



This report informs the collaborative effort to improve the employment, education, personal developmental and well-being of youth at risk of being disconnected from opportunities to succeed after graduating from high school.



PR/Award #: V420A150015

The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.



Abstract

The Best Opportunities to Shine and Succeed (BOSS) program enhanced existing out-of-school time (OST) programs and services by adding a dedicated case manager (i.e. intervention) who worked with at-promise youth (youth at-risk for disconnection) to develop academic and career goals, identify appropriate programs and services, and refer at-promise youth and their families to needed programs and services. Using a randomized controlled trial (RCT), this evaluation estimates the impacts of tiered case management in the context of the OST program environment. The key outcomes examined are graduation, the transition to post-secondary education, and employment. Both the treatment and control at-promise youth received complimentary OST services in the federally funded 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program or the Children Services Council's (CSC) sustained 21st CCLC program (i.e., Literacy Enrichment and Academic Pursuits [LEAP High]).

Key program components & content. The BOSS program employed case managers to individually link at-promise youth with the evidence-based and evidence-informed educational, employment, and personal development services they needed to graduate and achieve post-secondary success. Case managers administered a Youth Needs Assessment to guide at-promise youth in creating individual service goals tied to: the academic services that were required to graduate while simultaneously providing career exploration and employability skills to motivate positive behavior, set career aspirations, and enroll in the appropriate post-secondary opportunity to achieve their career goal.

Target population. The desired population were at-promise youth at risk for disconnection who attended six public high schools that serve high poverty communities. The BOSS program served at-promise youth in grades 9 -12 that are demographically reflective of the schools' student population.

Waivers. The CSC was approved to waive: 1) The Workforce Investment and Opportunity Acts' (WIOA) 25% funding requirement for "in school youth" allowing CSC to use underutilized WIOA dollars to support "in school youth" via case managers; 2) WIOA's individual eligibility requirements (except citizenship/residency status) and apply schoolwide income eligibility requirements; 3) WIOA's performance measures and use the approved 21st CCLC performance measures; 4) the 21st CCLC requirement that all services be offered during out-of-school time so the authorized case management services could occur during the school day; and 5) the Department of Education General Administrative Regulation prohibiting subgranting so the 21st CCLC dollars could fund the out-of-school time staff hired by CSC's 21st CCLC service providers.

Delivery. The BOSS services were provided at six schools and service delivery relied upon twelve full time case managers who were culturally similar to the youth they serve (half are bi-lingual). The OST support services were provided by certified teachers who worked at the host schools. Case managers were bachelor-level staff who received 12 days of extensive training on: school policies, graduation requirements, career pathway planning, the state university system's enrollment requirements, college affordability, fundamentals in case management practices, implicit racial bias training, positive youth development, and the provision of human services in Broward County.

Grantee: Children's Services
Council of Broward County

Project Lead: Dr. Sue Gallagher,
sgallagher@cscbroward.org

Evaluator: South Florida
Education Research Alliance

Evaluation Lead: Dr. Steve Rios,
steve@riosresearch.com

Intervention

- tiered case management

OST Services

- academic, family, and personal well-being services
- post-secondary preparation
- TOP® and YMCA's Youth In Government Program
- employability skills training
- summer work experience

Program Dosage

Case Management	21 st CCLC/LEAP
Year-round 8 hrs. per day Monday-Friday	Afterschool 2.5 hrs. Summer 6 hrs. Monday-Thursday
• 1:35 ratio	• 1:20 ratio

Outcomes. The three primary outcomes examined were: 1) graduation rates, 2) post-secondary enrollment (enter college, technical training or military), and 3) employment (find full time employment). The secondary outcomes examine the impact of the BOSS program on: online course completion, reading grades, school behavioral and attendance, summer employment, employability skills knowledge; setting and achieving career pathway goals; earning a Career Technical Education diploma designations, FAFSA completion, juvenile justice involvement, participation in school/community engagement activities, and parental involvement and educational referrals.

Sample and setting. The study population was 782 at-promise youth (390 treatment and 392 control) who attended: Boyd Anderson, Deerfield Beach, McArthur, Miramar, Piper and Plantation high schools. Youth attending the schools were eligible for the BOSS program if they: 1) were enrolled in the existing 21st CCLC or LEAP High programs; and 2) provided documentation verifying their U.S. Citizenship or legal residency status in the U.S (a WIOA eligibility requirement). The geographic boundaries of this evaluation are the attendance boundaries of the six high schools in Broward County Florida.

Research design and data collection. The consent process was based upon the School District's Institutional Review Board¹, which required signed *parental consent* and signed *student assent* to participate in the BOSS program and to share student education records for this evaluation. The approved consent forms were distributed to participants in CSC's 21st CCLC and LEAP High programs by the case managers working for CSC's OST providers (YMCA and Hispanic Unity of Florida). After collecting the signed consent forms and eligibility documentation, the case managers submitted all documentation to CSC's BOSS Project Director. If the required signatures were obtained and CSC verified the eligibility documentation, the Project Director assigned a unique Identification Number to each participant that was sent to our local independent evaluator for random assignment.

The outcome data that were collected included: 1) program attendance, demographics, employability skills scores, and individual service goals information from CSC's Services Administration Management Information System; 2) school grades, behavior, attendance, homeless status, and test scores from CSC's Integrated Data system with the School District; and 3) several data points from unique sources – FAFSA (District Guidance Dept.), Diploma and Career Technical Designation (principals), and Summer Youth Employment (CareerSource Broward).

Findings. The independent evaluation found the following statistically significant impacts of the BOSS case management services: 1) treatment participants were more likely to transition to a postsecondary educational opportunity, and complete the state's required online course requirement; and 2) family members of treatment youth were more likely to participate in an educational event relative to parents of students assigned to the control group.

Schedule/Timeline. The RCT began August of 2016 and ended January of 2017. Data were collected from random assignment to graduation or the end of the program - June 30, 2018. Data were collected quarterly from CSC's Integrated Data System, and annually from the other sources. Data were provided quarterly to the Independent Evaluator to certify the ED. Form 524 Quarterly Reports, the final BOSS database was completed June 2018.

¹ Broward County Public School IRB approval was granted on June 30, 2016. The School District has filed a Federal wide Assurance (FWA00011214) and registered an IRB (IRB00005849) with the U. S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP). This information is on file with the OHRP and is available at <http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search/asearch.asp#ASUR>