

Community Support for Youth and Families

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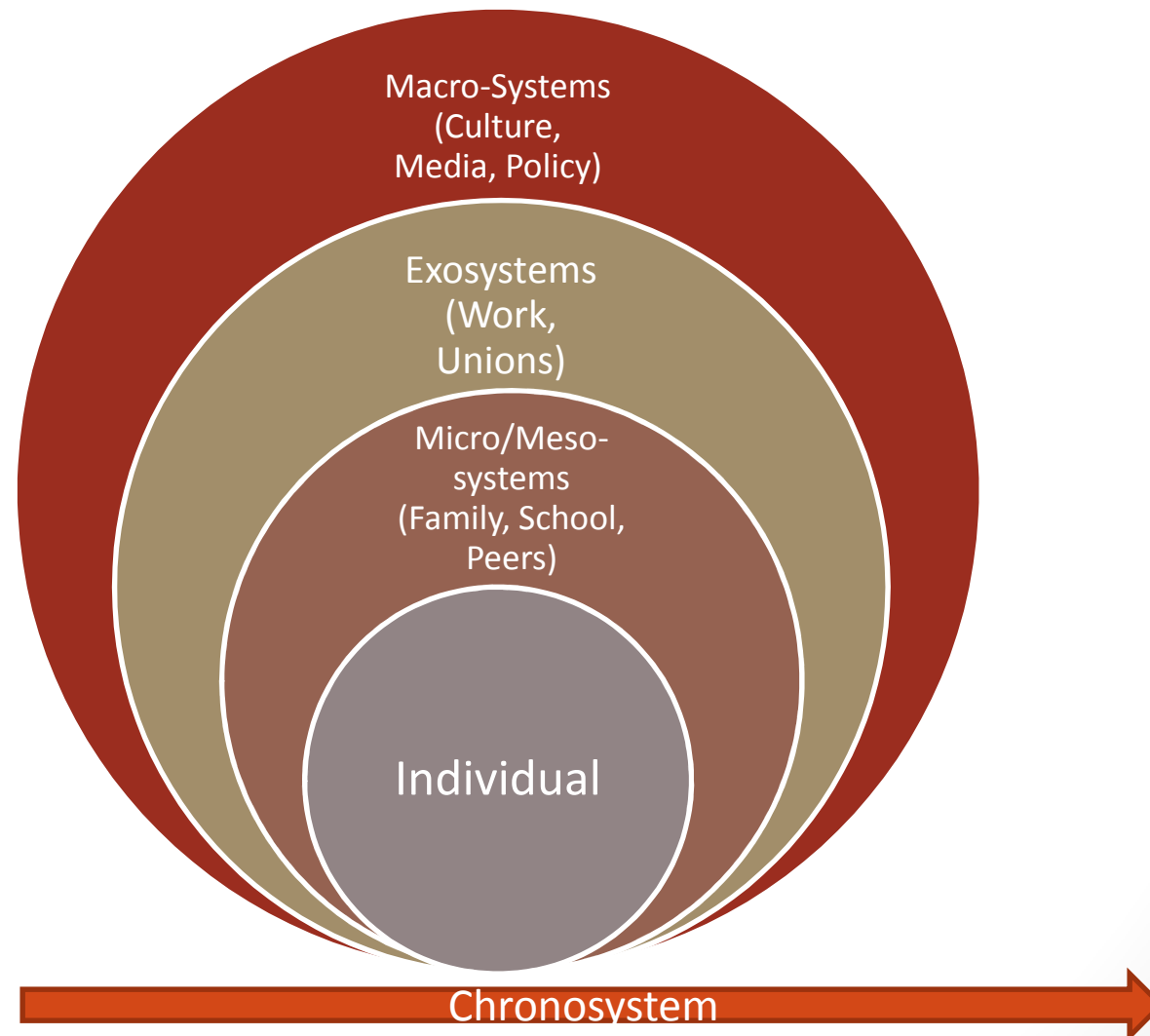
Probably no one thing has so tended to decrease delinquency as this public movement to furnish constructive recreational and social opportunities to boys and girls who would otherwise be denied these privileges.” (Louise deKoven Bowen, 1920)

