

Promoting Emotional and Behavioral Health in Preteens: Benchmarks of Success and Challenges Among Programs in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties

Final Report to the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health on The Foundation's Area 2 Grantmaking Strategy

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funders, policymakers and practitioners are interested in supporting strategies that will have the most long-lasting effects on youth, particularly those most lacking in services. Preadolescents are one such group and are of special concern, since researchers believe that it is in early adolescence when young people begin to adopt behavior patterns that can have life-long consequences;¹ prevention efforts at this point could shape the development of enduring healthy behaviors. The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health's (The Foundation) Area 2 Grantmaking Program seeks to fill a gap in services to youth of this age through a series of grants to youth development initiatives in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

This report on an evaluation conducted by Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) records the experience of 40 grantees that received one- to three-year Foundation grants (ranging from \$20,000 to \$313,000) in the first three funding cycles between December 2000 and December 2001. The grants were awarded to community- and school-based programs that committed themselves to promoting the behavioral and emotional health of preteens.

STUDY GOALS

In March 2002, The Foundation contracted P/PV, a national nonprofit social policy research organization, to evaluate its Area 2 Grantmaking Program in order to (1) provide information to them about the effectiveness of their early grantmaking approach, and (2) offer lessons for future grantmaking endeavors. The evaluation was designed to address three key questions about the "collective" success of the grantees:

- How well are the programs funded under Area 2 collectively succeeding in achieving The Foundation's goal of fostering resilience and preventing high-risk behaviors in 9- to 13-year-old youth in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties?
- To what extent are Area 2 grantees implementing quality programs in a manner that can be expected to meet the needs of the populations they serve? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the programs in the Area 2 initiative?
- What are the challenges faced by Area 2 grantees and the strategies they are using to address them?

Data to address these research questions were gathered from organizational surveys administered in June 2002, and site visits to a sample of grantees conducted in Summer 2002 and 2003.

¹ See Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 2000; Eccles et al., 1993a; 1993b; Eccles and Midgley, 1989; Simmons et al., 1987; Walker and Arbreton, 2001.

FINDINGS

The Population and Services

As a first step in addressing whether Foundation grantees are preventing high-risk behaviors and promoting health, the report addresses two basic questions concerning the population served and services provided with Foundation funds.

The Foundation Area 2 grantees are working with the preteen population of interest, with the majority of youth (60%) falling in the 12- to 13-year-old age range.² The grantees tend to serve economically needy youth (41% identified as eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch), who generally reflect the overall ethnic profile of the two counties, with about one-fifth identified as English language learners.

Funding of both school- and community-based grantees provides services to a balanced group of preteens: Whereas those grantees that are school-based work with youth who are likely to be older (i.e., a greater proportion of 12- to 13-year-olds compared with 9- to 11-year-olds) and more racially/ethnically diverse, community-based grantees serve youth across the preteen age and English-speaking proficiency range.

Most grantees, regardless of whether school-based or community-based, stated that their participants are at risk for not realizing their full potential due to academic, social or economic challenges. Participants were also described as susceptible to poor health and life outcomes. Many grantees portrayed their service areas of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties as having high rates of teen pregnancy, gang involvement and poor health outcomes.

Reflecting the importance The Foundation and its grantees have placed on providing opportunities for supportive relationships with adults and peers, 23 (66%) of the grantees provided some form of mentoring (peer, adult or both). Similarly, reflecting The Foundation's emphasis on promoting healthy behavior, 23 (66%) of the grantees offered some type of health promotion and prevention class. In keeping with the youth development focus, the health promotion and prevention classes were coupled with leadership/decision-making activities, group discussions/participation activities, and community service or mentoring.

On average, the grantees offered between six and seven different services. Many sites were able to offer multiple services because of collaborative relationships, which not only provided participant referrals, physical space and greater community awareness but also special activities for the youth.

² Another 26 percent fall in the 9- to 11-year-old range, 3 percent in the under 9 range and 10 percent in the 14- to 18-year-old range.

Benchmarks of Quality and Effectiveness

To examine the effectiveness of the grantees as a group, P/PV looked at the extent to which grantees met benchmarks of quality that the evaluation literature associates with positive outcomes for youth. P/PV chose this approach as a way to examine grantees' program quality given several limitations: First, while as a condition of receiving Foundation funds, grantees are required to track their progress on specific goals and objectives, the individual grantees have not all yet collected longitudinal data on outcomes. It is important to note that for many of the grantees, this lack of longitudinal data is appropriate because many programs or program elements were relatively new—too new, in fact, to have collected reliable outcomes data of a program in “steady state.” Second, in the first three cycles, The Foundation intentionally funded a wide variety of approaches designed to serve their target age group, which necessitated comparing these programs across a very general set of standards that transcended the specifics of the services offered. Third, the outcomes of interest to The Foundation (emotional and behavioral health) are very broad, so the evaluation looked for wide-ranging measures of effectiveness as well.³ Although the methodology used for this study does not allow for a direct answer to whether high-risk behaviors are ultimately prevented, in the absence of a more costly longitudinal outcomes evaluation, it provides The Foundation with early information that begins to answer this question.

The benchmarks identified from the literature review, and against which the grantees' quality was judged, are:⁴

- **Exposure.** It is critical that youth participate in a program for enough time to make a difference in their lives. Although no definitive threshold has been set, most studies indicate that changes in long-term outcomes occur only after many months of frequent attendance.⁵
- **Supportive Relationships.** Positive relationships with adults and peers are key components that serve to attract and retain youth and have been linked to positive developmental outcomes. Thus, intentional strategies to promote opportunities for relationships are important.⁶
- **Staff Training.** Training for staff and volunteers is a critical component that reflects a strong programmatic infrastructure for implementing a well-designed curriculum.

³ In fact, research suggests that a well-implemented curriculum related to a specific outcome of interest (e.g., reading or math achievement) is also an important benchmark (Lauer et al., 2003); however, because the specific goals of the various grantees were diverse, we did not include a benchmark specific to curriculum.

⁴ The report provides a more detailed literature review for each of these benchmarks in Appendix A.

⁵ In this report, the threshold was set at seven months or more, in order to categorize those programs that provided services for at least one school year.

⁶ In examining supportive relationships as a benchmark of quality, this report focuses on the extent to which grantees identify intentional strategies to promote relationship development for program participants – such as a mentoring component, time and space for youth and adults to interact, and consistent staffing practices.

- **Staff Retention.** When staff retention is low (i.e., staff turnover is high), programs find it challenging to maintain continuity and coherence of program goals, and have difficulty sustaining relationships with participants and collaborating partners.
- **Variety.** Offering a variety of well-implemented services and activities and providing choice are related to a program’s ability to attract and retain youth.⁷
- **Evaluation and Assessment.** Evaluations that look at the quality of program implementation often find that outcomes are poorer in programs that do not have any way of internally assessing their progress.
- **Cultural Competence.** Having staff who can understand and work with cultural differences, and respond to language needs of participants, promotes accessibility and responsiveness, which is increasingly important given the demographic profile of many California communities.

Using this set of seven “benchmarks” that research has shown is linked to program quality and effectiveness, P/PV found that 11 of the grantees (31%)⁸ achieved a high-quality profile (e.g., met six or seven of the seven benchmarks). Another 21 grantees (60%) were categorized as meeting a medium-quality profile (e.g., met four or five benchmarks). Finally, three grantees (9%) were categorized as low quality (e.g., met three or fewer benchmarks).

Based on these analyses, it is expected that—without benefit of the knowledge that would come with longitudinal outcomes evaluation—the grantees designated as high quality are most likely to contribute to the long-term outcomes of interest to The Foundation. The few grantees that met hardly any of the quality standards may be less likely to produce the long-term outcomes of interest to The Foundation and the youth development field more generally (although they may be successful in meeting other, short-term goals). It is more difficult to predict about those grantees that fall into the medium-quality profile category; to a degree, it may depend on the specific benchmarks that they do or do not meet. That is, in the analyses conducted for this evaluation, because of the disparate nature of the grantees’ goals and strategies and The Foundation’s broad definition of outcomes (behavioral and emotional health), all benchmarks are given equal weight. In practice, grantees that implement those elements likely to produce the outcomes of most interest to The Foundation will achieve better results and their counterparts who do not do so will likely be less successful.

Several factors tended to be present among those grantees rated as high quality. The high-quality profile grantees are most likely to:

- Have established more collaborative relationships,
- Provide an academic component, and
- Cost more per participant.

⁷ Of note, variety and choice refer to the way activities are offered as well as to the breadth of types of services. In the current study, grantees noted the components central to administering their program. In the case of grantees that offered mentoring, many of them noted the variety of activities that were engaged in and decided on by the youth and the mentor.

⁸ Out of 35 who completed and returned organizational surveys.

The cost is not surprising, since high-quality profile grantees also tend to offer a greater variety of services over a longer term than do those with lower-quality profiles. Consequently, this programming is more expensive.

Grantees' Major Challenges and Responses

Over the course of the evaluation, despite the variety of programmatic approaches undertaken by the grantees, common and thematic challenges and responses were revealed.

- The grantees have high rates of staff turnover that are particularly deleterious in light of the priority they give to building supportive relationships between youth and staff, which clearly require continuity. Though staff turnover is common in the social services field, grantees would welcome support from The Foundation in combating this problem with assistance in developing proactive training policies and targeted retention efforts.
- Engaging and educating parents is vital, but language barriers, transportation difficulties and cultural norms that favor privacy present substantial challenges to service providers. In response, grantees have developed such approaches as providing interpreters, child care, incentives for participation (such as small stipends or prizes), and specially targeted strategies to attract and engage parents. Grantees would welcome further guidance from The Foundation in developing other successful strategies for engaging parents of program participants.
- Restricting Foundation-funded programming to 9- to 13-year-olds, though welcome and very much needed, presents problems to grantees, especially those based in schools with wider age ranges. To accommodate youth outside the target ages, long-established grantees continue to serve older youth but do not report them as part of meeting the Foundation's grant goals; serve older youth with funds from other sources; and serve needy families by identifying a family member of the appropriate age.

LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The report concludes with lessons and recommendations that draw from the evaluation, the literature reviewed for the evaluation and the experiences P/PV has developed from its work in the field of youth development.

Both considerable resources and longitudinal evaluation are necessary to determine the long-term effects achieved by services for preteen youth; and proper timing of such costly evaluation is critical.

Typically, programs must be well established and participants must be followed for a long period of time (a year or more in many cases) in order to provide the best testing ground for ascertaining the impact of program participation on long-term outcomes, such as emotional well being, academic achievement and improved life chances. Because

collecting longitudinal data involves tracking participants over time, this type of evaluation can be very costly. As such, efforts to show the long-term effects of programs are most appropriately conducted at a time when programs have been at work long enough to be solidly implemented and have a strong infrastructure in place.⁹ In addition, the evaluation design must allow for follow up of program participants after they have had sufficient exposure to the programming, to expect improvements in long-term outcomes.

In lieu of more costly longitudinal evaluation, P/PV’s review of past research has identified a set of common benchmarks related to program effectiveness that may be a useful tool for guiding Foundation funding strategies and assessing interim outcomes—with the caveat that certain benchmarks may warrant greater emphasis, depending on the specificity of Foundation goals.

P/PV’s review of research on program effectiveness—whether it concerns mentoring, after-school, in-school or other types of interventions—suggests that the presence of a common set of benchmarks can determine a program’s capacity to achieve desired, long-term outcomes for youth. The quality benchmarks identified in this report can serve as a starting point for grant-makers seeking to understand the impact of their funding in the absence of long-term outcomes data. Funders can arm themselves with information about exemplary programs that meet benchmarks that have been shown to be related to outcomes of interest. Then, grantees can be provided with the support and technical assistance necessary to allow them to collect data on these meaningful benchmarks (in essence, interim outcomes), and programs can be monitored for the presence of these practices and interim outcomes, knowing they produce effects.

Within any particular grantmaking strategy, however, these benchmarks may best be used as guidelines rather than a checklist. In the analysis conducted for this report, because of the wide range of program types and goals, the benchmarks were all given equal weight in determining a grantee’s quality profile.

Grantees worked to provide supportive relationships for youth while facing the common challenge of retaining skilled and qualified staff.

Barring what might be an obvious solution of paying higher salaries to retain staff, grantees’ experiences, and work in the social services field more generally, suggest testing some possible innovations to promote staff retention. For example, in a situation characteristic of the nonprofit social services field in general, grantees reported that their direct service staff most typically left their agencies to seek advanced degrees or work with local governmental social service agencies, which paid higher salaries. The Foundation may be able to assist grantees in their efforts at staff retention by either directly sponsoring training opportunities for program staff, or providing technical assistance to grantees on how to finance further professional development for staff

⁹ See Walker and Grossman, 1999.

members while they remain in their employment.¹⁰ Additionally, The Foundation might be in a position to provide leadership in a regional discussion among other grantmaking institutions around strategies for promoting policies among grantees that might support staff retention among nonprofit organizations in the area. Possible areas for attention include management practices and support for educational and health benefits for employees.

Funders can promote cross-site learning that will help grantees to navigate common challenges—such as reaching parents, retaining skilled staff, and recruiting and retaining preteen participants—and implement programming more smoothly.

Area 2 grantees have a wealth of creative and innovative strategies they could share with their fellow grantees. Site staff were enthusiastic about the prospect of receiving support from fellow grantees and The Foundation, provided the content was relevant and practically oriented, and participation did not require a lengthy time commitment.

