

**Summary Report on the
*Assessment of Parent
Linking Programs*
Project**

Report Prepared for:
Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey
on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Children and Families

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Project Introduction and Overview

We begin this section with a description of the project goals and methods, followed by a brief overview of relevant research literature on the rationale for programs for teenage parents. In addition, we then briefly describe the structure of the Parent Linking Program. The report concludes with a synopsis of primary findings from the overall project; the detailed findings are summarized in the body of the report, with Section 1 focused on the analysis of program administrative data for two full academic school years; Section 2 composed of the data collected with program and school personnel; and Section 3 containing the summarized data from youth and caregiver interviews.

Project Overview:

This project was developed in summer 2013 to help understand the needs and challenges of the population served by the Parent Linking Program (PLP) in New Jersey. We enjoyed an enormous level of cooperation on behalf of the ten PLP programs and the school personnel where these programs are housed. In addition, PCA-NJ functioned as terrific partners in implementing every aspect of this project.

The key objectives included:

1. Assessing teen parents' knowledge of parenting skills and of healthy child development
2. Measuring the extent to which teen parents avoid or reduce involvement with child protection services
3. Assessing the logistics of the child care centers (e.g., in the school where the teen is enrolled versus outside of the school)
4. Assessing and describing the resources and activities of each of the 10 PLP program sites.

However, it is important to note that because this project entailed data collection during only one time period, it was not possible to prospectively examine the impact of the program on certain outcomes. As such, though we originally hoped to look at the longer term impact of PLP programs on key aspects of participants' functioning (e.g., avoiding additional unplanned pregnancies), due to the nature of this project's methodology, it was not possible to measure such outcomes. That is, some of these outcomes such as future unplanned pregnancies or failure to finish high school are longitudinal in nature and may take a few years to observe whether or not these outcomes were achieved and if it was the program that actually impacted these outcomes. Instead, we aimed to gather descriptive information from current and former participants about these outcomes and to explore their feedback about programs strengths and weaknesses. Ideally, we hope to one day reconnect with participants assess their longer term outcomes.

The original design included:

1. To conduct in-person interviews with 10 current program participants from each of the 10 program sites (total of 100 participant interviews). The goal was to conduct interviews within one hour and would include semi-structured interviews with valid measures of the constructs (e.g., healthy childhood development; parenting practices; “risky” sexual behavior; dating violence, etc.). *The interview protocol was developed in consultation with staff from PCANJ.* Each participant would be compensated \$25 for completing the interview.
2. To obtain former participants’ reflections of the effects of the PLP programs, we hoped to find approximately 25-30 former participants from across the programs and conduct in-person interviews with them. These interviews will parallel the current program participant interview former. Each participant would be compensated \$25 for completing the interview.
3. To round out the assessment of the program structure, we aimed to also collect data from the program staff and administrators about the efficacy, structure, and resources of their programs. In consultation with PCANJ, we developed a web-based survey tool via Survey Monkey that was be broadly distributed to all program staff, school administrators and any other practitioner that interact with the teens in the PLP. However, staff and administrators were not being compensated for their participation on this interview. This semi-structured survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.
4. In consultation with PCANJ, to measure the structure of the 10 programs and the resources and approaches of each, we analyzed administrative data captured via the Youth Services Net MIS operated by City Span, LLC to analyze different variables over time.

However, as will be described in Section 3 (data collection with youth and caregivers), we did not meet our interview target goal with the youth and conducted far fewer interviews than originally envisioned. The limitations we encountered will be discussed in that chapter.

For the interviews that we did accomplish, all were conducted individually and with a trained Research Assistant who was experienced with discussing sensitive topics with adolescents. Moreover, two of the RAs were fluent in Spanish and were instrumental in recruiting and interviewing Spanish speaking participants across all sites. We also benefited from a consultant to the project who was also fluent in Spanish who translated flyers, consent forms, interview materials, and other pertinent project materials into Spanish. All respondents in this phase were financially compensated for their participation. The interviews were conducted at a location of the respondent’s choosing—school; a public place such as a Starbucks, or at their homes. All data are confidential and we do not align any of the data with the respondent’s specific program.

Brief review on research regarding adolescent parents

In this review of the recent literature on teenage pregnancy, we recognize that much of this material is focused on negative outcomes, and disproportionately concentrated on teen mothers, yet it is important to portray how the circumstances uncovered by this research informed broad program development for this population. The research presented below is based on multiple studies from across the country and does not specifically represent New Jersey's teenage parent population.

The development of programs to serve teenage parents primarily stemmed from two emphases: one was to systematically address the risk factors that this population faced and the second was to incorporate a focus on enhancing parenting knowledge and practices, developing healthy parent-child relationships, and encouraging positive youth development. At present, though the rates of teenage pregnancy and birth rates in the United States are declining (Sadler et al., 2007), the need for specialized programs that can serve comprehensive needs of this population remain. In part this programmatic need remains because this group of teenage mothers¹ continues to face some comprehensive and overlapping challenges: lack of completion of high school education, which could lead to hindrances in obtaining subsequent employment; subsequent childbirth, as 25% of teen mothers have a second child within two years; economic and financial difficulties; impairments in child rearing practices and in relationships with their own caregivers; and potential risk for involvement with the child welfare system. In addition, many teenage female parents experience struggles with relationships with their babies' fathers regarding lack of material and emotional support (Aronwitz, 2005; Brooks-Gunn, 1995; Hamilton et al., 2004; Sadler et al., 2007; Seitz & Apfel, 1999). On the other hand, research has shown that completion of high school is a key factor in the facilitation of subsequent positive outcomes for these young women, including attendance at postsecondary or vocational training programs, as well as enhancing interpersonal and family relationships. Ultimately, when young mothers maintain involvement with high schools and complete their education, they have fewer subsequent births during the adolescent years, positive long-term economic outcomes, and better behavioral, social, and academic development for their children (Aronwitz, 2005; Becker & Barth, 2000; Hofferth et al., 2001; McDade et al., 2011; Panzarine Slater, & Sharps, 1995). Therefore, the advent of programs embedded directly into high school settings was a logical and innovative approach designed to address the needs demonstrated in multiple studies conducted around the country.

Parent Linking Program History

An example of this innovation is the The Parent Linking Program (PLP). This is a teen parenting program that was developed in 1980 by Prevent Child Abuse - New Jersey (PCANJ). PLP started as a "project" with a group of teen parents who attended Barringer High School in Newark, NJ. The initial purpose of PCA-NJ was to provide parenting education and direct support to teen parents was to prevent child abuse and neglect of their children. PCANJ provided educational and supportive services, groups and newsletters to the teen parents as they are more at risk of

¹ Though the PLP programs in this project do serve teenage fathers too, the research literature is primarily focused on teenage mothers.

being abusive parents due to their lack of economic resources, immaturity, and a lack of knowledge about parenting and child development.

After five years of establishment in urban high schools PLP became a component of the New Jersey School Based Youth Services Program (SBYSP). The NJ Department of Children and Families (DCF) provide funding for all PLP sites through the use of both state and federal funds. The NJ SBYSP was initiated by the New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) in 1988 to help young people navigate the adolescent years, finish their education, obtain skills leading to employment or continuing education, and graduate healthy and drug free. .

As a statewide approach and in addition, the PLP is to provide intensive case management and referral services (*as needed*) for expectant and parenting teens with an emphasis on awareness of and linkages to prenatal care, parenting education and infant/child development. On an as needed basis pregnant and parenting teens have immediate access to counseling and crisis intervention services. In addition, the model

The demands to support teen parents are great, therefore, support from the school district, local childcare facilities, and community based organizations make it possible to provide free childcare services within the school or within close proximity with transportation support on an as needed basis. In order to further support the success of each of these programs, NJ DCF contracts with PCA-NJ to provide training and technical support.

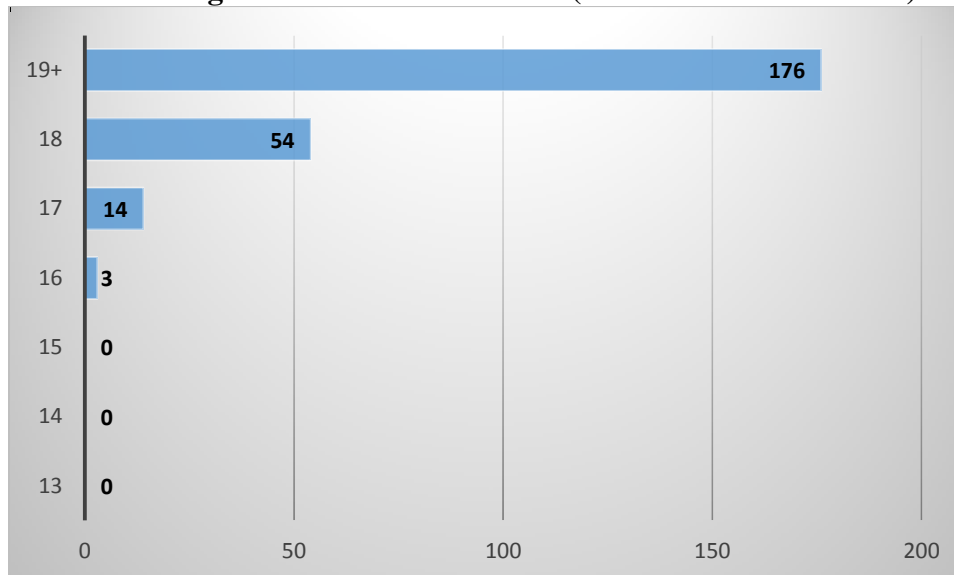
Part 1:
Analysis & Summary
of
Program Administrative
Data
2011-12
&
2012-13

Overview

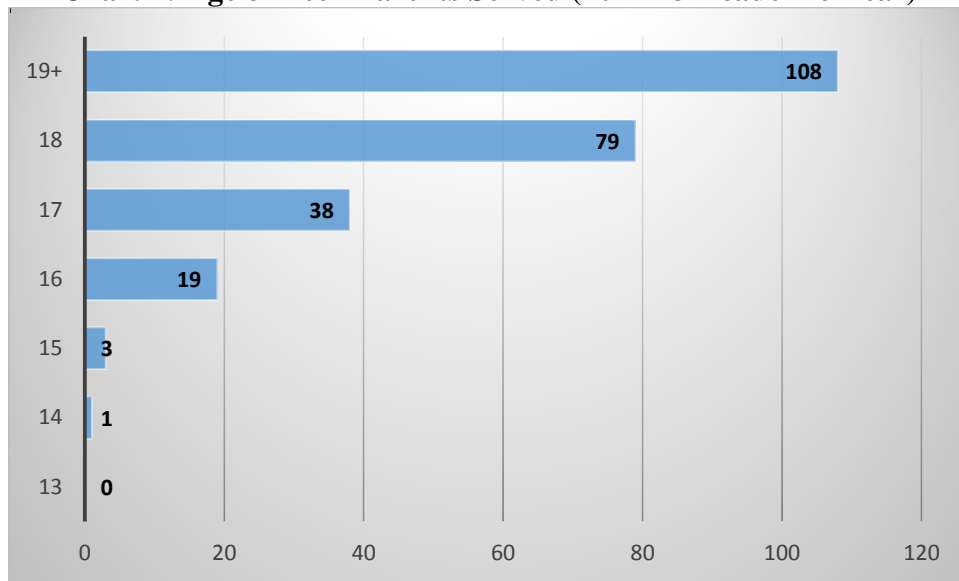
In this section, we discuss the results of our analysis of the program administrative data in order to provide a context for the scope of the programs' services. Data were pulled from the Youth Services Net MIS (powered by City Span, LLC) in spring 2014 and we focused on full academic year data for the most recent time periods available (2011-12 and 2012-13). Our intent was to provide a broad picture of all 10 programs, collectively and by each individual program². We examined demographic and background information of the participants, as well as programmatic service data (e.g., number of participants in individual and group sessions; referral reasons, etc.). We therefore present the background information collectively, and the programmatic service data by each program. In order to provide two full academic years' worth of program data, we analyze and present data for two academic years: 2011-2012 and 2012-13. We present the results for each year together for each variable. For most charts, we present the number of youth indicated for that variable and not the percentage, so that readers can get a sense of the volume of youth served by the programs.

Demographic and Background Information

Chart 1: Age of Teen Parents Served (2011-12 Academic Year)



² Please note that not all programs are represented in the MIS data for the time period examined; in addition, some data from individual programs might be missing for specific variables. These were not available in the MIS data.

Chart 2: Age of Teen Parents Served (2012-13 Academic Year)

In the 2011-12 academic year, most of the participants (teen parents) were older adolescents (over 19 years old) and in the 2012-13 academic year, most participants also were older adolescents.

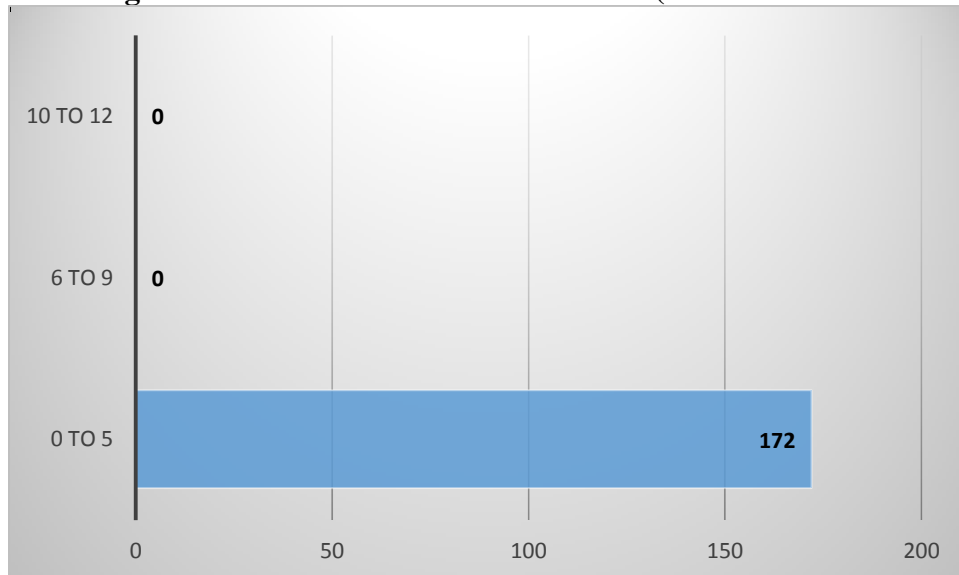
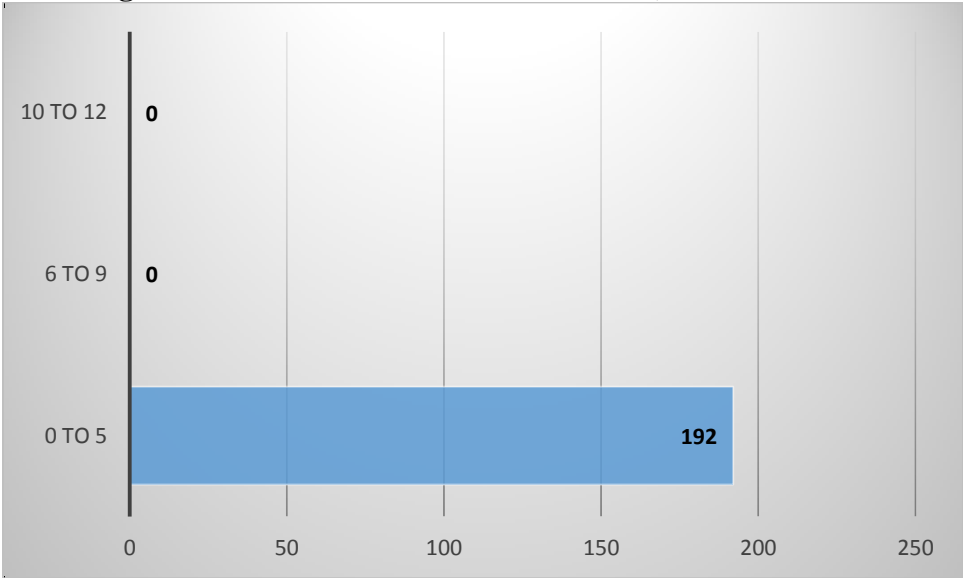
Chart 3: Age of Children of Teen Parents Served (2011-12 Academic Year)

Chart 4: Age of Children of Teen Parents Served (2012-13 Academic Year)



In both academic years, all children of the teen parents were 0 to 5 years of age.

Chart 5: Gender of Program Participants (2011-12 Academic Year)

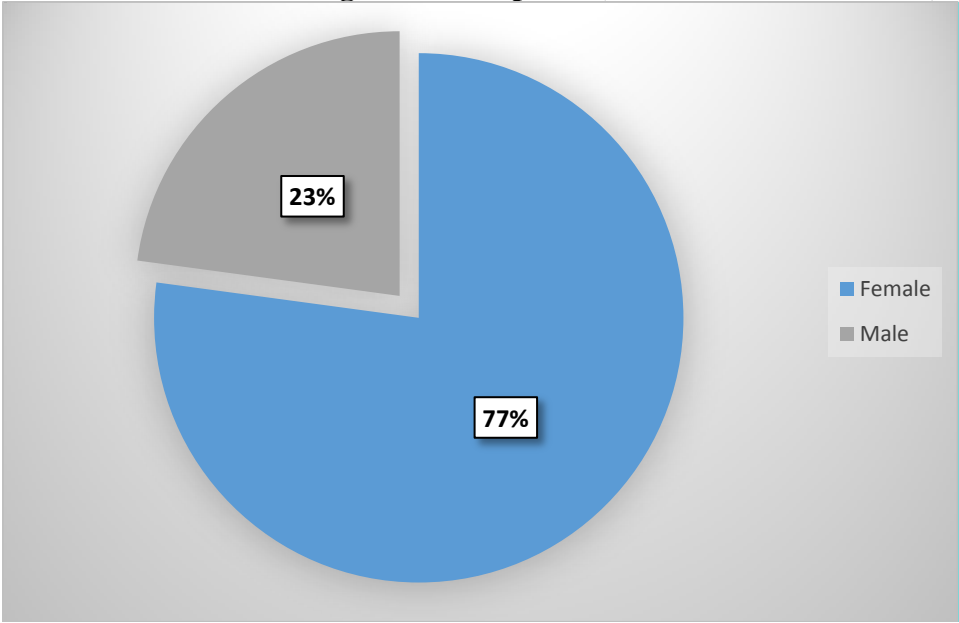
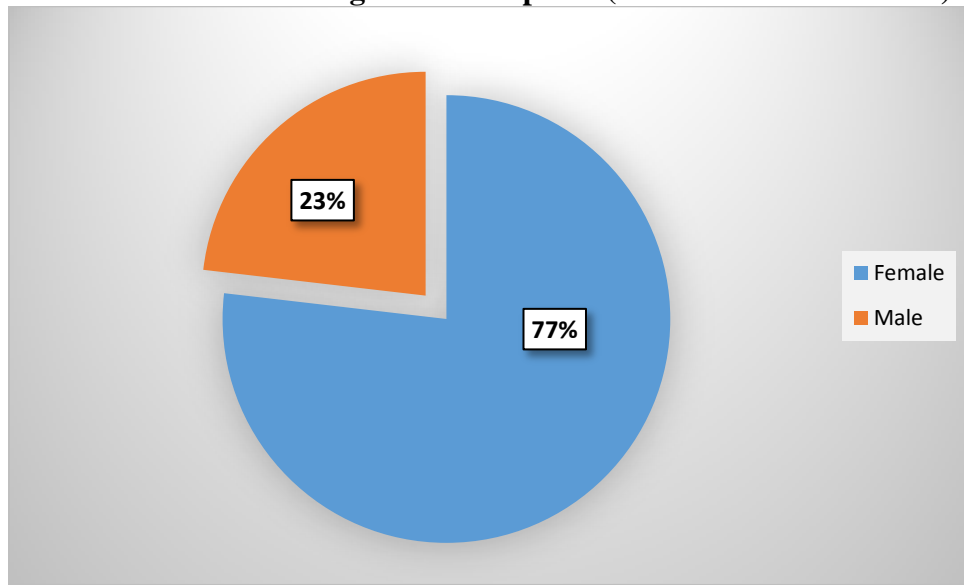


Chart 6: Gender of Program Participants (2012-13 Academic Year)



In both the academic years, the majority (77%) of participants served were female.