Rationale and Significance

- Juvenile delinquency is an important problem
- Juvenile offenders comprise 25% of the U.S. population. They commit:
 - 51% of arson, 39% of vandalism,
 - 29% of motor vehicle theft and burglary,
 - 12% of drug abuse violation, and 9% of murder arrests.
- 1 in 3 African American men between the ages of 16-24 were arrested in 2004 (Smith, Richardson, & Belue, 2009; Guerra & Smith, 2006)
- 66% of juvenile crime occurs between the hours of 3-6pm (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006)

Ecological Approach

(Bronfenbrenner, 1980)



Eco-developmental Model

- Foundation of Ecological Model
 - Families
 - Peers
 - Neighborhood/Community
- Changes across Lifespan
- Examining the meso-system interactions (family-peer, community-family, etc.)



Theoretical Foundations

- Routine opportunity theory (Osgood, Anderson & Schaeffer, 2005)
- Social connectedness (Hirschi, 1969)
- Family Cohesion, Communication, and Effective Management (Dishion et al., 1991;)
 - Attachment theory
 - Incorporates aspects of Social Learning models
 - Positive reinforcement and attention
 - Modeling
- Peer Affiliation
 - Family and peer affiliation (Dodge, Dishion, and Lansford, 2006; Smith, Dumas, & Prinz, 2006)
- Neighborhood Effects
 - Neighborhood disadvantage and assets (Furstenberg, 1993; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; McKnight & Kretzmann, 1993)

Conceptualizing Community

- Distinguishing neighborhood and community
 - Neighborhood – residence
 - Community – affiliation
- Neighborhood disadvantage
- Neighborhood assets
- Neighborhood as (Burton & Jarrett, 2000; Burton, Price-Spratlen, & Spencer, 1997) :
 - Site – location, socio-economic status, family structure
 - Networks – resources, connections
 - Perceptions – thoughts and beliefs
 - Culture – norms and practices

Role of Community for Families

- Longitudinal study of single-parents in Philadelphia
 - Examines ways in which families manage to promote positive behavior even in risky circumstances (Furstenberg, 1993)
- Socially-mobile low income families
 - Management within the home
 - Management outside the home , e.g. activities, meaningful adults and peers (Jarrett, 1995)
- Collective efficacy (connectedness and willingness to intervene) among families
 - In longitudinal design, collective efficacy preceded authoritative parenting which was found to decrease the expected rate of delinquency (Simon, Simons, Brody and colleagues , 2005)