This assistance might come in the form of cross-site conferences to discuss common issues or matching pairs of grantees that are working toward common program goals but exhibiting different levels of implementation experience. Alternatively, Foundation staff themselves may be able to distill best practices across sites and provide direct technical assistance to sites facing particular implementation issues.

If a goal of the grantmaking strategy is to prevent high-risk behaviors, an approach that targets specific subgroups of youth is likely to have the greatest impact.

To the extent that limited funds are available, taking a broad-based approach is less likely to reach the youth who most need the help social programs can offer. Previous evaluation findings support targeting specific youth. Research has generally found that it is only the highest-risk subgroups that show much impact or benefit from social programs (see Miller, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2003; DuBois et al., 2002; Grossman and Johnson, 1999). Higher-risk groups are the most likely to benefit for two reasons—they most need the support provided by quality youth programs, and they may be deterred from and are unlikely to find those supports elsewhere in the community.

Although it was not a stated practice in administering grants in the first three cycles, grantees already tended to serve an economically at-risk group of youth, and a number of grantees aimed at specific target populations. To the extent that this is the case, the impacts of Foundation dollars are likely to be greater.

¹⁰ Possibilities might include encouraging (and providing financial support for) grantees to use employees' pre-tax earnings to pay for academic courses at local higher education institutions or encouraging grantees to pay staff members' hourly wages while they attend classes contributing to advanced degrees.

A balanced strategy of school-based and community-based programming makes sense for reaching preteens.

In its first three funding cycles, The Foundation's Area 2 grantees were evenly distributed between community-based and school-based locations, and those indicators of program quality that appeared significant were well distributed between programs of both location types. This strategy allowed The Foundation to reach youth in the full distribution of the 9 to 13 target age range that were demographically representative of, although more economically needy than, the general preteen population of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

SUMMARY

In many ways, the first three cycles of grants succeeded in achieving a number of The Foundation's goals. This evaluation, designed to assess the collective success of the grantees, found that they were reaching youth across the 9- to 13-year-old age range who reflected the demographics and needs of the two counties, and providing services important for healthy development. The evaluation also revealed unevenness in terms of meeting specific benchmarks of quality and identified some systematic challenges to implementation faced by The Foundation's grantees.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health's grantmaking strategy and the majority of the programs it funds under Area 2 are grounded in the principles of youth development and supported by research. The Foundation aims to fund programs that will increase the quality and scope of positive opportunities for youth in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Funders, policymakers and practitioners are interested in supporting strategies that will have long-lasting effects on youth, particularly those most lacking in services. Preadolescents are one such group and are of special concern, since researchers believe that it is in early adolescence when young people begin to adopt behavior patterns that can have life-long consequences; prevention efforts at this point could shape the development of enduring healthy behaviors.¹¹

In response to the gap in services for youth of this age group and the interest in addressing this critical period of transition in youth's lives, The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health (The Foundation) initiated its Area 2 Grantmaking Program in December 2000. The Area 2 program is designed to promote the emotional and behavioral health of youth, ages 9 to 13, in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties by funding high-quality programs that will increase the quality and scope of youth development opportunities available. To this end, between December 2000 and December 2001, The Foundation awarded grants over three cycles to 44 grantees.¹² The grants ranged in amounts from \$20,000 to \$313,000, and varied in duration from one to three years. The common framework for awarding these grants was that the program committed itself in some way to the resiliency goals of promoting behavioral and emotional health in the counties' preteens.

This report documents to what degree the initial three cycles of The Foundation's grantees are collectively meeting the gap in services for preadolescents. It also examines the effectiveness of the early implementation of the grantmaking approach by assessing the extent to which grantees from the first three cycles of giving—as a group—meet a set of quality benchmarks identified by past research and practice.

¹¹ See Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 2000; Eccles et al., 1993a; 1993b; Eccles and Midgley, 1989; Simmons et al., 1987; Walker and Arbretton, 2001.

¹² It is important to note that in these first three cycles of funding, The Foundation also provided funds to four organizations to provide technical assistance or evaluation, instead of direct services. For reasons discussed in greater detail in Appendix B, these sites are not included in this evaluation. Instead, this evaluation focuses exclusively on the 40 programs that provided direct services to the preteen youth and their parents in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

WHY FOCUS ON PREADOLESCENCE?

*Preadolescence is a period characterized by profound changes on many different levels—biological, physical and behavioral, all of which roughly correspond with the movement from elementary school to middle or junior high school.*¹³

Preadolescence is a critical transition in youth's lives when many become exposed to, start experimenting with and engaging in more risky behaviors. At this age, supports in schools decrease, and parents are frequently less involved in supervising their children's time and tasks.

Successfully navigating this transition can, in large part, depend on the availability of opportunities to engage in positive activities and supportive relationships with adults that provide "scaffolding" for the developmental process (Tierney and Grossman, 1995; Eccles et al., 1993; Scales, 1991; Wood, 1986; Bruner, 1983). Yet, oftentimes, access to supportive opportunities and relationships is seriously lacking for preadolescents. The consequence is too much discretionary time, more unhealthy behaviors, more life stress and more difficulty forming healthy connections to other people. Limited access to supports is especially true in impoverished communities, where resources for youth are severely limited (Miller, 2003; Pedersen and Seidman, in press, cited in Eccles et al., 2003; Quinn, 1999). From a prevention perspective, therefore, targeting services to 9- to 13-year-old youth is appropriate and needed.

STUDY GOALS

In March 2002, The Foundation contracted P/PV, a national nonprofit social policy research organization, to evaluate its Area 2 Grantmaking Program in order to (1) provide information to them about the effectiveness of their early grantmaking approach, and (2) offer lessons for future grantmaking endeavors. The evaluation was designed to address three key questions about the "collective" success of the grantees:

- How well are the programs funded under Area 2 collectively succeeding in achieving The Foundation's goal of fostering resilience and preventing high-risk behaviors in 9- to 13-year-old youth in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties?
- To what extent are The Foundation's Area 2 grantees implementing quality programs in a manner that can be expected to meet the needs of the populations they serve? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the programs in the Area 2 initiative?
- What are the challenges faced by Area 2 grantees and the strategies they are using to address them?

The evaluation focuses on the first three funding cycles (i.e., December 2000, June 2001 and December 2001).¹⁴

¹³ See Footnote 1.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

P/PV researchers gathered both quantitative and qualitative information about grantees, their programs, services, staffing and populations served. To collect the information, an organizational survey was designed and administered in June 2002, to which 35 responses were received. P/PV researchers also visited 19 grantee sites. More details about the survey and site visits are described in Appendix B.

It is important to note that at the time P/PV began the evaluation, The Foundation's grantmaking program was in its infancy. Moreover, many of the grantees were implementing relatively new programs or program elements, and thus it was too early in the life of many of the grantees' programs to assess outcomes.

Additionally, grants were intentionally awarded to a disparate group of organizations in order to support the range of diverse community efforts. The portfolio of grantees in The Foundation's first three cycles varied along a wide variety of characteristics, including organizational type (locally based versus affiliated with a national organization), characteristics of the population served (race, ethnicity, elementary or middle school, English language proficiency, etc.), location of services (school versus community), types of services provided and stated program goals.

Recognizing these considerations, P/PV developed a methodology to assess benchmarks of program quality and grantmaking effectiveness based on a set of criteria identified through literature reviews, evaluation studies and practitioner knowledge. Through this methodology, we assessed the extent to which grantees are meeting benchmarks of the youth services field, and using The Foundation's funds to the greatest advantage in meeting the needs of preteens in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Effective Programs for Preteens Tend to Share a Common Set of Quality Features

"Time and again in the research cited in this report (Critical Hours), we find that it is not so much the type of program—the focus, strategies or location—as the environment that is created for youth that makes all the difference." (Miller, 2003, p.69).

A review of research on effectiveness among youth service programs suggests that the presence of a common set of benchmarks can determine a program's ability to achieve desired, long-term outcomes for youth. Based on this review, P/PV identified and developed measures of seven such benchmarks that tend to be associated with program quality:

- **Exposure.** It is critical that youth participate in a program for enough time to make a difference in their lives. Although no definitive threshold has been set,

¹⁴The Foundation has since funded an additional four cycles, which are not included in any of the data collection or analyses found in this report.

- most studies indicate that changes in long-term outcomes occur only after many months of frequent attendance.¹⁵
- **Supportive Relationships.** Positive relationships with adults and peers are key components that serve to attract and retain youth, and have been linked to positive developmental outcomes. Thus, intentional strategies to promote opportunities for relationships are important.¹⁶
 - **Staff Training.** Training for staff and volunteers is a critical component that reflects a strong programmatic infrastructure for implementing a well-designed curriculum.
 - **Staff Retention.** When staff retention is low (i.e., staff turnover is high), programs find it challenging to maintain continuity and coherence of program goals, and have difficulty sustaining relationships with participants and collaborating partners.
 - **Variety.** Offering a variety of well-implemented services and activities, and providing choice are related to a program's ability to attract and retain youth.¹⁷
 - **Evaluation and Assessment.** Evaluations that look at the quality of program implementation often find that outcomes are poorer in programs that do not have a way of internally assessing their progress.
 - **Cultural Competence.** Having staff who can understand and work with cultural differences, and respond to language needs of participants, promotes accessibility and responsiveness, which is increasingly important given the demographic profile of many California communities.

Throughout this report, these seven benchmarks are used as a basis for assessing grantees' effectiveness and overall quality. A more detailed literature review supporting these particular benchmarks is presented in Appendix A.

Limitations of the Data

Two characteristics of the data should be noted. First, the information is based on grantees' self-reports of their programming, their participants, staffing, etc. Thus, the data are limited by the fact that we were not able to verify it from alternative sources, and respondents may have attempted to present themselves in the best light possible in order to please their funders. At the same time, however, we have found that program staff typically present an accurate picture of their program services, because they realize it is in their best interest to be realistic about their strengths and weaknesses.

¹⁵ In this report, the threshold was set at seven months or more, in order to categorize those programs that provided services for at least one school year.

¹⁶ In examining supportive relationships as a benchmark of quality, this report focuses on the extent to which grantees identify intentional strategies to promote relationship development for program participants – such as a mentoring component, time and space for youth and adults to interact, and consistent staffing practices.

¹⁷ Of note, variety and choice refer to the way activities are offered, as well as to the breadth of types of services. In the current study, grantees noted the components central to administering their program. In the case of grantees that offered mentoring, many of them noted the variety of activities that were engaged in and decided on by the youth and the mentor.

Second, although we were able to visit a subset of sites, we were not able to conduct in-depth data collection with regard to all aspects of quality, service or participation. Also, the study does not include evaluation of individual grantees and, therefore, statements made about quality and effectiveness are based on self-reported practices backed by research knowledge about what practices have been deemed effective. In order to make definitive statements about outcomes, individual grantees would have had to undergo their own individual evaluations. Nevertheless, the information gathered for the evaluation provides important feedback about grantees' activities.

OVERVIEW OF THE REPORT

Chapter II describes the youth population that the grantees reach, where and how they reach them, and the breadth and scope of the services provided. Chapter III examines how well the qualities of the grantees align with the seven benchmarks of program effectiveness that have been linked to positive outcomes for youth. It also explores other program features on which the grantees vary (e.g., collaborative partnerships; national versus local programming) and their relationship to the grantees' achievement of the quality benchmarks. Chapter IV describes overarching challenges grantees have faced and the strategies they have used to address these challenges. This chapter also identifies those elements that grantees themselves feel are crucial to implementing quality programming. Finally, Chapter V summarizes the lessons learned from the evaluation and offers recommendations for future strategies in grantmaking based on the findings from this evaluation, other evaluations and P/PV's experiences in the field.

II. WHO DOES FOUNDATION FUNDING REACH AND WHAT SERVICES DOES IT PROVIDE?

As a first step in addressing whether The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health Area 2 Program grantees are preventing high-risk behaviors and promoting health, we need to answer several basic questions concerning the population served and the programming provided with Foundation funds. This chapter focuses on the following questions:

- Who is being served by The Foundation’s funding—how do participants compare with the general population of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties? Does the population served differ for community-based versus school-based grantees? Is the population being served at risk?
- What services are being provided?

WHO ARE GRANTEES SERVING?

Foundation dollars are being used to serve an underserved and economically needy group of youth who generally reflect the demographic profile of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Consistent with The Foundation’s goal of serving preadolescents, most youth (86%) served are between the ages of 9 and 13 (see Table 2.1). The proportions of girls and boys are similar, which is probably a result of the variety of programming, including activities that are attractive to both boys and girls. Grantees reported that approximately 41 percent of participants are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch at school and about 20 percent are identified as English language learners.

There were modest differences in the participant profiles across the counties. Table 2.1 indicates that grantees in San Mateo County serve a higher proportion of Latinos and African Americans than those in Santa Clara County. In contrast, grantees in Santa Clara County serve a higher proportion of Asians and Caucasians than those in San Mateo. Youth served in San Mateo County also tend to be poorer and are twice as likely to be English language learners.

