



Liberty Mutual Funded Research, Exploring Youth Mentoring Programs in Massachusetts

## **Big Sister Association, Life Choices**

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Individual program report highlighting findings from pre- and post-surveys administered to participating youth and mentors



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## Introduction

Research indicates that “mentoring programs can be effective tools for enhancing the positive development of youth.”<sup>1</sup> It is important, however, to note that youth mentoring programs vary greatly in terms of program structure, program type, target population, and primary goals. Despite the promise of mentoring, additional research is needed to learn about the “nature and influence of mentor relationships”<sup>2</sup> across the variety of youth mentorship programs and to determine key factors that may contribute to positive youth outcomes.

Liberty Mutual, in collaboration with the Mass Mentoring Partnership, hired the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute (*hereafter referred to as the Institute*) to conduct a study of Massachusetts-based youth mentoring programs. Research findings will assist Liberty Mutual and Mass Mentoring Partnership in expanding both the capacity and quality of youth mentorship programs.

The first report, *Characteristics of Youth Mentoring Programs in Massachusetts*, was released in October 2004 and provided information on the characteristics of youth mentoring programs throughout the state of Massachusetts.<sup>3</sup> The second phase of this research (*report to be released December 2005*) will examine the diverse characteristics of youth mentoring programs and document those program characteristics that contribute to achieving successful outcomes for youth participants. Staff at each of the youth mentoring programs were asked to administer surveys to both their mentees and their mentors in order to learn about the background of participants as well as impacts of program participation. The research will provide information about the ways in which youth benefit from different types of mentoring programs. It is our hope that this research will assist in expanding the capacity and funding for mentoring programs across the state.

In order to encourage youth mentoring programs to participate in the survey administration phase, Institute staff offered to provide program results back to each of the individual youth mentoring programs. This report provides program-specific findings about the impacts of the Big Sister Association, Life Choices program. This report is being provided solely to Life Choices staff. Decisions to share or disseminate this report are left solely to the Life Choices program.

The report is organized into the following sections:

- **Methodology** – Provides a narrative description of the report, including a description of the development of the questionnaires, target populations, survey distribution, response rates and analyses of the survey.
- **Youth Survey Results** – Describes the youth involved and the self-reported impacts of participation the in the Life Choices program.
- **Mentor Survey Results** – Describes the adults involved and the self-reported impacts of participation the in the Life Choices program. In addition, this section provides mentors’ feedback on program impacts on their mentees.

<sup>1</sup> Jekielak, S.M. et al. February 2002. “Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development” Washington, D.C.: Child Trends.

<sup>2</sup> Rhodes, J. E. et al. April 2002. “Youth Mentoring in Perspective: Introduction to the Special Issue”. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol 30, No 2.

<sup>3</sup> To view the full report, go to <http://www.mentoring.org/mass/>.



## Methodology

For Phase II (*Survey Administration*), the Institute developed a number of survey instruments to collect information on potential youth impacts from participation in youth mentoring programs. Instruments included:

- **Youth Pre-Survey**– This survey included questions on youth demographics and background, reasons for joining mentoring program and what hope to gain from participation, information about other adult mentors and involvement in other activities, information and feelings about school, relationships with peers and parent(s)/guardian, questions related to self-esteem, future connectedness and social confidence, and information on misconduct activities.
- **Youth Post-Survey**– This survey was very similar to the youth pre-survey described above. In addition to areas listed above, the post-survey included questions on involvement in the youth mentoring program and relationship with adult mentor, likes and dislikes about the program and time spent with mentor, and self-reported impacts from program participation.
- **Mentor Post-Survey**– The mentor survey includes demographic and background information on the mentor, questions on the most positive and least positive aspects of this mentoring experience, self-reported program impacts (on mentor), questions about the mentoring program and relationship. In addition, mentors were asked to fill out information on their mentees. Information included mentee’s demographic and background information, relationship with mentee, and perceived program impacts on mentee.

In addition, Institute staff used program data collected from Phase I (*Program Inventory*). In Phase I, program staff members completed a web survey describing their youth mentoring program.

### Questionnaire Development

As described above, Institute staff gathered information from multiple stakeholders – youth, mentors, and program staff - to gain a more complete sense of the impact within and across participating youth mentoring programs. Survey instruments consisted primarily of closed-ended response items. Closed-response items were primarily allowed for either yes/no or Likert-type scale responses. Surveys also included a limited number of open-response items. To develop appropriate scaled measures, the Institute worked closely with Dr. Jean Rhodes, an expert in the field of youth mentoring. Dr. Rhodes suggested a number of established measures that have been previously tested for validity and reliability and reviewed suggested measures developed by the Institute. In addition, Liberty Mutual and Mass Mentoring Partnership staff members reviewed the instruments. Changes were made through an iterative process of drafts and feedback.

### Target Respondents, Survey Distribution, and Response Rates

#### A. Youth Surveys

All participating youth (age 10-20) were asked to fill out a pre-survey near the start of the program and to complete a post-survey near program completion. Program staff members were asked to conduct the survey administration and return completed surveys to Institute staff. Program staff informed youth that the surveys were

voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Results of the survey would be aggregated and no comments are attributed to individuals.

Youth pre-surveys consisted of the following types of questions: youth demographics and background, information on whether have an adult mentor (outside of this program) and involvement in activities, reasons for joining the youth mentoring program, information on and opinions about school, information about relationship with other youth and parent(s)/guardian, information related to self-esteem, future confidence, and misconduct behaviors. Youth post-surveys consisted of the following types of questions: youth demographics and background, information about involvement in youth mentoring program and relationship with adult mentor, self-reported program impacts, information on and opinions about school, information about relationship with other youth and parent(s)/guardian, information related to self-esteem, future confidence, and misconduct behaviors.

The Big Sister Association ran two Life Choices programs during the time frame of the study.

- Life Choices Program – Fall Semester (November – January)
  - Completed and returned 63 youth pre-surveys
  - Completed and returned 42 youth post-surveys
- Life Choices Program – Spring Semester (February – April)
  - Completed and returned 68 youth pre-surveys
  - Completed and returned 43 youth post-surveys

Therefore, Institute staff received a total of 131 youth pre-surveys and 85 youth post-surveys for this study.

### C. Mentor Surveys

The mentors of all participating youth (age 10-20) were asked to fill out a post-survey near program completion. Program staff members were asked to conduct the survey administration and return completed surveys to Institute staff. Program staff informed mentors that the surveys were voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Results of the survey would be aggregated and no comments are attributed to individuals.

Mentor surveys consisted of questions on two broad areas: (1) mentors and program characteristics – including specific questions on demographics and background on mentor, strengths and weaknesses of program, self-reported impacts on mentor, and information about the mentoring relationship; and (2) mentees – including specific questions on demographics and background on mentee(s) and perceived program impacts on mentee(s). Mentors participating in group and/or team-based mentoring programs received one survey focused on the mentor and the program and numerous copies of the second survey on mentees. Mentors were asked to fill out one mentee form for each of their mentees.

The Big Sister Association ran two Life Choices programs during the time frame of the study.

- Life Choices Program – Fall Semester (November – January)
  - Completed and returned 13 mentor surveys
  - Completed and returned 90 mentee forms
- Life Choices Program – Spring Semester (February – April)
  - Completed and returned 9 mentor surveys
  - Completed and returned 89 mentee forms

Therefore, Institute staff received a total of 22 mentor surveys and 179 mentee forms for this study.

## Quantitative Analysis of Valid Responses

The foundations of this report are simple frequencies based on the survey responses. The total number of valid responses for any particular question may vary since some individuals, either intentionally or inadvertently, failed to answer one or more of the questions. In addition, a number of individual survey measures were re-computed to create the following scaled measures:

- School liking
- School engagement
- Academic efficacy / confidence
- Educational aspirations
- Peer relations
- Communication with parent(s) / guardian
- Self-esteem
- Future connectedness
- Misconduct behavior
- Alcohol and other drug (AOD) use

Cross-tabulations of the data were analyzed to identify any statistically significant differences between key subgroups of the respondents, including a variety of program, youth and mentor characteristics. Comparative data are shown only for those cases where a statistically significant difference was found. Subgroup differences were tested for statistical significance using the chi-square and Fisher's exact tests. Fisher's exact test is used in cases where one or more of the cells had a frequency of five or less.