Chart 7: Race and Ethnicity of Program Participants (2011-12 Academic Year)

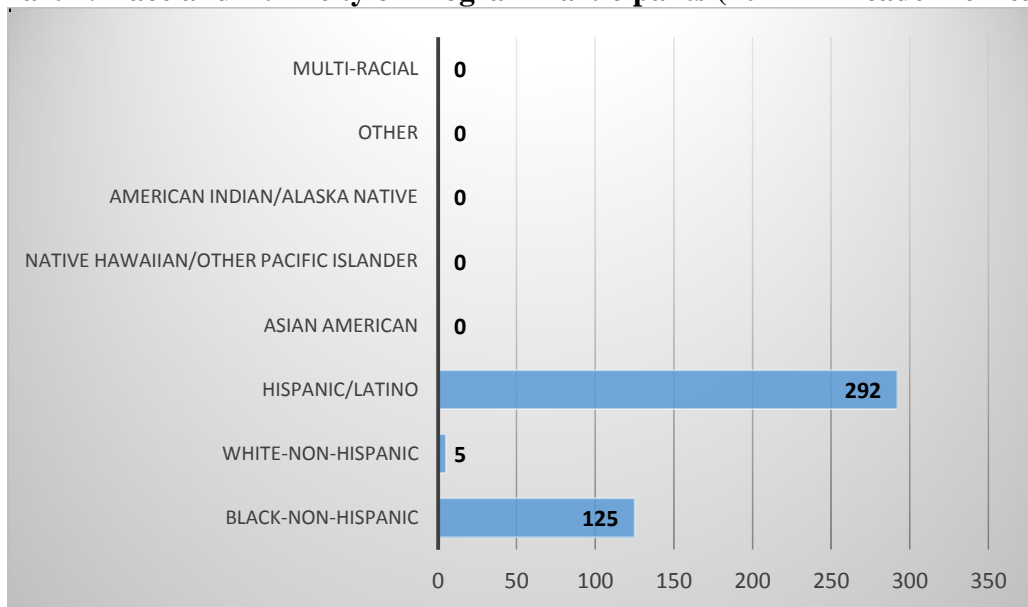
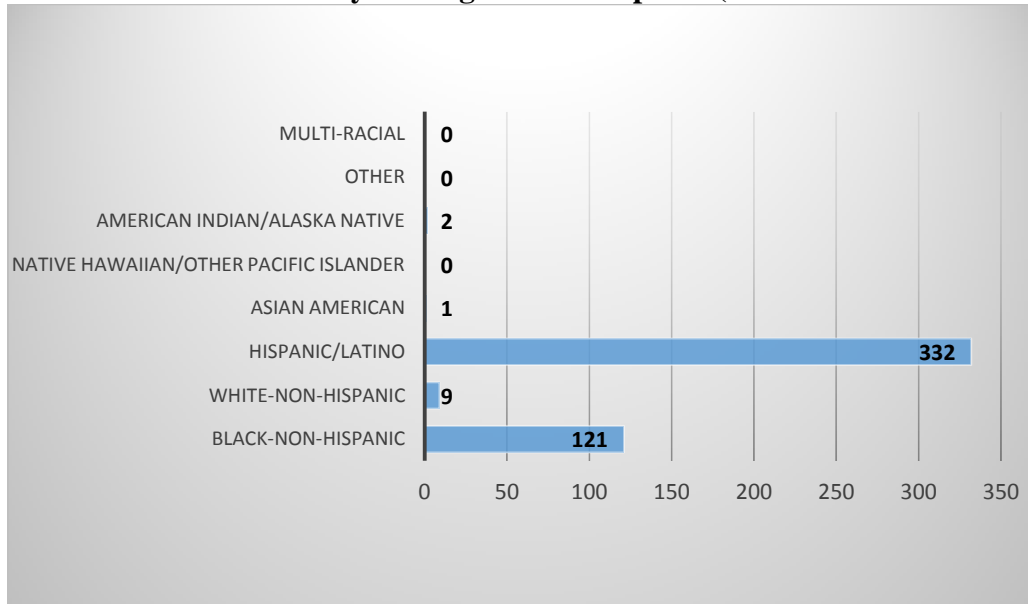


Chart 8: Race and Ethnicity of Program Participants (2012-13 Academic Year)



For both academic years, most of the program participants were Hispanic/Latina or African American descent.

Chart 9: Grade Level of Program Participants (2011-12 Academic Year)

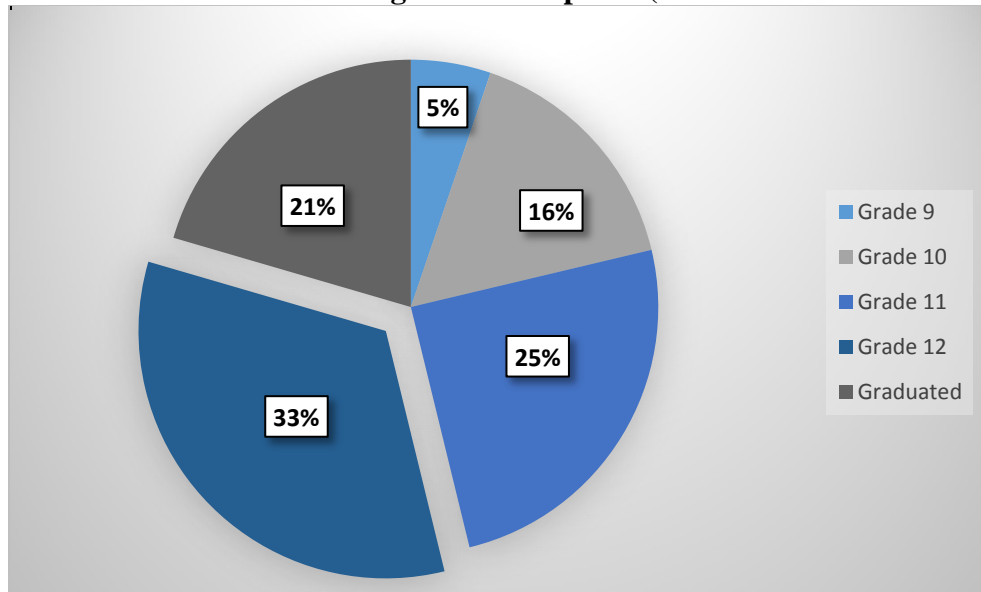
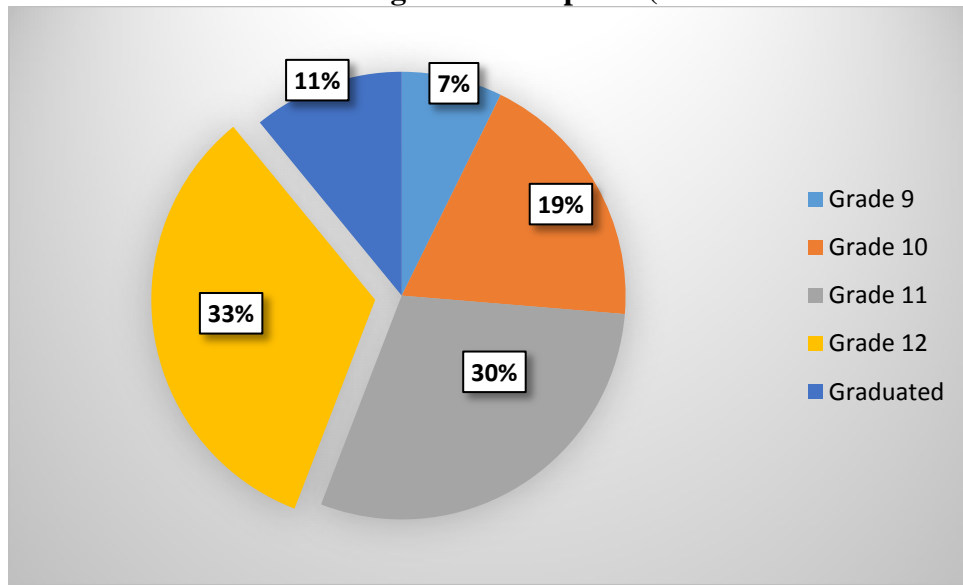


Chart 10: Grade Level of Program Participants (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, the predominant participants were grade 12 students (33%), followed by grade 11 students (25%) and in year 2012-13 grade 12 students (33%) were the predominant participants, followed by grade 11 students (30%). Please note that the MIS data does show that some programs serve graduated youth.

Chart 11: Who are Teens Residing with? (2011-12 Academic Year)

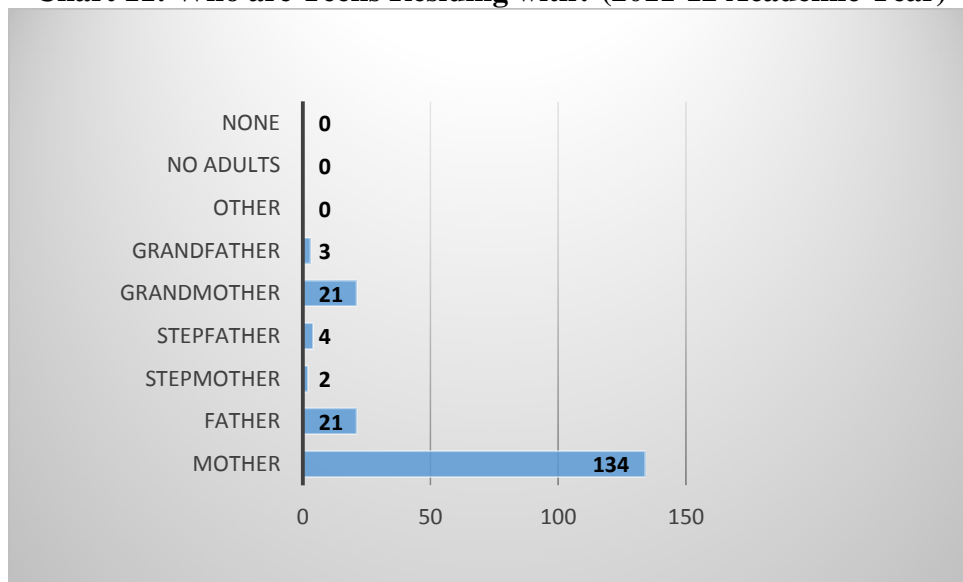
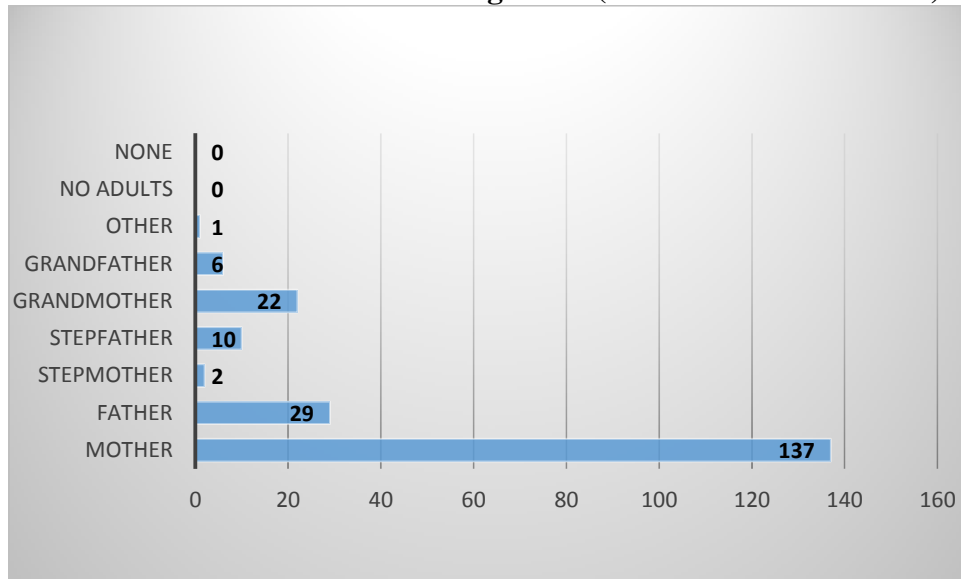


Chart 12: Who are teens Residing with? (2012-13 Academic Year)

In year 2011-12, the vast majority resided with their mothers (N=134) and in year 2012-13 the vast majority also resided with their mother (N=137).

Summary of Demographic and Background Characteristics

During this time period, not surprisingly, collectively the PLP programs primarily served females who were older adolescents, or whom had graduated from high school. Most of the program participants were of Hispanic/Latina descent or African American. The vast majority resided with their mothers.

Program Characteristics

Chart 13: Number of Enrolled Participants by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

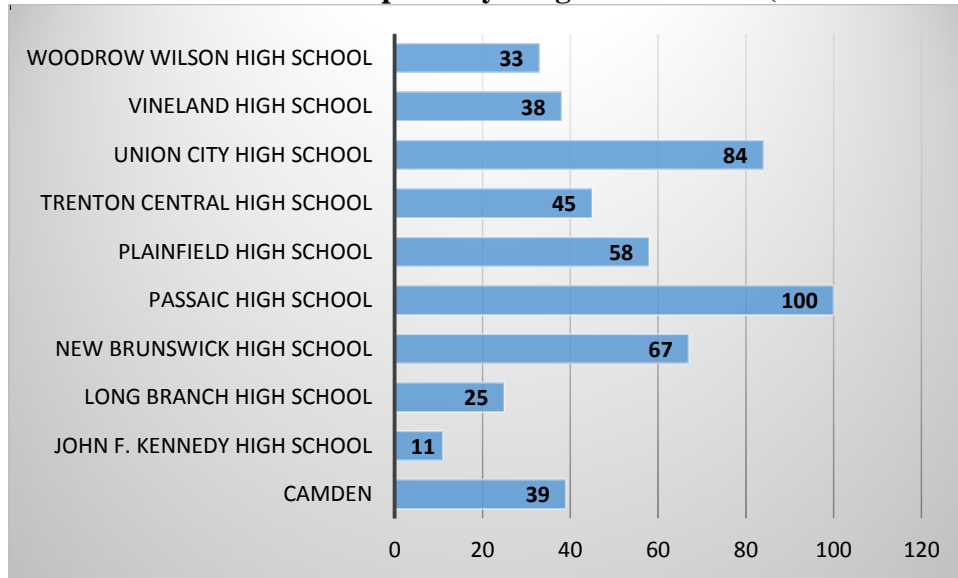
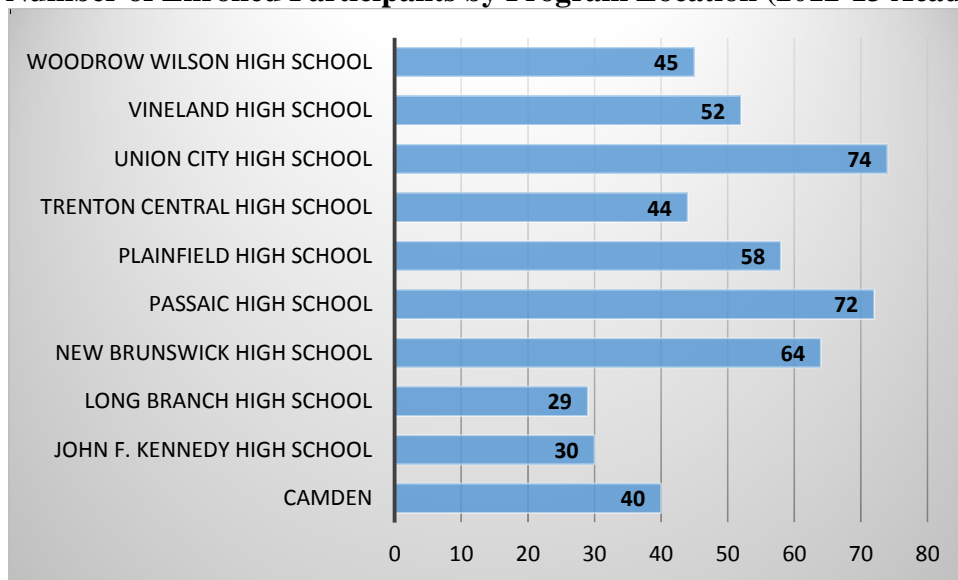


Chart 14: Number of Enrolled Participants by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



In the 2011-12 academic year, Passaic High School had the highest number of enrolled participants whereas in the 2012-13 academic year Union City High School had highest number of enrolled participants.

Chart 15: Individual Program Visits, by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

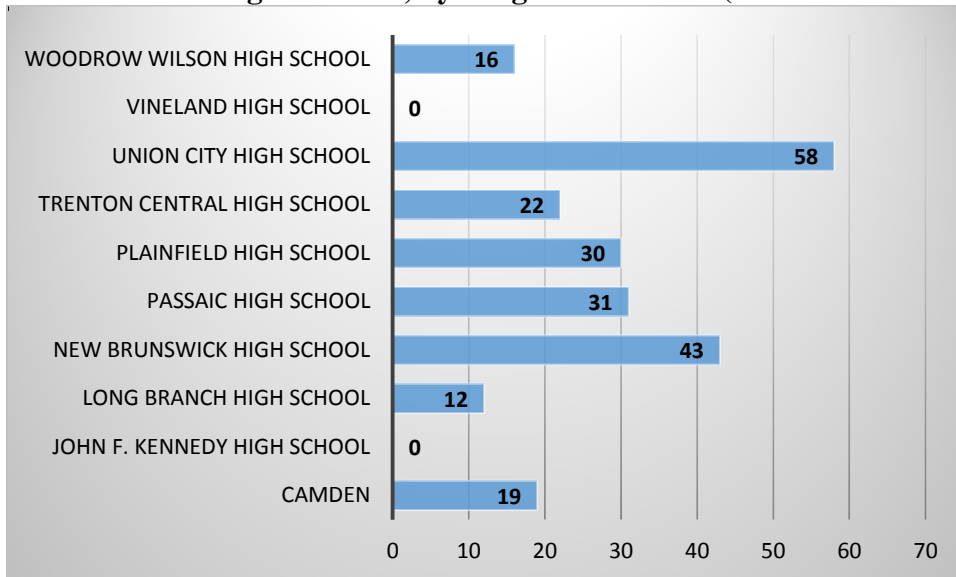
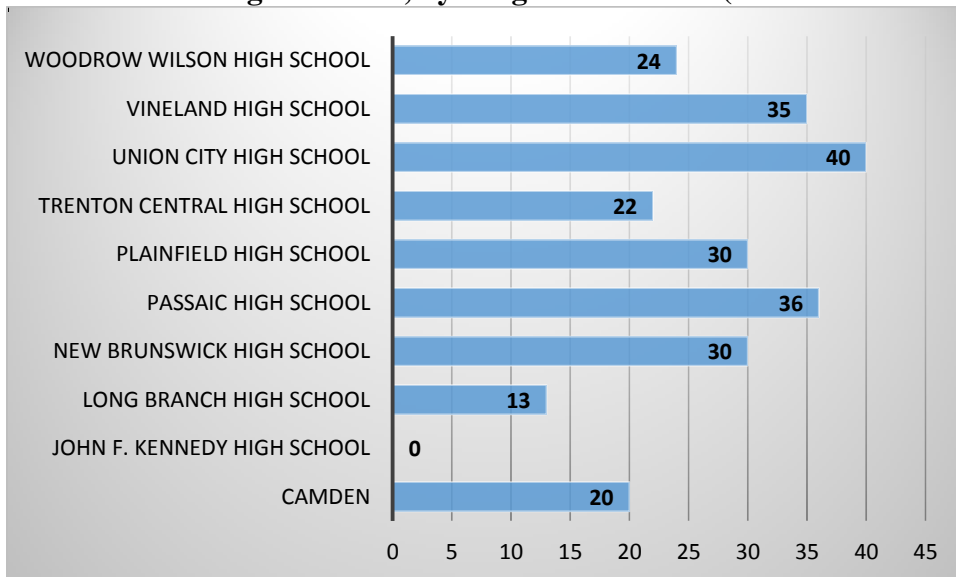


Chart 16: Individual Program Visits, by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



In both academic years Union City High School had the most individual program visits (not home visits).