These data provide one indication that grantees are reaching youth and families who might not otherwise have access to these types of programs and the supports they provide. Coupled with responses to questions about service population that were asked on site visits, they also indicate that Area 2 grantees have, as a whole, chosen to target services to the more economically disadvantaged preteens of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Table 2.1. Youth Participants in Area 2 Programming (as of June 2002)*

| Number of Programs Responding | San Mateo N=12 | Santa Clara N=17 | Both** N=6 | Total N=35 |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Total Number of Youth Currently Served | 1538 | 3261 | 720 | 5519*** |
| AGE | % | % | % | % |
| Under 9 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 9-11 | 43 | 16 | 40 | 26 |
| 12-13 | 50 | 69 | 40 | 60 |
| 14-18 | 3 | 11 | 18 | 10 |
| RACE/ETHNICITY | % | % | % | % |
| African American | 13 | 5 | 19 | 9 |
| Asian | 8 | 16 | 4 | 12 |
| Latino/Hispanic | 50 | 39 | 36 | 42 |
| Native American | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| White/Caucasian | 25 | 34 | 26 | 30 |
| Other | 3 | 4 | 15 | 5 |
| GENDER | % | % | % | % |
| Female | 50 | 53 | 54 | 52 |
| Male | 50 | 47 | 45 | 48 |
| | % | % | % | % |
| Free or Reduced-Price School Lunch | 55 | 40 | 20 | 41 |
| | % | % | % | % |
| English Language Learners | 35 | 18 | 4 | 21 |

* Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent and, therefore, columns may not total to 100.

** “Both” here indicates grantees that serve participants from both counties.

*** This total and the rest of the table do not include information from four programs that did not complete this question. We estimate, based on the projected services population, that 200 to 400 youth could have been added to this total if the programs met the target goals stated in their proposal to The Foundation. Also of note, these numbers are of current participants, when the survey was distributed in June 2002. Programs likely serve more total participants over the course of a year.

As a reference point, Table 2.2 shows the number of children, ages 10 to 14, in each county and the race/ethnicity distribution estimated for 2003. A comparison of the two tables indicates that The Foundation’s dollars are reaching youth across the demographic spectrum of the counties. The distribution also suggests that Foundation funds are reaching proportionately more Hispanic/Latino and African-American youth than are represented in the population; in contrast, fewer Asian and White/Caucasian youth are being reached with Foundation dollars.¹⁸

Table 2.2. 2003 County Population Estimates of 10- to-14-year-olds by Race/Ethnicity

| | San Mateo | Santa Clara |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Total Number of Youth 10-14 | 56,934 | 141,876 |
| RACE/ETHNICITY | % | % |
| African American | 4.5 | 3.6 |
| Asian and Pacific Islander | 24.2 | 28.5 |
| Latino/Hispanic | 32.9 | 32.6 |
| Native American | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| White/Caucasian | 38.2 | 35.1 |

Source: State of California, Department of Finance, Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail, 1970-2040. Sacramento, California, December 1998.

Does the School-Based or Community-Based Location of Services Affect Service Population?

The Foundation funds a variety of programs that are well distributed between school- and community-based settings, allowing them to reach a broad base of preteen youth. School settings serve a distinct population that tends to be older and more racially/ethnically diverse. Community settings serve a more diverse population in terms of age range and English language learners. Funding both school- and community-based programs allows The Foundation to reach a balanced group of preteens.

Previous research on mentoring (Herrera et al., 2000) and after-school programs (Walker and Arbreton, 2001; Arbreton and McClanahan, 2002) has documented that community-based and school-based programs tend to reach and serve different populations of youth. As noted in Chapter I, The Foundation funds both types of grantees. In this section, we

¹⁸ Although we do not know why these demographic differences appear, we have found similar demographic distributions in P/PV’s previous evaluations of Beacon Centers (Walker and Arbreton, 2004) and Boys & Girls Clubs (Arbreton and McClanahan, 2002), suggesting that these findings may be typical of the service profile of nonprofit, youth-serving agencies nationally.

examine how the setting is related to the population of youth served in order to uncover any systematic differences that might be informative for future grantmaking.

Table 2.3 shows the distribution of demographic characteristics of youth served by three categories: school-based grantees, community-based grantees and grantees that provide programming in both locales.

Table 2.3. Youth Participants in Area 2 Programming by Grantee Setting (as of June 2002)*

| Number of Grantees Responding | School-Based N=13 | Community- Based N=13 | Both** N=8 |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total Number of Youth Currently Served | 2796 | 1534 | 1103 |
| AGE | % | % | % |
| Under 9 | 0 | 4 | 9 |
| 9-11 | 12 | 36 | 39 |
| 12-13 | 63 | 48 | 50 |
| 14-18 | 14 | 7 | 1 |
| RACE/ETHNICITY | % | % | % |
| African American | 8 | 9 | 15 |
| Asian | 17 | 5 | 11 |
| Latino/Hispanic | 36 | 49 | 51 |
| Native American | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| White/Caucasian | 34 | 29 | 19 |
| Other | 4 | 8 | 3 |
| GENDER | % | % | % |
| Female | 51 | 51 | 56 |
| Male | 49 | 49 | 44 |
| | % | % | % |
| Free or Reduced-Price School Lunch | 52 | 18 | 48 |
| | % | % | % |
| English Language Learners | 17 | 33 | 13 |

* This table is based on a total of 34 survey respondents versus 35. One grantee was dropped from the analysis because the location could not be determined. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole percent and, therefore, columns may not total to 100.

** “Both” here refers to programs serving youth in both locales.

Although grantees in all locations served a greater proportion of youth in the upper age range (12 to 13), Table 2.3 shows a difference by location in the distribution across age groups of youth served. A greater proportion of youth in school-based settings were in the 12- to 13-year-old age range (63%) than in community-based locations (48%), likely reflecting that more grantees are located in middle schools than in elementary schools. In

contrast, a greater proportion of youth served by community-based grantees were in the 9 to 11 age range (36% in community-based compared with 12% in school-based).

The spread of participants by race/ethnicity in the two settings shows a slightly larger proportion of Asian youth served in the school setting. A larger proportion of Latino youth are served in a community versus school setting. Comparing this distribution to the population estimates in Table 2.2, we see that the different race/ethnicities participating in school-based sites indicates a distribution slightly more reflective of the distribution seen in the counties.

Probably the most dramatic difference is in terms of the variable of free or reduced-price school lunch. In school-based settings, we see slightly over half (52%) qualify for free or reduced-price lunch compared with the proportion in the community-based setting (18%). It is possible that we found a greater prevalence of eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch at school-based sites because program staff, due to their proximity to and relationships with school personnel, had greater access to these data than their community-based counterparts.

In contrast, approximately one-third of youth in community-based settings were English language learners compared with 17 percent in school-based settings. This is likely a result of the fact that two of the community-based grantees are located in housing developments and are exclusively serving new immigrants.

Are Participants in Area 2 Programs “At Risk”?

On the whole, Area 2 grantees are serving an at-risk population.

During our site visits, we asked programs to describe The Foundation-funded participants in terms of whether they considered them to be an at-risk population. Most grantees, regardless of whether school-based or community-based, stated that their participants are at risk for not realizing their full potential due to academic, social or economic challenges. Participants were also described as susceptible to poor health and life outcomes. Many programs portrayed their service areas of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties as having high rates of teen pregnancy, gang involvement and poor health outcomes. Of those programs visited by P/PV, only two grantees stated that they were serving a particularly low-risk group of participants, based on their observations that many of their participants were from stable home environments and/or were not having academic or personal problems.

Results from the organizational survey indicate that about 80 percent of the grantees target outreach efforts to specific populations (in addition to targeting the 9- to-13-year-old age range), including youth they consider to be at risk. The majority of those targeting their outreach efforts did so in three ways: (1) by population characteristics, (2) by high-risk behaviors, or (3) by a combination of characteristics and high-risk behaviors. The population characteristics most commonly noted were income level, race/ethnicity and geographic location, in that order. The high-risk behaviors most commonly noted

were academic risks (truancy, poor grades) and risky behaviors (drug use, sexual activity).

WHAT SERVICES ARE BEING PROVIDED?

The Foundation's Area 2 funding is being used to provide a wide range of programming components that support a youth development approach. In addition, the majority of grantees were involved in multiple organizational collaborations. These collaborations allow organizations to provide a rich set of experiences to the youth they serve and put The Foundation's dollars to good use.

The survey asked grantees to complete a chart listing all the programming components integral to implementing The Foundation-funded program, both those supported by Foundation funds and those supported by other funding sources. A summary of the components identified is reported in Table 2.4.

On average, the grantees offered six to seven components. Reflecting the importance placed on providing opportunities for supportive relationships with adults and peers, 23 (66%) of the grantees provided some form of mentoring (peer, adult or both). Similarly, reflecting the emphasis on promoting healthy behavior, 23 (66%) of the grantees offered some type of health promotion and prevention class. In keeping with the youth development focus, the health promotion and prevention classes were coupled with leadership/decision-making activities, group discussions/participation activities, and community service or mentoring.

Table 2.4. Services Provided by Foundation Grantees

| Program Component | Number of Sites Offering Program Components* N=35 | Proportion of Sites Offering Component |
|--|--|--|
| Health Promotion and Prevention Classes (e.g., sex education, alcohol/drug use prevention, etc.) | 23 | 66% |
| Group Discussions (e.g., rap sessions) | 20 | 57% |
| Adult Mentoring | 18 | 51% |
| Conflict Resolution Activities | 17 | 49% |
| Leadership/Decision-making Activities | 17 | 49% |
| Tutoring | 16 (15) | 46% |
| Homework Time | 15 (14) | 43% |
| Community Service | 15 | 43% |
| Art/Cultural Enrichment Classes (e.g., drama, music, etc.) | 12 (11) | 34% |
| Peer Mentoring | 12 (9) | 34% |
| Parent Education | 10 | 29% |
| Camping | 8 (6) | 23% |
| Academic Enrichment Classes | 8 | 23% |
| Other Enrichment Activities (e.g., sewing, cooking, etc.) | 8 (7) | 23% |
| Career Preparation | 7 (6) | 20% |
| Sports | 6 (5) | 17% |
| Individual and Group Counseling | 6 | 17% |
| Free Time/Hang-out Time | 6 (5) | 17% |
| Mental Health | 5(4) | 14% |

* Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of grantees for which the component is supported specifically with funds from The Foundation, if different from the overall number.

As displayed in Table 2.5, similar services were offered in school-based and community-based locations, in general. Indeed, contrary to what might be expected, community-based grantees were just as likely to offer academic services as school-based grantees. The main differences between community- and school-based grantees are that school-based grantees are more likely to offer health promotion and prevention classes and group discussions, while community-based grantees are more likely to offer arts/cultural and other enrichment activities and career preparation. Community-based grantees also tend to offer more services, on average, than did school-based grantees, 7.4 compared with 6.3, respectively.

Table 2.5. Number of Grantees Providing Services by Community-Based Versus School-Based Grantees

| Program Component | School-Based Grantee N=13 | Community-Based Grantee N=13 | Both N=8 |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Health Promotion and Prevention Classes (e.g., sex education, alcohol/drug use prevention, etc.) | 11 | 5 | 6 |
| Group Discussions (e.g., rap sessions) | 9 | 6 | 4 |
| Adult Mentoring | 7 | 8 | 3 |
| Conflict Resolution Activities | 7 | 5 | 5 |
| Leadership/Decision-making Activities | 7 | 7 | 2 |
| Tutoring | 7 | 6 | 3 |
| Homework Time | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Community Service | 4 | 6 | 4 |
| Art/Cultural Enrichment Classes (e.g., drama, music, etc.) | 3 | 7 | 2 |
| Peer Mentoring | 4 | 6 | 2 |
| Parent Education | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Camping | 1 | 6 | 1 |
| Academic Enrichment Classes | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Other Enrichment Activities (e.g., sewing, cooking, etc.) | 1 | 6 | 1 |
| Career Preparation | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Sports | 2 | 4 | 0 |
| Individual and Group Counseling | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Free Time/Hang-out Time | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Mental Health | 3 | 1 | 1 |

Note: One grantee was dropped because it could not be categorized. This table is based on 34 grantees.

Both school-based and community-based grantees were effective in providing multiple service components because of collaborative relationships. Table 2.6 notes the role of collaborations, illustrating the ways services and program implementation were expanded. Fourteen out of 35 organizations identified six or more collaborators; most frequently, collaborative relationships helped in providing participant referrals (or seeking referrals) or providing physical space. Table 2.6 also shows that many of the organizations collaborated a great deal with other local nonprofits and public agencies to provide activities and services. Many grantees, according to interviews gathered during site visits, did not always provide services directly, capitalizing on preexisting services in the community, often sharing the administrative burden of program implementation and thereby putting The Foundation’s dollars to most efficient use.

Table 2.6. Organizations’ Use of Collaborations and the Role They Play

| The Role That Collaborators Play | Number of Times Roles Cited |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Refer Participants to/from | 28 |
| Provide Space | 26 |
| Provide Activities or Services | 24 |
| Community Relations and Awareness | 23 |
| Guide Programming or Planning | 17 |
| Provide Staff | 15 |
| Other | 14 |
| Fundraising or Financial Support | 12 |
| Provide Training | 12 |
| Provide Governance or Fiscal Oversight | 4 |

SUMMARY

The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health’s Area 2 grantmaking strategy is reaching a diverse population of 9- to 13-year-olds in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The distribution of gender and race/ethnicity is, on the whole, representative of the demographic profile of the target counties. The youth served tend to be at the lower end of the economic continuum.