In addition to conducting cross-tabulations, the evaluation explored outcomes using the following methods:

- **Analyzing Self-Reported Outcomes** – Youth and mentors were both asked in the post-survey to identify those areas where time spent with a mentor and participation in the youth mentoring program impacted the youth and to rate the extent of the impact. In addition, mentors were asked to identify and rate impacts of participation on themselves.
- **Analyzing Post-Measures on Mentor – Mentee Relationships** – In addition, youth and mentors were asked to provide ratings to a number of questions related to their mentor – mentee relationship. These measures will be used as benchmarks for healthy, positive relationships.<sup>4</sup>
- **Analyzing Changes in Pre / Post Survey Responses** – Youth were provided with a number of questions related to their opinions and activities surrounding school, relationship with peers and parents, self-esteem and future connectedness, and misconduct behaviors - and asked to rate their level of interest or involvement in each at the start and at the conclusion of their mentoring experience. Comparisons of composite scores from pre- and post- survey responses were then analyzed. The Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney Test is used to analyze overall differences in pre-post survey responses and identify any statistically significant differences. The Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney Test is the non-parametric version of the independent samples t-test. This test is used when one does not wish to assume that the difference between the two variables is interval and normally distributed.

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<sup>4</sup> The study uses Dr. Jean Rhodes' 15-item metric on relationship quality and effectiveness as well as benchmarks from the article, *Assessing the Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs*, by Jean Baldwin Grossman and Amy Johnson.

Findings are shown for those cases where a statistically significant difference was discovered. Statistically significant differences are highlighted at the 5% level (probability  $<.05$ ). In other words, findings are considered to be statistically significant if there was less than a 5% chance (probability  $<.05$ ) that such a finding would be the result of sampling error rather than actual differences between the pre- and post- tests.

### **Qualitative Analysis of Open-Ended Responses**

Open-ended responses were entered into a database. The evaluator used a standard qualitative technique to analyze the content of the responses. The approach involved multiple readings of the data set and the assignment of themes around recurring ideas. Once themes were identified, each response was coded by its appropriate theme. The coded responses were then read and re-read in their thematic grouping to further identify patterns.

The findings of the qualitative analysis are referred to in the body of the report.

## Youth Surveys - Results

This chapter provides an overview of the youth survey results including information on youth demographics and background information, reasons for joining the mentoring program, program impressions, and program impacts.

The report reflects the findings from 131 youth pre-surveys and 85 youth post-surveys completed and returned to Institute staff.

### Youth Demographics and Background Information

The Life choices program serves females only. The vast majority of participants are non-white and are primarily represented by Hispanic / Latino(a) and/or Black / African American girls.

<i>Sex</i>	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	N	%	N	%
Female	131	100.0	85	100.0
Male	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	131	100.0	85	100.0
<i>Race / Ethnicity</i> <sup>5</sup>	N	%	N	%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	7	5.5	6	7.8
Asian	5	3.9	1	1.3
Black / African American	29	22.8	22	28.6
Hispanic / Latino(a)	51	40.2	36	46.8
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	1	0.8	0	0.0
White / Caucasian	38	29.9	20	26.0
Other	16	12.6	7	9.1
Total	127	100.0	77	100.0

The majority of youth do not live with both of their parents. Approximately one-third of youth live with both parents. Approximately 50% live with their mothers (*along with other relatives*). Less than 5 percent live solely with their fathers. The remainder (less than 10%) live with their grandparents, other relatives, or other adults. In addition, the vast majority – approximately 97% - of youth participants report having siblings. Approximately three-quarters of youth report that English is the primary language spoken in their homes. Approximately one-quarter report that Spanish is the primary language in their homes.

<sup>5</sup> Youth were able to select multiple categories for race / ethnicity. Seventeen youth selected multiple categories in the pre-survey and 12 youth selected multiple categories in the post-survey.



	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	N	%	N	%
<b><i>What adults do you live with?</i></b>				
Mother and father	40	31.7	30	39.0
Mother, father and other ( <i>grandparent, other relative</i> )	5	4.0	0	0.0
Mother only	49	38.9	27	35.1
Mother and other ( <i>grandparent, other relative, stepfather, other</i> )	19	15.1	11	14.3
Father only	3	2.4	2	2.6
Father and other ( <i>grandparent</i> )	0	0.0	1	1.3
Grandparent	3	2.4	1	1.3
Other relatives	4	3.2	4	5.2
Other	3	2.4	1	1.3
Total	126	100.0	77	100.0
<b><i>Number of Siblings</i></b>				
	N	%	N	%
None	4	3.1	2	2.6
1	18	14.0	12	15.6
2	36	27.9	29	37.7
3	20	15.5	13	16.9
4	16	12.4	8	10.4
5+	35	27.1	13	16.9
Total	129	100.0	77	100.0
<b><i>Language spoken most frequently at home</i></b>				
	N	%	N	%
English	84	74.3	46	78.0
Spanish	24	21.2	16	27.1
Other	5	4.4	1	1.7
Total	113	100.0	59	100.0

The vast majority of youth participants are currently enrolled in school. More than half report being in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and approximately two-fifths are in either 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Very few youth participants – less than 5% - are currently in high school. Approximately three-quarters of youth participants report being eligible for free or reduced lunch. In addition, approximately one-fifth report ever being held back a year in school and nearly one-third report ever being suspended from school.

	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	N	%	N	%
<b><i>Currently enrolled in school</i></b>				
Yes	125	99.2	76	93.8
No	1	0.8	5	6.2
Total	126	100.0	81	100.0

<i>Current or highest grade level</i>	<b>Pre-Test</b>		<b>Post-Test</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	1	0.8	1	1.2
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	20	15.7	16	19.3
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	29	22.8	20	24.1
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	74	58.3	43	51.8
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2	1.6	2	2.4
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	1	0.8	1	1.2
Total	127	100.0	83	100.0
<b><i>Eligible for free or reduced lunch</i></b>				
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	99	78.0	44	72.1
No	28	22.0	17	27.9
Total	127	100.0	61	100.0
<b><i>Ever held back a year in school</i></b>				
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	30	23.8	12	20.3
No	96	76.2	47	79.7
Total	126	100.0	59	100.0
<b><i>Ever suspended from school</i></b>				
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	37	29.4	20	32.3
No	89	70.6	42	67.7
Total	126	100.0	62	100.0

## Reasons for Joining the Mentoring Programs

At the beginning of their program participation, youth were asked why they chose to join the mentoring program and what they hoped to gain from time spent with their mentor.

The most common responses for joining the Life Choices program included:

- Program sounded fun and interesting
- Friends and classmates are in the program
- To learn and share information openly
- To make new friends
- Requirement / mandatory to join

See Appendix A for a complete listing of youth responses about reasons for joining the Life Choices program.

The most common responses for what youth hope to gain from participation in the Life Choices program include:

- Gain knowledge and ‘understand life’
- Build stronger friendships
- Increase self-confidence and self-esteem
- Improve leadership skills
- Gain a support network
- To have fun
- Improve responsibility and decision-making skills
- Gain respect for self and others
- Learn to be open with others and build trust

See Appendix A for a complete listing of youth responses about what they hope to gain from participation in the Life Choices program.

### The Life Choices Program and Mentor / Mentee Relationships

At program completion, youth were asked a number of questions about the Life Choices program and their relationship with their mentor at program completion. The majority of youth (69%) reported that they had attended the program for 3 to 6 months. Nearly all youth reported meeting with their mentor at least once a week. Nearly 90% report attending the program either ‘always’ or ‘most of the time’.

<i>Length of time attending this program / meeting with mentor</i>	N	%
Less than 3 months	12	14.3
3 months to less than 6 months	58	69.0
6 months to less than 9 months	12	14.3
9 months to less than 1 year	1	1.2
1 year to less than 2 years	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0
<i>How often usually meet with mentor?</i>	N	%
At least once a week	79	96.3
Two or three times per month	2	2.4
Once a month	1	1.2
Total	82	100.0
<i>How often usually attend this mentoring program?</i>	N	%
Always	57	67.1
Most of the time	18	21.2
Some of the time	7	8.2
Not often	3	3.5
Total	85	100.0

Life Choices is a group-based mentoring program, comprised of one mentor working with multiple youth. As highlighted below, group size varies somewhat. More than two-fifths of youth report having 6 to 9 youth in their mentoring group. A similar percentage reported having 10 or more other youth in their group. The remainder of youth (12%) report participating in smaller groups of 5 or less. Nearly all youth (90%) report feeling either ‘very close’ or ‘somewhat close’ to other youth in their group. In addition, youth were asked about who decides how the group spends its time together. More than half (58%) report that the mentor and youth decide together how to spend time. Approximately 30% report that the mentor is the decision-maker.