Role of Community for Youth

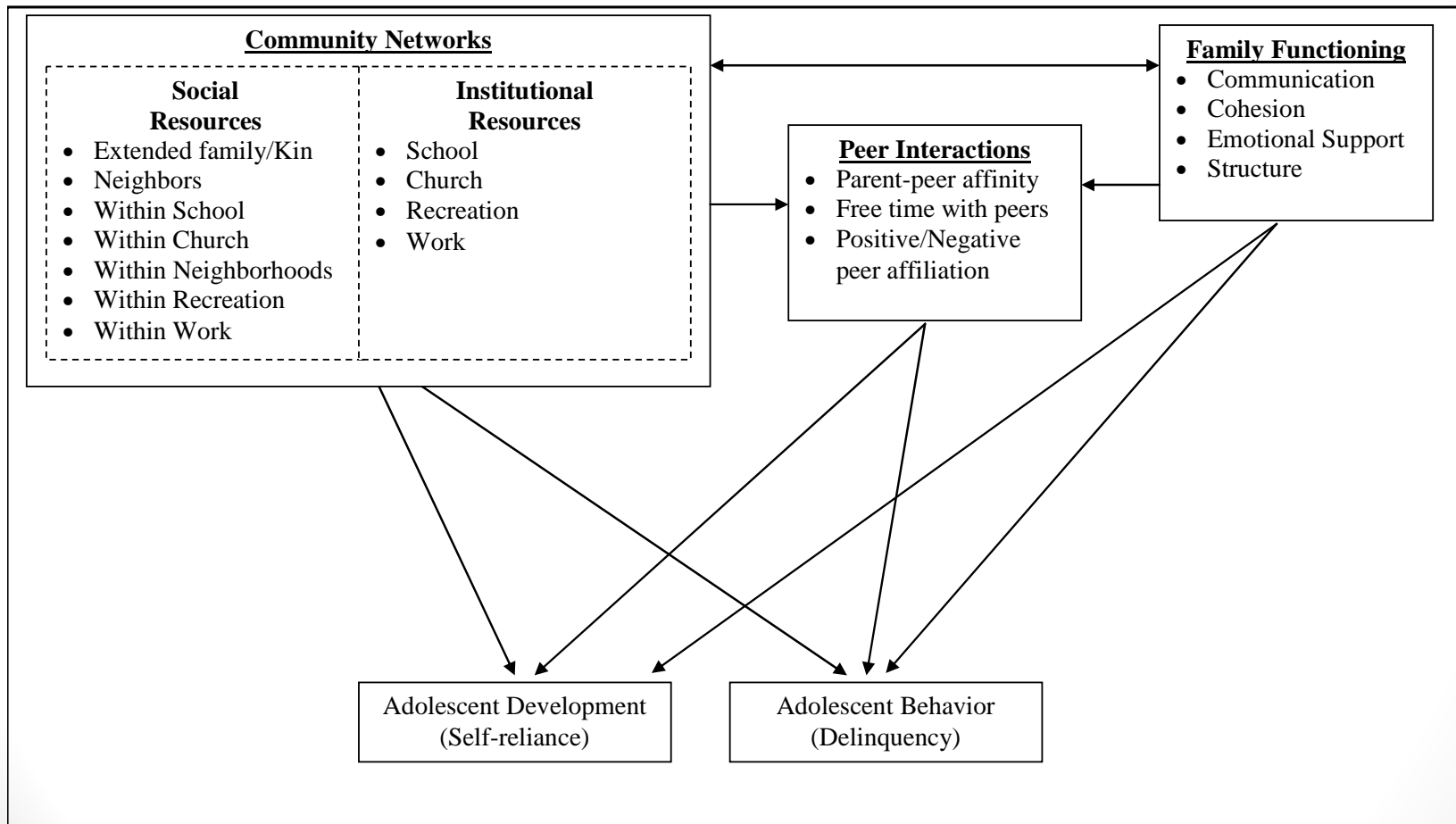
- Collective efficacy of adults (connectedness and willingness to intervene) in poor, urban Chicago neighborhoods related to less delinquency (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, 1997)
- Evaluation of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of USA found that supportive adult in life of youth could decrease delinquency and drop-out (Grossman & Tierney, 1998)
- Supportive adults working in community increases positive sense of identity and academic achievement (Smith, Atkins, & Connell, 2003)

However, we know less about how youth perceive their community and how that relates to family functioning and their behavior

Rationale

- Study interactions of meso-system
 - Ways in which the effects of family, peers, and community interact
- Community networks vs neighborhood disadvantage
- Delinquency AND Positive Youth Development
- Youth experience of community (neighborhood as perceptions and networks)

Figure 1
Theoretical Model



Methodology

- Context of Ecological Intervention Approach (parenting and advocacy)
- Previous work on effects (Smith et al., 2004)
 - Increase in family communication, family management, less labeling
- 100 First-Time Juvenile Offenders
- Youth and Family Consenting Process
- Focus on assessing community networks – Ecomap

Measures

- Problematic Family Functioning
- Peer Affiliation
 - Time spent with Peers
 - Parent-peer affinity
 - Delinquent Peers
 - Positive Peers
- PYD
 - Caring, sharing, flexibility, decision-making
- Delinquency
 - Self-report
 - Official