Funding of both school- and community-based grantees provides services to a balanced group of preteens: Whereas school-based grantees work with youth who are likely to be older (i.e., a greater proportion of 12- to 13-year-olds compared with 9- to 11-year-olds) and more racially/ethnically diverse, community-based grantees serve youth across the preteen age and English-speaking proficiency range.

On the whole, The Foundation’s Area 2 Grantmaking Program also tends to support a wide range of services—a majority of grantees provided multiple services to participants. In the next chapter, we explore benchmarks of quality programming in order to determine the extent to which Foundation grantees can be expected to prevent high-risk behaviors among the preteens of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

III. WHAT IS THE “COLLECTIVE” QUALITY OF AREA 2 GRANTEE PROGRAMMING AND WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO THAT QUALITY?

The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children’s Health is interested in assessing whether the collective use of the funds it spent over the first three cycles of grantmaking can be expected to have an effect on preteen development in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. This chapter addresses the issue, focusing on the following questions:

- To what extent are grantees, “overall,” implementing quality programs in a manner that can be expected to meet the needs of the populations served?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the programs in the Area 2 initiative?

To examine the effectiveness of the grantees as a group, P/PV analyzed the extent to which grantees met benchmarks of quality that the evaluation literature associates with positive outcomes for youth. We chose this approach as a way to examine grantees’ program quality given the following limitations: First, the individual grantees have not all collected data on outcomes. For many of the grantees, this lack of data is appropriate because many programs or program elements were relatively new—too new, in fact, to have collected reliable outcomes data of a program in a “steady state.” Second, in the first three cycles, The Foundation intentionally funded a wide variety of approaches designed to serve their target age group, necessitating comparing them across a very general set of standards that transcended the specifics of the services offered. Third, the outcomes of interest to The Foundation (emotional and behavioral health) are wide-ranging, so the evaluation looked for broad measures of effectiveness as well.¹⁹ Although the methodology used for the study does not allow for a direct answer to whether high-risk behaviors are ultimately prevented, it provides The Foundation with early information that begins to answer this question.

In this chapter, we:

- Describe the proportion of The Foundation’s Area 2 grantees that is meeting a significant number of the quality benchmarks; and
- Examine how other factors are related to meeting these quality benchmarks.

¹⁹ In fact, research suggests that a well-implemented curriculum related to a specific outcome of interest (e.g., reading or math achievement) is also an important benchmark (Lauer et al., 2003); however, because the specific goals of the various grantees were diverse, we did not include a benchmark specific to curriculum.

HOW WELL ARE THE GRANTEES COLLECTIVELY MEETING BENCHMARKS OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS?

Nearly one-third (31%) of Area 2 grantees met six or seven of the seven quality benchmarks.

As noted in Chapter I, a review of the literature on the relationship between quality benchmarks and program effectiveness has pointed to a common set of features.²⁰ Drawing on our review, we focused on the extent to which the following program features were present across all grantees in order to determine the “collective” quality of The Foundation-funded programs:

- Exposure²¹
- Supportive Relationships
- Staff Training
- Staff Retention
- Variety²²
- Evaluation and Assessment
- Cultural Competence

To determine whether a grantee met each benchmark, their responses to the organizational survey administered in June 2002 were used. Because studies have not, for the most part, identified specific thresholds associated with success, the standards P/PV used to assess whether a grantee had achieved each benchmark represent our best understanding of good practice based on past research and program experience. Table 3.1 summarizes the criteria used. (More detail is provided in Appendix A, Table A.1.)

²⁰ See Appendix A for the literature review.

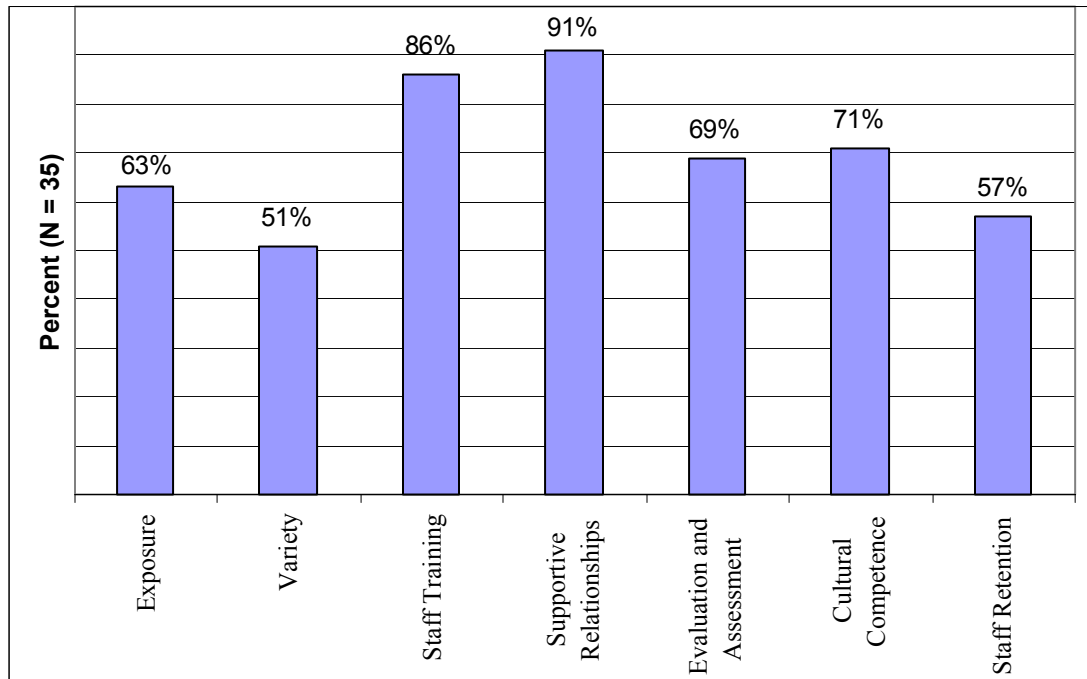
²³ In contrast to the “components” offered by grantees that were examined in Chapter II, variety of services refers to the number of different *types or categories* of services offered by the grantee, for example, academics (tutoring, homework help, enrichment) or mentoring (peer or adult-youth). The 10 service categories and the proportion of grantees providing each are presented in Appendix A, Table A.2.

Table 3.1. Defining the Seven Benchmarks of Quality

| Benchmark | “Threshold” (Criteria for Meeting Benchmark) |
|---------------------------|---|
| Exposure | Grantees indicated they offer programming that typically involves participants for 7 to 12 months or a year or more. |
| Supportive Relationships | Grantees identified adult or peer mentoring components or described the opportunities a youth may experience with supportive adults because of their participation. |
| Variety | Grantees identified four or more types/categories of services (out of 10 possible) they provide. |
| Staff Training | Grantees noted two or more opportunities for staff to develop skills across several areas, including youth development, conflict or behavior management, program planning, teaching or curricula development, and/or team building. |
| Staff Retention | Grantees identified 50% or more of their staff as working with the organization for more than one year or did not identify staff turnover as a challenge during implementation of programming. |
| Evaluation and Assessment | Grantees identified specific evaluation, tracking and assessment efforts. |
| Cultural Competence | Grantees’ staff have language skills that match program participants’ language needs, and grantees have at least 33% or more staff identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. |

Figure 3.1 displays the proportion of grantees that met the “threshold” or standard of quality for each benchmark.

Figure 3.1. Proportion of Grantees Meeting Each Individual Benchmark



Of note, the benchmarks of Staff Training and Supportive Relationships were satisfied by most of the grantees, 86 percent and 91 percent, respectively. Fewer grantees met the benchmarks for Variety²³ and Staff Retention (51% and 57%, respectively).

Quality Profile

In addition to investigating the extent to which grantees met each individual benchmark, we developed a “quality profile,” based on the degree that each grantee met *multiple* benchmarks. We labeled grantees as having low, medium and high quality profiles, based on meeting the following number of benchmarks:

- **High Quality:** six or seven of the seven benchmarks;
- **Medium Quality:** four or five out of the seven benchmarks; and
- **Low Quality:** three or fewer of the benchmarks.²⁴

It is important to note that for this analysis we did not weigh any of the quality standards as more important than others, in large part because the grantees are very diverse in their goals, and we did not want to unfairly penalize any one type of grantee. As Table 3.2 displays, using this system, approximately one-third (31%) of The Foundation’s Area 2 grantees were rated as meeting a high quality profile, 60 percent as medium and 9 percent as low.

²⁴No grantee met fewer than two quality benchmarks.

Table 3.2. Distribution of Program Quality

| Level of Quality | Number of Grantees | Percentage |
|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| High | 11 | 31% |
| Medium | 21 | 60% |
| Low | 3 | 9%* |
| Total | 35 | 100% |

* This represents \$288,512 in Foundation grants.

Based on these analyses, it is our expectation that—without benefit of the knowledge that would come with a longitudinal outcomes evaluation—the grantees designated as high quality are most likely to contribute to the long-term outcomes of interest to The Foundation. This represents approximately one-third of the grantees in the first three funding cycles.

The few grantees that met hardly any of the quality standards (the three grantees designated as having a low quality profile) may be less likely to produce the long-term outcomes of interest to The Foundation and the youth development field more generally (although they may meet other, short-term goals, and thereby provide benefits to program participants).

We do not know about the impacts achieved by those grantees that fall into the medium profile category; to a degree, it may depend on the specific benchmarks that they do not meet. That is, in this analysis, all benchmarks are given equal weight. In practice, programs that implement those elements likely to produce the outcomes of most interest to The Foundation will achieve better results (e.g., meeting the benchmarks for exposure and supportive relationships may deserve more weight than other benchmarks) and their counterparts that do not will be less successful.

WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE GRANTEES?

Most grantees (91%) identified mechanisms for providing supportive relationships. Fewer grantees (63%) offered programs that engaged participants over a significant period of time.

In an effort to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the grantees in terms of meeting quality benchmarks, we conducted additional analyses. First, we examined the quality benchmarks by quality profile. We also examined the grantees' quality profile in relationship to other programmatic features. These analyses help to identify areas of strength in the Area 2 Grantmaking Program, as well as areas that may deserve attention in future grantmaking cycles.

Quality Profile by Benchmarks

Table 3.3 shows the proportion of grantees in each profile that met each of the quality benchmarks and helps make clear the strengths and weaknesses that were not immediately evident in our examination of the major benchmarks of quality, as illustrated in Figure 3.1. In particular, the table shows some of the strengths of the low-quality profile grantees.

Table 3.3. Proportion of High-, Medium- and Low-Quality Designated Grantees Meeting Each Individual Benchmark

| Level of Quality | Exposure | Service Variety | Staff Training | Supportive Relationships | Evaluation and Assessment | Cultural Competence | Staff Retention |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| LOW N=3 | 0 | 0 | 33% | 66% | 0 | 100% | 66% |
| MEDIUM N=21 | 52% | 38% | 86% | 90% | 62% | 57% | 48% |
| HIGH N=11 | 100% | 91% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 91% | 73% |
| TOTAL N=35 | 22 | 18 | 30 | 32 | 24 | 25 | 20 |
| | 63% | 51% | 86% | 91% | 69% | 71% | 57% |

As Figure 3.1 displays, across all levels of quality, a comparatively large proportion of all the grantees are doing a good job of providing **Supportive Relationships** and **Staff Training**. The fact that most grantees are providing supportive relationships reflects the emphasis The Foundation placed on this feature in its award process, based on its importance in fostering resiliency. Although grantees met the benchmark established for providing ongoing training to staff, site visits revealed that staff felt more training would be helpful, particularly focusing on strategies for working with their high-need populations, such as case management. Further, retaining skilled, trained staff was identified as a challenge for grantee success.

In contrast, when looking at the areas of **Exposure**, **Service Variety** and **Evaluation**, we see that the high-quality profile grantees are providing these features at a rate of almost 100 percent, whereas none of the low-quality profile grantees and comparatively few of the medium-quality profile grantees do so. These are areas that may be of concern to The Foundation and could be examined more closely during the proposal period.

The **Exposure** variable is of particular importance. In order to help youth, grantees need to be able to keep youth engaged for a long period of time. To meet the Exposure benchmark, grantees need to offer programming that engages participants for a minimum of seven months. As the literature review in Appendix A notes, Exposure is the most frequently referenced criteria for program effectiveness. All of the high-quality, but none of the low-quality, profile grantees satisfied the criteria of the Exposure variable. If programs are to be effective at achieving long-term outcomes, participant attendance is

key. Many evaluations of programs found results only for youth who attended/were mentored for a year or more, or, in other cases, for even longer periods. In essence, short-term interventions can achieve short-term goals, but developmental outcomes are more closely tied to greater exposure.

Although the table displays that **Staff Retention** was a problem for a greater proportion of those deemed medium and high quality than for those deemed low quality, all grantees had problems retaining staff. The issue of staff turnover is explored in more depth in Chapter IV.

Finally, we note that low-quality profile grantees all met the benchmark of **Cultural Competence**; thus, these grantees may be successful in ways the other grantees were not. As discussed further in Chapter IV, grantees felt that hiring and retaining culturally competent staff was crucial to meeting the needs of preteens, an idea also well substantiated by the counties' demographic profile discussed in Chapter II. In such diverse areas as Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, cultural competency may appropriately assume an importance not yet reflected in the youth development literature.

Quality Profile by Other Grantee Factors

Next, we examined how a set of other factors were related to a grantee's designation of high-, medium- or low-quality profile²⁵:

- County of service;
- School-based or community-based organizations;
- Brand name national versus local grassroots organization²⁶;
- Presence or absence of an academic component;
- Number of collaborators; and
- Cost per participant.