<i>Number of youth(besides self) in mentoring group</i>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
5 or less	10	12.3
6 - 9	35	43.2
10 - 12	36	44.4
Total	81	100.0
<i>How close do you feel to other youth in group?</i>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Very close	40	47.1
Somewhat close	36	42.4
Not very close	9	10.6
Not close at all	0	0.0
Total	85	100.0
<i>Who decides how mentoring group spends time together?</i>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Mentor	24	29.6
Youth	3	3.7
Mentor and youth together	47	58.0
Program	7	8.6
Total	81	100.0

Next youth participants were asked a number of questions about their mentor. Approximately two-thirds of youth described their mentor as a friend. Nearly one-fifth described their mentor as a counselor and the remainder described their mentor as either a teacher or parent figure. Nearly all youth described the relationship with their mentor as positive. Nearly three-quarters described their relationship as ‘very positive’ and one-fifth described their relationship as ‘somewhat positive’. The vast majority (84%) reported they had some similar interests as their mentor.

<i>What best describes your mentor?</i>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
A friend	53	65.4
A counselor	15	18.5
A teacher	7	8.6
A parent	6	7.4
Total	81	100.0

<b><i>Relationship with mentor</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Very positive	62	72.9
Somewhat positive	17	20.0
Not very positive	4	4.7
Not at all positive	2	2.4
Total	85	100.0
<b><i>Do you have similar interests as your mentor</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Very similar interests	7	8.2
Some similar interests	71	83.5
No similar interests	7	8.2
Total	85	100.0

In addition, the survey asked youth to respond to a number of scaled questions about how they feel when they spend time with their mentor.<sup>6</sup> When analyzed together, these measures serve as benchmarks for relationship quality. The following two tables highlight the overarching relationship quality benchmarks and the singular measures that comprise each of these benchmarks. As highlighted in the table below, the vast majority of youth reported that their mentoring relationship was quite helpful (70% high; 18% moderate).

The three remaining benchmark measures are all comprised of negative statements about the mentoring relationship. Dr. Rhodes and her colleagues found that “*Successful and enduring mentoring relationships tended to be defined less in terms of mentors’ positive virtues or any particular activities they engaged in than the absence of disappointing characteristics.*” The benchmarks highlight that very few relationships are NOT meeting expectations (only 3.7% report high level of disappointment) or evoking negative emotions (only 2.5% report high level of negative emotions). The final benchmark on level of closeness, however, highlights more variation. The relationship closeness benchmark reveals that 21% of the youth respondents report high levels and 51% report moderate levels of not feeling as close to their mentor as desired. This result may be due to a variety of factors including, but not limited to: confusion over the individual questions, a desire for longer program length or durations, having a positive relationship with the mentor but desiring more personalized time, or, conversely, not having a close relationship with the mentor.

<b><i>Benchmarks on Relationship Quality</i></b>	<b>Low Level</b>	<b>Moderate Level</b>	<b>High Level</b>	<b>Total</b>
Is relationship helpful?	10	15	57	82
	12.2	18.3	69.5	100.0%
Does relationship meet expectations?	55	24	3	82
<i>* negative scales (desire low level scores)</i>	67.1	29.3	3.7	100.0%
Does relationship evoke negative emotions?	60	19	2	81
<i>* negative scales (desire low level scores)</i>	74.1	23.5	2.5	100.0%
Does the mentee feel close to the mentor?	23	41	17	81
<i>* negative scales (desire low level scores)</i>	28.4	50.6	21.0	100.0%

<sup>6</sup> This 15-question scale was adapted from Dr. Jean Rhodes’ Gauging the Effectiveness of Youth Mentoring.

At the completion of the program, youth participants were asked to describe what they liked most and least about time spent with their mentor and the Life Choices program. The most common responses on what youth liked most about the Life Choices program include:

- Talking openly and expressing oneself freely
- Learning about personal issues
- Making new friends
- Gaining trust and comfort with the group
- Fun games

See Appendix A for a complete listing of youth responses about what youth liked most about the Life Choices program.

The most common responses on what youth liked least about the Life Choices program include:

- Program is too short
- Some of the girls' attitudes and actions
- Some of the subjects and activities

See Appendix A for a complete listing of youth responses about what youth liked least about the Life Choices program.

## Self-Reported Program Impacts

Youth were provided with a list of potential outcomes and asked to report whether time spent with your mentor and being part of this program has helped them. As highlighted below, the majority of youth in this study report that meeting with their mentors and involvement in the mentoring programs have had **positive impacts in terms of improving school-related behavior, increasing youth development, and reducing negative or high-risk behaviors.**<sup>7</sup> Positive self-reported impacts reported include:

### School Related

- **Come to school more often** – 63.7% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Like school more** – 59.5% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Better grades at school** – 52.0% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’

### Youth Development

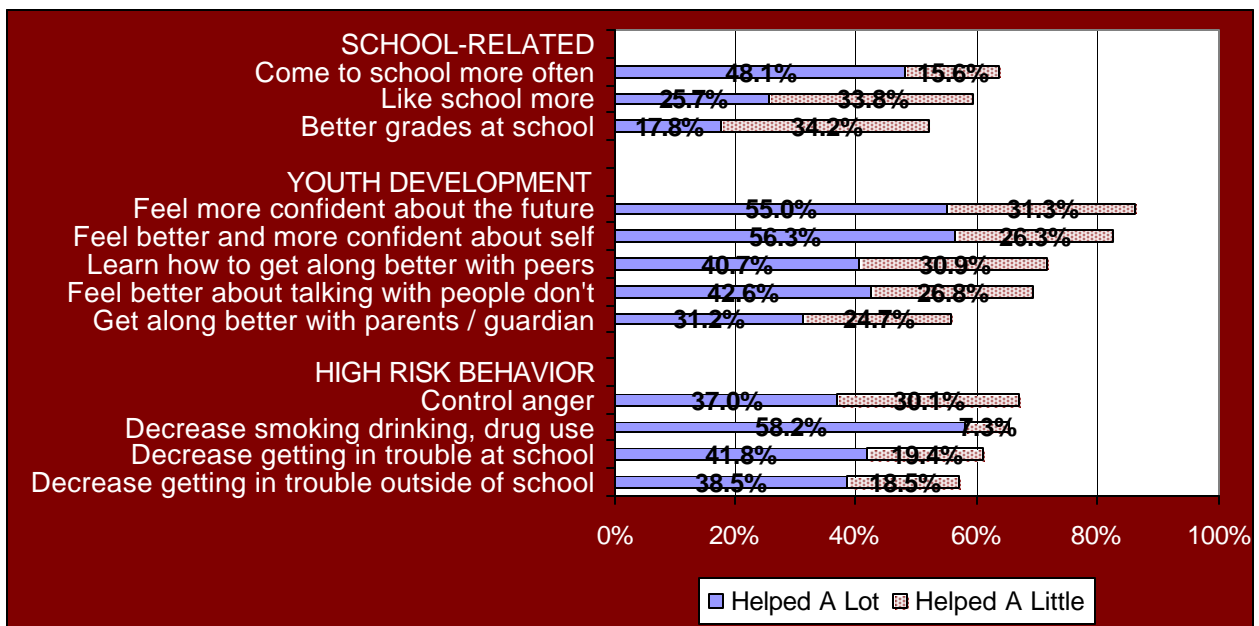
- **Feel more confident about the future** – 86.3% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Feel more self-confident** – 82.6% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Learn how to get along better with peers** – 71.6% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Feel better about talking with people don’t know very well** – 69.1% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’

<sup>7</sup> In addition to pointed questions on program impacts, youth were asked to complete a number of scaled questions (*very true, somewhat true, somewhat untrue, very untrue*) on both their pre- and post- youth survey. The individual questions were then compiled into nine composite measures. Pre-post analysis reveals that the significant improvements in the following composite measures after involvement in the Life Choices mentoring program: **increase in positive peer relationships, increase in self-esteem / self-confidence; and decrease in misconduct / high-risk behavior.**

- **Learn to get along better with parent(s) / guardian** – 55.9% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’

High Risk Behaviors

- **Control anger**– 67.1% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Stop or decrease smoking, drinking, or other drug use** – 65.5% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Stop or decrease getting in trouble at school**– 61.2% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’
- **Stop or decrease getting in trouble outside of school**– 57.0% report participation in Life Choices ‘helped a lot’ or ‘helped a little’



Youth Self-Reported Program Impacts <sup>8</sup>	Yes, Helped		No Change	No, It Got Worse	Total
	A Lot	A Little			
Better grades at school.	13	25	34	1	73
	17.8%	34.2%	46.6%	1.4%	100.0%
Come to school more often.	37	12	27	1	77
	48.1%	15.6%	35.1%	1.3%	100.0%
Like school more.	19	25	29	1	74
	25.7%	33.8%	39.2%	1.4%	100.0%
Feel better about talking with people I don't know very well.	30	19	22	0	71
	42.3%	26.8%	31.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Feel better and more confident about myself.	45	21	13	1	80
	56.3%	26.3%	16.3%	1.3%	100.0%
Learn how to get along better with my parent(s) / guardian.	24	19	33	1	77
	31.2%	24.7%	42.9%	1.3%	100.0%

<sup>8</sup> The response ‘Not applicable’ was removed from this analysis.