Chart 17: Number of Individual Sessions, by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

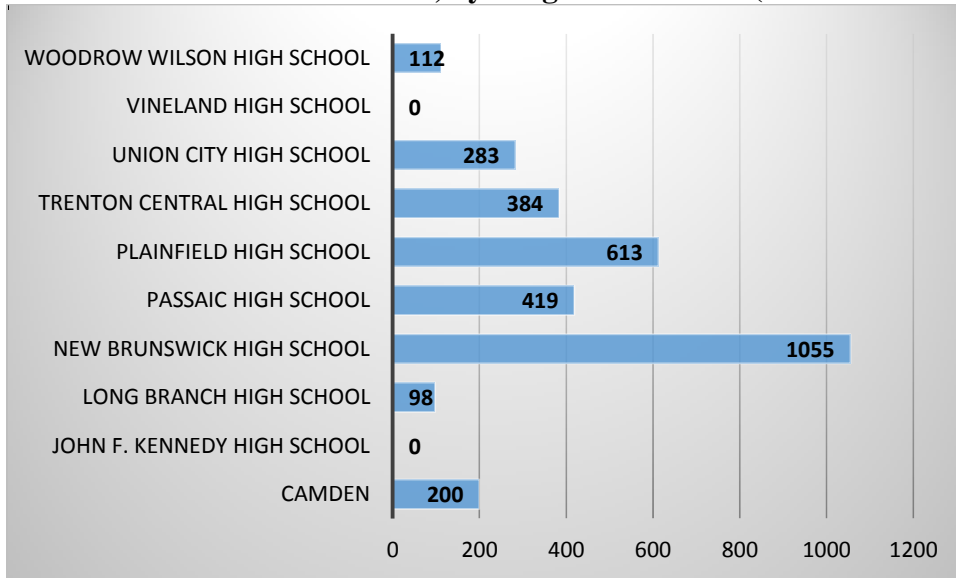
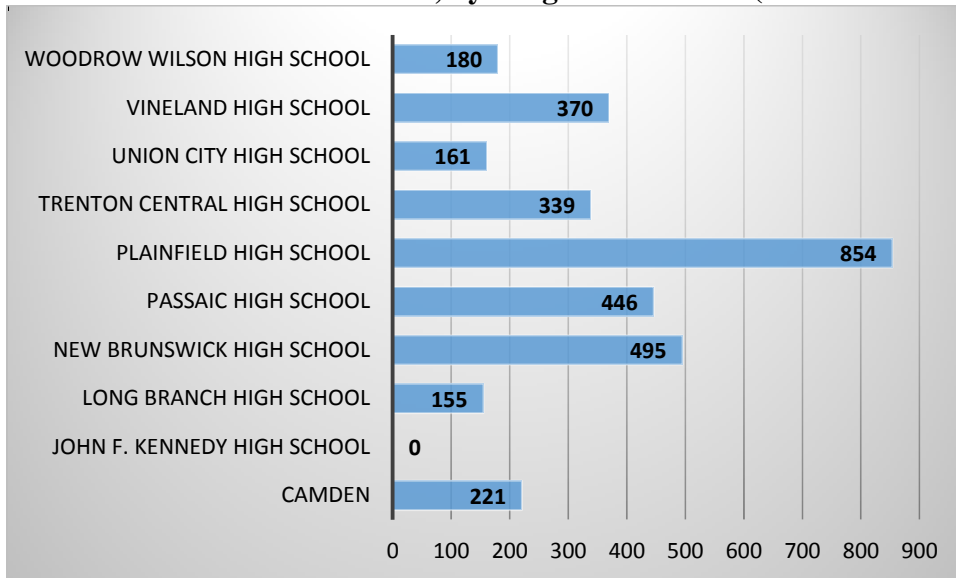


Chart 18: Number of Individual Sessions, by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, New Brunswick High School had the highest number of individual sessions and in year 2012-13 Plainfield High School had the highest number of individual sessions.

Chart 19: Participants in Group Services, by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

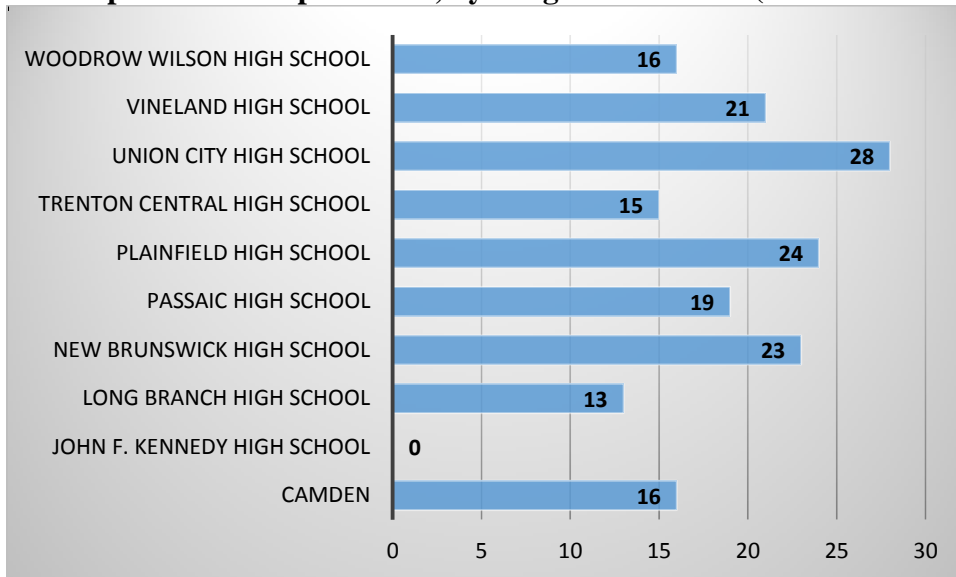
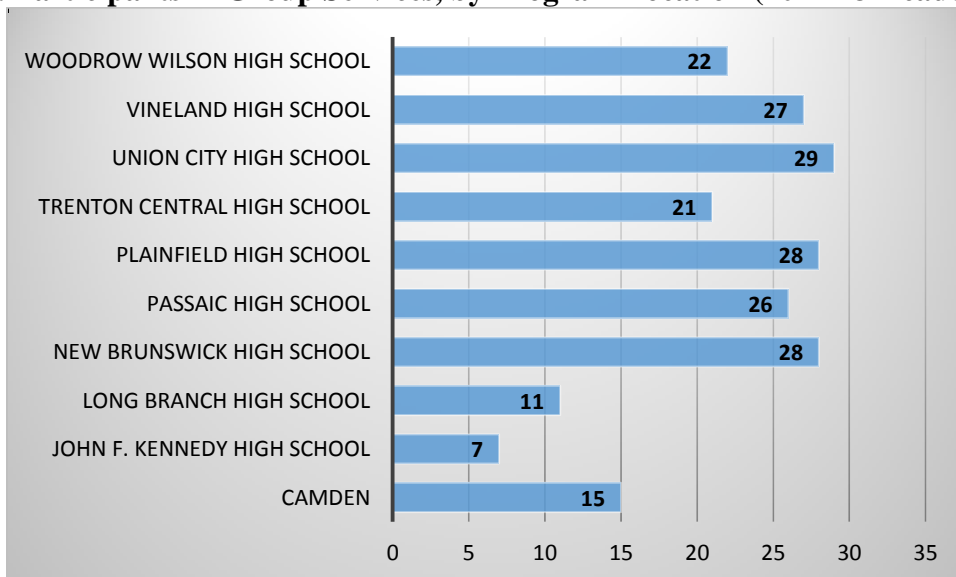


Chart 20: Participants in Group Services, by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



Group series refers to the programmatic resources and services offered on a group basis. In year 2011-12, Union City High School had the most participants in group services and in year 2012-13 Union City High School also had the highest number of participants in group services.

Chart 21: Number of Group Sessions, by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

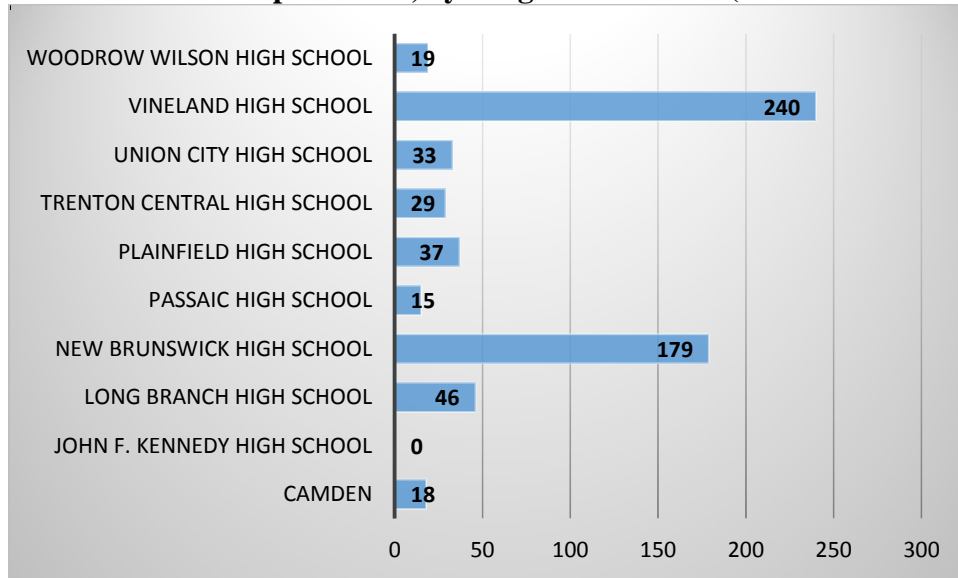
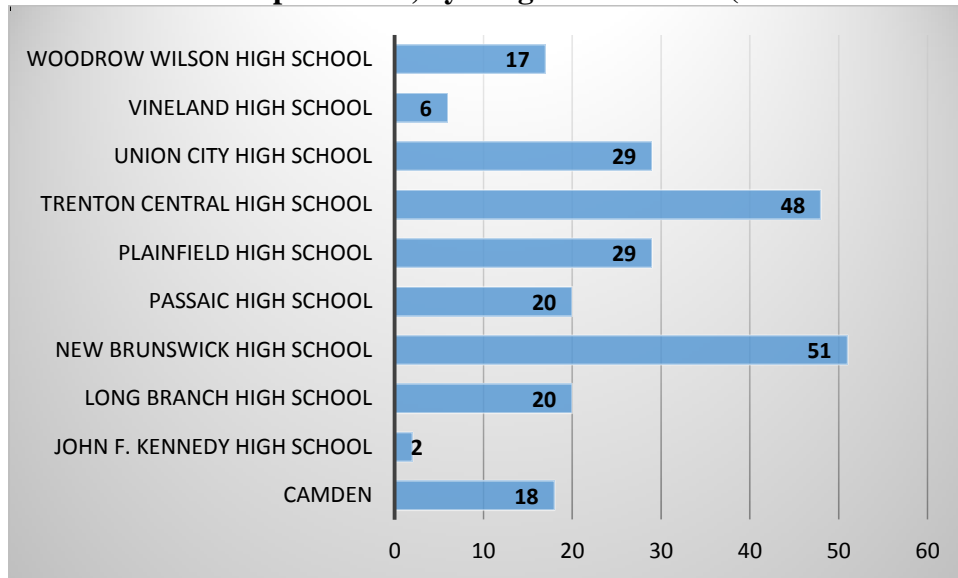


Chart 22: Number of Group Sessions, by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, Vineland High School had the highest number of group sessions and in year 2012-13 New Brunswick High School had the highest number of group sessions.

Chart 23: Total Number of Referrals to Programs, by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

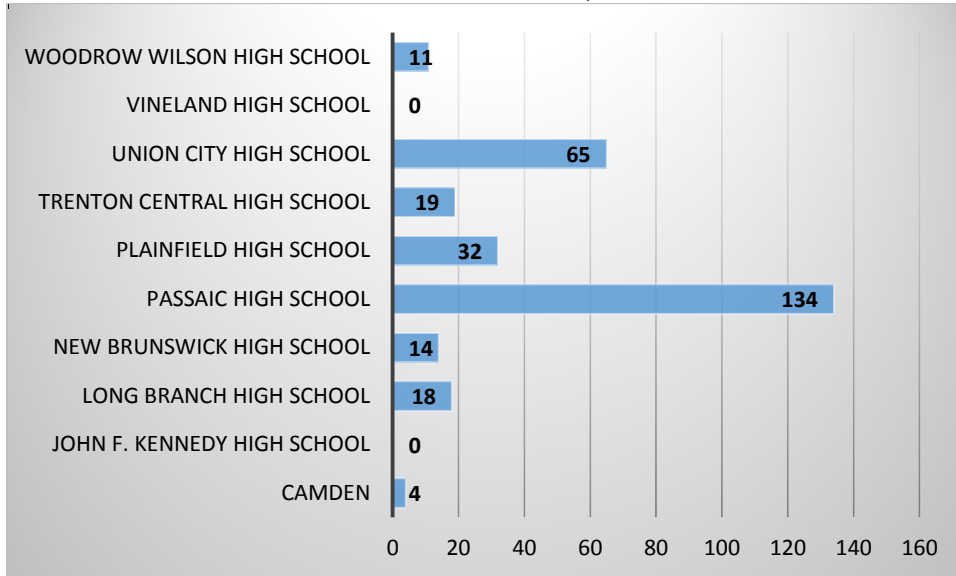
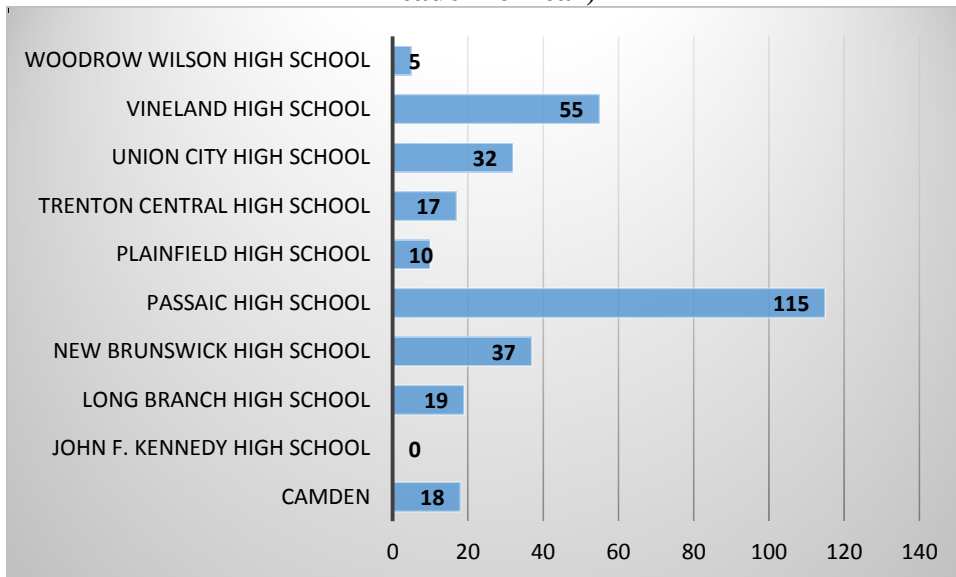


Chart 24: Total Number of Referrals to Programs, by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, Passaic High School had the highest number of referrals to its program and in year 2012-13 Passaic High School had the highest number of referrals.

Chart 25: Total Unduplicated Participants Referred, by Program Location (2011-12 Academic Year)

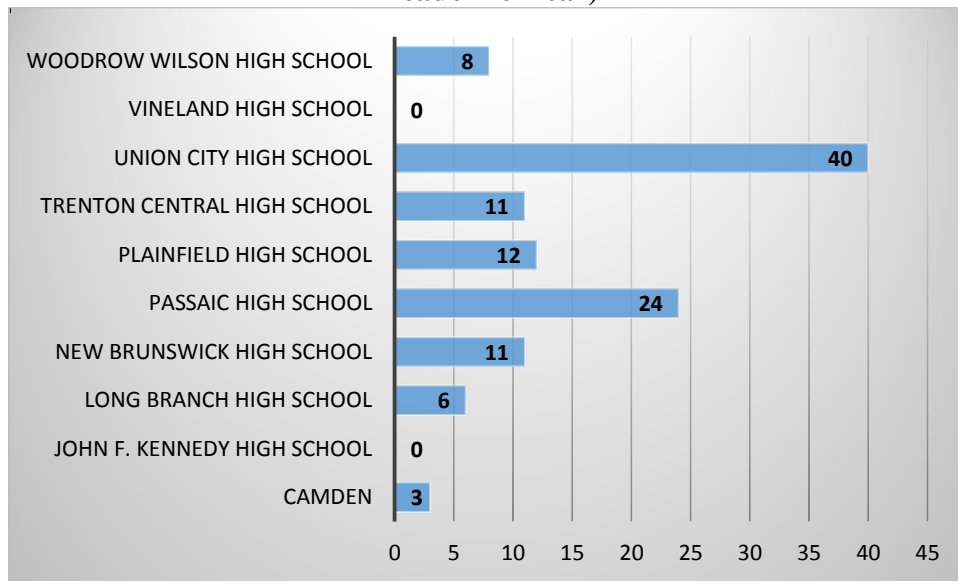
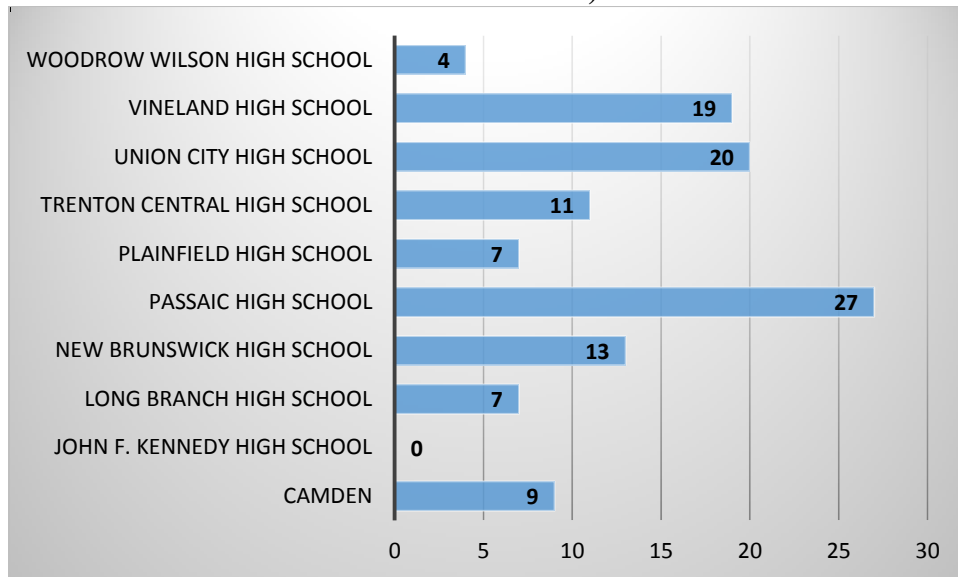


Chart 26: Total Unduplicated Participants Referred, by Program Location (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, Union City High School had the most unduplicated participants referred and in year 2012-13 Passaic High School had the most unduplicated participants referred.