Similar proportions of grantees in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties fell into each quality profile, as did similar proportions of school-based versus community-based grantees. Tables displaying these results are presented in Appendix C.²⁷ These findings suggest that the strategy of grantmaking across these factors did not detract from The Foundation's effectiveness in promoting quality programming and, as we saw in Chapter II, allowed Foundation dollars to reach preteens of need in the two target counties.

²⁵ We also examined the quality profile by grantmaking cycle. We found that grants in December 2000 to June 2001 were equally likely to be designated as low, medium or high in their profile. A greater proportion of grantees in December 2001 were designated as high quality than in either of the previous cycles. Because there was no difference from December 2000 to December 2001, in the remainder of our analyses we collapsed grantees across the three cycles.

²⁶ Brand name is used here to denote grantees that are affiliated with various national organizations, such as Boys & Girls Clubs or Big Brothers Big Sisters; in contrast, local grassroots organizations are those that are locally based, single-entity organizations.

²⁷ Appendix C also contains additional tables that examine difference among grantees that take a school-based versus community-based approach.

As Table 3.4 shows, there was an interesting difference in grantees’ quality profile by whether they were a brand name (an affiliate of a national organization) or a locally based grantee. All three of the grantees that fell into the low-quality profile were local grantees. On further exploration of this finding, we noted that local efforts that ended up in the low-quality profile were also representative of grantees that had the fewest financial resources, both direct and in-kind, and thus fewer resources they could devote to things like staff training and evaluation. They also tended to operate using very few staff. It is important to emphasize that we do not believe this finding suggests that The Foundation should discontinue funding locally based efforts, particularly as evidenced by the fact that 32 percent of the local grantees were in the high-quality profile, only slightly less than the 36 percent of national grantees at that level. Instead, these findings suggest that, irrespective of whether the grantee is a national or local effort, The Foundation should look for the presence of organizational infrastructure that would allow grantees to use Foundation dollars to the greatest advantage.

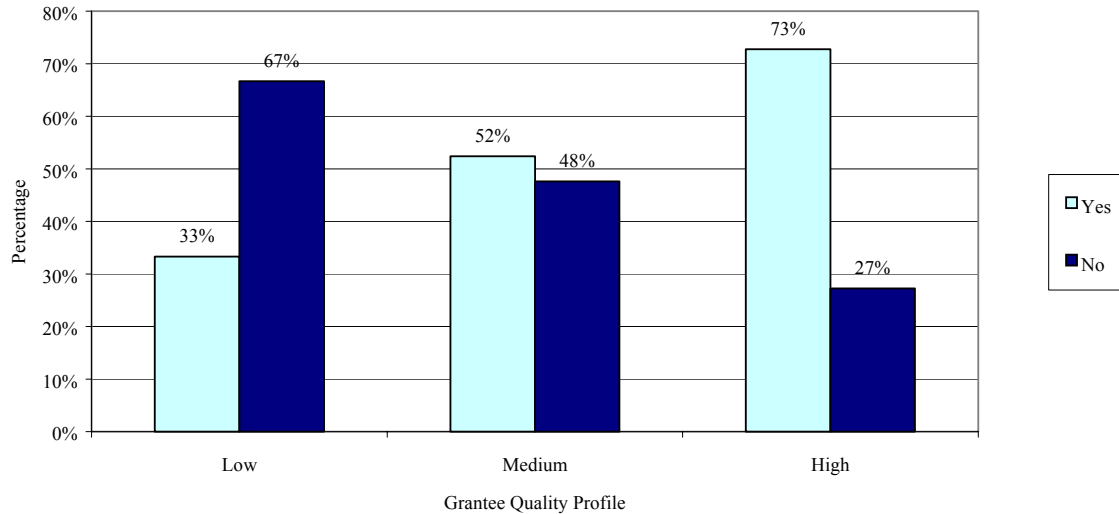
Table 3.4. Locally or Nationally Based Programs by Quality Profile

| Level of Quality | Local | | National | |
|------------------|--------|------------|----------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Low | 3 | 14% | 0 | 0 |
| Medium | 12 | 55% | 7 | 64% |
| High | 7 | 32% | 4 | 36% |
| TOTAL | 22 | 100% | 11 | 100% |

Note: N=33

The presence of an academic component was also related to quality profile. In conversations with grantees, they identified academic support as a critical need for program participants. And, research has shown a positive link between academic success and emotional and behavioral health (Miller, 2003; Grossman et al., 2002). Figure 3.2 shows the proportion of grantees in each quality profile that provided an academic component as one of its services.

Figure 3.2. Presence of Academic Component by Grantee Quality Profile



Almost three-quarters of the high-quality profile grantees offered an academic component as one of their service areas, compared with about half of those as medium profile and one-third as low profile. It is unlikely that the academic component caused the grantee to be of higher quality. However, P/PV’s past reviews and work with programs that incorporate academics have found that a higher level of staff training and curriculum development is needed to incorporate this component, and that may be one reason this difference in quality profile emerges. That is, if grantees were able to successfully implement an academic component, they also likely had a sound organizational infrastructure that led to quality implementation in other key areas as well.

The number of collaborations with other agencies was also related to grantee quality profile, as reflected in Table 3.5. High-quality profile grantees had the most (6.2, on average) and low-quality profile grantees the fewest (2.7, on average) collaborations. Like our findings surrounding the relative importance of an academic component, this does not indicate a causal relationship. That is, our findings do not suggest that having more collaborative partners causes high-quality programs. Instead, we believe it is best understood as a marker associated with the organizational capacity to meet the benchmarks of quality.

Table 3.5. Average Number of Grantee Collaborators by Quality

| Level of Quality | Average Number |
|------------------|----------------|
| Low | 2.7 |
| Medium | 4.6 |
| High | 6.2 |

As displayed in Table 3.6, grantees designated as meeting the high quality profile tended to cost more per participant (\$1,855) than did the medium (\$1,071) or low profile grantees (\$383).

Table 3.6. Estimated Program Cost per Participant by Quality

| Level of Quality | Average Cost Per Participant |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Low | \$383.85 |
| Medium | \$1,071.83 |
| High | \$1,855.10 |

Note: These estimates are very rough, based on the overall budget number provided in the organizational survey divided by the number of participants served.

Although this analysis of cost per participant is a very rough estimate, in the absence of a full cost analysis, the findings are informative. A program that allows for significant exposure over time and develops a variety of services to attract and retain participants, as well as meet the other benchmarks of training, etc., can be expected to cost more than those that are one-time or shorter-term interventions.

SUMMARY

At the heart of The Foundation’s interest in providing grants in Area 2 is the desire to fund in a way most likely to achieve long-term outcomes of interest: promoting the health and resilience of 9- to-13-year-olds in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

The findings in this chapter suggest that the first three granting cycles were relatively successful at achieving their goals. In the absence of long-term outcome studies conducted by their grantees, P/PV used a coding scheme that examined the extent to which grantees were meeting a set of seven quality benchmarks related to program effectiveness. Approximately one-third of the grantees met six or seven of the seven quality benchmarks, and thus would be likely to promote the long-term emotional and behavioral health outcomes of those preteens who participated in their programs. Grantees’ provision of strategies to support relationship development represents a common and key programmatic strength. The degree that grantees’ programs engage participants over time offers an area for further development.

The findings suggest that a balanced strategy of giving across local and national, school-based and community-based grantees, and across counties is likely to continue to be effective in promoting The Foundation’s goals. In addition, high-quality profile grantees were found to have established more collaborative partners, and were more likely to provide an academic component than were their lower-quality profile counterparts. Although these are not causal findings, they may be markers of longevity and curriculum development, as well as organizational strength. In addition, the high-quality profile grantees’ programming tended to cost more per participant, which is not surprising given

the variety of their services and the fact they were more likely to provide a longer-term intervention.

The next chapter presents information on grantee quality by exploring challenges and strategies the grantees used to address them.

IV. CHALLENGES TO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

An organization's ability to implement programming in accordance with the best practices in the field contributes substantially both to youth's experiences of and the benefits they receive from program participation. In this chapter, we describe those overarching challenges to grantees as they implemented their Foundation-funded programming:

- Dealing with staff retention, and the need to hire and retain linguistically and culturally competent program staff;
- Working with parents of program participants;
- The challenges associated with restricting program services to the 9 to 13 age range.

We also explore the strategies they used to address these challenges and highlight those areas in which grantees themselves would welcome increased support from The Foundation, both technical and financial, as a means to bolster program quality.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AND STRATEGIES FOR STAFF RETENTION AND HIRING AND RETAINING CULTURALLY COMPETENT STAFF?

Turnover among staff is a problem endemic to the nonprofit sector. Young staff members often use their early nonprofit experiences as a starting point for their careers, and low wages and demanding workloads can lead to high degrees of staff burnout. This presents a particular challenge in the Bay Area, with one of the highest costs of living in the country.²⁸ Staff turnover can be especially challenging when one of the goals of a program is to develop bonds between staff and youth and to build supportive relationships. One of the major changes we noticed between our first and second round of site visits (a span of one year) was the frequency of turnover among staff in direct contact with youth. Twelve of the organizations we visited in the second round had experienced turnover among direct service staff in the previous year. Also, as noted in Chapter III, 43 percent of the surveyed sites indicated high rates of staff turnover and did not meet a benchmark for staff retention. Staff turnover emerged as an issue across low-, medium- and high-quality profile grantees. As program managers explained it, they simply could not afford to pay salaries that would attract better-trained (and therefore, in their opinions, more permanent) staff. Program staff did not feel this turnover was the result of the economy. Instead, they saw it as a characteristic of the field and a larger issue that needs to be addressed.

²⁸ For a full analysis of the characteristics and impacts of staff turnover within the nonprofit sector in the Bay Area, see Peters et al., 2002.

The frequency of staff turnover may reduce the quality of services offered.

Three of The Foundation grantees we visited described their program staff as serving in a mentoring role with their program participants, and many others described the relationship between the staff and the participants as one of the key strengths of their programs. One of the most consistent findings of research on child and youth development is the way that a positive adult role model and relationship with an adult can contribute to youth's successful transitions.²⁹ Moreover, taking a lesson from the literature on mentoring, one of the key elements in developing a productive relationship between adults and youth in a program setting is time.³⁰ Thus, even in programs that work hard to ensure that all direct service staff positions are filled, frequent staff turnover can undermine some of the benefits that program participants might otherwise receive from consistent relationships with program staff.

Staff turnover has the potential to affect programming at all levels. It may also present an obstacle to maintaining productive, working relationships with collaborating agencies. During our site visits, most of the organizations we visited described the direct service program staff as responsible for creating and maintaining collaborative relationships with staff at school sites, as well as with other partner agencies. Moreover, these grantees reported that forming linkages was further complicated by the fact that school personnel turn over frequently, and they often found themselves forced to “start over” at relationship-building each fall. While it is true that staff turnover among school personnel may have presented challenges for grantees' program staff, turnover among grantee staff in Area 2 programs may have presented similar obstacles for grantees' collaborators as well.³¹

Retaining linguistically and culturally competent staff presents an even greater challenge for grantees.

This issue of retaining staff who have experience with the communities they serve and speak participants' native languages caused even greater concern for Area 2 grantees. As Table 2.1 illustrates, Latino and Hispanic youth make up the largest portion (42%) of Foundation-funded program participants in both counties, and 21 percent of program participants across the two counties were identified as English language learners. Thus, linguistic and cultural capacity was crucial to working with the participants targeted by programming in both counties.

Although the majority of Area 2 grantees that answered our organizational survey (71%) succeeded in hiring culturally and linguistically competent staff, several had great difficulty retaining them. From our conversations with grantees, we learned that highly trained, specifically M.S.W. level, staff with Spanish language capacity are in high

²⁹ For a review of the literature on the importance of adult relationships in the lives of young people, see Miller, 2003, pp. 21-22.

³⁰ Tierney and Grossman, 1995.

³¹ For a discussion of the obstacles to collaboration presented by staff turnover, see Arbreton and McClanahan, 2002.

demand and short supply in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Several sites reported that when they did succeed in hiring culturally competent staff, they often lost them when these valued employees took jobs with county departments of social services that provided wages and benefits with which these nonprofit agencies could not compete.

Sites adopted a number of coping strategies, but this challenge did not lend itself to satisfying solutions. Programs reported that when they lost Spanish-speaking staff, they managed as best they could, having administrative staff or program staff pitch in and translate when necessary. Several grantees also reported that they used the youth themselves as translators to help them communicate with monolingual parents, but acknowledged that this limited the services they were able to provide to the family members. Finally, one grantee took a more holistic approach and actively sought to develop culturally competent and Spanish-speaking counseling staff by encouraging bilingual M.S.W. candidates to serve their internship and stay on as full-time staff after completing their degrees.

Proactive training policies and targeted retention efforts may help to ameliorate the effects of staff turnover.

Unfortunately, staff turnover is an issue endemic to the social services field, where small salaries and large workloads often predominate. High-quality programs have adopted a number of strategies that allow them to continue to provide excellent services. From the youth development literature, for example, we know that frequent trainings for personnel can help minimize the impact of staff turnover on service delivery. Moreover, cross-training may help to provide needed continuity when direct service staff leave programs that are already under way.