Youth Self-Reported Program Impacts <sup>8</sup>	Yes, Helped		No Change	No, It Got Worse	Total
	A Lot	A Little			
Learn how to get along better with people my own age.	33 40.7%	25 30.9%	23 28.4%	0 0.0%	81 100.0%
Feel more confident about the future.	44 55.0%	25 31.3%	11 13.8%	0 0.0%	80 100.0%
Stop or decrease smoking, drinking alcohol, or other drug use.	32 58.2%	4 7.3%	18 32.7%	1 1.8%	55 100.0%
Control my anger.	27 37.0%	22 30.1%	24 32.9%	0 0.0%	73 100.0%
Stop or decrease getting in trouble at school.	28 41.8%	13 19.4%	26 38.9%	0 0.0%	67 100.0%
Stop or decrease getting in trouble outside of school.	25 38.5%	12 18.5%	27 41.5%	1 1.5%	65 100.0%

Comparative analysis was conducted to explore whether there were significant differences in youth self-reported program impacts based on youth demographics, mentor-mentee relationship, and group relationship. Significant findings include:

- **Low income youth are significantly more likely to report positive outcomes.** Youth who are eligible for free or reduced lunch are significantly more likely to report *coming to school more often* and *decreasing getting into trouble at school* as compared with those youth who are not eligible for free or reduced lunch.
- **Youth with strong, high-quality relationship with their mentors are significantly more likely to report positive outcomes.**
  - Youth who describe the relationship with their mentors as ‘very positive’ are significantly more likely to report *liking school more, feeling better and more confident about self, feeling more confident about the future, and decreasing getting into trouble outside of school* as compared with those who describe their relationship as ‘somewhat positive’, ‘not very positive’, or ‘not positive at all’.
  - Youth who describe the relationship with their mentors as highly helpful are significantly more likely to report the following improvements: *like school more; feel better and more confident about myself; feel more confident about the future; learn how to get along better with my parent(s) / guardian; decrease smoking, drinking or drug use; decrease getting into trouble at school* and *decrease getting into trouble outside of school*.
  - Youth who describe the relationship with their mentors as evoking low levels of negative emotions are significantly more likely to report the following improvements: *like school more; feel better and more confident about myself*; and *decrease getting into trouble at school*.
- **Youth with strong relationships with other youth in their mentoring group are significantly more likely to report positive outcomes.** Youth who report feeling ‘very close’ to other youth in their mentoring group are significantly more likely to report the following improvements: *better grades at school, coming to school more, liking school more, learning how to get along better with parent(s) / guardian, decreasing smoking, drinking or other drug use*, and *decreasing getting into trouble at school*.



At the completion of the program, youth participants were asked to describe how time spent with their mentor(s) and participation in the Life Choices program helped them. The following is a sample of youth responses.

*It helped me to trust others*

*It's helped me to become a better person and gave me advice I needed*

*It has helped me learn about my body and also ways to solve issues*

*It helped me learn how to respect people*

*It helped me with my school work and it makes me believe in myself*

*I've learned to be patient and understand things better.*

*It helped me a lot by making better choices and they answer questions I'm afraid to ask.*

*To have more confidence in myself.*

*It helped me know that I have someone to go to.*

*It helped me learn how to listen even better to people. It also showed how to explain myself better and to get my feelings out.*

*I've learned better ways to deal with stress and have become more social.*

*It's helped me make friends.*

*I don't know - it just helps my anger go away a little*

*Think before acting.*

See Appendix A for a complete listing of youth responses.

## Mentor Surveys – Results

This chapter provides an overview of the mentor survey results including information on mentor demographics and background information, program impressions, and program impacts on mentors and mentees.

The report reflects the findings from 22 mentor surveys and 179 mentee forms across the Fall and Spring semesters of the Life Choices program.<sup>9</sup>

### Mentor Demographics and Background Information

All mentors in the Life choices program are female. More than three-quarters of mentors are in their twenties with the remainder in their thirties. Nearly two-thirds of mentors are white. The remainder (36.4%) are black and/or Hispanic/Latina.

<i>Sex</i>	N	%
Female	22	100.0
Male	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0
<i>Age</i>	N	%
Teens	0	0.0
Twenties	17	77.3
Thirties	5	22.7
Forties or older	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0
<i>Race / Ethnicity</i>	N	%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	0	0.0
Asian	0	0.0
Black / African American	0	0.0
Hispanic / Latino(a)	4	18.2
Black and Hispanic/Latina	4	18.2
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
White / Caucasian	14	63.6
Total	22	100.0

<sup>9</sup> As discussed in the Methodology section, survey data from the Fall and Spring semesters of the Life Choices program were aggregated together for analyses. It is likely that some individuals served as mentors during both the Fall and Spring semesters of the program, thus resulting in duplicative counts.

The vast majority of mentors (96%) has received or is receiving post-college education. One half are employed full-time, nearly one-fifth part-time, and nearly one-third are students. All full- and part-time employees are paid staff members of the Big Sisters, Life Choices program. In addition, all mentors are single (never married) without children of their own. Household income ranges from less than \$15,000 to less than \$50,000.

<b><i>Educational Background</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Some high school or less	1	4.5
High school diploma or equivalent	0	0.0
Some college	0	0.0
College graduate	0	0.0
Post-college education	21	95.5
Total	22	100.0
<b><i>Employment Status</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Employed Full-Time	11	50.0
Employed Part-Time	4	18.2
Student	7	31.8
Home-maker / Stay-at-home parent	0	0.0
Retired	0	0.0
Unemployed	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0
<b><i>If Full-Time or Part-Time employee, type of occupation</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Staff member at this youth program, paid mentor	15	100.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	15	100.0
<b><i>Marital Status</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Single / Never married	22	100.0
Married	0	0.0
Separated or divorced	0	0.0
Widowed	0	0.0
Total	22	100.0
<b><i>Have own children?</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	0	0.0
No	18	100.0
Total	18	100.0
<b><i>Household Income</i></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than \$15,000	6	30.0
\$15,000 to less than \$25,000	4	20.0
\$25,000 to less than \$35,000	7	35.0
\$35,000 to less than \$50,000	3	15.0
More than \$50,000	0	0.0
Total	20	100.0

The majority of adults (70%) reported to serving as a mentor previously.

<i>Served as mentor previously</i>	N	%
Yes	14	70.0
No	6	30.0
Total	20	100.0

## Program Information and Impressions

Life Choices mentoring groups meet weekly. Mentors report spending between one and two hours with their group each meeting. The majority of mentors report that decisions about how group time is spent are made by either the mentors or the mentors and youth together.

<i>Number of hours per meeting spent with mentees</i>	N	%
1 hour	3	14.3
1.5 hours	11	52.4
2 hours	7	33.3
Total	21	100.0

<i>Who generally decides how time is spent together?</i>	N	%
Mentor	9	42.9
Youth	0	0.0
Mentor and youth together	9	42.9
Program	3	14.3
Total	21	100.0

Mentors were asked to describe the types of activities they engage in with their mentees. As shown below, the majority of time in the Life Choices program is spent engaging in life skills activities. Eighty percent of mentors reported that they engage their mentees in life skills activities ‘a lot’.

