hours of asset development programming in the areas of **Academic Support & Tutoring; Recreation & Sports; Primary Prevention Education; Life Skill Training; and Technical Skills**. The volume, focus and structure of asset development programming differ at each Center. Centers run multiple programs simultaneously on a given day allowing for increased programming capacity.

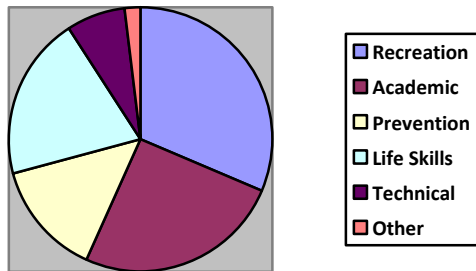


Figure 1 2016-2017 Programs

Leadership Activity

Centers provided:

- **2151** hours of youth leadership opportunity
- **6** Centers have Youth Advisory Boards
- Leadership opportunities include planning & organizing YRC activities, fund drives and community service events.

Community Service

Youth develop a sense of belonging and connection to their community through service. This reporting period,

731 youth provided **4293** hours of service to their communities. Youth Centers leverage adult volunteers to expand programming. This year, **585** adults volunteered **17,210** hours of service. **At the living wage rate of \$12.50 Youth Centers leveraged \$215,125 in adult volunteer time to support program services.**

Beyond the Numbers: Youth programs play a significant role in the resource continuum as illustrated below:

“Cambridge students are very lucky to have the Youth Center available to them. The Center provides a safe, fun and active place for my child to go after school. As a parent, it is a huge relief knowing my child can attend daily Center activities. The bonus is that it's free and supervised by educated and trained staff. The Youth Center is a huge asset to the Cambridge community.”

“Michael” came to our community after being adopted from another country.. He had to make quite a transition at the end of the school year as he was moving to a new land, with a family he barely knew and spoke only French. With the help of our programs, he was able to slowly transition into his new world. He met new friends, learned English and how to relate to peers and authority figures other than his parents. To be honest, there were days we did not feel equipped for Michael’s needs. We saw the struggles between Michael and his brother. We saw how the language barrier complicate his new relationships. We were concerned. Slowly, steadily, something amazing happened by the end of the school year--he was ready to attend our summer camp with little additional support. The kids in this small town took Michael under their wing and supported him. We began to see his kind heart and a child that just wanted to learn how to be a kid. He is flourishing! This is one of many ways our programs serve the Deerfield Community.”

“Micha” is a middle school boy who lives near the Center. He wanted to participate, but didn’t have family support. Even so, we welcomed and helped him build relationships. This summer, he joined our camp and we quickly learned some of his challenges. He was slow to accept expectations and rules. He struggled to be part of the community and cooperate with kids he didn’t know well. With time and attention, he learned how to regulate his behavior and what was appropriate and inappropriate. We worked through his “testing of boundaries” and until he settled in. With the start of school, he will be ready for regular after school. He has joined our LEAP 2 College program; our Men Engaged in Non-Violent Strength social-emotional learning program co-facilitated with DAIS; and is a regular attendee of our Friday Engagement Day. He used to be the ringleader of mischief, but is now one of the boys helping his peers stay on task!

"I'm so thankful this program exists and grateful the City recognizes it's worth in providing funding. Plus it's excellently run! As a single parent the youth center provides me with scheduling certainty and peace of mind, knowing my daughter is supervised and engaged in enriching activities. You never know what you'll pop in on when you pick up your child. This program also strengthens community in Middleton and exposes my daughter to a social diversity she may not experience otherwise."

"This story is about a 6th grade youth who began attending the OYC in June of 2016. "Daisy" is a daily attendee at the OYC. Shortly after she began coming to the OYC, we had a volunteer event to do face-painting at the local National Night Out. David spent 2 hours face-painting! She expressed how much fun she had, and from that event on, she has been at every single one of our volunteer events. Not only is Daisy volunteering with the OYC, but she has embraced our mantra of giving back to the community that gives so much to us, and not volunteers at the local public Library. She has two scheduled shifts at the Library each week and continues to be at every single OYC volunteer event. Her commitment and dedication to volunteering is an inspiration to both youth and staff. Daisy embodies everything we are working toward here at OYC and we see the impact she is making in her own community each and every day."

Prepared by Connie Bettin, Prevention Manager, Dane County Department of Human Services/Dane County Youth Commission, August 2017