

July 2008

Volume 1, Issue 1

Five Town CTC News

Got Outcomes? We Do!

- Community Levels of Risk Down
- Community Levels of Protection Up
- Youth Delinquency Reduced
- Youth Drug Use Trending Down!

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Together...

Promoting Healthy Youth

Programs Cut Rates of Juvenile Delinquency

A recently released article about a nation-wide study involving Five Town Communities That Care provides encouraging news. Researchers have found that seventh-grade students in U.S. communities that have set up scientifically validated programs to reduce juvenile delinquency have a significantly smaller chance of engaging in such behavior than do children in towns that have not adopted such programs.

Students in 12 Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Oregon, Utah and Washington towns that installed such prevention programs were 27 percent less likely to be involved in delinquency than were students in 12 matched towns in those states that didn't set up programs, according to a new University of Washington study published recently in the Journal of Adolescent Health.

The early finding comes from the Community Youth Development Study that is tracking the behavior of more than 4,400 students for five years in the 12 pairs of small-to-moderate-size towns. The data come from the third year of the study, which was originally funded for five years. Researchers hope to continue data collection for an additional five years.

(continued on page 3)

S.T.A.R. National "Science & Service" Award Finalist

Five Town Communities That Care recently learned that its S.T.A.R. (Skills Training And Recognition) after school program has been selected as a finalist for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) 2008 'Science and Service' Award in the category of Substance Abuse Prevention.

Starting in 2007, SAMHSA created the non-monetary Science and Service Awards as a national program to recognize community-based organizations and coalitions for exemplary implementation of evidence-based services.

Awards are bestowed in five categories: Mental Health Promotion, Treatment of Mental Illness and Recovery Support Services, Substance Abuse Prevention, Treatment of Substance Abuse and Recovery Support Services, and Co-Occurring Disorders.

As part of the final selection process, Five Town Communities That Care anticipates a site visit from a representative of the Science and Service Program in July. Announcement of the three winners in each category are expected in September.

For more information about the STAR program visit www.fivetownctc.org/programs/star

For more information about the Science and Service Awards, visit SAMHSA's Science and Service website at www.samhsa.gov/scienceandservice.



CTC Director Presents in Washington, D.C.



Dutton was asked to share local successes with the Communities That Care (CTC) system, and to answer questions about using the comprehensive, data-driven approach to promote healthy youth development in a relatively small community.

Dalene Dutton, the Executive Director of Five Town Communities That Care, spoke to leaders from the National Institute On Drug Abuse, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and the National Prevention Network in Bethesda, M.D. on July 16th.

Ms. Dutton was invited to speak to the group about implementation of the Communities That Care system in the five-town community of Appleton, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, and Rockport, Maine which began in the fall of 2003 and has been operating continuously since that time.

At the same meeting, Dr. J. David Hawkins of the University of Washington shared the latest findings from the Community Youth Development Study, which is a high-quality research trial of the effectiveness of the Communities That Care system in seven states across the U.S. The five town community is one of twenty-four communities being followed in the study.

Ms. Dutton was asked to share local successes with the Communities That Care (CTC) system, and to answer questions about using the comprehensive, data-driven approach to promote healthy youth development in a relatively small community. These successes include increased use of data systems to make decisions about youth programming, increased understanding of prevention science in the

community, increased use of proven programs and strategies, positive effects on predictors of problem adolescent behavior, and promising trends in reduction of substance abuse and antisocial behaviors.

"The early findings from the Community Youth Development Study are very encouraging. It is wonderful to see definitive results so soon," said Dutton.

"The CTC system really does work 'on the ground.' We now approach prevention in a different way in our community---we look at outcomes, set priorities, and match proven practices with our need. Because we are constantly tracking outcomes, we know that we ARE making a positive difference in the lives of youth in our community."

Recommended Reading: New York Times Article "The Urge to End It All"



A recent article By Scott Anderson, published on July 6, 2008 in the New York Times is a sobering look at the phenomenon of suicide and the "British Coal Gas story."

Mr. Anderson makes a powerful argument for increased use of gun locks as a way to reduce access to lethal means in order to decrease deaths due to suicide.

Access the article online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/06/magazine/06suicide-t.html?pagewanted=1&r=1>

Copies of the article are also available at the Five Town Communities That Care office in Rockport.