Budget constraints may well prevent grantees from paying a premium for particularly valued staff.³² For those positions where continuity of staff is tied to the desired program outcomes, grantees may need to focus extra attention on retention issues. The Foundation may be able to motivate grantees to focus on retaining those staff whose longevity has the potential to enhance program success, such as in instances when staff members mentor program participants or have crucial language skills.

Both grantees' experiences and a recently begun policy discussion concerning the dilemma of staff turnover among local nonprofit organizations (see Peters et al., 2002) may prove useful to The Foundation in supporting grantees in their efforts to retain valued staff. Possibilities include:

³² It is interesting to note that during 2000-2001, a survey of nonprofits in the San Francisco Bay Area revealed that 40 percent of nonprofits surveyed chose to increase employee salaries beyond standard annual raises, and 45 percent chose to increase employee benefits, suggesting that given the right economic climate, paying staff members more to promote longevity may be an option for some more economically secure nonprofits. (See Peters et al., 2002) It is unlikely, however, that nonprofit organizations would be able to do so in light of the changes in the local economy since that time. For a discussion of the impact of the economic slowdown and the aftermath of September 11 on local nonprofit organizations, see FlashPoint, 2002.

- Helping grantees plan for staff turnover and implement strategies to minimize the impacts of vacancies;
- Encouraging (and funding) grantees to provide opportunities for professional development and education; and
- Providing technical assistance to grantees in implementing policies that promote an attractive work place culture, such as manageable workloads and performance management-oriented supervision. (See Peters et al., for further discussion.)

Moreover, given the nearly universal challenge that staff retention presents to the nonprofit sector, it may provide an area where The Foundation may be able to make an impact both on its grantees and nonprofits in the region, more generally, beyond financial contributions alone. Should The Foundation decide to undertake a leadership role in the regional discussion surrounding staff retention among nonprofits, it may be able to stimulate important dialogue surrounding the development of an area-wide strategy among local foundations for promoting longevity among staff at area nonprofits.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF WORKING WITH PARENTS?

The program sites we visited were nearly unanimous in their belief in the importance of engaging the parents of their young program participants. While it was not a stated goal of all the programs we visited, Area 2 program staff expressed the view that working with parents could only help their programs reach children, and many expressed a desire to increase their parental outreach efforts.

In its first three cycles of funding, The Foundation devoted significant resources to parental education. Of the 35 sites that answered our organizational survey, 10 (28%) indicated that they provide parental education using Foundation dollars. Of the 19 sites we visited, five (26%) had used Foundation funds for a parental education component. Even if sites did not use Foundation dollars to conduct formal parental education classes, many of them conducted parental outreach and sought to engage parents with their organization as a way to provide more effective services to and build stronger relationships with youth program participants.

Grantees agreed that working with parents presented a significant challenge. They cited a number of barriers, including language, transportation and cultural norms that do not support sharing information about such private matters as parenting.

On the whole, those grantees that implemented formal parental education efforts described themselves as ultimately finding a successful strategy to reach parents. Their approaches may represent “best practices” for working with parents, from which their fellow grantees may gain useful information.

Cultural awareness is key to successfully engaging parents in both formal parental education and more casual involvement with programs that serve their children.

Cultural awareness was identified as crucial to parent engagement. Program staff agreed that intimate knowledge of the culture and customs of the group being served was essential. Programs tried a number of strategies for engaging parents, including providing interpreters, child care and incentives for participation, such as a small stipend or prizes. While it is impossible for us to know exactly which of these strategies proved the most effective, site staff reported that combinations of these strategies ultimately proved successful in engaging parents and drawing them into parent education programs. Grantees articulated the following successful strategies:

Provide a culturally appropriate “hook” to draw parents into parental education programs. Staff from one organization explained that parents from the Filipino community were very reluctant to interact with program staff, but eager to watch their children in dramatic performance. Based on this knowledge, the program added a youth drama component as a bridge to forming relationships with parents for whom they wished to provide parental education classes.

Center the parental education curriculum on an issue considered relevant to the parents they wished to involve. One organization serving Spanish-speaking parents reported that they were most successful when they offered simultaneous, but separate, groups for parents and their preteen children. When this same organization provided parental education to Southeast Asian parents, they reported that having a “peer” group leader proved especially helpful in engaging this group. Another program recruited parent participants almost exclusively from the school districts’ School Attendance Review Board (“SARB”) process, reaching out to parents whose children were having attendance problems and might therefore be open to accepting the assistance that parental education could provide.

Build on preexisting relationships with local communities. As a result either of excellent planning or very good luck, one program that provided after-school academic enrichment hired a neighborhood parent to act as a parent liaison. In so doing, the grantee formalized the role this woman was already playing as a resource for local parents, and was able to build on the networks of trust she had already established.

Successful parental education strategies may represent an opportunity for cross-site learning.

Engaging parents is a topic on which the best resources for program improvement may come from fellow grantees. The Foundation may be in a position to play a facilitating role in bringing together those grantees that are trying to reach similar populations to share information and successful approaches. While some of the issues faced by grantees (such as the status of the national and local economies) are structural and intractable,

engaging parents is an area where increased knowledge and shared information may make a difference.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH RESTRICTING SERVICES WITHIN THE AREA 2 AGE RANGE OF 9 to 13?

Funding for the 9- to-13-year-old age range is viewed as welcome and needed, but presents unique implementation concerns.

As Table 2.1 indicates, the primary use of Foundation dollars by programs was to serve youth in this age range, with 87 percent of the funding used to serve 9- to 13-year-olds. The remaining 13 percent of youth served with Foundation dollars fell outside the 9- to 13-year-old age range: 3 percent were under age 9, and 10 percent were ages 14 to 18. A majority of the youth (60%) served were ages 12 and 13, representing a greater focus on middle-school youth.

To further understand how serving this age range is filling the needs of the communities and presenting challenges, we questioned grantees about how they are operationalizing the Area 2 age range and what they think about it. Based on our interviews with staff, we found that programs were glad to find a foundation that was supporting programming for this underserved age range and felt it allowed them to serve an otherwise neglected population. Many of the grantees were using the funds to expand programs they were already offering to older youth, and welcomed the opportunity to serve this younger group. They felt that preteen youth are important to reach before negative behaviors are ingrained, when youth may be more amenable to preventive and youth development approaches.

Grantees identified some challenges in serving this age range as well. For many grantees, it was simply impossible not to serve youth outside the Area 2 target age range. For example, programs in school-based settings typically served youth according to **grade level**, irrespective of the students' age. Because the age range spans elementary and middle school, some programs served youth only in the age range that fit one school level. In addition, programs with a family based approach inevitably served siblings that fell outside the target age range.

Grantees have chosen to accommodate youth outside the target age range using several different strategies:

- If The Foundation is the sole source of funds for the program, and the program inevitably captures youth outside the age range, grantees typically serve these youth anyway, and choose not to report them as part of meeting the goals of The Foundation grant.
- If the program has financial support other than The Foundation funds, grantees typically serve youth outside the age range with funds from other sources that do not impose age restrictions.

- If the program has a comprehensive family based model of services and a family member outside the age range is identified as needing services, the program considers looking for another child within the family who falls into the target age range to justify serving the family.

Grantees are concerned about continuity and duration of services beyond The Foundation's planned years of support.

As discussed more fully in Appendix A, participation and how long youth are exposed to a program significantly affects whether the program ultimately makes a difference in their lives. Many grantees expressed concerns that they would not be able to provide services to program participants after they “aged out” of the preteen range. While The Foundation-funded programs may be able to raise funds on their own to provide continued services (one grantee did so between Rounds 1 and 2 of site visits), or have other services to which they can link clients, others may not. Moreover, raising additional funds to both sustain the preteen program (after The Foundation funding has terminated) and a new 14+ program may be additionally difficult in the current, contracting philanthropic environment. Several grantees, in keeping with the youth development perspective, felt that their services would be improved if they were able to provide continuous services to youth as they aged out of the 9- to 13-year-old range, without the burden of seeking additional funds. In other words, if grantees have a developmental perspective or a commitment to comprehensive services, they would prefer it if The Foundation allowed for a continuum of funding, that enabled grantees to “capture” youth while they were in the preteen age range and carry them forward, without having to seek additional sources of funding or stop serving youth when they “aged out.” Agencies also noted that it is difficult to see the long-range effects programs might have on a youth when the programs do not serve them beyond the age of 13.

Collaborative partners may be able to meet the needs of Area 2 program participants as they “age out” of The Foundation's Area 2 age range.

Although grantees feel they may best be able to serve the needs of Area 2 program participants as they “age out” of the age range, this might present them with unforeseen challenges if they are inexperienced in offering services to older youth. As the literature documents, it is very difficult to recruit program participants in the 15-year and older age range. The availability of programs for and willingness of youth to attend programs show a decline for youth aged 15 and older.³³ Even though programs feel that they can provide needed continuity for participants, they may not have success doing so. Instead, in those situations where grantees do not provide services to older youth themselves, they may need encouragement to collaborate with partners that do. Thus, in addition to requiring that grantees plan for financial sustainability, The Foundation may also be able to play a needed role in requiring grantees to plan for programmatic continuity for their program participants. This may offer the most cost effective way to provide longitudinal services to preteen program participants, especially for those types of interventions where

³³ See Sipe et al., 1998.

we know the most significant effects are achieved through longitudinal exposure, such as mentoring and after-school programs.

SUMMARY

This chapter utilized grantees' perspectives to uncover information useful to Foundation staff and grantees alike in implementing quality programs. As discussed previously, Area 2 grantees are a diverse group. The fact that the challenges outlined here emerged as common themes suggests that they may arise for future Foundation grantees as well. Moreover, given the near universal nature of these issues, they may represent opportunities for The Foundation as a funder to enhance programs through providing general awareness about common pitfalls, communicating lessons learned, and providing and promoting cross-site learning.

In the next chapter, we consider the common lessons learned from this study and offer some recommendations to support The Foundation and other grant-makers more generally in providing assistance to the organizations they fund.

V. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In an effort to address the gap in services to preadolescents in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, The Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health initiated its Area 2 program in December 2000. The overarching goal of the grantmaking strategy is to improve the behavioral and emotional health of youth, ages 9 to 13, in the two counties. The Foundation and others recognize preadolescence as a critical age of transition, when prevention and intervention approaches can be promising and have lasting effects. The approach The Foundation took was to award grants to a wide variety of programmatic approaches, with the commonalities being that they take a youth development approach to serving the target 9- to 13- year-old population in the two counties.

In many ways, the first three cycles of grants succeeded in achieving a number of The Foundation's goals. This evaluation, designed to assess the collective success of the grantees, found that they were reaching youth across the 9- to 13-year-old age range that reflected the demographics and needs of the two counties. Grantees were providing services important for healthy development. In particular, the grantees had strategies in place to provide positive relationships for youth, which research has shown is critical to their resilience. Approximately one-third of the grantees were rated as having a high-level quality profile in terms of meeting six or seven of the seven benchmarks of quality, and thus are likely to achieve many of the prevention goals of interest to The Foundation. The evaluation also revealed unevenness in terms of meeting specific benchmarks of quality and identified some systematic challenges to implementation faced by the grantees.

Based on findings from the evaluation, along with the knowledge P/PV has gained from working with this age group and conducting evaluations in the field, this final chapter identifies some important lessons for The Foundation, as well as for other funders interested in administering an effective intervention strategy for preadolescent youth.

Both considerable resources and longitudinal evaluation are necessary to determine the effects achieved by services for preteen youth; and proper timing of such costly evaluation is critical.

The youth development literature clearly shows that almost without exception, participation and how long youth are exposed to a program significantly affect whether the program ultimately makes a difference in their lives. Moreover, programs typically must be well established and participants must be followed for a long period of time (a year or more in many cases) in order to ascertain the impact of program participation on such outcomes as emotional well being, academic achievement and improved life chances. Consequently, efforts to show the effects of programs that serve youth must occur at a time when programs have been at work long enough, and program participants have had sufficient exposure to the programming, to expect improvements in outcomes.

While assessing the impacts of The Foundation's grantmaking strategy as a whole will not be possible unless all grantees have achieved a sufficient level of maturation, and

appropriate cross-site data collected, The Foundation is establishing the appropriate infrastructure with current data collection efforts. Moreover, as The Foundation continues to refine and focus its grantmaking strategy, it may discover a more narrow set of interventions—whose effects are of particular interest, such as after-school programs—and conduct more targeted analyses of grantees providing a specific type of intervention. While such evaluation efforts would still need to take place over the long term, this more targeted approach might provide a more cost effective way of learning about the outcomes achieved by a specific set of programs considered central to The Foundation’s mission.

In lieu of more costly longitudinal evaluation, P/PV’s review of past research has identified a set of common benchmarks related to program effectiveness that may be a useful tool for guiding Foundation funding strategies and assessing interim outcomes—with the caveat that certain benchmarks may warrant greater emphasis, depending on the specificity of Foundation goals.

Our review of research on program effectiveness—whether it concerns mentoring, after-school, in-school or other types of interventions—suggests that the presence of a common set of benchmarks can determine a program’s capacity to achieve desired, long-term outcomes for youth. However, within any particular grantmaking strategy, these benchmarks may best be used as guidelines rather than a checklist.

In the analysis conducted for this report, the benchmarks were all given equal weight in determining a grantee’s quality profile. When utilizing benchmarks as a guide for future grantmaking, however, funders may take a different approach. When facing the difficult challenge of choosing between two very different potential grantees, foundations may need to rank one benchmark indicator higher than another. Moreover, funders may need to make choices based not only on the knowledge base of past evaluations but also on information they gain directly from their experience in the field. For example, in a diverse area such as Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, cultural competency assumes an importance not yet reflected in the youth development literature—and as such, warrants additional emphasis when choosing and working with grantees to achieve Foundation goals.