<i>How often engage in the following?</i>	A Lot	Some	A Little	None	Total
Social / recreational activities	4	5	4	8	21
	19.0	23.8	19.0	38.1	100.0%
Academic / tutoring activities	0	1	1	19	21
	0.0	4.8	4.8	90.5	100.0%
Job-related activities	1	4	11	4	20
	5.0	20.0	55.0	20.0	100.0%
Life-skills activities	16	3	1	0	20
	80.0	15.0	5.0	0.0	100.0%
Community service / volunteer activities	0	0	6	15	21
	0.0	0.0	28.6	71.4	100.0%
Counseling activities	0	17	2	2	21
	0.0	81.0	9.5	9.5	100.0%

Other types of activities specified include discussion of teen issues with an emphasis on healthy decision-making in a confidential setting, psycho-social education, teen issues, and fun and laughter.

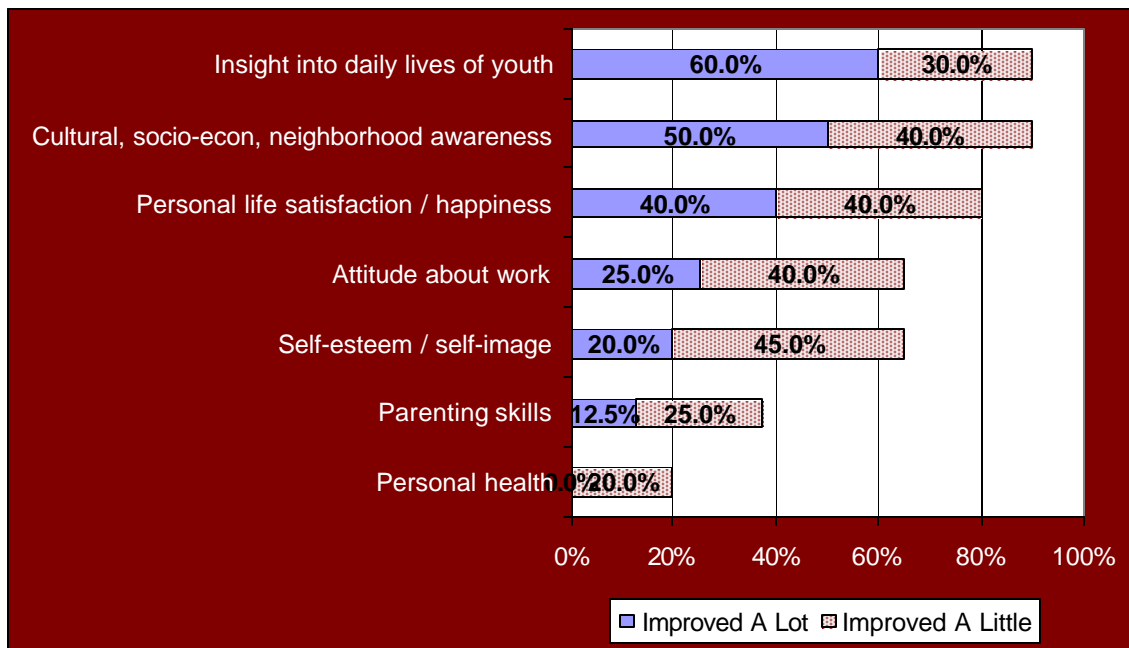
### Self-Reported Program Impacts

Mentors were asked to describe the most positive aspects of the mentoring experience. The most common responses included:

- Building relationships and connections with girls
- Teaching girls skills to improve healthy choices and to build healthy relationships

To see the complete list of responses, see Appendix B.

In addition, mentors were asked how serving as a mentor has impacted their lives. As the figure below highlights, serving as a mentor can and often does greatly benefit the mentors themselves. The vast majority of mentors report that serving as a mentor increased their insight into the lives of youth (90%), increased their cultural, socio-economic, and neighborhood awareness (90%) and improved their overall happiness (80%). In addition, approximately two-thirds report improvements in self-esteem and attitude about work. Smaller proportions report improvements in parenting skills (38%) and personal health (20%).

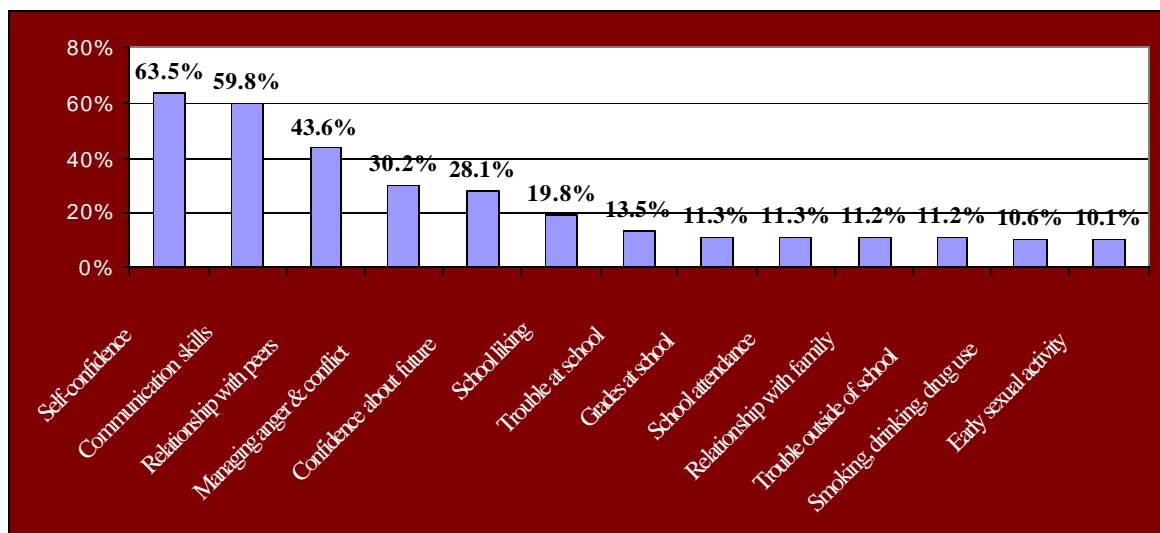


Mentor Self-Reported Program Impacts	Improved	Improved	No Impact	Worsened	Total
	A Lot	A Little			
Gain insight into day-to-day lives of youth	12	6	2	0	20
	60.0	30.0	10.0	0.0	100.0%
Improve personal life satisfaction / happiness	8	8	3	1	20
	40.0	40.0	15.0	5.0	100.0%
Improve self-esteem / Enhance self-image	4	9	6	1	20
	20.0	45.0	30.0	5.0	100.0%
Improve personal health	0	4	14	2	20
	0.0	20.0	70.0	10.0	100.0%
Increase cultural, socio-economic, neighborhood awareness	10	8	2	0	20
	50.0	40.0	10.0	0.0	100.0%
Improve attitude about work	5	8	6	1	20
	25.0	40.0	30.0	5.0	100.0%
Improve parenting skills	2	4	10	0	16
	12.5	25.0	62.5	0.0	100.0%

### Perceived Program Impacts on Mentees

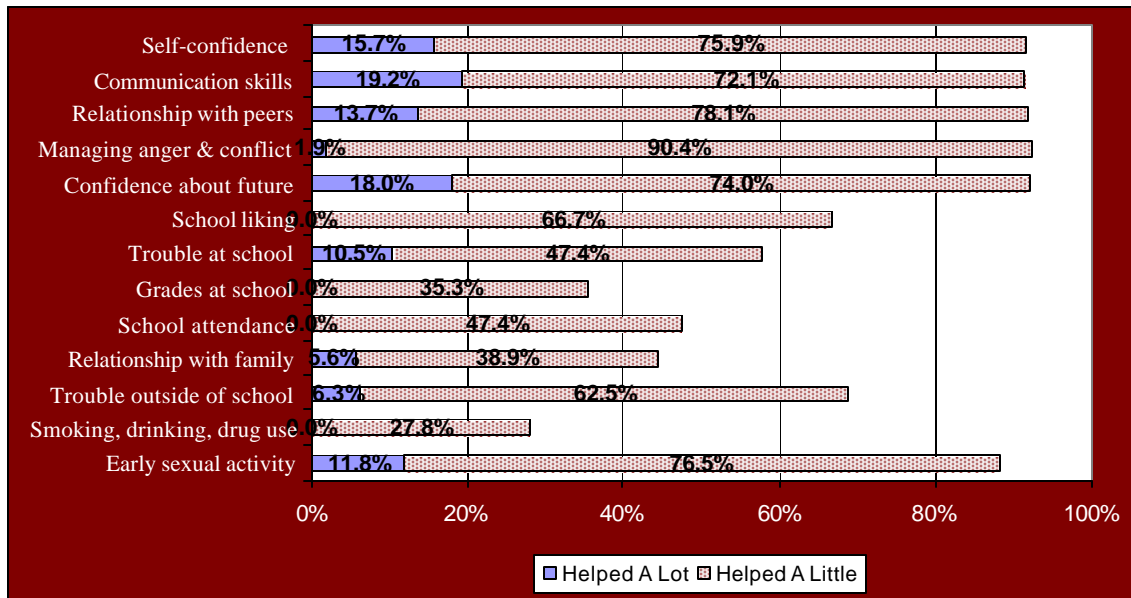
Mentors participating in group mentoring programs were asked to complete a brief survey on each of the youth participating in their mentoring group. This section provides information on 179 youth mentees from their 22 mentors.