Programs Cut Rates of Juvenile Delinquency (cont. from page 1)

"This finding is very important because early initiation of delinquent behavior in children before the age of 14 is a predictor of later substance abuse, chronic criminal behavior and mental health problems," said J. David Hawkins, lead author and director of the study. "It is exciting because we didn't expect to find these community-wide effects until about five years. The seventh grade is still pretty young and this may bode well for other behavioral outcomes."

The study is being conducted by the UW's Social Development Research Group, a part of the School of Social Work. Funding for the study is provided by multiple sources, including the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Cancer Institute, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institute of Mental Health and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

At the start of the study, all fifth-grade students in the 24 cities filled out questionnaires that included questions about delinquent behavior, asking for example whether they had stolen anything worth more than \$5, purposely damaged or destroyed property that didn't belong to them or attacked someone with the intent of causing serious harm. The questionnaires were administered again when the students were in the sixth and seventh grades.

The study was designed to test the *Communities That Care* program developed by the Social Development Research Group. To set up the study, the researchers recruited and matched 12 pairs of cities by population, racial and ethnic diversity, crime rates and other factors. One city in each pair was randomly chosen to test *Communities That Care* and received training over the first year in how to implement it and build a supportive community coalition. The five-town community of Appleton, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, and Rockport is one of the Maine communities implementing *Communities That Care*; the Greater Old Town Community is the other.

Part of the training included a process for each town to identify its risk factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency. Once these were identified, the communities were asked to select between two and five of them as their top priorities. After that they were given information about tested programs that addressed each priority risk factor, selected programs they would implement and were trained in how to implement these programs. The other cities were given no assistance.

"*Communities That Care* is designed to empower communities to collect and use data on the risks their children face, and also on the strengths of the community, and then use this information to choose prevention and early intervention

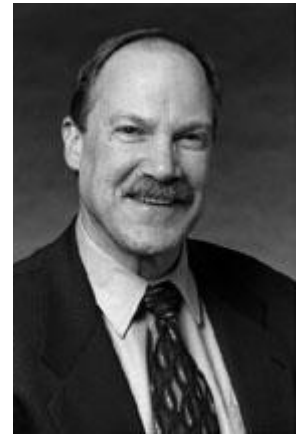
programs that have been tested and shown to be effective," said Hawkins.

"Historically, this country has believed in building coalitions to deal with youth problems in a community, but they haven't been shown to be effective. What's exciting is that this demonstrates that if you provide a community coalition with the skills and tools of prevention science, that coalition can help its kids actually avoid delinquent behavior. We can use the resources of a community to solve its problems by working smarter."

Data from the study showed the *Communities That Care* communities' programs had little effect in reducing the number of children who began using cigarettes, alcohol, drugs and other substances by the end of the seventh grade. This was expected, according to Hawkins, because most young people initiate substance use at an older age.

Coauthors of the study are Social Development Research Group scientists Eric Brown, Sabrina Oesterle, Michael Arthur and Richard Catalano and educational psychology professor Robert Abbott.

For more information about the study, contact Hawkins at (206) 543-7655 or jdh@u.washington.edu, Brown at (206) 221-3195 or ricbrown@u.washington.edu or Oesterle at (206) 543-7187 or soe@u.washington.edu.



Dr. J. David Hawkins

"What's exciting is that this demonstrates that if you provide a community coalition with the skills and tools of prevention science, that coalition can help its kids actually avoid delinquent behavior. We can use the resources of a community to solve its problems by working smarter."

STAR Program Wraps Up Another Successful Year

To date, the STAR program has served the following percentages of each of these future graduation classes of Camden Hills Regional High School AT LEAST once (many for multiple cycles)!

2010: 12%
 2011: 31%
 2012: 45%
 2013: 48%
 2014: 45%
 2015: 39%

The latest STAR Program data is in! During the 2007–2008 school year the program served 19% (116 of 625) of the grade 5–8 public middle school students in the five town community. Some of these students participated in multiple cycles. This is very close to our goal of reaching 20% of the students each school year.

STAR is a prevention program that focuses on increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors for area youth. A protective factor reduces the likelihood that youth will participate in risky behaviors. A risk factor increases the likelihood that youth will engage in risky behaviors. These factors are evaluated bi-annually through the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey (MYDAUS).

Results from the 2008 MYDAUS data show that local grade 8 students are reporting both

higher levels of protection and lower levels of risk.