Table 1
Descriptive Information for all Measures

Measure	Response Category	# of Items	Mean	SD	Range	Reliability*	Sample/
FAM III	1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree)	50	54.69	8.91	39.14 - 80.86	.76	“My family tries to run my life.”
Negative Peer Affiliation	0 (none) to 4 (all)	8	7.77	5.42	3-30	.81	“How many of your friends do things that get them in trouble with the law?”
Free Time with Peers	0 (never) to 4 (almost always)	5	14.49	4.57	0-20	.84	“Do you spend a lot of your free time with your peers?”
Parent-friend Affinity	0 (none) to 4 (all)	5	10.54	3.58	3-16	.83	“How many of your friends know your parents?”
Positive Peer Affiliation	0 (none) to 4 (all)	4	8.28	3.47	0-15	.65	“How many of your friends are in clubs and other organizations such as scouts?”
Self-Report Delinquency Scale (SRD)	0 (never) to 5 (once a day)	48	18.02	17.90	1-94	.86	“Purposely damaged or destroyed property belonging to a school.”
Positive Youth Development (PYD)/Self-reliance (BASC)	True or False	7	5.84	1.4	1-7	.55	“I am good at making decisions.”

EcoMap - Community Networks

Table 2
Exploratory Factor Analyses of Peer Processes

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Factor 1: Negative Peer Affiliation				
8. Friends get all good grades (Reverse)	.407	.216	.231	.263
12. Friends get in trouble with the law	.685	-.071	-.165	-.009
13. Friends used weapon	.555	.053	-.104	-.152
16. Friend in trouble for alcohol/drugs	.595	-.003	-.248	-.246
17. Friends quit/want to quit school	.564	.064	.053	-.282
22. Friends stopped by police	.849	.021	-.105	-.126
23. Friends get in trouble at school	.523	-.057	.168	-.070
Factor 2: Time with Peers				
1. Peer activities: spend time hanging out	-.024	.788	.099	.081
2. Spend free time with friends	-.031	.742	.177	.125
3. Spend time with friends after school or work	.080	.729	.088	.316
4. Do best friends spend time together hanging out	.049	.578	.195	-.048
5. Spend time at friends' houses	-.082	.724	.212	-.156
Factor 3: Parent-peer Affinity				
7. Friends know parents	-.002	.300	.680	-.065
9. Parents like friends	-.239	.164	.658	.121
15. Friends like your parents	-.062	.110	.720	.123
20. Parents know friends	.044	.317	.766	.024
Factor 4: Positive Peer Affiliation				
10. Friends like school	-.269	-.038	.302	.453
14. Friends want to go to college	-.185	.088	.091	.567
18. Friends are in clubs/organizations	-.093	.034	-.060	.478