Mentors were provided with a list of issues and asked to identify whether or not their mentees exhibited any of these issues at the start of the mentoring relationship.<sup>10</sup> As highlighted in the figure below, mentors reported that approximately 60% of youth mentees had issues with self-confidence and communication skills at the start of the mentoring program. The other most commonly reported issues included: relationship issues with peers (44%), managing anger (30%), confidence about the future (28%), and school liking (20%).



<sup>10</sup> Mentors had the option of reporting ‘yes’, ‘no’, or ‘don’t know’ for each of the issue areas.

Mentors that responded affirmatively to their mentees having a given issue(s) at the start of the program were asked to rate the impact of program participation on these youth. Mentors reported that participation in the Life Choices program had helped (‘a lot’ or ‘a little) improve the self-confidence, communication skills, peer relationships, anger management, and confidence about the future for more than 90% of the youth mentees who exhibited problems with such issues at the start of the mentoring relationship.



	Youth with Issue at START of Mentoring Program	Mentor Reported Outcomes For Youth with Issues at Start of Program				Total
		Improved A Lot	Improved A Little	No Impact	Worsened	
Grades at school (n=177)	20 11.3%	0 0.0	6 35.3	10 58.8	1 5.9	17 100.0
School attendance (n=177)	20 11.3%	0 0.0	9 47.4	9 47.4	1 5.3	19 100.0
School liking / School engagement (n=177)	35 19.8%	0 0.0	22 66.7	10 30.3	1 3.0	33 100.0
Communication skills (n=179)	107 59.8%	20 19.2	75 72.1	9 8.7	0 0.0	104 100.0
Self-confidence / Self-esteem (n=178)	113 63.5%	17 15.7	82 75.9	9 8.3	0 0.0	201 100.0
Relationship with family members / guardian (n=178)	20 11.2%	1 5.6	7 38.9	10 55.6	0 0.0	18 100.0
Relationship with peers (n=179)	78 43.6%	10 13.7	57 78.1	6 8.2	0 0.0	73 100.0
Confidence about the future (n=178)	50 28.1%	9 18.0	37 74.0	4 8.0	0 0.0	50 100.0

	Youth with Issue at START of Mentoring Program	Mentor Reported Outcomes For Youth with Issues at Start of Program				Total
		Improved A Lot	Improved A Little	No Impact	Worsened	
Smoking, drinking or drug use (n=179)	19 10.6%	0 0.0	5 27.8	13 72.2	0 0.0	18 100.0
Managing anger and conflict (n=179)	54 30.2%	1 1.9	47 90.4	4 7.7	0 0.0	52 100.0
Getting into trouble at school (n=178)	24 13.5%	2 10.5	9 47.4	8 42.1	0 0.0	19 100.0
Getting into trouble outside of school (n=179)	20 11.2%	1 6.3	10 62.5	5 31.3	0 0.0	16 100.0
Sexual activity (n=179)	18 10.1%	2 11.8	13 76.5	2 11.8	0 0.0	17 100.0

Finally, mentors were asked to provide a success story, if applicable, highlighting how the Life Choices program has impacted their mentees. Areas highlighted in these success stories included:

- Building and strengthening peer relationships
- Making healthy life choices
- Building self-confidence and self-esteem
- Improving communication skill
- Building leadership skills
- Gaining knowledge
- Gaining confidence about the future, and
- Learning to control behavior

For a complete listing of success stories, see Appendix B



## Appendix A – Qualitative Responses from Youth Surveys

Reasons for Joining the Life Choices Mentoring Program
I decided to join because it sounded cool also because most of my friends were doing it.
I thought it would be fun. I also heard that it fun and the people are nice.
Because they told me that I can come and it sound fun.
Because it's fun and easy to talk about.
All the girls in my class are in it.
All the girls in my class joined/ participated.
I had to because all the girls in my class were chosen to do this.
The reason is because I like it and all the girls in my class are in it.
We had to and all the girls joined in the class
All the girls in class are participating at school
All the girls in my class are participating.
Because it sounded fun and I think I would enjoy it.
I decided to join this youth program because I thought it would be nice to meet and make more friends.
I thought it would be good for myself.
Because it seems very fun and this is my only time to be free in school besides lunch and you can tell people anything private that you kept inside or your secrets.
I decided to come to this program because it is a good program to share personal things and it stays with all of the people in the program.
My p.o. made me come.
My p.o. made me come to this program.
Because I want to.
My probation made me come.
Because I want to see how the program is.
I decided to join this program because my teacher thought I had leadership in sharing my feelings. I can because I felt it was right for me.
I decided to join the youth program because I had a choice, to stay in specialty class or to know more people and get along.
Because I had a choice.
Because I did it last year and it was fun. That was when I was in the 6th grade. Now I am in the 7th grade so it could be even better.
I decided to join this program because I thought it would be fun. It would also give me something to do after school.
I wanted to try something new. I wanted to be in a fun group where we get to do diffe rent things.
Because it's fun and I never been in this youth program and I wanted to know how it was like.
My counselor told me it would help me do better and keep myself out of trouble so I decided to give it a try.
I wanted to join because I wanted to have fun, and know what big sisters was all about.
Because I want to learn more about health and what happens to our body. And I want to have fun.

<b>Reasons for Joining the Life Choices Mentoring Program</b>
The way I decided that I wanted to come to the program is I came on the first week to see if it was fun, interesting or boring after the first week I liked it. It was fun and interesting.
I decided to join this youth program because I wanted to do something fun with people my age.
Because it help with mostly all the problem and you get to talk about private stuff.
I thought it would be fun. Also I have something to do after school.
So I can know what to do when I have that problem.
My friend went something this before. I heard about it at my school so I joined.
To talk about stuff that I don't have confidence to talk to with other people.
So I could learn stuff and I could get out of class.
Because it sounded interesting and I could talk here.
I decided to join this youth program because it is going to make decisions in the future and teach us stuff.
Because it helps you thing what is good and bad choices to decide for.
I don't know, just something to keep me busy on Wednesday.
I decided to join the youth program because I can talk about my feelings and whats bothering me.
I decide to join this youth program because I thought it will be fun and if I have a problem and my mother or someone in my family can't help people in the program can help me.
I decided to join this youth program because I like to talk in groups about stuff or things that we need to know.
Because I think it would be good to come so this group could help me on my choices I have when I get a little bit older and go to high school.
I wanted to talk about different issues that are happening.
I decided to join because I thought it would be fun to be in big sister and something to do after school on Wednesday.
I decided to join the youth program because I could learn more stuff then I learn in school. And I heard from my friends it was really fun.
I joined it to talk about, you know, girl stuff.
I decided to join this program because I wanted to learn more about relationships and a lot of other things.
Me and my mom decided it was good enough to help me get over my attitude.
So that I have something to do after school.
Teacher suggested it to me and my sister.
Because I thought that it was gonna be fun and it was gonna help me get interested in things.
Well, it sounded like a program that I wanted to go to and I try to get/take as many opportunities as possible.
I decide to join this youth program because it interested me.
I decide to join this program because I can learn a lot and it is fun.
Friends. My teacher introduced it to me.
I decided to join this youth program because I think it will be fun and you can learn more things about yourself.
I had to come here.
I had to come here.
It was assigned to us to take it but I liked it.
It was mandatory.
I had to because its part of school
I had to because it was part of school.
We have to.
More knowledge about sex.
We were required to come to this class.
I decided this because I thought it was better than going home and get to be with my chicas.
Because I want to know new people.