The quality indicators identified in this report can serve as a starting point for grant-makers seeking to understand the impact of their funding in the absence of long-term, outcomes-oriented data. Funders can arm themselves with information about exemplary programs that show best practice indicators and interim outcomes benchmarks. Then, grantees can be provided with the support and technical assistance necessary to allow them to collect data on these meaningful indicators, and programs can be monitored for the presence of these practices and interim outcomes, knowing they produce effects.

The Foundation has already begun this process with grantees. The Foundation is unique in that it allows Foundation funds to be used for evaluation efforts as well as direct services, and program staff provides technical assistance surrounding data collection. Contract goals are program specific and typically reflect the most recent research

regarding best practices in that particular field. The indicators outlined in this report may serve to further clarify those elements of program design most likely, when implemented correctly, to achieve positive outcomes for youth participants.

To promote resiliency, continuing to emphasize opportunities for developing positive relationships is critical. Grantees worked to provide supportive relationships for youth while facing the common challenge of retaining skilled and qualified staff.

One of the most consistent and clear findings in the research on resilience among youth is that supportive adult relationships are key to positive outcomes for youth. Reflecting the emphasis that The Foundation has put on this key indicator in its award process, nearly all (91%) of the Area 2 grantees reported strategies for providing program participants with supportive adult relationships. However, grantees also revealed that the most common strategy for providing positive relationships for youth is through the relationships that develop between staff and youth. When staff turnover is high, as it was among grantees (and as it is in the youth service field in general), this can present a significant obstacle to achieving this program goal.

Barring what might be an obvious solution of paying higher salaries to retain staff, grantees experiences, and work in the social services field more generally, suggest testing some possible innovations to promote staff retention. For example, in a situation characteristic of the nonprofit social services field in general, grantees reported that their direct service staff most typically left their agencies to seek advanced degrees or work with local governmental social service agencies, which paid higher salaries. The Foundation may be able to assist grantees in their efforts at staff retention by either directly sponsoring training opportunities for program staff, or providing technical assistance to grantees in how to finance further professional development for staff members while they remain in their employment.³⁴ Additionally, The Foundation might be in a position to provide leadership in a regional discussion among other grantmaking institutions around strategies for providing the kind of educational and health benefits and promoting the kind of management strategies and positive workplace culture that might support staff retention among nonprofit organizations in the area.

Funders can promote cross-site learning that will help grantees to navigate common challenges and implement programming more smoothly.

Service providers face certain issues that transcend type of programming, population served, location and organizational structure. Area 2 grantees faced such common implementation issues as reaching parents, retaining skilled staff, and recruiting and retaining program participants. Area 2 grantees as a group demonstrated creative and innovative strategies for handling these common challenges, allowing them to succeed in providing quality services to a broad range of participants.

³⁴ Possibilities might include encouraging (and providing financial support for) grantees to use employees' pre-tax earnings to pay for academic courses at local higher education institutions or encouraging grantees to pay staff members' hourly wages while they attend classes contributing to advanced degrees.

Information about how to successfully surmount the barriers to program implementation may best come from fellow service providers confronting similar issues. Area 2 grantees certainly have a wealth of information they could share with their fellow grantees. At the time of our site visits, we asked Area 2 grantees if they would welcome direct involvement, either by fellow grantees or Foundation staff, in dealing with particularly challenging implementation issues. Site staff were enthusiastic about the prospect of receiving support from both these sources, provided the content was relevant and practically oriented, and participation did not require a lengthy time commitment.

This assistance might come in the form of cross-site conferences to discuss common issues or matching pairs of grantees that are working toward common program goals but exhibiting different levels of implementation experience. Alternatively, Foundation staff themselves may be able to distill best practices across sites and provide direct technical assistance to sites facing particular implementation issues. Topics grantees identified as being of particular interest include staff retention, parental outreach and education, and program sustainability.

If a goal of the grantmaking strategy is to prevent high-risk behaviors, an approach that targets specific subgroups of youth is likely to have the greatest impact.

To the extent that limited funds are available, taking a broad-based approach is less likely to reach the youth who most need the help social programs can offer. Previous evaluation findings support targeting specific youth. Research has generally found that it is only the highest-risk subgroups that show much impact or benefit from social programs (see Miller, 2003; U. S. Department of Education, 2003; DuBois et al., 2002; Grossman and Johnson, 1999). Higher-risk groups are the most likely to benefit for two reasons—they most need the support provided by quality youth programs, and they may be deterred from and are unlikely to find those supports elsewhere in the community.

Although it was not a stated practice in administering grants in the first three cycles, grantees already tended to serve an economically at-risk group of youth, and a number of grantees aimed at specific target populations. To the extent that this is the case, the impacts of The Foundation's dollars are likely to be greater.

A balanced strategy of school-based and community-based programming makes sense for reaching preteens.

When funding services to meet the needs of a diverse preteen population, an even distribution between school-based and community-based programming seems to work well. Location does not appear to provide an essential determinant of program quality, and we know that school-based and community-based programming tend to reach different groups of participants, thus, they complement each other well.

In its first three funding cycles, The Foundation's Area 2 program sites were evenly distributed between community-based and school-based locations, and those indicators of

program quality that appeared significant were well distributed between programs of both location types. This strategy allowed The Foundation to reach youth in the full distribution of the 9 to 13 target age range that were demographically representative of, although more economically needy than, the general preteen population of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Additionally, even distribution between community-based and school-based sites has the added benefits of allowing grantees to capitalize on preexisting resources in the school sites, while facilitating year-round programming in community locations.

APPENDIX A: SELECTION AND IDENTIFICATION OF QUALITY BENCHMARKS

SELECTION OF BENCHMARKS

In order to identify a set of benchmarks against which to examine the grantees, we reviewed the literature on effective programs for preteens. A set of seven common factors associated with program effectiveness emerged from the literature. The seven factors are described here, along with their rationale.

Exposure (duration and intensity). Frequency of participation and how long youth are exposed to a program significantly affects whether it ultimately makes a difference in their lives. Sustained participation is the most consistently identified marker of program effectiveness in all the studies and literature reviews we examined. As Miller (2003) notes, “students must not only enroll in after-school programs but attend for months and often years in order for the program to show a lasting effect.” Youth who attend after-school programs for a short amount of time are unlikely to gain the full benefits of the program (Kane, 2004; Walker and Arbreton, 2004; Lauer et al., 2003; Miller, 2003; Hangle and McClanahan 2002; Arbreton and McClanahan, 2002). An evaluation of the San Francisco Beacons Initiative indicated that participation over two to three sessions (roughly one year or more) is a critical amount of exposure for middle school youth. A review of effective prevention programs for teens also found that “substantial duration and intensity are necessary” for effectiveness (Eisen et al., 2000). Studies on mentoring have found that relationships need time to develop through meetings over extended periods of time (a year or more) before they have a lasting impact on the lives of youth (Grossman and Rhodes, 2002). And, in fact, relationships that end prematurely can have a deleterious effect on youth (Grossman and Johnson, 1999). It is important to note here that well-implemented, short-term interventions have been found to effect short-term gains. For example, an evaluation of a six-week summer career exploration program (McClanahan and Sipe, forthcoming) found that youth were more likely to get jobs for the summer than a comparison group; however, outcomes assessed a year later showed no differences. Similarly, an evaluation of the Summer Training and Education Program (STEP) found significant differences in the short-term (at the end of the summer program), but not at a follow-up period a year later (Walker and Vilella-Velez, 1992).

Supportive Relationships. An accumulating body of research reported in a recent book, *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* (National Research Council, 2002), indicates that a set of effective program features can provide core experiences important for healthy adolescence:

- Physical and psychological safety,
- Appropriate structure,
- Supportive relationships,
- Opportunities to belong,
- Positive social norms,
- Youth input and leadership,

- Opportunities for skill building, and
- Integration of family, school and community efforts.

In particular, there is strong support for the role supportive relationships can play in the lives of youth (see Miller, 2003 and DuBois et al., 2002, for reviews; Tierney and Grossman, 1995). Walker and Arbreton (2004) found that identifying adult support was the most significant predictor of continued participation for middle school youth in the Beacons after-school program over time. Adult relationships were found to help with resilience and youth development outcomes in young adulthood (Gambone et al., 2002). In a review of studies on after-school care, Beckett et al. (2001) found strong evidence in the studies they reviewed that a positive emotional climate is a factor that contributes to a program's ability to affect youth outcomes—including fostering a warm relationship between staff and students, and between staff and parents. Joy Dryfoos' research (1998) suggests that what young people need on a daily basis are “safe places, challenging experiences, and caring people.”

Variety of Services. Beckett et al. (2001) reviewed major studies and reports on after-school care and found that “providing a sufficient variety of activities” is one of the three strongest predictors of later outcomes (compared with 17 others that show moderate or limited support). Joy Dryfoos (1998), in her book, *Safe Passage: Making it Through Adolescence in a Risky Society*, also describes diverse services as a common factor in programs that attract and affect young people. In an evaluation of the San Francisco Beacons Initiative, Walker and Arbreton (2004) found that the variety of activities offered by the after-school component of the initiative attract participants and is related to participant retention. Other studies of youth development agencies have found that youth benefit most from participation when they engage in a variety of activities (Herrera and Arbreton, 2003; Walker and Arbreton, 2004; Gambone and Arbreton, 1997). Other program models that incorporate multiple service components, such as the Carerra Teen Pregnancy intervention approach, have also been shown to positively affect youth outcomes when implemented fully (Philliber et al., 2001). A review of 21 promising prevention programs and approaches also identified a “multi-component” strategy as common across effective programs (Eisen et al., 2000). It is important to note here that program variety and multi-component strategies are important for recruiting, engaging and retaining youth, but studies have also found that it is critical that the components be well implemented (Walker and Arbreton, 2004; Eisen et al., 2000; Hangle and McClanahan, 2002).

Staff Training. Staff training has been linked to the quality of program implementation and the likelihood that a program can achieve its desired outcomes (see U.S. Department of Education, 2003; Miller, 2003). Beckett et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis of program components related to outcomes identified staff training as a factor in the studies they reviewed. In P/PV's and others' work on mentoring, staff training has been found to be a contributing factor to strong program infrastructure, which in turn is related to positive outcomes for youth (Herrera, forthcoming). Walker and Arbreton (2004), in their evaluation of the San Francisco Beacons Initiative, found evidence that the site with the greatest proportion of youth who derived developmental benefits from programming had

staff with training in the content area of interpersonal relationships, and an executive director and staff with youth development background and training.

Staff Retention. Program operators struggle with staff turnover at every level in the youth development field. Staff turnover has been identified as problematic in studies of mentoring, after-school programs and youth development agencies (see Herrera and Arbretton, 2003; Grossman et al., 2002; Arbretton and McClanahan, 2002; Gambone and Arbretton, 1997). The problems associated with staff turnover include maintaining continuity and coherence of program goals (Walker and Arbretton, 2001) and building and sustaining relationships with teens and collaborating agencies (Arbretton and McClanahan, 2002). Staff turnover can be particularly problematic for programs that strive to establish a mentor-type relationship between staff and youth. If the staff is filling this role, staff retention is critical. Relationships need time to develop and last in order to have an effect on youth and can often be detrimental if the relationship ends prematurely (for references, see discussion of duration, above).

Evaluation and Assessment. Evaluations that look at the quality of program implementation often find that outcomes are poorer in programs that do not have any way of internally assessing their progress or noting whether they are reaching implementation benchmarks (Fashola, 1998). Programs can use evaluation and assessment to strengthen their program services and delivery (Public/Private Ventures, 2000). Not all programs need to undergo extensive rigorous evaluations with experimental designs to determine their outcomes; however, ongoing assessment of benchmarks and program goals achieved enable programs and others to assess the likelihood that the program has a chance of having effects on youth. Evaluation and assessment, along with program improvement, are markers of quality implementation.

Cultural Competence of Staff. Although no benchmarks have been established for cultural competency, this is an area that has received increasing attention, particularly in states like California, where the “new immigrant” population is becoming the majority demographic group. Unfortunately, there has been very little empirical work or reviews that have examined the issue of cultural competence, so it is difficult to know how important this piece is to youth outcomes. Nevertheless, it is very likely an important component for attracting, retaining and communicating with participants and their families. Dryfoos (1998), for example, discusses accessibility, flexibility and responsiveness—all of which may be components of cultural competence in terms of understanding and working with cultural differences, responding to differences in language needs and being accessible by having staff who are culturally competent and available. Also of importance is meeting the language needs of a service population in which many youth and parents are English language learners. Thus, although we do not have strong empirical support for this dimension, it is of growing interest and importance, and we have included it in our assessment.

IDENTIFICATION OF QUALITY INDICATORS

Table A.1 describes the questions we used in the organizational survey to assess the extent to which the grantee had met each of the seven identified benchmarks. As the table describes, many of these benchmarks of quality were based on answers to multiple questions in the survey. Because of the variety of programmatic approaches taken by the grantees, we were somewhat lenient in our understanding of whether the grantee had met that benchmark in order not to penalize any specific type of program.