Figure 2
Ecomap Example

_____ DATE _____ COUNTY _____

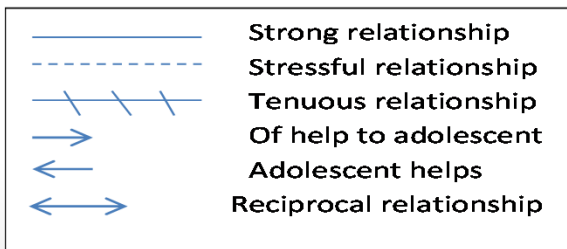
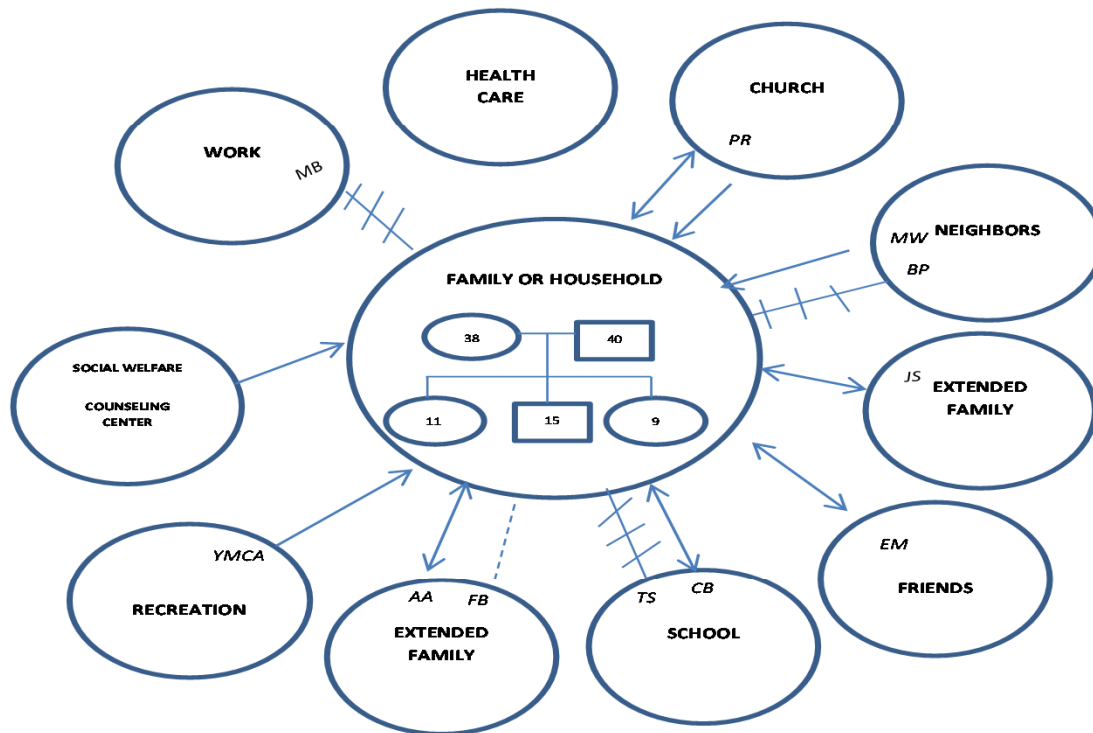
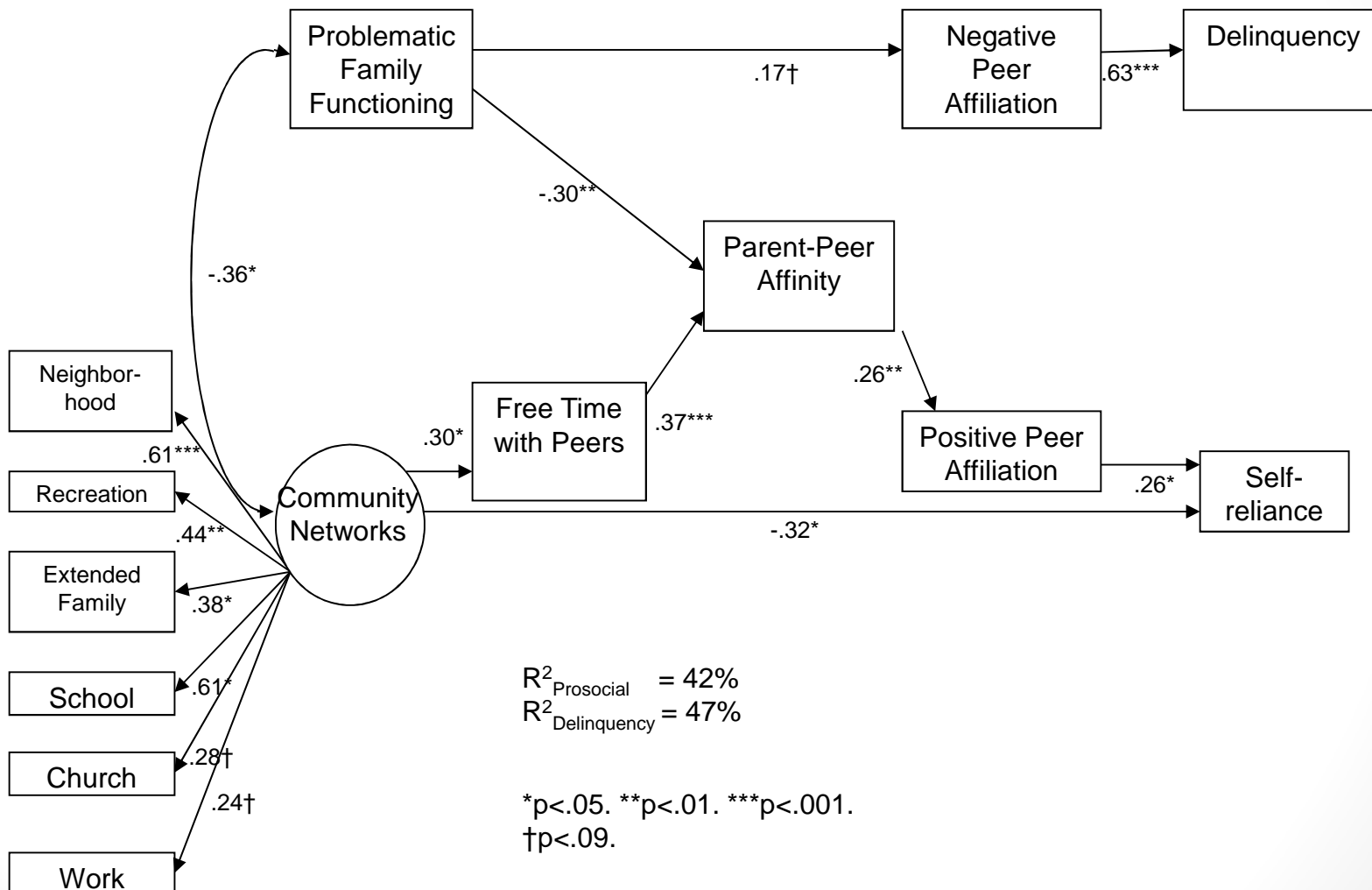