Chart 27: Referral Reasons: Camden (2011-12 Academic Year)

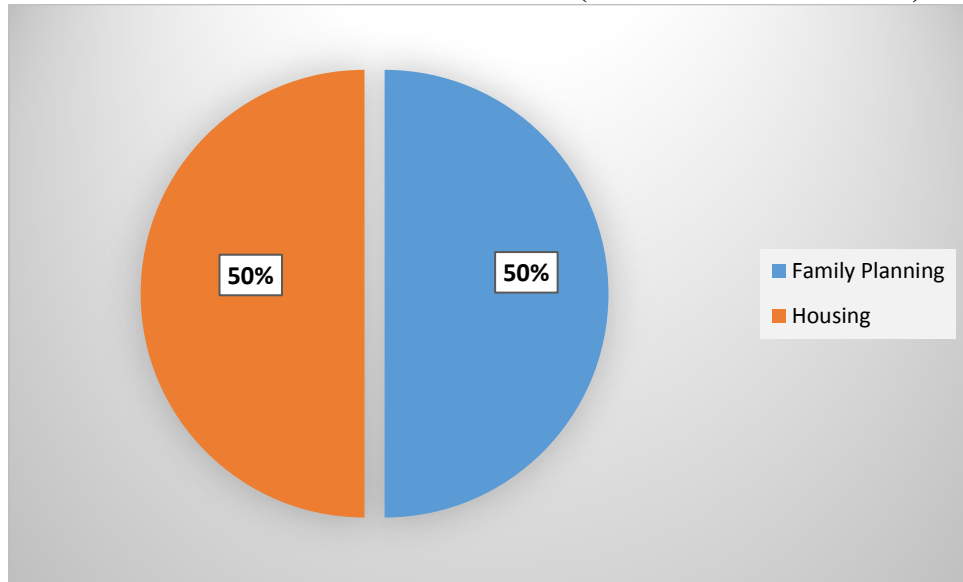
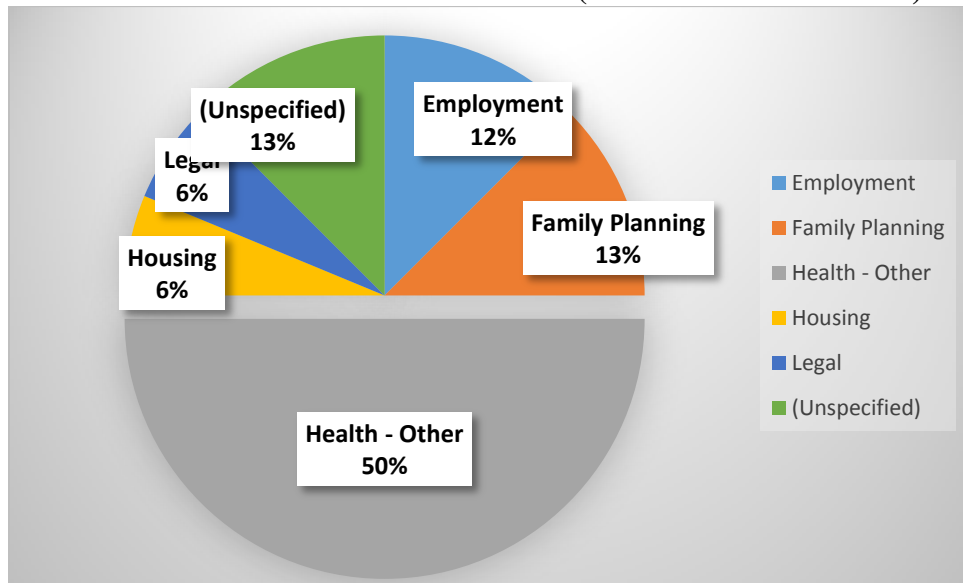


Chart 28: Referral Reasons: Camden (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, Camden participant referrals comprised two categories: housing (50%) and family planning and in year 2012-13 the predominant referral reason was health (50%), followed by myriad other categories of reasons.

Chart 29: Referral Reasons: Long Branch High School (2011-12 Academic Year)

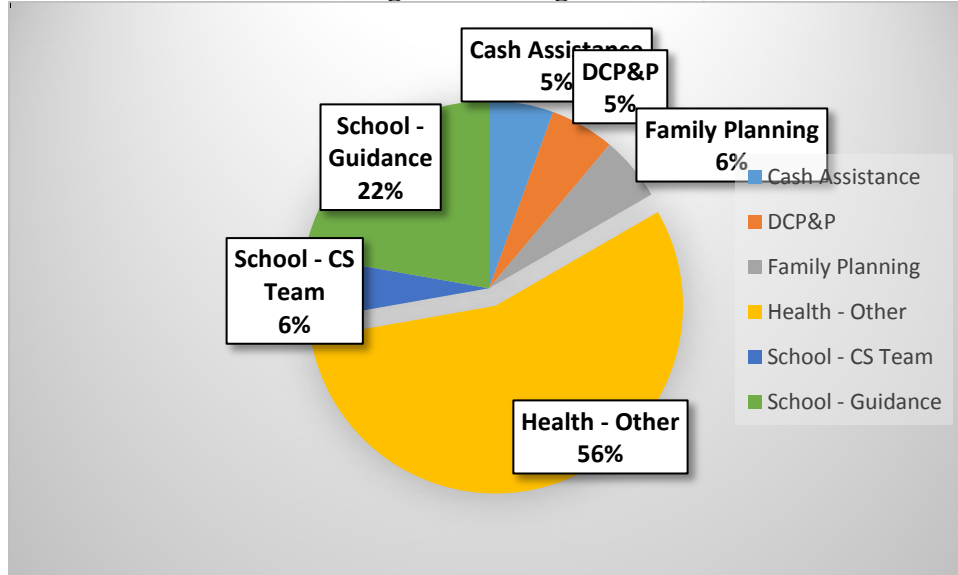
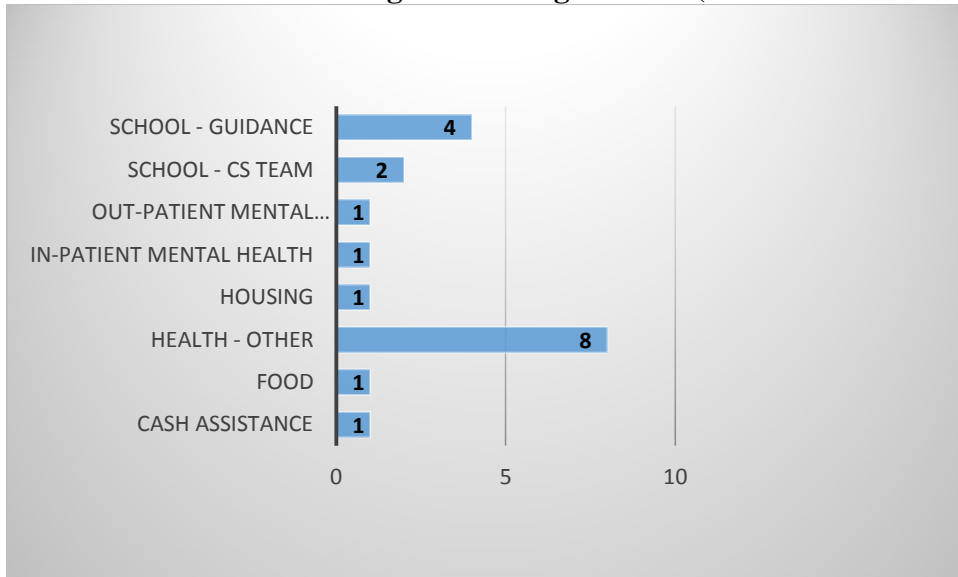


Chart 30: Referral Reasons: Long Branch High School (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, the predominant referral reason was health (56%) and in year 2012-13 the predominant referral reason was also health (42%).

Chart 31: Referral Reason: New Brunswick High School (2011-12 Academic Year)

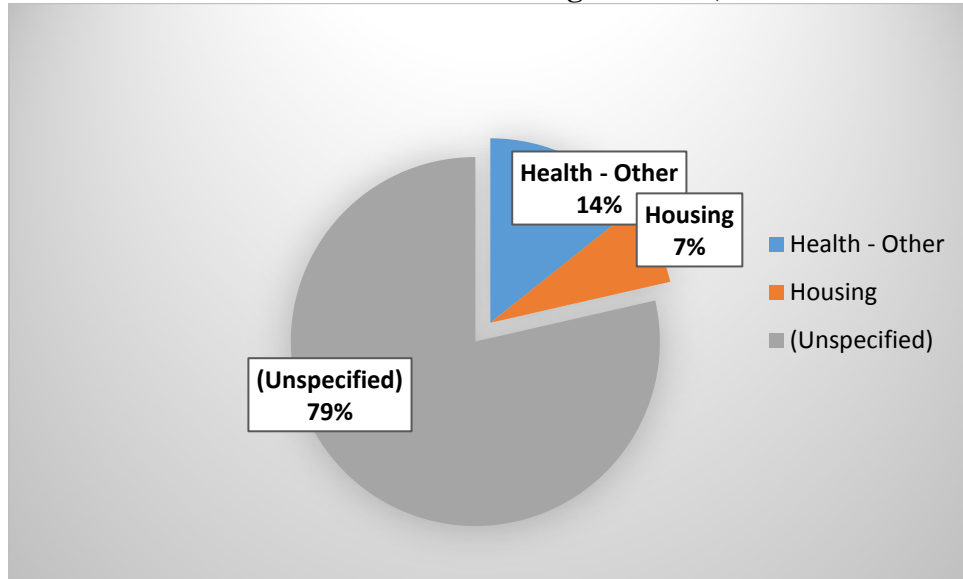
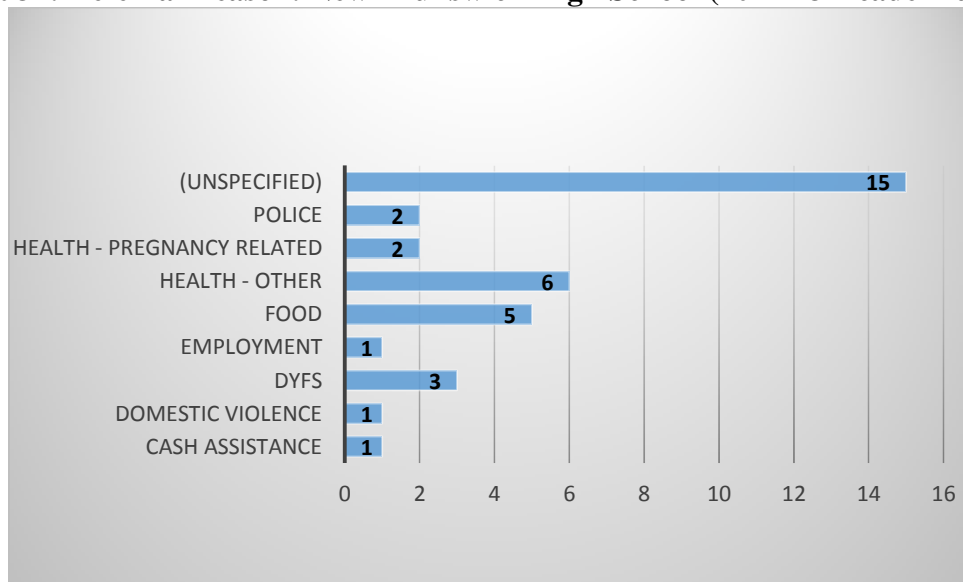


Chart 32: Referral Reason: New Brunswick High School (2012-13 Academic Year)



In both the academic years, unspecified reason was the predominant referral reason (79% and 42%, respectively)

Chart 33: Referral Reason: Passaic High School (2011-12 Academic Year)

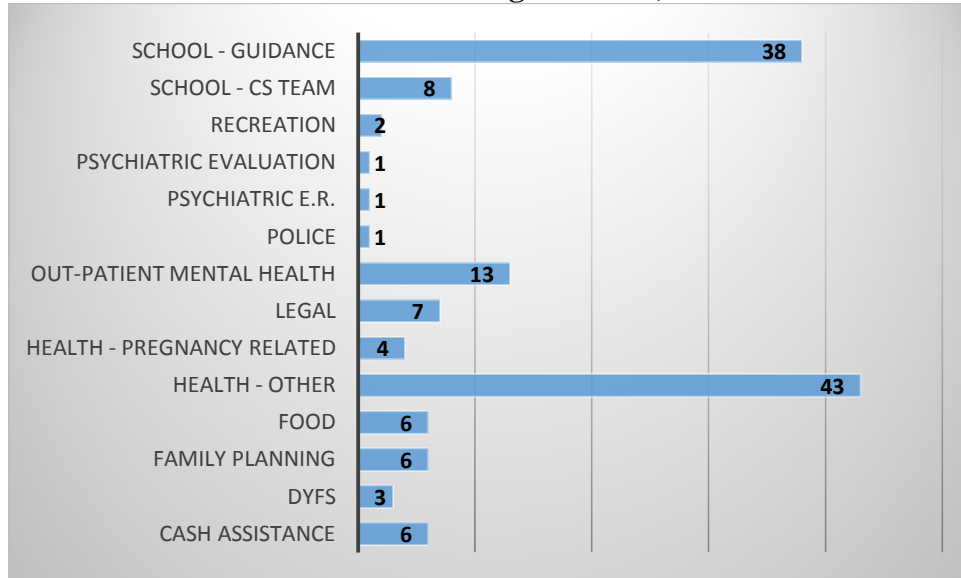
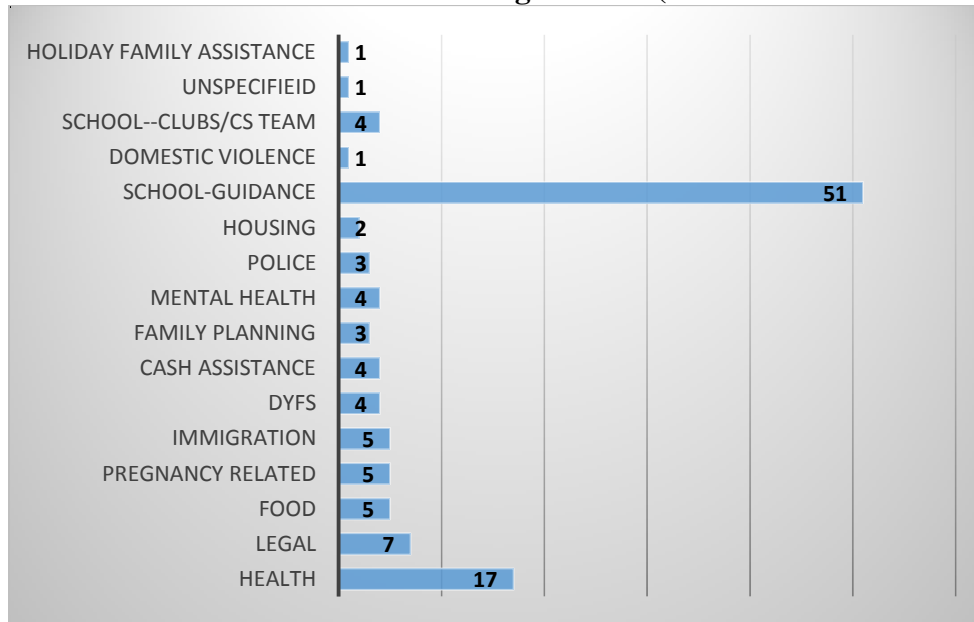


Chart 34: Referral Reason: Passaic High School (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, the predominant referral reason was health-other (N=43), followed by school-guidance (N=38) and in year 2012-13 the predominant referral reason was school-guidance (N=51), followed by health (N=17).

Chart 35: Referral Reason: Plainfield High School (2011-12 Academic Year)

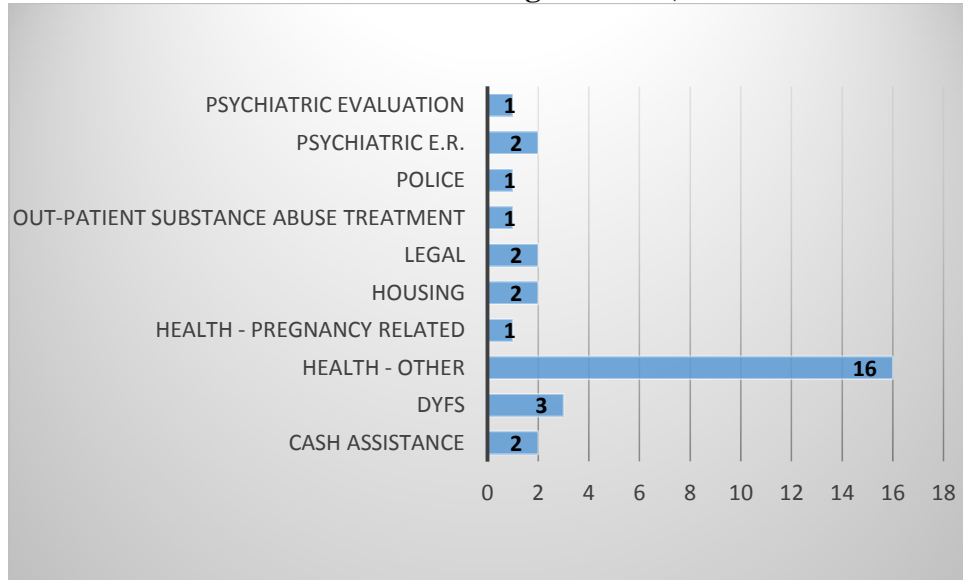
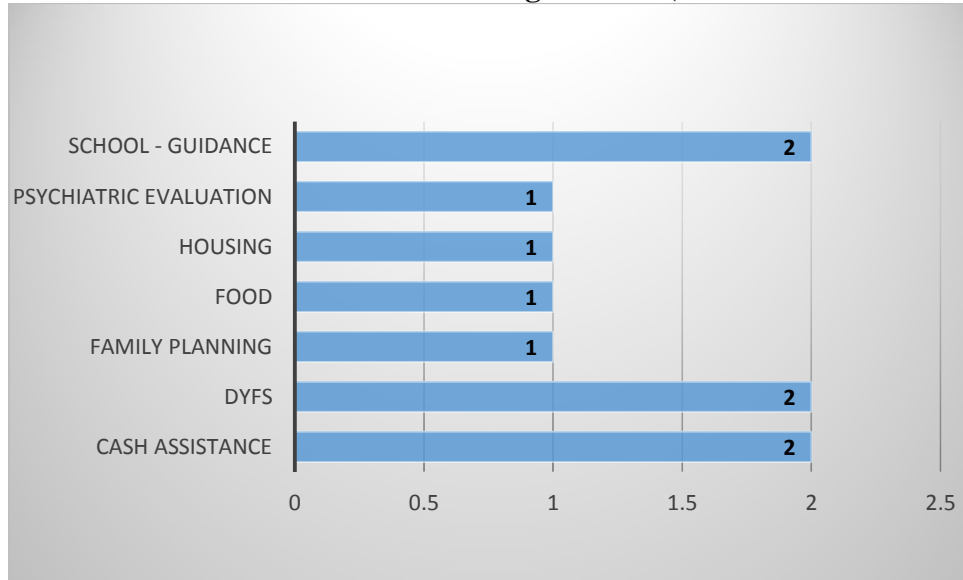


Chart 36: Referral Reason: Plainfield High School (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, the predominant referral reason for Plainfield High school was health-other (N=16) and in year 2012-13 school-guidance, DCP&P/DYFS, and cash assistance were the predominant referral reason at the same rate.

