

The Effects of an After School Program on Academic Achievement and Social Emotional Health

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Objective

This poster presents the development of a study which will evaluate an after school program in Trenton called Urban Promise Trenton. Specifically, the aim of the study is to determine the effects of an after school program (Urban Promise Trenton) on academic achievement and social emotional health.

Trenton Demographics

- **Population:** 83,974 people as of 2018
 - ◆ Black or African American - 50.7%
 - ◆ Hispanic or Latino - 36.4%
 - ◆ White alone - 12.9%
- **Poverty:** 28.4% in poverty
 - ◆ Per capita income (past 12 months) - \$18,473
 - ◆ New jersey per capita income (past 12 months) - \$40,895
- **High School Graduation Rate** (2014-2018): 71.8%
 - ◆ Bachelor's degree or higher - 11.7%
 - ◆ New Jersey high school graduation rate - 89.5%

Urban Promise Trenton (UPT)

- **UPT:** After school program in Trenton, New Jersey
 - ◆ Ages - kindergarten to high school
- **Mission:** help students develop the skills necessary for...
 - ◆ Academic achievement
 - ◆ Life management
 - ◆ Spiritual growth
 - ◆ Christian leadership
- Provides students with a safe environment with supportive and caring adults
- **College Prep:** helps students to graduate high school and transition into college
- **Mentoring:** Street leaders (high school students) lead and mentor the younger children

Hypothesis and Literature Review

- **Hypothesis 1:** After school program participation can lead to increased reading comprehension and overall academic achievement.
 - ◆ Intensity and breadth of participation in after school programs led to an increase in GPAs (Springer & Diffily, 2012)
 - ◆ The quality of after school programs increased children's academic achievement (Leos-Urbel, 2015)
- **Hypothesis 2:** Intrinsic motivation, reading amount, and reading comprehension are potential mediators of (i.e., can explain) the relationship between after school program participation and academic achievement.
 - ◆ Children report increased intrinsic motivation after making a personal connection with an adult in their after school program (Dawes & Larson, 2012)
 - ◆ Intrinsic motivation has a positive and significant relationship with reading amount and reading comprehension (Troyer et al., 2019; Miyamoto, Pfof & Artelt, 2019)
- **Hypothesis 3:** Participation in after school programs has positive effects on behavioral and social outcomes.
 - ◆ Participation in after school programs has a positive effect on a child's social competence and confidence (Shernoff, 2010; Vandell et al., 2020)
- **Hypothesis 4:** ACEs have longterm negative effects on children, but PACEs can mitigate these effects.
 - ◆ ACEs - adverse childhood experiences
 - ◆ PACEs - protective and compensatory experiences

CBPR Approach

- **Parachute Model:** researchers drop in, collect data, and leave
 - ◆ Effects - can harm the community and lead to distrust
- **CBPR:** works with the community every step of the way
 - ◆ Community members, representatives of organizations, and researchers are equally involved throughout the whole process
 - ◆ All partners have shared responsibility and ownership of the project
 - ◆ Enhances understanding of a given phenomenon
 - ◆ Knowledge gained turns to action

Method

- **Mixed-Method Design:** Mix of qualitative and quantitative data
 - ◆ Quantitative Data - Survey questions rated on likert-type scales
 - ◆ Qualitative Data - Open ended interview questions about more abstract concepts
- **Sample:** High school students at Urban Promise Trenton

Variables

- **ACEs and PACEs**
- **After school program participation**
 - ◆ Breadth of participation - measured with a checklist of UPT programs
 - ◆ Intensity of participation - measured with attendance
- **Program quality**
 - ◆ Program engagement
 - ◆ Program environment
- **Engagement in school**
- **Reading**
 - ◆ Reading motivation - intrinsic or extrinsic
 - ◆ Reading amount - for school, for UPT, or for pleasure
 - ◆ Reading comprehension
- **Mentoring** - in and out of UPT
- **Academic Achievement**
 - ◆ Grades - GPA, letter grades, and SAT scores
 - ◆ Academic motivation
 - ◆ Perceived academic achievement
- **Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Health**
 - ◆ Self-perception - self-efficacy, confidence, self-competence
 - ◆ Behaviors - prosocial behaviors, externalizing behaviors, internalizing behaviors
 - ◆ Empathy

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