Figure 3
Structural Equation Model



Summary and Discussion

- Family problems is related to lower levels of positive peer affiliation
- Negative peer affiliations is strong factor in youth problem behavior and delinquency
- Community networks and connectedness is related to lower levels of problematic family functioning
- Community networks and connectedness are also related to:
 - positive peer affiliation,
 - and indirectly to prosocial behavior (self-reliance, decision-making, sharing, and caring)
- This models predicts:
 - almost half (47%) of the variance in delinquency
 - and 42% of the variance in positive youth development

Future Research

- Neighborhood and community can involve assets and not just disadvantage
- Future research should continue to explore the role of community networks and connectedness for youth and families in larger, samples diverse in racial-ethnic and social backgrounds
- Future work can also examine the quality of the relationship and reciprocity (who helps whom)

Implications for practice

- Intervention that helps parenting and connects to helpful people and resources in communities
- Explore salience of family communities and groups
- Investing in community resources and institutions that support youth and families might also emerge as a helpful future direction (afterschool, recreation, etc).
- Consistency of messages across contexts:
 - Sincere, descriptive praise
 - Catch them being good
 - Be a caring listener
 - Engage and empower youth



**“Leading, Educating, Guiding , Communities of Youth Together”
LEGACY Together Project**



- Study of 72 youth-serving settings across Pennsylvania
 - Cohort 1 – 225
 - Cohort 2 – 200
 - Cohort 3 – 300
 - Total 725 children, 200 staff
- Use of Pax-GBG in Afterschool
 - Teams of children
 - Catch them Being Good
 - Activity Rewards
- Randomized Efficacy Trial

Description of Study Measures

Measure	Number of Items	Mean (S.D.)	Reliability (Alpha)
Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, Meltzer, & Bailey, 1998)	25	40.78 (7.83)	.798
Prosocial	5	12.17 (2.48)	.716
Emotional Symptoms	5	8.84 (2.51)	.675
Hyperactivity	5	8.34 (2.40)	.590
Conduct Problems	5	7.83 (2.43)	.641
Peer Problems	5	8.14 (2.07)	.377
Collective Efficacy (CE) (adapted from Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2000)	20	45.39 (1.65)	.844

Slide 24

e1 esp, 10/17/2009

e2 need missing (e.g.wave 2 if these are wave 1 means and alphas) data here.
esp, 10/17/2009

Impact of Youth Collective

Efficacy (Smith, Osgood, Perkins, and Caldwell, in press)

HLM Analyses of Collective Efficacy

(Connectedness and Willingness to Intervene)

Outcome Variable

Explanatory Variable

Problem
Behavior

SDQ Total

Gender

-0.14 *

-0.16 *

Grade

-0.18 **

-0.18 **

Willingness to Intervene

-0.26 **

-0.04

Connectedness

-0.15 *

-0.24 **

Variance Components

Level 2

0.042

0.001

Level 1

0.805

0.104

Total

0.846

0.104

Intraclass Correlation

0.049

0.005

R Squared

0.185

0.175

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