Chart 37: Referral Reason: Trenton Central High School (2011-12 Academic Year)

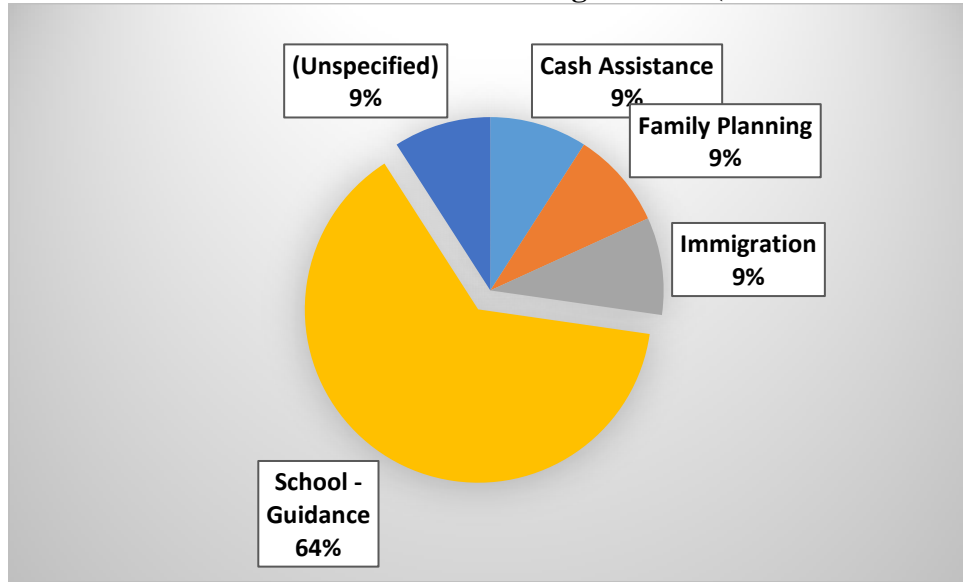
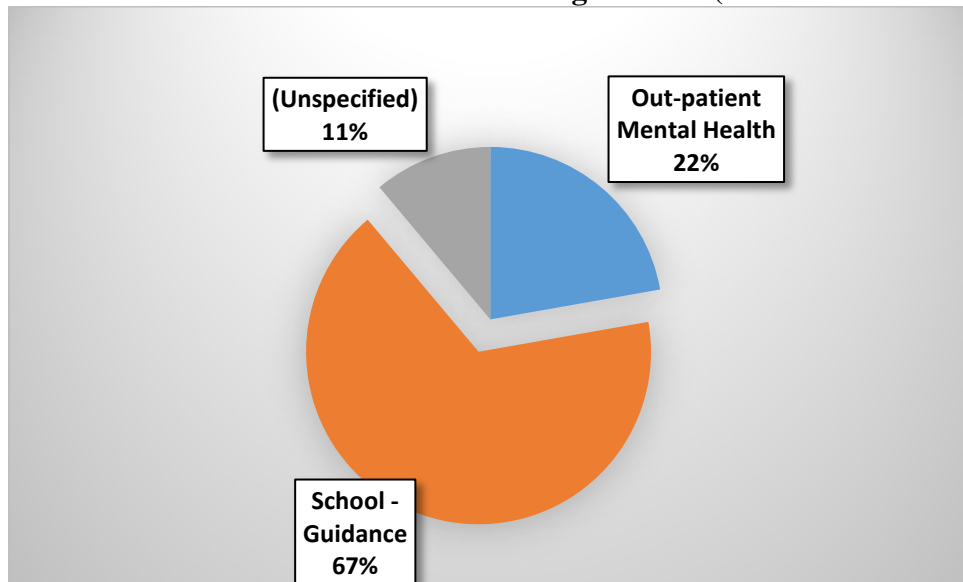


Chart 38: Referral Reason: Trenton Central High School (2012-13 Academic Year)



In both the academic years, school-guidance was the predominant referral reason (64% and 67 %, respectively).

Chart 39: Referral Reason Union City High School (2011-12 Academic Year)

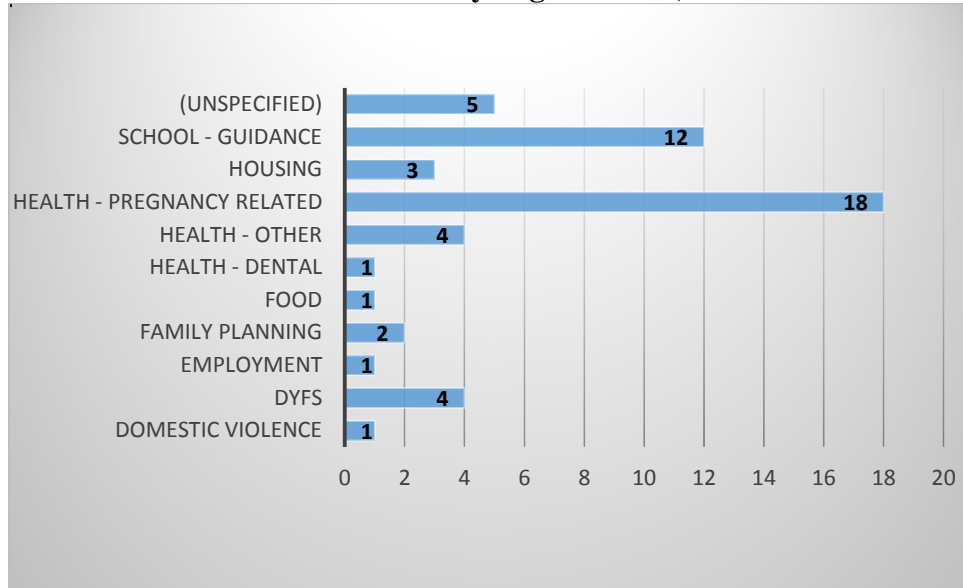
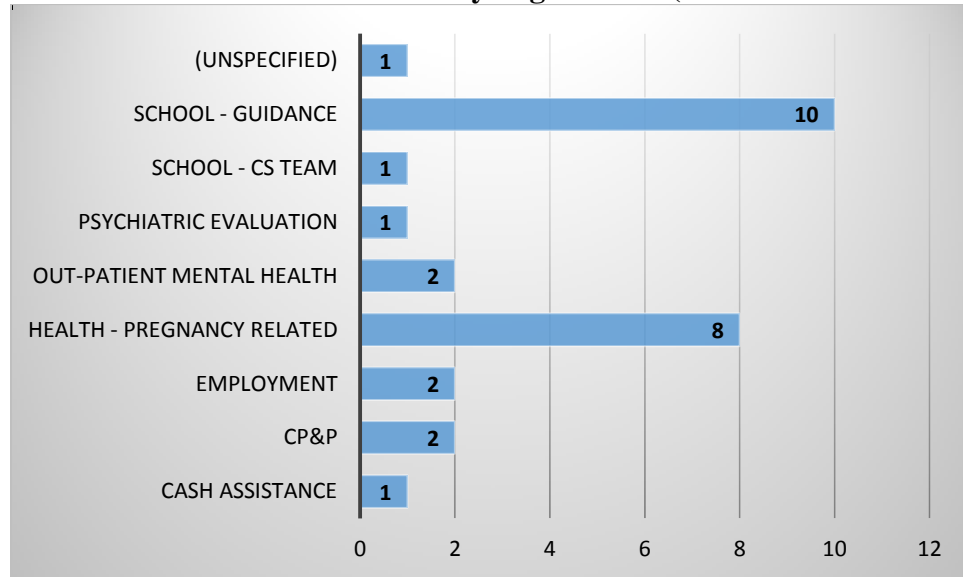
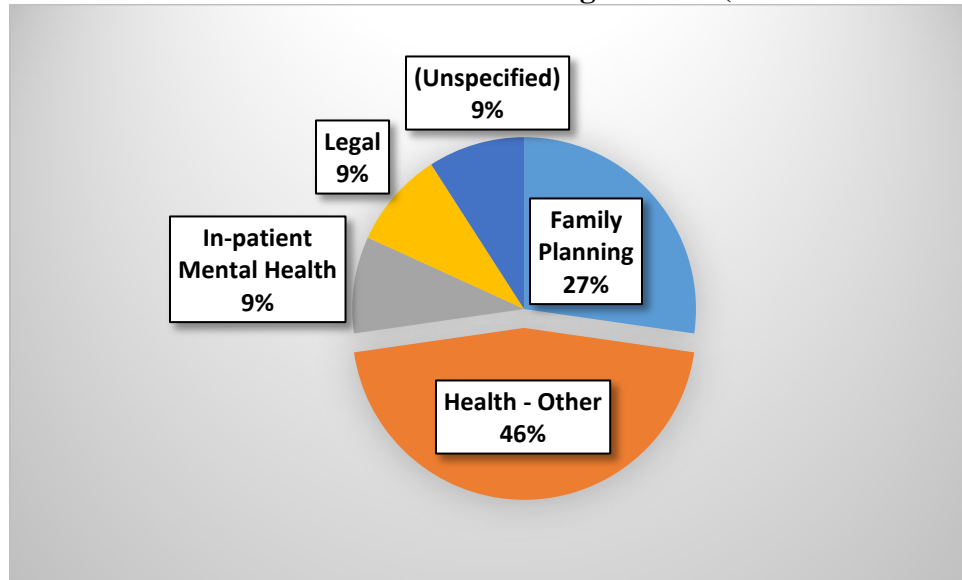
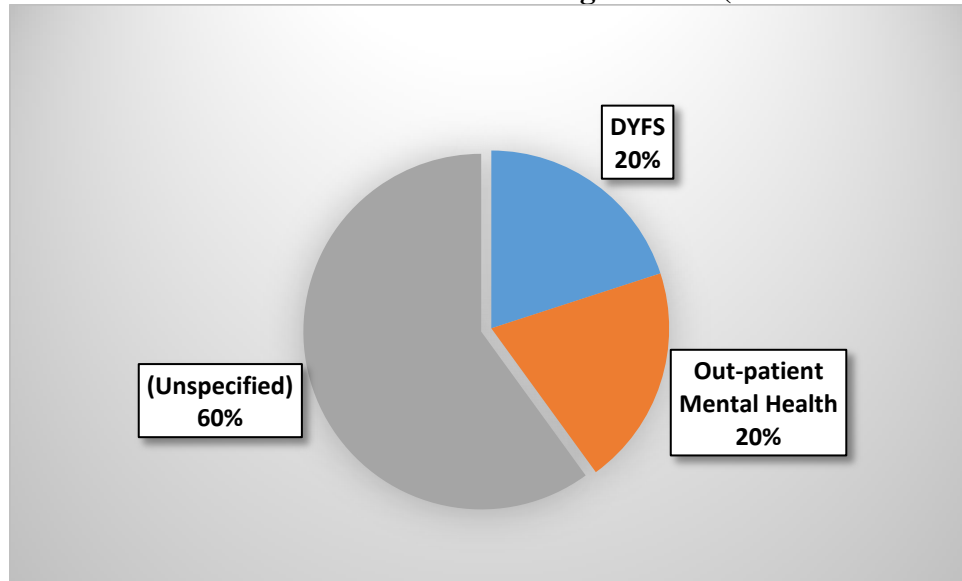


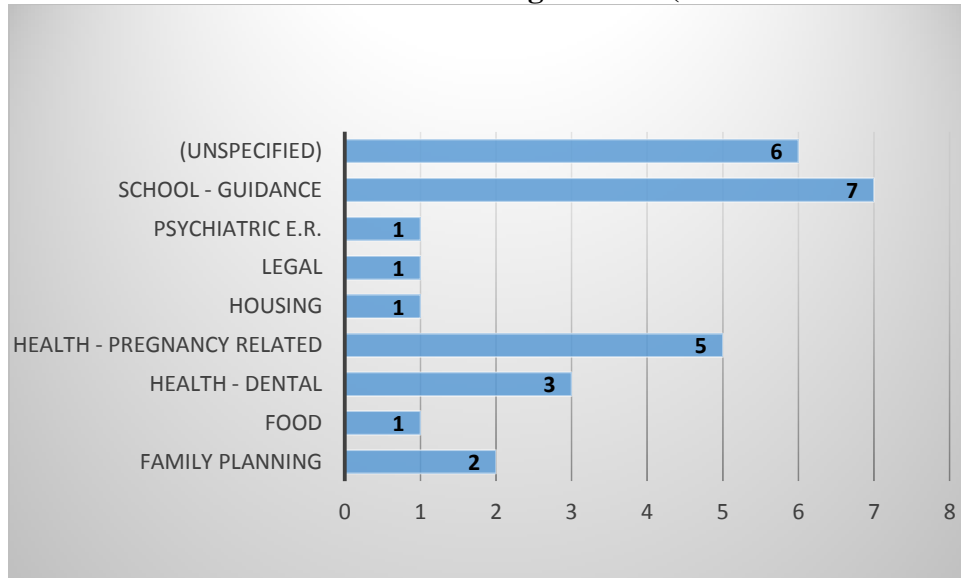
Chart 40: Referral Reason Union City High School (2012-13 Academic Year)



In year 2011-12, health-pregnancy related (N=18) was the predominant referral reason for Union City High School and in year 2012-13 school-guidance (N=10) was the predominant referral reason.

Chart 41: Referral Reason: Woodrow Wilson High School (2011-12 Academic Year)**Chart 42: Referral Reason: Woodrow Wilson High School (2012-13 Academic Year)**

In year 2011-12, the predominant referral reason was health-other (46%), followed by family planning (27%) and in year 2012-13 unspecified reason was the predominant referral reason (60%).

Chart 43: Referral Reasons: Vineland High School (2012-13 Academic Year)

In year 2012-13, the predominant referral reason was school-guidance (N=7), followed by unspecified (N=6) and health-pregnancy related (N=5). Note: There was no MIS data for Vineland School for the 2011-12 school year.

Summary of Program Services and Characteristics

With respect to the 2011-12 time period, the three high schools with the largest number of participants were: Passaic, Union City, and New Brunswick; Union City and New Brunswick also had the highest number of individual participant visits in 2011-2012, though Union City, Passaic, and Vineland had the highest number the following year. However, in 2012-13, most programs saw a notable increase in the number enrolled, including Vineland, Woodrow Wilson, Trenton, and JFK High Schools. All programs had comparable numbers of participants in group services, though New Brunswick and Vineland had the highest number of group sessions.

In 2011-12, the referral patterns across the programs reveal wide variability from site to site. For instance, Camden participant referrals comprised two categories: housing and family planning, while Long Branch, Passaic, Plainfield, and Pleasantville High Schools indicated referrals for health and family planning reasons. In contrast, in 2012-13, referral reasons were moderately more differentiated by each program. Health, family planning, and school guidance were the chief reasons for referrals, across the programs. In some programs such as Trenton Woodrow Wilson mental health also comprised significant referrals reasons.

Part 2:
Analysis & Summary of
Program Staff
Survey Data

Introduction and Demographic & Background Features of Respondents

In spring 2014, we invited over 20 program personnel, school administrators and other practitioner that support teen parents to complete an electronic survey via Survey Monkey about their perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of their respective PLP, the training and supervision they have received, and their reflections of working with program participants. Most of the brief survey was in a structured format, though some asked for respondents open-ended comments. The surveys were collected anonymously, and, in accordance with IRB requirements, respondents were not compensated for their participation. The data are examined collectively; that is, we do not identify any respondent by program affiliation (with the exception of noting how many responded from each program). A total of 16 staff from various programs responded to our invitation to complete the online survey. We should note that with a sample this small, the percentages for each result should be viewed cautiously, as it is easy to skew the percentages with the slightest change in the number of respondents to a given answer.

The age range of participants was from 24-67 years; with a mean age of 45. Most respondents were female (87.5%), and their race/ethnicity distribution included white (56.3%), Hispanic (31.3%), and African American (12.5%).

Table 1 indicates the program representation for all respondents; only two programs were not represented in this survey. Table 2 reflects the respondents' employment positions at their respective PLP program. Moreover, as conveyed in Table 3, most of the respondents have been in their current positions for more than 5 years.

Table 1. Program respondents (N=16)

	N	%
Passaic High School, Mental Health of Passaic-Baby Steps	4	25.0
Plainfield High School, Plainfield Teen Parenting Program	4	25.0
New Brunswick High School, Parent Infant Care Center	2	12.5
Union City High School, Parents Linking Parents	2	12.5
Camden High School, Partners in Parenting	1	6.3
Kennedy High School, Concerned Parents for Head Start	1	6.3
Vineland High School, Impact Center	1	6.3
Trenton Central High School, Teen Parenting Program	1	6.3
Woodrow Wilson High School, Partners in Parenting	0	0
Long Branch High School, Hand in Hand Infant/Toddler Program	0	0
TOTAL	16	100.0

Table 2. Respondents' Employment Position (N=16)

	N	%
Case Manager/ Counselor	5	31.3
Program Director/ Coordinator	3	18.8
SBYSP Director	3	18.8
Center Director	2	12.5
Head Teacher	1	6.3
Executive Director	1	6.3
Parent Educator	1	6.3
TOTAL	16	100.0

Table 3. How long have you been in current position (N=16)

	N	%
6 months or less	1	6.3
1-2 years	2	12.5
3-5 years	1	6.3
Longer than 5 years	12	75.0
TOTAL	16	100.0

Educational Background of Respondents: In Tables 4-6, we present the respondents' educational and professional licensure information. With one exception, respondents all held a bachelor's or master's degree (and the one exception held an Associate degree); most were in a field related to social work. In addition, 11 of the 16 respondents had earned specialized licenses or certification relevant to their positions.

Table 4. What is the highest degree that you hold? (N=16)

	N	%
High school diploma/ GED	0	0
Associate degree	1	6.3
Bachelor's degree	7	43.8
Master's degree	8	50.0
Ph. D./ doctorate	0	0
TOTAL	16	100.0

Table 5. Is your degree in social work, psychology, public health, or related field? (N=16)

	N	%
Yes	11	68.8
No	5	31.3
TOTAL	16	100.0

Table 6. Please indicate any additional certifications or licenses that you hold (n=11)

	n	%
Teachers Certification	3	27.3
30+Credits in Early Childhood Education Teaching Certificate in Preschool – 3 rd grade	1	9.1
NJ School Administrator, NJ Principal, NJ Elementary Teacher (N- 8)	1	9.1
Special Ed. Certification Standard Teaching License	1	9.1
Early Childhood Education Special Education K-12	1	9.1
CDA Director’s Academy	1	9.1
Credits towards master: MCRP	1	9.1
CSW	1	9.1
School Social Work Certification	1	9.1
TOTAL	11	100.0

Internal and External Structure

Internal Program Operations. Table 7 presents the results of a scale we devised to yield respondent feedback about the program logistics, capacity and staffing, and perceived relationships with DCF. Respondents provided only one response per question, and here we summarize across all respondents; the most frequent response for each question is bolded. In this section, we present the data in the tables first, and then briefly summarize the main findings for each domain following the tables.

In Table 8³, we present the respondents’ open-ended responses regarding “other attributes that you think are internal strengths of the PLP at your school.” In contrast, we also asked respondents to provide open-ended responses pertinent to “other attributes that you think are internal challenges for the PLP at your school,” which are summarized in Table 9.

³ As with other sections of this report, when summarizing respondents’ open-ended remarks, we present it as close to verbatim as possible, though some minor editing for clarity may occur.

Table 7. Internal characteristics

	Strongly Disagree n (%)	Mostly Disagree n (%)	Slightly Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Slightly Agree n (%)	Mostly Agree n (%)	Strongly Agree n (%)
The PLP has appropriately qualified staff to address the needs of the teen parents in our school (N=16)	2 (12.5)	---	---	---	1 (6.3)	2 (12.5)	11 (68.8)
The PLP has enough staff to address the number of teen parents that need to be served (n=15)	2 (13.3)	2 (13.3)	---	---	1 (6.7)	3 (20.0)	7 (46.7)
The PLP has sufficient supplies and support personnel (N=16)	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	2 (12.5)	---	2 (12.5)	6 (37.5)	4 (25.0)
The PLP has the support needed from the lead agency (N=16)	1 (6.3)	---	1 (6.3)	---	1 (6.3)	3 (18.8)	10 (62.5)
The PLP has the support needed from DCF (N=16)	2 (12.5)	---	1 (6.3)	---	4 (25.0)	4 (25.0)	5 (31.3)
The PLP has the minimum funding needed to do the work (N=16)	2 (12.5)	2 (12.5)	3 (18.8)	2 (12.5)	3 (18.8)	1 (6.3)	3 (18.8)
The PLP has effective/evidence-based curriculum and treatment approaches (N=16)	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	---	1 (6.3)	2 (12.5)	6 (37.5)	5 (31.3)
The PLP has the capacity to serve the youth that need services (n=15)	3 (20.0)	---	2 (13.3)	---	1 (6.7)	5 (33.3)	4 (26.7)

Table 8. Please describe other attributes that you think are internal strengths of the PLP at your school (n=11)

	n
Our program has a strong support from the parent daycare that funds half our program. Also the Mayor's office recognizes our program as an asset to the community	1
PLP is imbedded in the Districts SBYSP. This allows the program great flexibility in providing the support necessary for our children to have success	1
We have a number of community partners who enhance services to our program	1
The child care center is located in the school building.	2
School based youth services in high school with us principal and vice principals are very supportive of the program	1
We collaborated with outside agencies to provide parenting classes.	1
They are many local agencies that always keep PIC-C in the back of	1

their minds when donating items. We always seems to have donations coming in for the student parents	
High school staff are extremely supportive, lines of communication are open, school has a very positive outlook as to what the PLP program here and its staff are trying to accomplish, that are a great support system	1
The district has many programs that help students have success	1
Referrals from school nurse, and dropout prevention program/ Community programs where grandparents can be referred for supportive services	1
TOTAL	11

Table 9. Please describe other attributes that you think are internal challenges for the PLP at your school (n=14)

	n
Not enough funds and resources	4
Our city has many community challenges created by abject poverty	1
Do not have transportation	1
The violence in the city that impact many of the teen parents. Fathers of their children have been murdered which ultimately impact the participants	1
Lack of support services from the school when addressing students that are at risk of dropping out due to lack child care	1
Absentee fathers	1
Grandparents being paid to care for the babies instead of having the student participate in the program	1
The biggest challenge that I see is often getting family in support & participate in the program with their teen mom and involving the dads	1
There should be more office space available so that counselors can have their own space that students can come in cases such an emergencies and not have to look around.	1
High pregnancy rates inability to provide condoms in building	1
Teachers who do not support program and may hold it against teen parent	1
TOTAL	14

Internal characteristics. When asked about the extent to which respondents agreed with certain characteristics of the PLP programs, the most endorsed statements pertained to the qualified staff in the programs as well as the support received from the lead agencies. In addition, they offered open-ended feedback about programs' strengths, including the location of the child care center on site and that there is support from school personnel and school districts. In contrast, statements respondents were less in agreement with were that programs had adequate funding

and capacity to serve clients. Regarding open-ended commentary, challenges that the respondents noted about internal functioning again mostly pertained to funding and resources.