One of the protective factors targeted by STAR is *community recognition for prosocial involvement*. A total of 53.6% of eight grade students reported that they received recognition from community members, such as neighbors, when they do something good. This is a significant positive change from the previous survey results for this protective factor of 42.7% in 2002 and 37.3% in 2006.

The main risk factor targeted by STAR is *rewards for antisocial involvement*. On the latest MYDAUS survey, 32.1% of eighth grade students reported that they felt drug use and delinquent behavior is socially rewarding; this is a decrease from the 2006 rate of 41.3%.

As a skill based program, STAR also measures skill attainment by participants. All students (100%) demonstrated increased

skill proficiency at the completion of each STAR cycle. Data from skill assessments given in the first and last classes of each cycle showed that 89% (128/144) of students completing a cycle of STAR advanced to the next skill level in that class.

STAR also strives to connect youth to existing opportunities in the community. During the 2007 – 2008 school year, 97% (139/144) of STAR participants were able to identify opportunities in the community where they could continue to use their new skills.

The STAR program is made possible by the support of Maine's Juvenile Justice Advisory Group, the office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, the Sunshine Lady Foundation, Wal-Mart, and many local organizations and individuals.

Guiding Good Choices Program Ready to Roll

There are now more than a dozen certified Guiding Good Choices facilitators in the five town community and more than 70 parent alumni.

Five Town Communities That Care has completed the important capacity building work that will allow the acclaimed *Guiding Good Choices* program to be offered to more parents in the five town community.

During the last year, twelve new facilitators were trained and materials have been purchased for new classes.

Once funding is secured sessions will be offered in Appleton, Camden, Hope, Lincolnville, and Rockport.

To date, more than 70 local parents have participated in the program. The goal is to reach more than 100 parents before the end of the year.

Guiding Good Choices has been shown to reduce substance abuse, depressive

symptoms, and delinquent behaviors among youth whose parents have participated in the program.

To learn more about Guiding Good Choices, or to help raise the \$1500 needed to offer a session, please contact Dalene at (207) 236-9800, email dalene@fivetownctc.org or visit our website at www.fivetownctc.org

Math Mentors Program Yields Strong Results

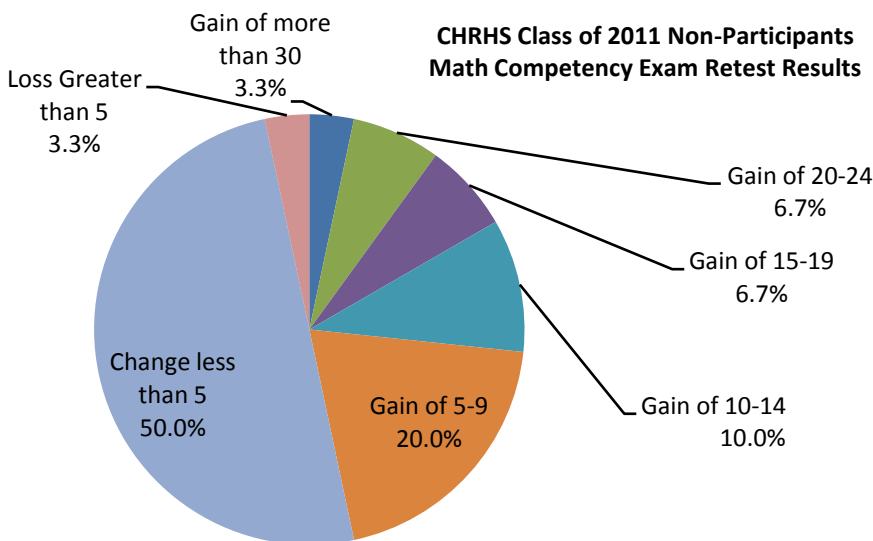
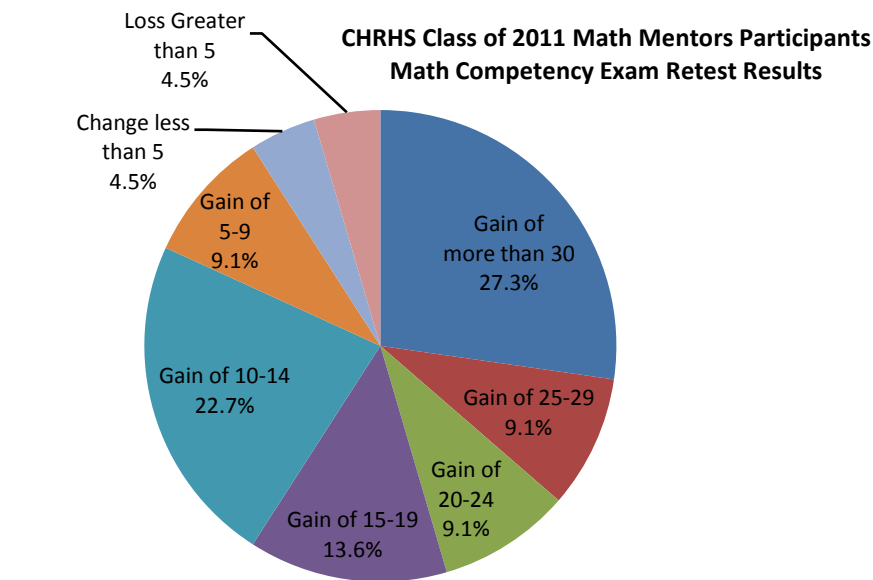
Analysis of the Five Town Communities That Care Math Mentors Program for the 2006-2007 school year revealed strong gains in not only mathematics, but in reading as well.