Table A.1 Defining and Categorizing the Seven Benchmarks of Quality

| Variable Name | Definition of Variable | Variable Categories | What do the categories represent? |
|--|---|---------------------|--|
| Exposure | Signifies the amount of time a program participant typically spends involved with the program. | Yes No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term programs are those offering programming that lasts less than 7 months. Medium-term programming lasts about one school year, which is 7 to 12 months. Long-term programs are those that offer services that last a year or more. |
| Results: We found that overall, 13 grantees (37%) provided short-term programming, 14 (40%) grantees provided medium-term programming, and 8 (23%) grantees provided long-term programming. Those grantees identified as medium- or long-term (63%) were considered to have met the benchmark. | | | |
| Variety | Identifies whether or not the variety of programs offered responds to the diverse needs of the preadolescent population. | Yes No | Grantees that offer variety are those that identified four or more types/categories of service (out of 10 possible). See Table A.2 for a list of types/categories. |
| Results: A little more than half (18 or 51%) of the grantees met the quality benchmark using these criteria. | | | |
| Staff Training | Staff training that supports the goals and efforts of the programming objectives related to youth development principles. | Yes No | Sites with appropriate training are those that provide two or more opportunities for staff to develop skills related to youth development, conflict or behavior management, program planning, teaching or curricula development, and team-building. |
| Results: A large majority (30 or 86%) of grantees provide training opportunities and successfully satisfied this benchmark of quality. | | | |

| Variable Name | Definition of Variable | Variable Categories | What do the categories represent? |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| Supportive Relationships | Identifies or recognizes its role in providing informal or formal opportunities for youth to establish a caring and nurturing relationship with a responsible adult. | Yes No | Sites that have identified peer or adult mentoring components or describe the opportunities a youth may experience with supportive adults because of their participation. |
| Results: A large majority (32 or 91%) of grantees provide opportunities for supportive relationships. | | | |
| Evaluation and Assessment | Assesses sites' data collection commitment and use of data it collects. | Yes No | Evaluation and assessment activities are considered satisfactory if they respond positively to three questions regarding their evaluation, tracking and assessment efforts. |
| Results: 24 (69%) of the grantees satisfied the criteria for appropriate data evaluation and assessment efforts. | | | |
| Cultural Competence | Determines if the language needs of participants are being satisfied, and whether or not staffing diversity is evident. | Yes No | Grantees reflect language competence if program staff have language skills that match program participants' language needs, and if grantees have at least 33% or more staff identified as a race or ethnicity other than white. |
| Results: 25 (71%) of the grantees satisfied the criteria for linguistic or cultural competence. | | | |
| Staff Retention | Signifies the ability of sites to maintain a consistent and stable group of staff. | Yes No | Sites were considered able to retain staff if they identified 50% or more of staff as working with the organization for more than one year or did not identify staff turnover as a challenge during implementation of programming. |
| Results: 20 (57%) sites satisfied the criteria for staff retention. | | | |

Table A.2. Proportion of Grantees Providing Different Categories of Services

| Service Category | Number of Grantees | Proportion of Grantees |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Parent Education | 10 | 29% |
| Academics | 20 | 57% |
| Cultural/Enrichment | 13 | 37% |
| Health Promotion/Prevention Classes | 23 | 66% |
| Mentoring | 23 | 66% |
| Counseling/Mental Health | 24 | 69% |
| Sports/Recreation | 11 | 31% |
| Career Preparation | 7 | 20% |
| Leadership/Community Service | 23 | 66% |
| Free Time/Hang Out | 6 | 17% |

Note: Proportions are based on information from 35 organizational surveys.

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

This evaluation combines multiple quantitative and qualitative data, collected from currently funded grantees, and used to provide The Foundation with important feedback about its grantmaking strategy in Area 2. This evaluation focuses exclusively on information taken from those Foundation-funded sites providing direct services to the preteen populations of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties and their families. The evaluation was designed to give grantees the opportunity to provide The Foundation with important information about their experience of the grantmaking process, which will lead to process improvements. The findings presented in this report are based on 35 completed organizational surveys (from non-technical assistance or research-funded sites) and site visits to 19 grantees. Each of the methods of data collection is described below.

Organizational survey. The purpose of the survey was to gain an understanding of The Foundation-funded program itself, as well as how it fits into the larger organization or programming delivered by the funded organization. P/PV developed the survey with feedback from Foundation staff. The survey was distributed in June 2002 to 38 organizations providing direct service/programming. Our survey results are based on 35 returned surveys, which reflects a response rate of 92 percent.

Site Visits. The site visits, which gather more detailed site information and how Foundation dollars are being used, allow P/PV researchers to see a program in action, view the environment, meet with staff and see how things actually work. The information from the sample of sites visited is intended to further inform the data we gathered through the organizational survey and vice versa.

In selecting sites to visit, we categorized sites according to a number of criteria, including the cycle in which grants were awarded, number of years of recommended funding, county where services are delivered and types of service provided (based on a review of proposals), as detailed in Table B.1. We selected a cross-section of site types in order to get the most representative group of grantees possible, so the lessons we learned from them would be broadly applicable to the larger group of grantees included in the study.

Table B.1: Categories of Site-Visit Criteria and Number of Sites in Each Category

| Funding Cycle | No. | County | | Number of Yrs. Recommended | | Type of Activities* | |
|---------------|-----|-------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| | | Location | No. | Funding | No. | | No. |
| 2000 CYCLE I | 4 | San Mateo | 6 | One Year | 4 | Mentoring | 3 |
| 2001 CYCLE I | 6 | Santa Clara | 10 | Two Years | 10 | Conflict Resolution | 1 |
| 2001 CYCLE II | 9 | Both | 3 | Three Years | 5 | Health Education | 1 |
| | | | | | | Case Management/Counseling | 5 |
| | | | | | | Leadership | |
| | | | | | | Skills/Activities | 2 |
| | | | | | | Parent Education | 2 |
| | | | | | | Service Learning | 1 |
| | | | | | | Rec. Activities | 2 |
| | | | | | | Tutoring | 2 |

* Here it is important to note that the types of activity listed in this table were determined by P/PV staff through a review of the proposals submitted to The Foundation. Since many sites offered multiple components, we felt it necessary to develop our own classification scheme in order to select a balanced distribution of activities across sites. In reality, most sites we visited offered more than one of these activities. Finally, this schema was used only for site visit selection. All of our analyses of activities are based either on information collected directly from the sites through site visits or through sites' responses to our organizational survey.

As the table above shows, the majority of sites visited received their grants in the second and third funding cycles.³⁵

During site visits, we interviewed staff at a variety of levels: executive and management, direct service, and evaluation and development. We also spoke with a broad selection of community collaborators (e.g., representatives from other organizations, school site personnel) whenever possible. We interviewed multiple respondents in an effort to gather a complete picture of the organizations and understand where The Foundation-funded program fit into their larger organizational structure and mission, as well as to learn details of the program's implementation. Whenever possible and appropriate (in 12 of the 19 sites we visited) we observed activities and interviewed program participants, including youth and parents.³⁶ We promised all interviewees confidentiality and, as a result, do not name any programs or individuals.

³⁵ We included only four (out of 19) sites from the first cycle of funding, because only those sites that received three-year grants were guaranteed to be current grantees during both rounds of site visits.

³⁶ It is important to note that we felt it was inappropriate to observe certain types of activities funded by The Foundation under Area 2, such as mentoring (because of the one-to-one nature of activities) or situations where rules of privacy would dictate that the identity of participants be kept confidential (such as individuals in the foster care system).

Our first round of site visits was conducted in Summer 2002. During this round, we visited 14 sites (out of 40 possible sites)³⁷ distributed across the first three cycles of funding. The second round was conducted during Summer 2003, when we expanded our sample to include a total of 19 (out of 40 possible) sites and, with two exceptions, revisited all the sites included in Round 1.³⁸ In the second round of site visits, we gathered follow-up data on three sites visited during Round 1 by phone (instead of using an in-person site visit) and saw five previously unvisited sites.

Technical Assistance and Evaluation Grantees. These grantees are not included in this analysis. Preliminary data exploration with the technical assistance or evaluation-only grantees led us to the determination—given the fact that they were small in number, at very different stages of project development, and had dissimilar project goals—that it would be difficult to draw any conclusions about the quality of their initiatives.

³⁷ While The Foundation made grants to 44 organizations during its first three funding cycles, four of those grants were made to organizations to provide either technical assistance or evaluation services. We did not consider those four grantees for site visits.

³⁸ We attempted to contact two sites from Round 1 but did not succeed. As a result, information from these sites is not included in the Round 2 analysis.

APPENDIX C: FURTHER ANALYSES OF DATA FROM CHAPTER III

In Chapter III, we discussed whether funding cycle, county location and location of services were related to grantee quality profile. Tables on these factors are presented below. (Note: The percentages reported in Tables C.1 through C.3 are calculated to add up to 100 percent in the columns; therefore, for example, Table C.1. shows the proportion of grantees in each cycle that fell into the low-, medium- and high-quality profile.)

Table C.1. Grant Funding Cycle by Quality

| Level of Quality | 2000 CYCLE I | % | 2001 CYCLE I | % | 2001 CYCLE II | % |
|------------------|--------------|----|--------------|----|---------------|----|
| Low | 1 | 6 | 1 | 11 | 1 | 10 |
| Medium | 11 | 69 | 7 | 78 | 3 | 30 |
| High | 4 | 25 | 1 | 11 | 6 | 60 |
| TOTAL | 16 | | 9 | | 10 | |

Table C.2. County Location of Program by Quality Profile

| Level of Quality | San Mateo | % | Santa Clara | % | Both Counties | % |
|------------------|-----------|----|-------------|----|---------------|----|
| Low | 1 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 33 |
| Medium | 7 | 58 | 12 | 71 | 2 | 33 |
| High | 4 | 33 | 5 | 29 | 2 | 33 |
| TOTAL | 11 | | 17 | | 6 | |

Table C.3. Location/Environment of Program by Quality Profile

| Level of Quality | Community-based | % | School-based | % | Both | % |
|------------------|-----------------|----|--------------|----|------|----|
| Low | 1 | 8 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 13 |
| Medium | 7 | 54 | 8 | 62 | 5 | 63 |
| High | 5 | 38 | 4 | 31 | 2 | 25 |
| TOTAL | 13 | | 13 | | 8 | |

Note: Missing one (N=34)

Tables C.4. through C.12 explore further the differences between school-based and community-based grantees on the benchmarks of quality, as well as on other programmatic factors explored in Chapter III.

We examined each quality benchmark by grantee location. Results are reported in Tables C.5 through C.11. (Of note, the percentages add up to 100 percent across the row.) In general, Tables C.5 through C.7 show that a greater percentage of community-based

grantees met the benchmarks of exposure, variety and staff training. Table C.8 shows that a greater percentage of school-based grantees met the benchmark of staff retention. Finally, Tables C.9 through C.11 show that a similar proportion of grantees in each location met the benchmarks of supportive relationships, cultural competence and evaluation and assessment.

Table C.4. Exposure Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|----|----|----|
| School-based | 8 | 61 | 5 | 39 |
| Community-based | 10 | 77 | 3 | 23 |
| Both Locations | 4 | 50 | 4 | 50 |

Table C.5. Variety of Services Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|----|----|----|
| School-based | 7 | 54 | 6 | 46 |
| Community-based | 8 | 62 | 5 | 38 |
| Both Locations | 3 | 38 | 5 | 62 |

Table C.6. Staff Training Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|-----|----|----|
| School-based | 9 | 69 | 4 | 31 |
| Community-based | 12 | 92 | 1 | 8 |
| Both Locations | 8 | 100 | 0 | 0 |

Table C.7. Staff Retention Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|----|----|----|
| School-based | 10 | 78 | 3 | 22 |
| Community-based | 7 | 54 | 6 | 46 |
| Both Locations | 3 | 38 | 5 | 62 |

Table C.8. Supportive Relationships Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|-----|----|----|
| School-based | 12 | 92 | 1 | 8 |
| Community-based | 13 | 100 | 0 | 0 |
| Both Locations | 6 | 75 | 2 | 25 |

Table C.9. Evaluation and Assessment Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|----|----|----|
| School-based | 9 | 69 | 4 | 31 |
| Community-based | 9 | 69 | 4 | 31 |
| Both Locations | 5 | 63 | 3 | 27 |

Table C.10. Cultural Competence Benchmark by Program Location

| Program Location | YES | % | NO | % |
|------------------|-----|----|----|----|
| School-based | 8 | 62 | 5 | 38 |
| Community-based | 9 | 69 | 4 | 31 |
| Both Locations | 7 | 88 | 1 | 12 |

Contrary to what might be expected, Table C.11 shows that similar proportions of school-based and community-based grantees offer an academic component. About half of the grantees in each location reported providing an academic component, reflecting grantees' widespread commitment to academic support for program participants.

Table C.11. Academic Content by Program Location

| Program Location | Academic Component | % | No Academic Component | % |
|------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------|----|
| School-based | 7 | 54 | 6 | 46 |
| Community-based | 7 | 54 | 6 | 46 |
| Both Locations | 6 | 75 | 2 | 25 |
| TOTAL | 20 | | 14 | |

Finally, Table C.12 shows that community-based grantees tended to work with more collaborative partners, on average, than did school-based grantees.

Table C.12. Average Number of Collaborations Noted by Location/Environment

| Program Location | Average Number Noted |
|------------------|----------------------|
| School-based | 4.5 |
| Community-based | 5.7 |
| Both Locations | 4.8 |

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