Table 10. What components/activities would you like to see changed or added to the program? (n=12)

	n
Internships that give them college credit-a bigger incentive to their education and help them feel valuable. Less formula approach to how we can assess program effectiveness. Every kid/culture does not fit the formula nor will the levels of success be equal.	1
How about a C.O.L.A. so that we can keep the talented staff that work so hard for our children	1
I would like to see our Child Care Centers funded as Parent/Child Centers with the ability and financing to support and enhance our efforts to Asset Build; Relationship Build; and generally celebrate our Adolescent Families	1
Larger center to service more students more participants from school	1
I would like to see the daycare expanded to accommodate all those students waiting to enter the day care center. Also I would like to see more funding in order to have more family oriented activities/experiences	1
Services for Teen parents should start at the middle school. These children have even greater need for support and assistance to remain in school and care for their babies	2
I think the students should be more active with their peers in the school. They spend their pathways group with us, lunch, and 2 days a week after school.	1
I feel the program needs a salary guide so that everyone is paid equally well for the outstanding work they do	1
More of a team effort to have a collaborative communication among ourselves regarding the students we serve	1
Involve SBYSP Directors in the state level conversations. PLP Coordinators go to the PCA meetings, SBYSP Directors go to SB meetings-but there is never talk about PLP at these meetings. I would like to see a quarterly or twice a school year PLP meetings where SBYSP Directors are invited in to participate	1
Inclusion of grandparents during initial intake and throughout academic year. Outdoor activities for children in daycare. Training for program caretakers	1
TOTAL	12

We also asked participants to describe what changes they envision for their respective programs. Their responses are summarized in Table 10. Some feedback pertained to changes they wish for

the student participants, such as starting program services at a younger age, while other comments suggest changes for staffing or program logistics.

External School and Community Characteristics. Following the section on internal characteristics, we followed up with a series of scales or questions about the programs' relationships with school and educational personnel, as well as the process of engaging youth for participation in their respective PLP programs.

In Table 11, we present the results of the respondents' answers about their perceptions of the external characteristics. The most frequent response is bolded and generally indicated that felt positive about the relationships between the programs and the general school personnel and administration.

Table 11. External characteristics (N=16)

	Strongly Disagree n (%)	Mostly Disagree n (%)	Slightly Disagree n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Slightly Agree n (%)	Mostly Agree n (%)	Strongly Agree n (%)
School administration provides the necessary support for the PLP	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	---	1 (6.3)	5 (31.3)	7 (43.8)
The PLP has a good relationship with teachers, school nurses etc..	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	---	1 (6.3)	6 (37.5)	6 (37.5)
Teachers/ school personnel seem to feel comfortable and knowledgeable of when to use PLP services	1 (6.3)	1 (6.3)	---	---	7 (43.8)	4 (25.0)	3 (18.8)

Engaging PLP Participants

In Table 12, we convey their perceptions about the process of engaging youth, and some of the logistic challenges that may interfere with their participation. Following this, we present open-ended responses about engaging youth and the activities they have implemented to do this.

Table 12. To what extent do you think the following factors contribute to challenges the PLP faces in attempting to serve youth?

	Never n (%)	Almost Never n (%)	Someti mes n (%)	Fairly Often n (%)	Very Often n (%)
Youth are not receptive when offered services (n=15)	---	6 (40.0)	7 (46.7)	2 (13.3)	---
Youth do not seek out services when needed (n=15)	---	4 (26.7)	8 (53.3)	3 (20.0)	---
Parents are not receptive (n=14)	---	5 (35.7)	7 (50.0)	---	2 (14.3)
Participants are not released from class or encouraged to use class time (n=15)	---	6 (40.0)	7 (46.7)	1 (6.7)	1 (6.7)
We have challenges with outreach/ referral procedures at our school (n=15)	2 (13.3)	9 (60.0)	3 (20.0)	1 (6.7)	---
Do you do anything specific to engage teen mothers in PLP services? (n=15)	---	---	2 (13.3)	4 (26.7)	9 (60.0)
Do you do anything specific to engage fathers in PLP services? (n=15)	---	---	7 (46.7)	7 (46.7)	1 (6.7)
Do you do anything specific to engage mothers' caregivers in PLP services? (n=15)	---	2 (13.3)	5 (33.3)	7 (46.7)	1 (6.7)
We do not have adequate staff resources to serve the youth that would need and accept our services (n=15)	1 (6.7)	9 (60.0)	2 (13.3)	2 (13.3)	1 (6.7)
We do not have challenges identifying and engaging the youth that need our services (n=15)	---	7 (46.7)	5 (33.3)	2 (13.3)	1 (6.7)
Our school is not clear about our services and often makes inappropriate referrals to the PLP (n=15)	7 (46.7)	6 (40.0)	2 (13.3)	---	---

Table 13. Please describe activities that the PLP engages in to facilitate positive youth development for the participants involved in services

	n
We have many relationship topics ranging from healthy relationships with the fathers to bonding with their babies and expectations. We offer budgeting and job preparation	1
Weekly group address many of the issues listed in this question	1
As well as Positive Parenting Skills, Life Skills, Individual and Family Counseling	1
Weekly group meetings as well as promoting the importance of family time	1
Group workshops once a week home visits/ caregivers in daycare encourage mom baby dad baby relationships	1
When we conduct our parenting groups, we schedule topics related to positive youth development	1
All of the above	1
We provide class 5 days a week and touch on the many areas. We include guest speakers, participating in a girls group with other high	1

school students, and one on one case management	
We have outside speakers come in to speak with the students regarding their health and development as well as their children. We also cover many topics in group sessions that are designed for the school year	1
Individual sessions with case manager/ caregivers are always available & site director	1
Parenting classes	1
Day care teachers are supportive of the student parent, and provide supportive advice and hands on education to the student parents. In the past they have done everything from showing a teen parent how to bathe their baby to how to handle diaper rash as well as how to calm babies during nebulizer treatments. Their roles as care providers for the babies allows them a closeness and trust with the student parents that does wonders in the educational aspect. Multiple staff members available to student for different reasons from day care staff, to Director, to counselors, to case managers-students are supported through every need they may have. The mandatory groups are great. It helps provide many educational opportunities for the students, and honestly-keep us on track to meet the requirements instead of becoming too “heavy” in one area. Empowerment-we proactive role play to encourage students to speak up for themselves. (school name deidentified) has a PLP student council-where the students meet-decide priorities, plan events ad advocate for themselves. The older students model for younger. Peer mentoring. Very informally-students support each other through motherhood. Strong expectations and standards.	1
Group for teens on parenting, child abuse prevention, academic growth, community resources, empowerment, relationships, pregnancy prevention. Speakers brought in the discuss topics.	1
TOTAL	13

Engaging Participants. Some obstacles include: occasionally not being released from class; and some difficulties with youth not being receptive or open to seeking services with PLPs. In addition, we asked them for open-ended feedback about program strategies for engaging youth in positive youth development (summarized in Table 13), and they provided snapshots of their innovative ideas. These include specialized group sessions, empowerment activities integrated into their educational opportunities, and pertinent guest speakers.

In Table 14, we convey their open-ended feedback about ideas for engaging them into the PLP, which ranges from pragmatic functions of the PLP such as having child care to working with school referral on outreach and recruitment. As shown in Table 15, most respondents asserted that the optimal time to engage participant’s was early in the student’s pregnancy.

Table 14. What has helped the PLP programs to engage youth? (n=13)

	n
Daycare center	4
Treating the participants with respect and love/ give them encouragement and praise and helping them grow from mistakes	1
Requirement of group session	1
Outreach/ Administration, teachers, counselors all know about our program and we often get connections or questions or referrals from all	2
Working with the students individually/ marketing strategies/ constant communication/ incentives	1
More staff, as in our recent hire	1
Overall awareness that we exist through the teachers, guidance, administrators, family members etc.	1
Strong staff support of the students	1
Training for staff who attend	1
TOTAL	13

Table 15. When is the best time to engage participants into the program? (n=15)

	n
Early and during pregnancy	12
Before pregnancy	1
It depends on the situation. If the student is pregnant we will reach out to them during their pregnancy and follow up after the birth of the child. If the student is requesting services and they have their child we will engage them	1
I think as long as they are interested in the program. It doesn't matter what part of their parenting journey they are in	1
TOTAL	15

In a final series of questions about engaging youth, we asked their candid feedback about strategies for engaging “reluctant” youth (Table 16), as well as their ideas for improving engagement at their school (Table 17). Regarding the former, they noted that the same strategies identified earlier are also generally successful with “reluctant” youth, especially once they make initial contact with them. Regarding the latter, strategies offered included working cooperatively with school administration and development of a marketing strategy for pregnant girls and dads.

Table 16. How have these engagement strategies worked with reluctant youth? (n=11)

	n
Pretty well, we are not a pushy staff. They come because they want to as much as because they need to. We are not a threat, and they value that it is then by their choice to be involved	1
Well we have a waiting list for our services	1
This is a difficult question. Up until this point we have been primarily funded to serve parenting teens who apply for the program in order to access child care and return to high school. Group activities and individual counseling require encouragement and relationship building to counteract the reluctance	1
Those who are reluctant to child care often participate in prenatal support	1
Often	1
Usually these strategies work with all types of students including reluctant students. At times we may have difficulty contacting them but once we have engaged them a better line of communication is establish making it easier to work with them	1
Very well	1
If they are reluctant, there is just a little more effort put into attracting them to the program. If they do not come down to receive the services, we cannot force them	1
Sometimes they will complete a referral just in case they change their mind	1
Staff are good at engaging students	1
When we have a third party connect us-it helps build trust/ By creating a network of supportive people	1
TOTAL	11

Table 17. What would you do to improve outreach and engagement efforts at your school? (n=11)

	n
I would offer food and incentive vouchers to trips they can take on the weekend with their babies All dreamy things not in any budget	1
NA not an issue for us	2
We are planning a marketing outreach for our pregnant teen and our teen dads	1
Have had meeting with teachers and administration	1
I would continue to expand on the marketing strategies and try to include the school staff more so they are aware of our program	1
We do not have the problem with outreach but I feel that the engagement and keeping the students on board who are not receiving child care is challenging. If there was an incentive for them, it would probably be helpful	1

I think that since we are always full and have an ongoing waiting list we are good	1
Have fun programming for them to attend	1
We do a good job already	1
Reach out to administrators to gain support	1
TOTAL	11

Supervision and Training

The next part of our survey pertained to respondents' perceptions of the training and supervision they have received for their positions. These results are presented in Tables 18—22. Please note that not everyone answered this question because they may have been in a supervisory or director role themselves. As shown in the tables, the ratings of the training and supervision is mixed. Their open-ended reflections provide useful feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their training and supervision and what they'd like to see changed. It is noteworthy that many respondents (seven) suggested more frequent on-site trainings and they'd like more trainings on working with caregivers and with school personnel. Additional feedback on specific topics for trainings is noted in Table 21.

Table 18. How would you rate the training for your specific role? (N=16)

	N
Not very effective or useful	1
Fairly effective	1
Pretty useful	2
Very useful and effective	8
N/A	3
No training for directors	1
TOTAL	16

Table 19. How would you rate the supervision, guidance, and feedback that is provided to staff? (N=16)

	N
Not very effective or useful	0
Fairly effective	2
Pretty useful	5
Very useful and effective	7
N/A	1
Missing	1
TOTAL	16

Table 20. What would you like to see changed or modified in how staff are trained for their roles? (n=11)

	N
More state flexibility with how the work gets done	1
I would like to see a greater focus on regional training provided at appropriate times and intervals so as to afford the opportunity to the maximum number of staff. Related to case management/counseling training offered by PCA is very limited	1
More trainings on specific topics in working with families and the schools and more frequent onsite trainings; also need training for caregivers and teachers	7
Staff development must be locally based-having training during the school day does not allow teachers to attend, as they need to be with the babies	1
Unsure what this is relating to. Training from the state or PCA or internal trainings? PCA does a great job of offering trainings to staff	1
TOTAL	11

The respondents noted the need for additional training support in their roles. The most frequent open-ended feedback included the desire for specified trainings (ideas offered are summarized in Table 21), as well as training for teachers and caregivers.

Table 21. What topics, issues, or ideas would you like more training on? (n=11)

	N
Finding appropriate day care for those students who cannot use the day care center	1
I'd like to get availability issues straight first, then we need to do a statewide training needs assessment based on staff roles and responsibilities	1
How to positively impact parenting teens	1
Working with teen parents issues with teen parents and their children boundaries when working with teen parents anything for caregiver to network with other caregivers from other PLP programs	1
Child sexual abuse, developmental issues and how to offer support to families, how to work with aggressive people, organization and motivational skills for staff, burnt out topics for staff	1
Poverty, boundary setting with teens	1
I think the staff that work in the classrooms should receive more sensitivity training and understanding how the teen brain works	1
CPR, domestic violence sighs, teacher-child interaction	1
Community, county and state resources	1
Adolescent development, infant and toddler development, play activities on infant and toddler stimulation, boundaries	1
TOTAL	11

Table 22. What would you like to see changed about how the staff are supervised? (n=10)

	N
Quarterly meetings	1
Weekly team meetings	1
I would like to see more supervision form the director for all staff	1
Supervisor is great	1
There needs to be better communication between PCA and DCF	1
Nothing	5
TOTAL	10

Regarding the supervisory structure of PLPs, for those who responded about desired changes, most replied that they did not want anything to change, though two respondents suggested additional weekly and quarterly meetings.

Overall Program Feedback

The final set of questions for the PLP staff pertained to garnering their open-ended feedback on the strengths (Table 23) and weaknesses (Table 24) of their respective PLP programs, as well as what they like most (Table 25) and least (Table 26) about working with PLP clients.

Table 23. What are the best attributes of the PLP program? (n=13)

	n
The day care service is the key. They have the ability to be in school and not worry about the baby for those eight hours	2
Very supportive program	3
The flexibility to meet our families where they are and appreciate the individual needs of our participants	1
Helping our teens create goals beyond high school and watching the positive impact the program has on the infants and toddlers	1
I love how this program offers so much support in so many different capacities. Students don't feel helpless and can actually achieve goals. Through the free child care and all the support/education services, students have the ability to grow as a person and as a parent. This program helps these students realize their full potential and that their dreams can still be a reality	1
The ability to help young mothers and fathers who have nowhere to turn	1
The best are our reputation and the assistance we provide the students with. Many of the students come here and fell a connection that they don't have anywhere else in the school. It is nice when we can really make an impact in a student's life	1
We provide a safe place for our 24 babies, we have been quite	1

successful with our graduation record, majority of seniors do continue their education, and our alumni are still dropping in with an update what they have accomplished. I think that we are doing the best we can to help both moms, dads and most importantly our beautiful babies.	
Located inside the high school	1
Teen parents what to learn and engage in more activities	1
TOTAL	13

Table 24. What would you like to see changed about the PLP program? (n = 12)

	n
Our specialists should have more authority in the program allocations and guidelines. They work closer with us and know what we do and what we need. More services for the graduates because sometimes they have difficulties with life after PLP.	2
Allowing us to work with pregnant students. No credit is given until we work with parent after delivery	1
More housing options for our families who are really struggling in their present living arrangements	1
More money for supplies help students with financial need quicker money to help with diapers of food readily accessible	2
More assistance (<i>not specified</i>)	1
Allow middle school students to receive services/ Increase funding so staff can get salary increases	1
At times we may have to bend the guidelines a little to do what we feel helps the parent & child through a difficult time	1
Better coordination from the state	1
Communication from state to program. Starting to see changes with monthly conference calls. Expansion to the middle school	1
Team work/ Grandparent involvement and teen father involvement encouraged	1
TOTAL	12

Respondents offered many positive comments about the PLP programs, again emphasizing the presence of daycare at the programs, but also including the supportive and flexible framework provided as well. At the same time, constructive feedback offered for improving the programs indicated the need for more resources and supports, and a desire for improved communication and coordination within the program and with external entities.

Table 25. What do you like most about working with the PLP participants? (n=15)

	N
I like to see them happy to be understood and supportive. When they get to that level of comfort in the program, I feel great too	1
That they have hope for the future	1
We learn every day from our families	1
Witness positive changes and greater bonds with mom and baby	1
Challenging job everyday something new love to help the student see the growth in them as parents and students	1
The ability to guide them regarding life choices as well as general parenting and seeing the changes they make throughout the time they are enrolled	1
I love to sit down with them in counseling sessions and meetings in order to help them out with their specific issues. I love to be able to provide an outlet for the students in all aspects	1
Helping them get a good start on parenting	1
How the participants are successful in completing school, caring for their babies and becoming successful	1
I find this to be a very rewarding job and I truly enjoy coming to work each day. Even on the tough day, it is still a lesson learned and an experience gained and I carry that with me each day	1
Mostly receptive to the fact they know we are there for them, we are not here to judge, we are here as a support system for them & their baby	1
Students feel comfortable and open up quickly	1
The individual growth of the teen parents	1
Students: they are amazing. They are resilient, and strong and great developing people	1
The healthy empowerment and growth of both teen and child	1
TOTAL	15

Table 26. What do you like least about working with PLP participants? (n=12)

	N
I don't like intruding so much. They feel like we're the police or something at the home visits. It never changes no matter that we tell them it's not that kind of visit. Also, I feel helpless sometimes. Not all situations are fixable, even if the teen really wants it, the families make it hard	1
Not enough state resources to help them become successful in life	2
Some teens refuse every intervention	1
Stressful students have many heartbreaking challenges to face	1
I don't like when their families make it difficult for the student to receive services, it makes it difficult to work with the student	1
I find it challenging to maintain their expectations of the grades and	1

attendance. I also would like to see every participant appreciate what they are getting. Some don't realize how lucky they are	
As teens I am always repeating certain things over & over which comes with the territory working with a large group of teenagers who are just that plus being a mom with all its new responsibilities	1
Not having my own desk area to see them and having my clients not feel comfortable sometimes	1
The struggle with having them understand the importance of this program and how important it is to take advantage of it, before they lose the opportunities	1
Nothing	2
TOTAL	12

In describing how the respondents' enjoyed working with program participants, many comments pertained to the joy of facilitating positive youth development and resilience in their participants. Still, some offered that there are challenges too, mostly reflecting the sometimes stressful circumstances of their day to day work.