Program participant scores were compared with scores of their peers on the Camden Hills Regional High School Math Competency Exam and on NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) national standardized tests.

Data for the Camden Hills Regional HS Math Competency Exam showed that, for students who failed the exam on the first attempt, more than 90% of Math Mentors Program participants made gains when retested. Only 47% of non-participants made gains when retesting (and more than 20% of those students made gains of less than 10 percentile points). More than 27% of the Math Mentors program participants made gains of more than 30 percentile points when retested.

On the NWEA exams, program participants also made stronger gains. In Union 69 (Appleton, Hope, and Lincolnville) more than 50% of Math Mentors program participants saw gains in percentile rank (from fall to spring) in mathematics, only 26% of their peers who did not participate rose in percentile rank. (CRMS was not included in the NWEA analysis as it had too few participants for a meaningful comparison. The program served more than 32% of the Union 69 students.)

Perhaps the most dramatic gain was seen in the NWEA reading scores. More than 88% of Math Mentors program participants



placed in a higher percentile in reading at the end of the year, while only 45% of their non-participant peers moved up in percentile ranking.

The Literacy Mentors program was in its pilot year in 2006-2007, so there were not sufficient numbers of

participants to allow for a thorough analysis.

Data for the 2007-2008 school year for both Math and Literacy Mentors programs will be analyzed as soon as it is available.

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Life Skills Training at CRMS

Camden-Rockport Middle School has finished up another year of implementation of the Life Skills Training Curriculum for students in grades 6, 7 and 8 Health classes.

The Life Skills Training Curriculum was piloted in 2005. The CRMS class of 2011 received only the first two years of the program (level one in grade 7 and level two in grade 8), while the CRMS classes of 2012 and following classes

received level one in grade 6, level two in grade 7, and level three in grade 8.

The CRMS Health team of Clairlynn Rountree and Matt Brown are doing a wonderful job at implementing this program that has been proven in many studies to reduce substance abuse—immediately and in the long term.

Soon to be released data from the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey shows that

substance use among five town area grade 8 students is indeed trending downward!

The curriculum includes modules on drug use, decision making, media influences, coping with anxiety, coping with anger, social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution, and peer pressure.

For more information about the program, contact Clairlynn Rountree at 236-7805 or email dalene@fivetownctc.org.

Olweus Program Produces Positive Outcomes at AVS

The Appleton Village School recently completed a follow-up survey of its youth after its third full year of implementation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program.

The Olweus Program has been shown to be effective at reducing substance abuse as

well as antisocial behaviors.

The school implemented the program in the fall of 2005 in response to concerns about disrespectful behaviors and school climate.

Survey data showed increased awareness of bullying behaviors, reduction of reports

of students bullying their peers, and an increase in student perception that school staff are actively working to counteract bullying.

For more information about the program contact AVS staff at (207) 785-4504 or email dalene@fivetownctc.org.

About Our Organization...

The mission of Five Town Communities That Care is to promote healthy youth development and to prevent problem adolescent behaviors such as substance abuse, suicide, violence, delinquency, school drop-out, and teen pregnancy in the five town community of Appleton, Camden, Lincolnville, Hope, and Rockport. We also seek to foster increased collaboration and cooperation in the community in order to best serve the needs of its youth.

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