<b>Reasons for Joining the Life Choices Mentoring Program</b>
To talk about stuff, like if I really need someone to talk to and I don't want to go to my parents I go to someone I can really trust and listen to what I have to say. And talk about my career goal.
I decided to join this youth program because I heard about this program and I want to experience this program.
All my friends come here and also I heard it sounds interesting. Also somebody recommended.
I didn't, my teacher chose for me to be a part of this program, so far I like it.
I thought it would be fun and interesting.
My PO made me come.
PO made me come.
PO made me come.
I decided to join this youth program because many of my friends came before me and told me I should join because it could help me and it was a lot of fun.
I liked it. I thought that it was an opportunity to talk and meet other people.
Because my friend introduced me to it. And I also loved the fact that we had big sisters.
I joined it to learn to trust, be safe, make more friends, learn to believe in myself.
I decided to join this group because there are so many things I want to know about sex and I get embarrassed asking someone.
To learn new things.
Mandatory.
You guys picked us. It's mandatory.
I decided to join this club because I think it would've been fun to have an older sister.
Because I wanted to have fun.
I came because I want to get along with other people.
Because its fun and I love talking to someone with my problem.
I heard it was fun.
Because everyone said it would be fun.
I decided to come because friends told me about it.
My friends told me it helps you stay safe and its fun.
Because it sounded like fun and its good to have someone to talk to.
To talk about the problems I have at home or out in the streets.
I decided to join this because I heard from all my other friends in the last group that it was a fun group.
It seemed fun and interesting and I got recommended.
Someone recommended me.
To learn how to be more respect to other people.
Because I was recommended to this group.
Mandatory.
Wasn't an option.
They chose us.
You guys picked us.
I had to for school.
Mandatory with school.
To get out of theatre arts class.
My teachers recommended me and I thought it would be fun.
I was chosen/selected to be put in this program. So therefore on other hand I wouldn't have knew about it.
Because it sounded very interesting and fun.
It is good to be with a bunch of girls and talk.
My teachers recommended me.
My teachers recommended for me.

<b>Reasons for Joining the Life Choices Mentoring Program</b>
My teachers recommended me to the program.
It sounded like a fun new experience and me teachers recommended me.
Because I wanted to learn more, meet new people, and have fun.
We had to.
Mandatory.
It is mandatory.
I didn't decide to join my teachers made me.
My friend told me about it and I wanted to join in.
Because my friend told me that this program is fun. Also all girls have some kind of problems like me.
Someone else had recommended me.
Because I wanted to join an after school program.

<b>What do you hope to gain from participating in the Life Choices?</b>
I hope to gain leadership and not to be shy no more.
Learn things I don't know.
Have fun.
Knowledge.
To be more confident about myself.
Deal with situations better.
Stronger friendships with my friends.
Self-confidence and support and I don't know.
Games and meet new people.
To understand life and what's going on.
Understanding life
I hope that I can get along with people and stay at the program until it ends.
I will hope to gain responsibility from this program.
To get out of of p.o.
To get better at things.
To not have a probation.
The youth of working, talking together. And this is what I hope to gain.
I hope to gain respect and be responsible to everyone I don't know very well.
I hope to learn new things, make good friends, and that is it. And I hope to meet new challenges than from last year.
I hope to gain friendship and try things I haven't tried before.
What I hope to learn is a lot of new games and new things I never learned before in my life.
I hope to gain more self confidence.
To have a nice pizza party at the end of the program. To go on a nice field trip at the 2nd to last day of the program and also to take pictures at both the party and the field trip.
I hope to gain more trust from the people of this program and learn more about the stuff in these programs.
I hope to gain confidence and self control.
I want to have fun in this program.
How to help other people and make the write decision.
I would like to gain how to keep secrets better. Also I would like to gain more respect for myself and others, last but not least not to be shy in front of people.
I would like to gain power to stand up for myself and make the right choices.
Allot of respect. My life to change like to be more confident in myself and respectful to people.
More confidence.
An experience.
To talk to someone close about my problems.
From this program I hope to gain lots of stuff. Like make choices in the future. Learning about what is good and is not good and why.
Well to learn what I should do and cons.
What I hope to gain from this program is to respect and share feelings with one another.
What I hope to gain from this program is help from people and helping them.
I hope to gain the right to make my own choices and to do it right.
How to be open. To trust people and not to be scared of my feelings.
I hope to gain more knowledge about certain issues.
I hope to gain in this program was to get a lot of in to of thing that I didn't know and use it for health class.
I hope to gain confidence from this program.
I hope to gain more respect and more confidence.

<b>What do you hope to gain from participating in the Life Choices?</b>
To learn how to deal with my issues.
Confidence in myself and more social strength.
I hope to gain pride, respect, and responsibility.
I hope to gain pride, respect and more responsibility.
I hope to gain more self esteem.
I hope to gain friendship.
Better relationship with friends.
That I will learn more things and other stuff. To make new friends.
I hope to know people better, and learn more things.
Here about others choices and opinions.
Become more social.
Speak to other people.
More communication.
Knowledge.
To get along with a girl that I didn't get along with before.
I hope to gain more friendships and more trust.
Trust from some girls.
I'd like to learn more stuff then I have already learned.
I hope to gain from this program is to care for other people.
I hope to gain respect.
I hope to gain knowledge from going to this program.
I'm not really sure but I might make some goals.
To change my way of thinking and attitude.
I hope to get out of my house more.
I hope to gain confidence in myself and self esteem also to learn discuss and work though my problems.
New friends, more knowledge.
To become a better person and a better sister. Also to be true to myself.
The stuff I want to know that I came to this class like values, trust, believe, being safe, family, friends and having confidence.
Information about sex, diseases, and things like that that I don't know already.
More friends.
For one girl to understand that I don't have a problem with her.
Respect.
I hope to gain respect for these girls.
Learning more about yourself.
New friends.
To learn about other life.
I hope to gain more self confidence.
To learn a lot about the real world.
New friendships, advice, etc.
Confidence in myself and to listen to other peoples opinions.
I hope I can gain to be more talkative and share personal things.
Lots of respect and trust.
Self-respect.
To learn new thing that I don't already know.
That I would learn how to have leadership.
I want to learn a little bit about everyone and have a good time.

<b>What do you hope to gain from participating in the Life Choices?</b>
Learn how to prevent teen pregnancy.
More self esteem.
Meet new people.
More friends.
I hope to learn to make better and wiser decisions.
A good positive attitude.
To learn more about life in general.
I hope to become more social in the program.
I hope to gain knowledge.
To be able to learn new things.
I hope to get to know more about people.
I learned a lot about values and about myself.
To be happy and try to forget my past also have still confidence with the girl.
More respect, ability to pay more attention, and also to show leadership.
To earn trust, and to be kind to one another.

<b>What do you like best about time spent with your mentor and the Life Choices program?</b>
I like to just talk and have a positive conversation.
We get to talk about things we want.
I like the games we play and talking.
You get to express yourself.
The time we spent together was great and I loved that time it was a way for me to cope with problems.
What I like best is when we learned about sex and our safety.
All of it!
How we could always say what we feel.
We get to talk about our feelings.
Good, because when there's something I don't feel comfortable telling anyone I can tell them.
I like everything.
All the stuff that we talk about and how we do new things.
We all get to talk about everything together. You basically get to speak your mind with everyone in the group.
Talking.
I like that we can talk about anything that's bothering us and we can have fun.
The best thing I like was when we talk about our feeling as when we talk about sex.
The funny moments.
What I liked best was all the things we talked about and how we all became very good friends.
You are free to say what you want and share things.
I get to make new friends.
We have fun and everyone is open and don't trash people behind their backs.
The fun games we play.
I like seeing all the girls in this group.
We play games and learn about new things.
That we bring each other together.
I really like it because I feel comfortable when she talks to us.
The cool things we do.
It got me out of art class.
Everything is alright.
You don't get to do work and you have time 2 talk and relax with friends.
I like how we talked about things.
The food and games.