Table 27. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us? (n=10)

	N
No	3
This is a great program/ It is so needed, and such a successful program to the students who are able to take advantage of it/ Happy to be working for it.	3
I have a wonderful group of caregivers who are devoted to their job but feel they are too often overlooked, underpaid and not appreciated for the outstanding work they are doing. As their director I make a point of thanking them for all they do and try in small ways to show this to them. They are the backbone in making the daycare a loving place for our babies and a support system for the teen moms.	1
TOTAL	7

Summary of Program Staff Survey Data:

Although we had a relatively low response rate to the survey, respondents provided candid and detailed feedback about the programs. The structured survey responses revealed that most felt positively about the program structure, how the programs relate to the large school environments, and about their outreach and engagement strategies with youth. That is not to say that the responses were uniformly positive, with the need for additional resources and funding identified as a chief challenge they are facing. Readers are advised to read the open-ended feedback for descriptive ideas for suggested changes, as well as comments about what has worked well in their programs. For instance, one respondent suggested that it would be helpful if

their program could serve *pregnant* mothers, and not have to wait until after they had given birth. Moreover, they offered many specific ideas for training needs. On the other hand, others commented that the comprehensive array of services they offered was quite valuable and allowed them flexibility to address participants' multiple needs.

Respondents also offered open-ended comments about the strengths of the programs, with the presence of child care services as one of the most frequent response in this regard. Respondents also noted many positive insights about working with this population such as enjoying facilitating positive youth development and resilience, and that they are happy to play a role in helping the young participants move forward with their lives.

Part 3:

Analysis and Summary of Data Collected from PLP Participants & Caregivers

Overview

As noted earlier, the heart of this project was to reach out to current PLP participants from all 10 programs and interview them about their current functioning, relationships with key people in their lives, knowledge of early childhood behavior, and feedback on their experiences with PLP services. Our intention was to also interview the caregivers of these young mothers (and fathers, too, if they were willing to participate).

While we did amass substantial data from those involved, we experienced several challenges in recruitment and were only able to interview 27 youth, and 7 caregivers, far fewer than we had hoped. And, for one program, we were unable to recruit any PLP participants at all. We have been able to identify some recruitment challenges. For instance, because the young women were mostly minors, per IRB regulations, it was necessary to collect informed consent from their legal caregivers. However, when we reached out to these caregivers, most of them were unaware of the project and thus did not want to participate (we had relied on the teen mothers providing their caregivers with a flyer about the project, which we later realized this probably did not consistently happen). In addition, some young mothers were also reluctant to talk with us about their experiences; some may have been relatively too young for a project like this and not comfortable talking with “strangers” about such sensitive material. Thus, we did expand our recruitment to former PLP participants (over the age of 18 years), who were more receptive to us, but this strategy was implemented late in the project cycle, and was not fully implemented across all program. Were we to conduct such a project again, we would likely approach fewer programs, and concentrate on different recruitment strategies (e.g., holding in-service sessions for caregivers) that were not feasible with this broader group of programs.

For those interviews that we did conduct, all were conducted individually and with a trained Research Assistant who was experienced with discussing sensitive topics with adolescents. Moreover, two of the RAs were fluent in Spanish and were instrumental in recruiting and interviewing Spanish speaking participants across all sites. We also benefited from a consultant to the project who was also fluent in Spanish who translated flyers, consent forms, interview materials, and other pertinent project materials into Spanish. All respondents in this phase were financially compensated for their participation. The interviews were conducted at a location of the respondent’s choosing—school; a public place such as a Starbucks, or at their homes. All data are confidential and we do not align any of the data with the respondent’s specific program.

Notwithstanding the issues with recruitment, the data summarized herein do tell an important story about these young parents’ involvement with PLPs, and about their self-assessments. We are also grateful to the few caregivers who provided some descriptive feedback as well.

Demographics

We interviewed 24 young mothers and three (3) fathers. The age range of all respondents was 15 to 27 years. Fifteen of the youth identified as “black or African American,” while 12 identified as Hispanic/Latino race or ethnicity. In addition, one Hispanic youth offered that she was of Dominican descent.

Most of the mothers had one child, though three mothers had two children, and one mother had three.

The following tables reveal the respondents’ perceptions about whom they consider to be their caregivers (Table 28). In this question to the youth, we let them self-identify who they perceived as their primary caregiver, if they felt they had a caregiver in their life. Most indicated that their biological mothers were their primary caregiver, though several others noted grandmothers, fathers, and foster parents as well. Three youth declined to answer the question. The following question pertained to identifying the specific PLP program they were affiliated with (Table 29).

Table 28: Respondents’ Caregivers (n = 24)

	N	%
Biological mom	15	62.5
Independent/on own/no caregiver	5	20.8
Biological mom and dad	2	8.3
Mother and grandmother	1	4.2
Foster mother	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

Table 29: PLP Program Participation (N = 27)

	N	%
Camden High School, Partners in Parenting	2	7.4
Kennedy High School, Concerned Parents for Head Start	0	0
Long Branch High School, Hand in Hand Infant/Toddler Program	5	18.5
New Brunswick High School, Parent Infant Care Center	2	7.4
Passaic High School, Mental Health of Passaic-Baby Steps	2	7.4
Plainfield High School, Plainfield Teen Parenting Program	2	7.4
Trenton Central High School, Teen Parenting Program	7	26.0
Union City High School, Parents Linking Parents	1	3.7
Vineland High School, Impact Center	3	11.1
Woodrow Wilson High School, Partners in Parenting	3	11.1
TOTAL	27	100.0

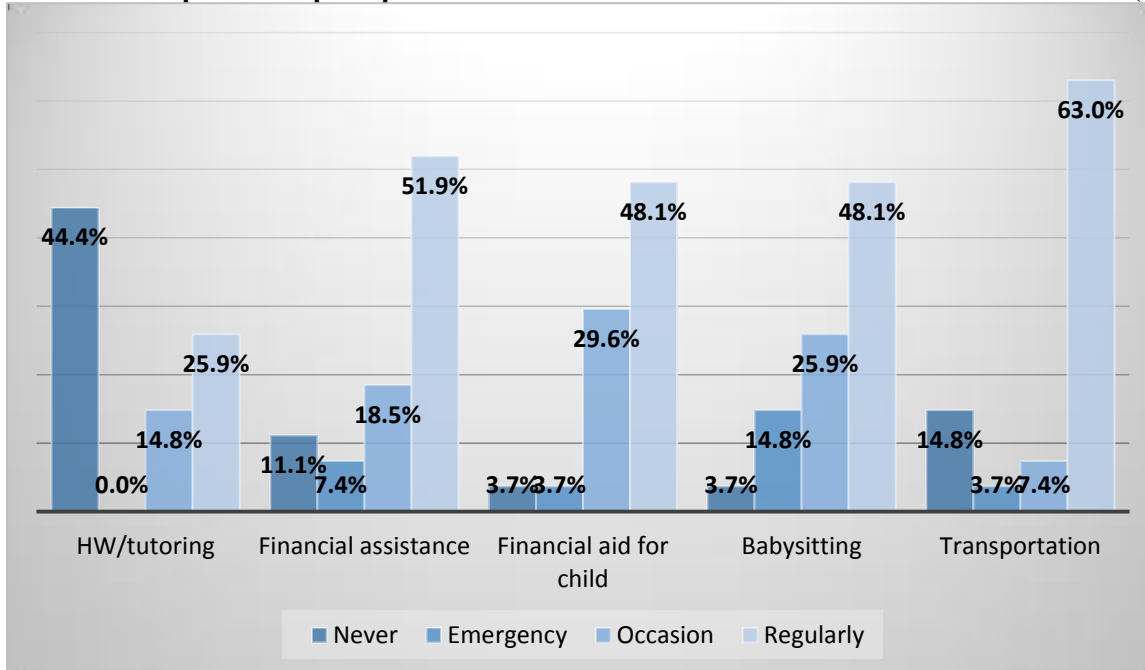
Current Living Situation

Most young parents report stable presence in these living situations, with 40.7% living in their current residence for 5 years or longer (Table 30). In addition, 18 of the youth (66.7%) report being “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their living arrangement (data not shown). Reasons contributing to their satisfaction included: feeling safe; having own space for her and her child; feeling supported with child care; and getting assistance from caregivers. However, four youth also noted that they were dissatisfied with this arrangement because of lack of safety. One youth offered that the reason she liked her living situation was: *It is safe for my daughter; it is quiet, and I don't have to worry about shootings or kidnappings.*

Table 30: Description of current residence (N = 27)

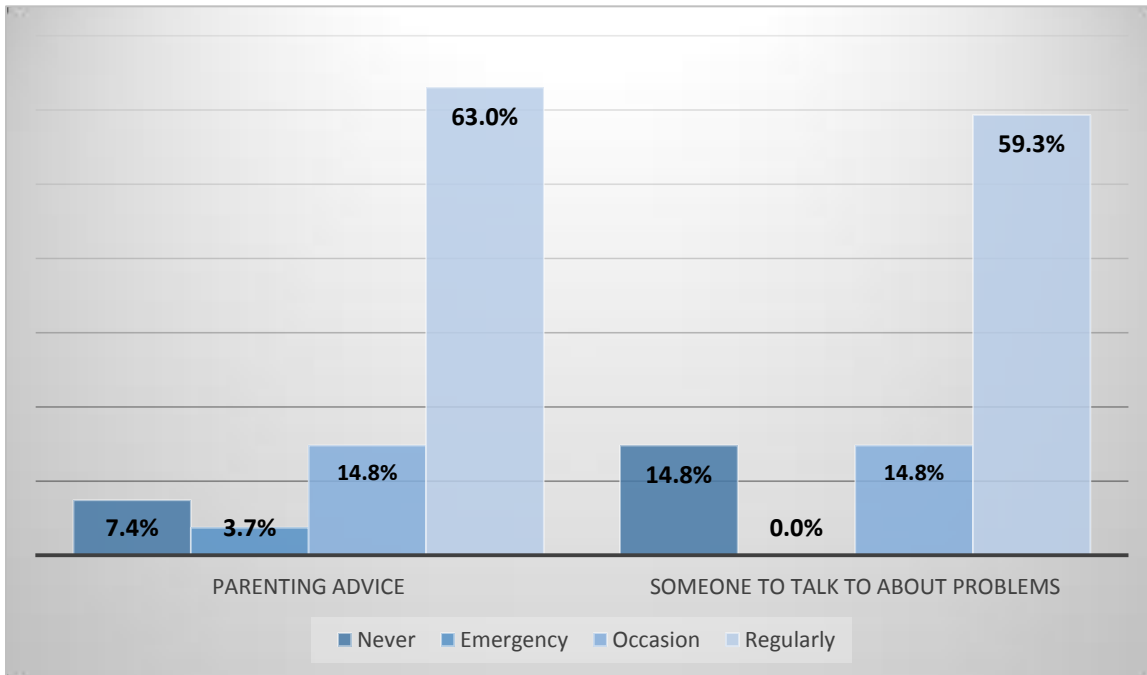
	N	%
With biological relatives/parents	17	63.0
With foster parents/family	1	3.7
In own/shared apartment	4	14.8
With spouse/partner	4	14.8
Other	1	3.7
Total	27	100.0

Chart 44: Respondents’ perceptions of concrete assistance from co-residents⁴ in the home (n = 24)



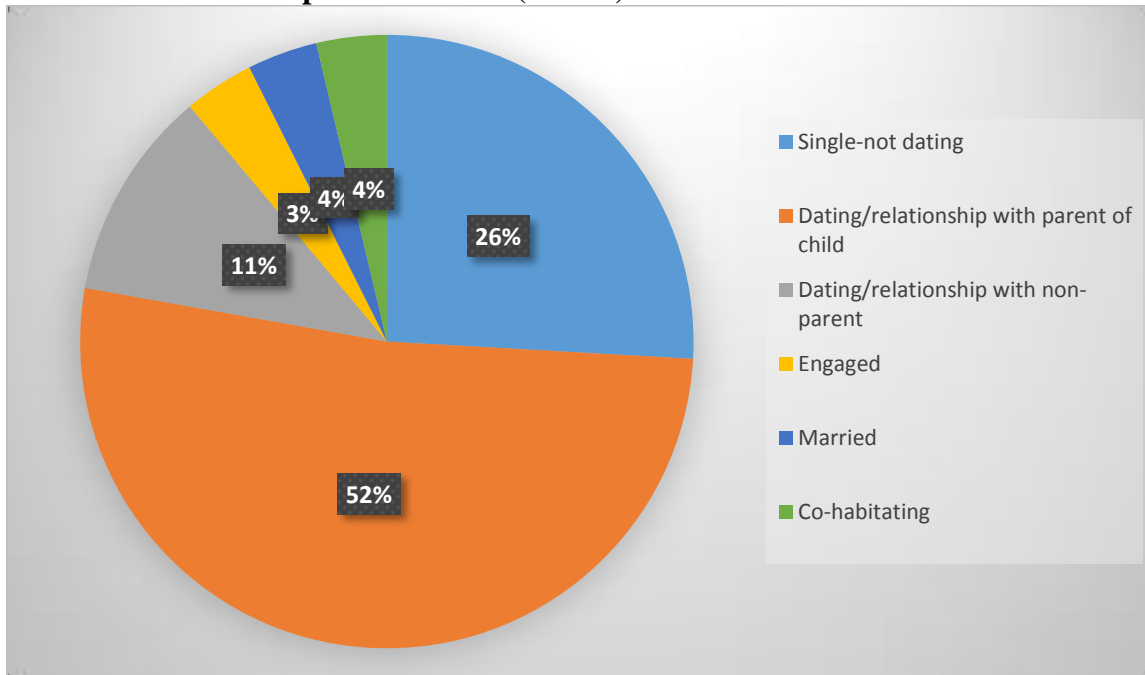
⁴ The term co-residents refers to those who are living in the home with the respondents. These may be relatives, but may also include non-family members as well. Each respondent identified co-residents as they wished.

Chart 45: Respondents' perceptions of interactions involving personal discussions and advice (n = 24)



Relationship Status and Sexual Activity

In this section we talked to the youth about their current romantic relationships status, including whether they were involved with their children’s father(s) or mother(s). We also explored their historical and current sexual activity, including the extent to which they use birth control.

Chart 46: Relationship status of teen (N = 27)

Sixteen youth respondents reported that they were in a relationship with the father or mother of their child; eight of these youth reported that they were living with this person.

Regarding the sexual activity of these youth. Most youth (19 youth or 70.4% of respondents) reported that they had been pregnant (or had gotten someone else pregnant, if it was a male respondent) one time. Two youth had been pregnant twice, two had been pregnant three times, and two youth had been pregnant five times. In addition, one youth was currently pregnant⁵.

The charts below indicate characteristics of their sexual activity, including the age at which they first became sexually active, as well as their most recent sexual history. We also asked them about the use of birth control.

⁵ Please note that some of the multiple pregnancies and births may have been stated by some of the older respondents in this survey who are no longer involved in the program. Due to the relatively low number of respondents, we do not identify whether these were program youth or graduates as this may inadvertently breach their confidentiality.

Chart 47: Age at which respondents first engaged in sexual intercourse (N = 27)

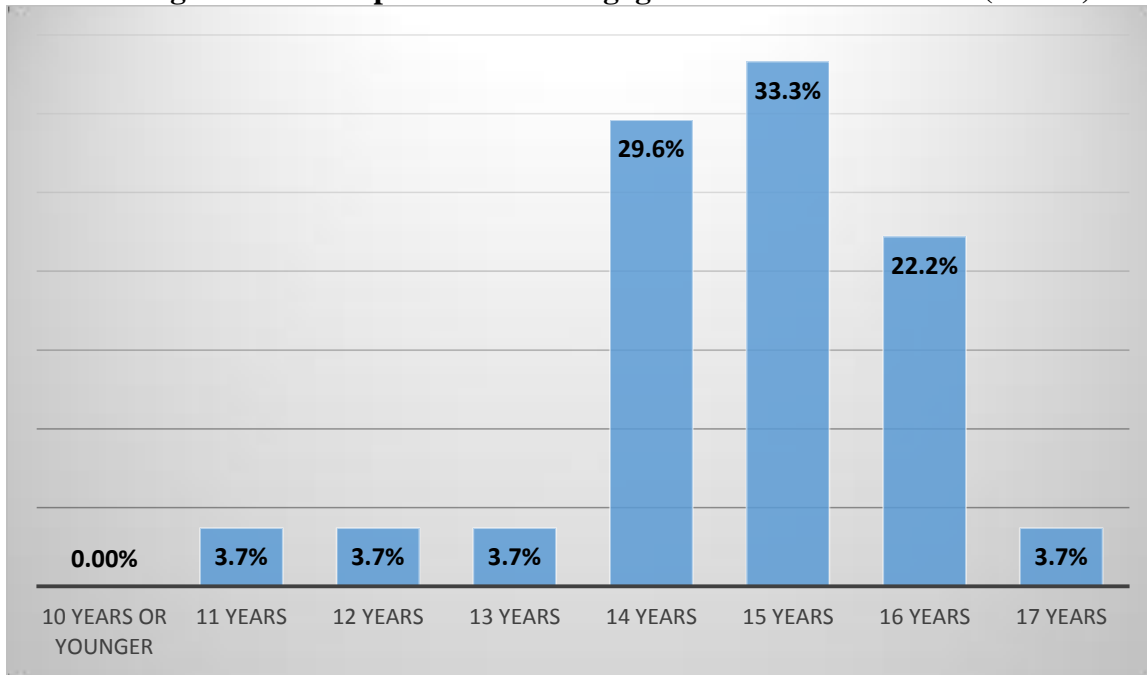


Chart 48: Number of sexual partners throughout their lives (N = 27)