<b>What do you like least about time spent with your mentor and the Life Choices program?</b>
Everyone always have something to say and they take things too serious.
That we kinda don't all get along.
Well nothing really except when someone is being rude or disrespectful for someone else.
Talking about "boring" subjects.
I don't like when we can't have a group because of something came up.
The end of it.
How time seems short and sometimes hearing people whine.
One of the girls in the group.
That people don't respect each other.
It's on a Monday and so is art. I really like art.
Some of the people.
That we don't get to spend a lot of time together.
When you're doing nothing fun.
We can't have our cells on.
It's too long
the survey
The condom touching
That it is only once a week
Sometimes we talk about stuff I don't like
yelling
The time is too shortened and it's not really fun when we don't have both of them in.
That we only have like one hour - we should have more time
That it's only for 1 hour
the puberty subject
At the last minutes when we have to go
It ends to fast
When there is an argument
Nothing
That we always have to do a check-in
she don't listen
I don't like that I can't talk the way I want to
Filling out surveys
the girls here

<b>How has time spent with your mentor helped you?</b>
Help me to think positive about people.
Lets me concentrate.
By being able to listen and talk to other people.
It made me feel better.
I've learned to be patient and understand things better.
It helped me a lot by making better choices and they answer questions I'm afraid to ask.
A lot!
To have more confidence in myself.
IT helped me know that I have someone to go to.
It has helped me feel comfortable about myself and its helped me learn things I didn't know before.
It helps me a lot.
IT showed me a lot of things.
It helped me learn how to listen even better to people. It also showed how to explain myself better and to get my feelings out.
It taught me more.
It has helped me a lot. I learned a lot of thinks I never knew including about myself and friends.
I spent a very good time and they teach me to be myself.
It helped me with thinking about how to protect yourself better when having sex.
It helped me to trust them. It also helped me open up.
Think before acting.
I understand what life has in store for me
I've learned better ways to deal with stress and have become more social.
It's helped me make friends.
It has helped me to learn about people and things.
It helped me communicate with the other little sister.
It helped me because she helps me feel better about myself.
It gave me confidence.
In a lot of stuff.
It has helped me in some things.
It made me get more friends than I all ready have.
It helped me learn new things.
It's helped me to be open to people.
By getting to know a lot of girls because I don't with girls. I chill with boys.
A lot
It has helped me a lot
helped me share feelings
I learned more new things
It has helped me a lot
It helped me by teaching me something I didn't know
I learned a lot of new things and also about myself
It has helped me by making right choices
A lot
It helped me in the topics we discussed together
It taught me things
To think things in the future
talking; having fun

<b>How has time spent with your mentor helped you?</b>
It helped me learn more about condoms
To understand myself better
It helped me to trust others
Its helped me to become a better person and gave me advice I needed
I know how to socialize more
It has helped me learn about my body and also ways to solve issues
A lot – a lot of the stuff I knew and a lot of the stuff I did not know
It has helped very much with my life choices
It has helped me understand people more
I learned things I never knew and about my friends better
Well really it has helped me to understand things better and how things happen with your body be more respectful
It helps me a lot because we talk about sex
It helped me learn how to respect people
It helped me talk to people
It helped me being more friendly
It helped me learn new vocabulary and words
It helped me to know more about myself
It helped me understand things better
It has encourage me not to be ashamed of something
A lot
It helped me make new friends
Getting along. We get to learn about each other
It helped me with my school work and it makes me believe in myself
It helped me learn more about puberty and some things that I didn't know that much about
I don't know - it just helps my anger go away a little
I have changed a lot

## Appendix B– Qualitative Responses from Mentor Surveys

<b>What was the most positive thing about this mentoring experience for you?</b>
The most positive thing was working with girls who never interacted with each other and seeing them come together and become friends.
The most positive was leading the group of such diverse personalities and seeing the girls work in a cohesive manner.
Making real connections with girls, having them see me as an ally rather than someone to tell them what to do.
Developing group work skills and behavior modification plans with my mentees to help them have successful relationships with their peers in group.
Learning about how to most effectively communicate with adolescents.
Building relationships with girls
Learning about the issues that are important to the girls, forming relationships with them and being able to connect with them about those issues.
Making real, visible connections with girls.
Building a relationship with the girls.
Learning about what challenging issues teens face now-a-days. Having to interact w/ teens directly
Observing the growth of individual girls and the group as a whole over time. The relationships with the girls and their increased ability to use each other for support over time.
Feeling like I was able to teach others
Helping girls make better decisions, giving them a safe space to talk
A positive aspect of this mentoring experience was the opportunity to help create a safe space where girls could talk about issues and experiences that were important to them
Watching girls grow more comfortable with one another and relying on each other for support. A few girls came "out of their shells" over time in the group.
The positive things is knowing that I am able to see the girls grow and work together
Helping girls to improve their self-esteem and communication skills. Feeling closeness across racial lines
The direct interaction with the girls. The opportunity to learn about adolescent issues as well as group work experience.
The opportunity to teach these girls some of the skills necessary for them to make good choices in their lives. In addition, over the course of the groups existence, I developed trusting relationship, learning as much from them as they did from us.
Watching the group members take full advantage of the experience - they were so eager to have a space of their own, to have caring adults to consult w/ & build relationships. They emerged more connected, trusting, & prepared to make healthy decisions
Seeing the mutual aid of the group of youth. Knowing that I've made a contribution to their healthy development.

<b>Provide a Success Story about Your Mentee</b>
This mentee had huge success in choosing to steer clear of relationships and sexual activity w/ older males. She also mended relationships and friendships with her peers over the course of the group and w/ some support and guidance from myself as a mentor.
This mentee has made great strides in her ability to speak up in group.
This mentee has improved her ability to stick up for herself when others try to put her down.
This mentee has improved communication skills from being very shy to talking and sharing with her peers more over the course of the group.
This mentee has improved her ability to share the spotlight and not put others down during group time.
This mentee has improved her ability to forgive others and to be more patient.
This mentee has had success in letting others know when their behavior is inappropriate or when it is holding the group back.
This mentee has made significant improvements in her impulse control and the way she treats others during group.
This mentee is much less shy as she progresses in group.
This mentee appears to have improved her communication skills and empathy capacity for her peers over the course of the group.
This mentee appears more self-confident and has improved her relationships and friendships among her peers.
Mentee demonstrated good leadership skills as she was engaging and always shared her opinions/thoughts.
Mentee demonstrated great leadership skills as she engaged in all activities and with all group members.
Throughout the group's time together, she had demonstrated leadership skills. She was also helpful with bringing together the two sub-groups.
Throughout the group, she demonstrated self-confidence and trust as she would ask questions to the group leaders and members openly.
Mentee was able to show more of a caring personality as she would check-in with other group members who would withdraw at times.
Throughout the group's time, she was able to communicate her thoughts and opinions.
Throughout the group, she has been able to demonstrate leadership skills.
Mentee was able to vocalize her thoughts more as the group was able to connect more.
She was able to vocalize her thoughts and opinions more as the group became more cohesive. She was also able to show care/support to other members.
She learned how to open up a bit in group. She felt connected to other girls, more so than when she started. She also learned to let things 'roll off her back'.
She experienced over time greater acceptance from her peers - which improved her self confidence. She went from acting out and being silly to gain attention to participating thoughtfully in discussion.
The career awareness field trip the group took and our subsequent processing of the day helped this girl think a lot about the possibilities for her future and envision herself in a professional career.
This youth came into group with an unhealthy relationship with an older male. This girl also had no friends that were positive in her life. During this group she was able to get out of unhealthy relationship, develop a friendship with a group member, and start a healthy relationship with a male in her age group.
This girl was a teen mom and was able to get support from other girls in the group. She was also able to be provided with information needed around topics discussed in the group.
This youth has made good progress with her communication skills
She was able to connect with other group members and gained relationships that could be lasting.
She continued to improve and make a presence in the group. She improved her ability to stay focused and connected in group.

<b>Provide a Success Story about Your Mentee</b>
She improved her relationships with group members.
This mentee sought consultation and support from mentors regarding several sensitive issues such as family conflict, concerns about pregnancy and relationship conflicts. During the course of the group, this mentee made the decision to leave a relationship that she deemed controlling and unhealthy as a conscious step towards taking care of herself.
Mentee sought consultation and support regarding dating violence that she was experiencing. This led to mentee eventually ending the relationship and an end to the violent episodes.
Mentee sought a consultation about a conflict with her peer. She eventually approached this peer to resolve the issue and talk out their problems.
This mentee began group presenting as lacking self-confidence and sense of herself. By group's end, she became significantly more confident in her presentation and shred with the group that she had joined the basketball team.
This youth has been able to prioritize her schoolwork, make new friends, and strengthen existing friendships with help from this mentoring group. She has also found a safe space to share her concerns
This youth has made great strides in her communication skills and level of self-confidence / self-esteem through the process of attending this mentoring group. She started off as very shy with her peers and now fits in as one of the team.
This youth seemed to gain a better sense of self and improved her communication skills throughout the group process. She was also a very caring member of the group and was able to improve her ability to promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and mutual aid
This youth made great strides in trying to stay focused during group time. She was able to recognize a positive change in her behavior and ability to focus during group.
This youth made great strides in her communication skills and confidence about the future.