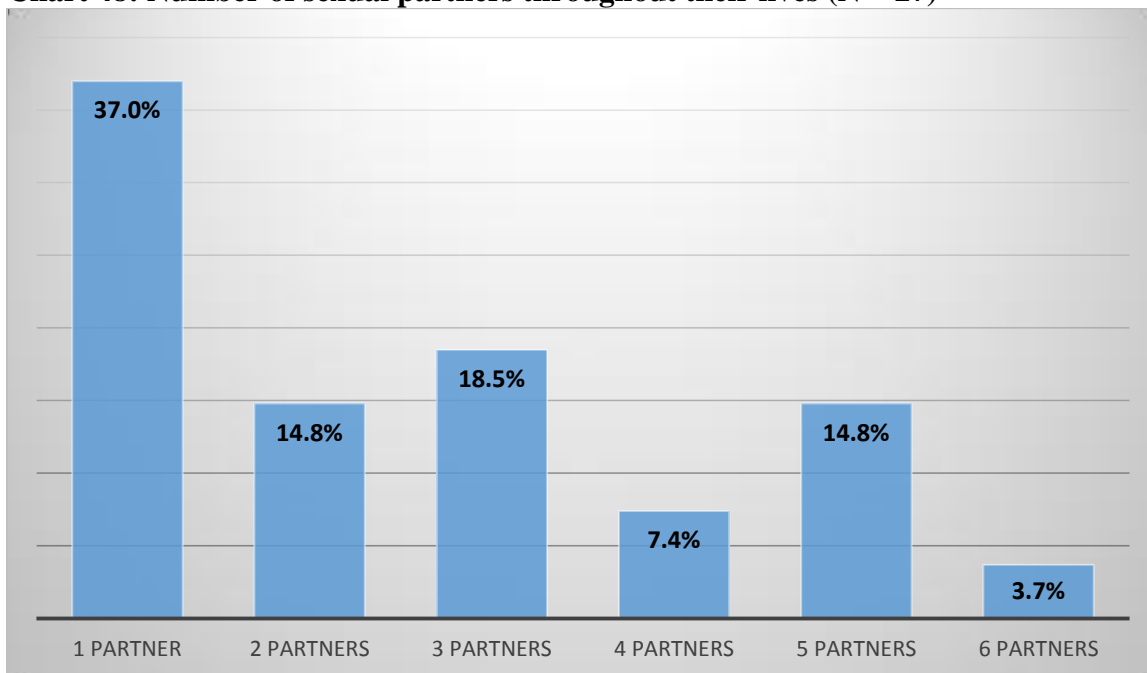
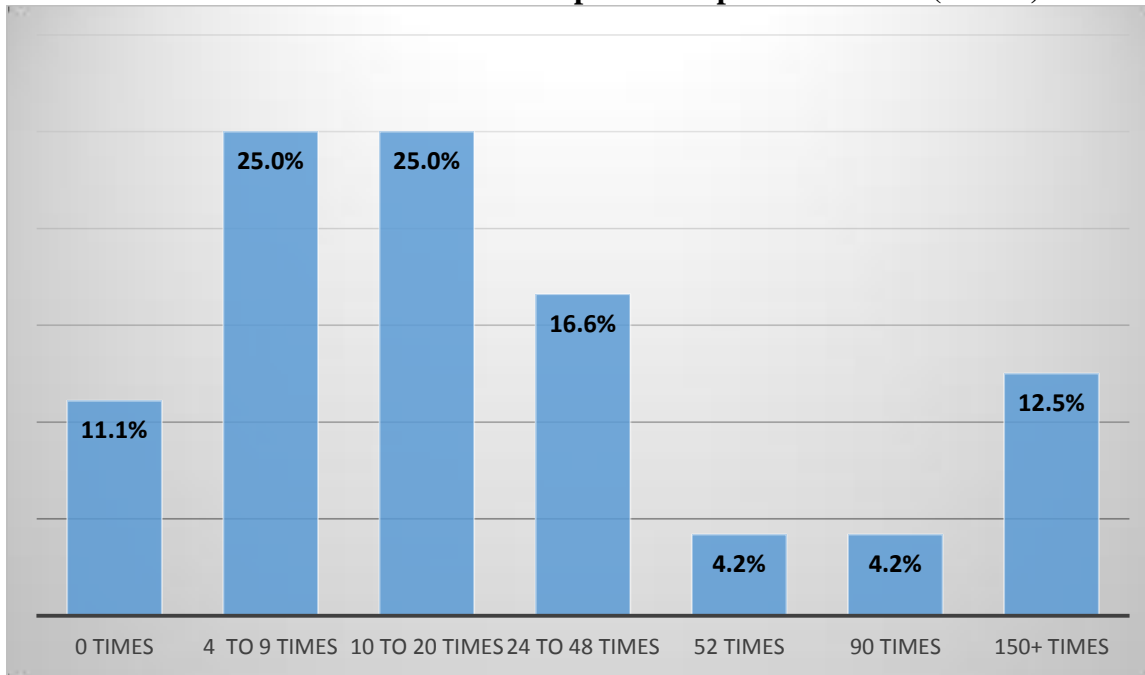
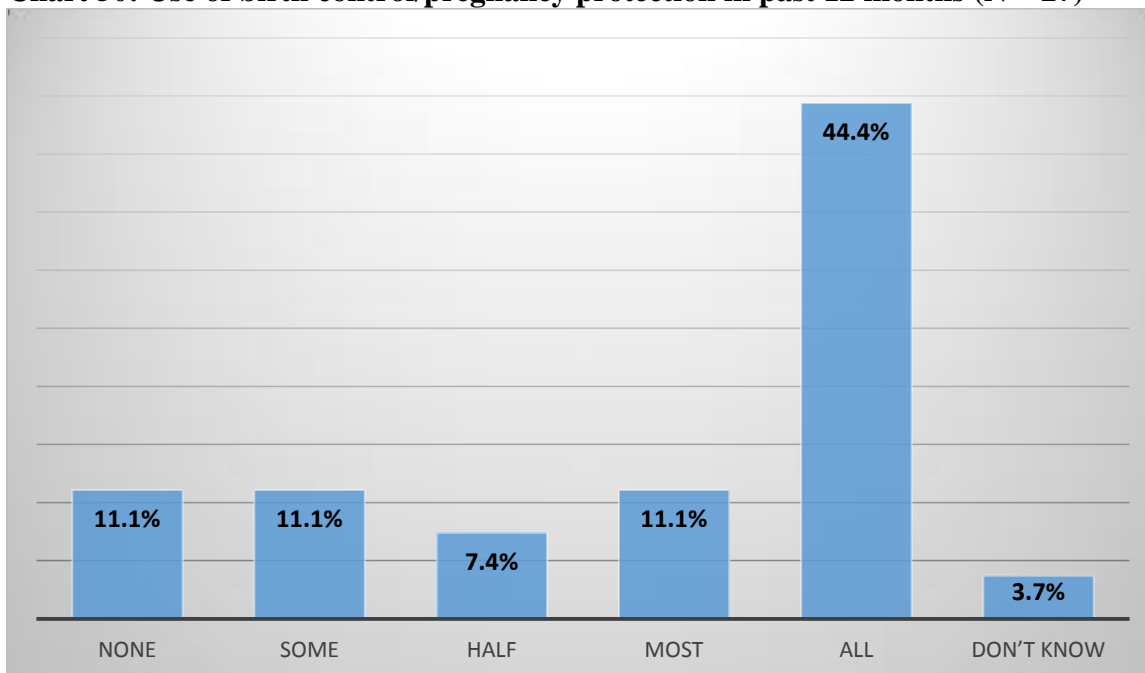


Chart 49: Number of sexual intercourse episodes in past 12 months (N = 27)



For those who had sexual intercourse in the past 12 months, the majority of youth reported that they had one sexual partner; two youth reported having two sexual partners.

Chart 50: Use of birth control/pregnancy protection in past 12 months (N = 27)



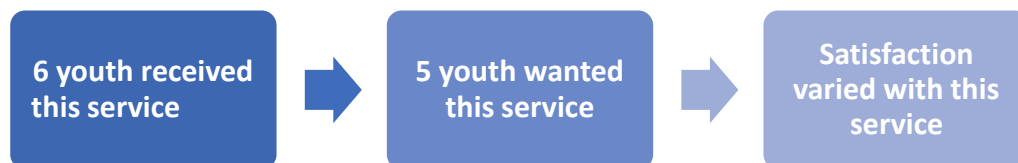
We further asked about their use of birth control for their most **recent** sexual intercourse experience (data not shown) In response, seven (7) youth reported that they did not use some form of birth control, while 19 indicated that they had (one youth did not know).

School Performance

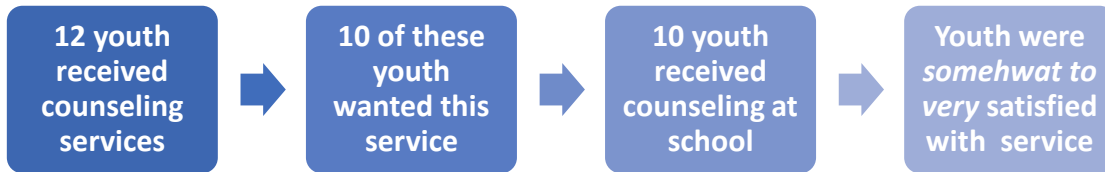
Of the 27 youth interviewed, seven had graduated high school, 11 were in the 12th grade, 6 in the 11th, and the other three were in the 9th or 10th grade. Their self-reported grades were quite positive with most earning a B or A average (59.3% and 18.5%, respectively). However, 16 youth indicated that they had repeated a school grade in their academic careers. In addition, nine youth noted that in the previous academic year, they had failed a course.

The following graphics indicate the youths' responses to the services they have received in school (distinct from services received specifically from the PLP programs, which will be described later in this section). We asked the youth if they had received specific services, whether or not they had wanted to receive this service, and what their satisfaction was with service receipt. We also asked about where they received this service, which, with one exception, was primarily through or at the school.

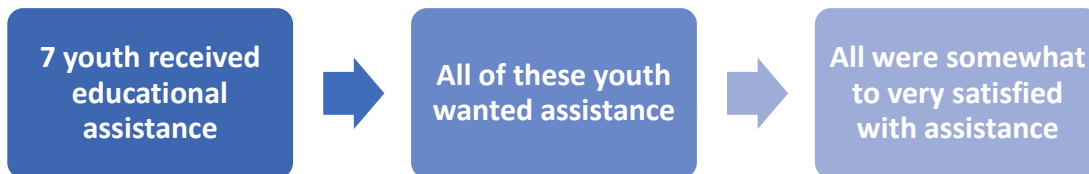
➤ Tutoring Services



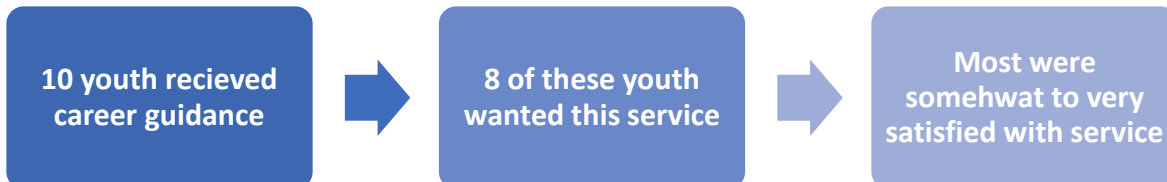
➤ **Counseling Services**



➤ **Educational Services**



➤ **Career Guidance**



➤ **Transportation Services**



➤ **Regarding services they wish they had received, youth respondents indicated the following:**

- Parenting skills (3 youth)
- Childcare services (4 youth)
- Newborn care services (5 youth)
- Counseling services pertaining to pregnancy (4 youth)
- Transportation services while pregnant (4 youth)
- Financial assistance (3 youth)

➤ **The reasons offered for failure to receive these services included:**

- Lack of knowledge about the service (9 youth)
- Did not qualify (1 youth)
- Conflict with school (1 youth)
- Financial constraints (1 youth)
- Service was not offered (8 youth)
- Ineligible due to age (2 youth)

Future Goals & Aspirations:

In this section we asked youth to describe their overall career and academic goals, as well as how they envision their lives five years hence. With respect to their **career goals**, the youth provided the following open-ended responses, which we summarized and categorized according to common themes:

Health related field

- *To become a registered nurse (4 youth)*
- *A labor and delivery RN/ OB GYN nurse at RWJ (2 youth)*
- *Medical Assistant*
- *Radiology and home health aid*
- *Respiratory therapy or physical therapy at Rutgers. I just want to graduate and make it. I became interested in that career from school helping with college searching.*
- *Nursing/radiology; very into broadcasting, as well; deciding between three colleges.*
- *I want to go to a 2 year college so I can get a job in sonogram diagnostic office and continue college after that*

Legal field

- *I want to go to Camden County for two years and then join the police academy to become a police officer. 10 years from now, I want to be a Marshall.*
- *Police Officer*
- *FBI agent (2 youth); I want to get my bachelor's degree in criminal justice at Rutgers.*
- *Criminal justice / police officer*

Psychology/Social Work

- *A child Psychologist*
- *Earn masters in criminal psychology*
- *To get a degree in Psychology, get Masters; go to law school for 2 years to see if I like it. Work with children and police force*
- *Want to be a social worker for DCP+P - or wants to become a cop -might want to be a special education teacher*
- *To become a Social Worker*

Education

- *To get my bachelors in early childhood, to work with preschool kids for board of education. I want to be a director of a childcare center. I want to get my masters.*

Design/Planning/Other

- *Wedding Planner*
- *I want to be a fashion designer or illustrate books and become an author. I really want to be an author.*
- *Have my cosmetology license, graduate from high school, work part time then go to college. I'll start with 2 year college and then continue. Go for business and open my own shop/salon.*

- *Work in a bank*
- **Where do you see yourself 5 years from now?**
 - *I see myself as an RN and active and supportive parent to a 9 year old*
 - *My house, have a BA in RN. Taking care of me and my daughter. we will be settled.*
 - *As a social worker , a wife and a mom*
 - *working at hospital or doctor's office*
 - *Finishing college*
 - *in college ; hopefully getting a job in nursing*
 - *In 5 years I should be a metro police officer for Camden NJ.*
 - *In a house, married with my daughter. My own car & dreams. Doing what I get to do for myself.*
 - *Seeking job opportunities for career*
 - *A successful cop*
 - *I could see myself closer to God in 5 years.*
 - *-Want to get own business to be my own boss*
 - *College!*
 - *With a business, career, and a house*
 - *In my own house with my own job and car.*
 - *In a classroom teaching. Finished school and prepare my kids for college.*
 - *To have a permanent career*
 - *Community college, studying to be a nurse*
 - *In my own place with a job and in school*
 - *Graduating college, having a job, being stable and happy*
 - *Getting my own house, in college, get a job and all that*
 - *I see myself working at a job. Have finished 2 years of college and probably get my tubes tied.*
 - *Working with a car, house, and travelling the world*
 - *Graduating from college, looking for a job*
 - *Employment in the health field with a nice car and a place of her own*
 - *Still in college with my own house and car settled down with somebody*
 - *Working at the hospital and having a house where I can live with my daughter*

Mentoring

We then asked the youth about the presence of mentors in their lives. Twenty of the youth respondents answered affirmatively that they had a mentor in their life. We left this term or

concept up to the youth to define and we accepted whatever definition they offered. They described these mentors as⁶:

- Current/former coach (1 youth)
- Religious/spiritual leader (1 youth)
- PLP program personnel (5 youth)
- A relative (16 youth)
- Foster parent (1 youth)
- Best friend (1 youth)
- Boyfriend (1 youth)

Table 31 is a summary of their responses to a standardized scale entitled the *Youth-Mentor Relationship Questionnaire* that measures different attributes of their relationships with their mentors. The most frequent response from each question is bolded. As noted in this table, most indicated very favorable responses about these relationships.

Table 31: Youth-Mentor Relationship Questionnaire

	Never % (n)	Seldom % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Often % (n)	Always % (n)
I can be genuinely myself with my mentor (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	4.8 (1)	85.7 (18)
I believe my mentor values me as a whole person (e.g. professionally/academically and personally) (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.8 (1)	0 (0)	95.2 (20)
My mentor's commitment to and involvement in our relationship exceeds that required by his/her social/professional role (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	14.3 (3)	76.2 (16)
My mentor shares stories about his/her own experiences with me in a way that enhances my life (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	14.3 (3)	76.2 (16)
I feel as though I know myself better because of my mentor (n=20)	0 (0)	5.0 (1)	15.0 (3)	10.0 (2)	70.0 (14)
My mentor gives me emotional support and encouragement (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	4.8 (1)	85.7 (18)
I try to emulate the values of my mentor (such as social, academic, religious, physical/athletic) (n=21)	4.8 (1)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	28.6 (6)	57.1 (12)
I feel uplifted and energized by interactions with my mentor (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	4.8 (1)	85.7 (18)
My mentor tries hard to understand my feelings and goals (academic, personal, or whatever is relevant) (n=21)	9.5 (2)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	9.5 (2)	71.4 (15)

⁶ Please note that they could count more than one person as a mentor

My relationship with my mentor inspires me to seek other relationships like this one (n=21)	9.5 (2)	0 (0)	14.3 (3)	0 (0)	76.2 (16)
I feel comfortable expressing my deepest concerns to my mentor (n=21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	9.5 (2)	9.5 (2)	81.0 (17)

Child Development Knowledge; Reflections on Parenting

In this section, we asked all young parents to complete a standardized scale about parenting knowledge and skills (*Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory*). These results are summarized in Table 32, with the most frequent response across all participants for each item bolded. Some responses show wide variability, while others indicate solid insight about the needs and capabilities of young infants and toddlers. Regarding the latter, of particular salience, was that the parents endorsed an understanding of infant and toddler psychosocial development and fostering the capacity to develop autonomy. In addition, there was wide disagreement with the use of spanking as a discipline method; an endorsement of wanting their children to share their feelings with them; and an endorsement that children “should be potty trained when they are ready and not before.” Yet, some respondents endorsed responses that indicated the desire for children to focus on their *own* needs (those of the parents). For example, some endorsed that children should be their parents’ “best friend” and that a child can provide comfort after parents have argued.

Table 32: Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory

	Strongly Agree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Uncertain % (n)
Children need to be allowed freedom to explore their world in safety. (n=27)	33.3 (9)	59.3 (16)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Time-Out is an effective way to discipline. (n=27)	25.9 (7)	51.9 (14)	18.5 (5)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
Children who are one-year old should be able to stay away from things that could harm them. (n=27)	37.0 (10)	25.9 (7)	25.9 (7)	7.4 (2)	3.7 (1)
Strong-willed children must be taught to mind their parents. (n=27)	33.3 (9)	44.4 (12)	11.1 (3)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)
The sooner children learn to feed and dress themselves and use the toilet, the better off they will be as adults. (n=27)	7.4 (2)	48.1 (13)	25.9 (7)	7.4 (2)	11.1 (3)
Spanking teaches children right from wrong. (n=27)	7.4 (2)	7.4 (2)	44.4 (12)	37.0 (10)	3.7 (1)
Babies need to learn how to be considerate of the need of their mother. (n=27)	0 (0)	22.2 (6)	44.4 (12)	25.9 (7)	7.4 (2)
Strict discipline is the best way to raise children. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)	59.3 (16)	25.9 (7)	0 (0)
Parents who nurture themselves make better parents. (n=27)	37.0 (10)	44.4 (12)	11.1 (3)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)

Children can learn good discipline without being spanked. (n=27)	59.3 (16)	40.7 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Children have a responsibility to please their parents. (n=27)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	59.3 (16)	14.8 (4)	3.7 (1)
Good Children always obey their parents. (n=27)	11.1 (3)	25.9 (7)	44.4 (12)	3.7 (1)	14.8 (4)
In father's absence, the son needs to become the man of the house. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	29.6 (8)	40.7 (11)	18.5 (5)	7.4 (2)
A good spanking never hurt anyone. (n=27)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	40.7 (11)	44.4 (12)	3.7 (1)
Parents should push their children to do better. (n=27)	51.9 (14)	37.0 (10)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)
Children should keep their feelings to themselves. (n=26)	0 (0)	0 (0)	30.8 (8)	69.2 (18)	0 (0)
Children should be aware of ways to comfort their parents after a hard day's work. (n=27)	0 (0)	29.6 (8)	40.7 (11)	18.5 (5)	11.1 (3)
Children learn respect through strict discipline. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	25.9 (7)	48.1 (13)	14.8 (4)	7.4 (2)
Hitting a child out of love is different than hitting a child out of anger. (n=26)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)	38.5 (10)	42.3 (11)	11.5 (3)
A good child sleeps through the night. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	29.6 (8)	40.7 (11)	18.5 (5)	7.4 (2)
Children should be potty trained when they are ready and not before. (n=27)	25.9 (7)	51.9 (14)	18.5 (5)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)
A certain amount of fear is necessary for children to respect their parents. (n=26)	7.7 (2)	26.9 (7)	34.6 (9)	19.2 (5)	11.5 (3)
Children who feel secure often grow up expecting too much. (n=26)	0 (0)	19.2 (5)	53.8 (14)	11.5 (3)	15.4 (4)
Spanking teaches children it's alright to hit others. (n=26)	15.4 (4)	26.9 (7)	26.9 (7)	30.8 (8)	0 (0)
There is nothing worse than a strong-willed two-year old. (n=26)	0 (0)	19.2 (5)	57.7 (15)	15.4 (4)	7.7 (2)
Sometimes spanking is the only thing what will work. (n=26)	0 (0)	3.8 (1)	53.8 (14)	42.3 (11)	0 (0)
Children who receive praise will think too much of themselves (n=26)	0 (0)	11.5 (3)	57.7 (15)	26.9 (7)	3.8 (1)
Children should do what they're told to do, when they're told to do it. It's that simple. (n=26)	3.8 (1)	61.5 (16)	26.9 (7)	7.7 (2)	0 (0)
Children should be taught to obey their parents at all times. (n=26)	26.9 (7)	61.5 (16)	7.7 (2)	0 (0)	3.8 (1)
Children should know what their parents need without being told. (n=26)	0 (0)	0 (0)	65.4 (17)	30.8 (8)	3.8 (1)
Children should be responsible for the well-being of their parents. (n=26)	3.8 (1)	7.7 (2)	34.6 (9)	50.0 (13)	3.8 (1)
It's Ok to spank as a last resort. (n=26)	0 (0)	26.9 (7)	46.2 (12)	26.9 (7)	0 (0)
Parents should be responsible for the well-being of their parents. (n=26)	15.4 (4)	42.3 (11)	23.1 (6)	11.5 (3)	7.7 (2)
Parents who encourage their children to talk to them only end up listening to complaints. (n=26)	0 (0)	11.5 (3)	57.7 (15)	19.2 (5)	11.5 (3)
Children need discipline, not spanking. (n=26)	30.8 (8)	61.5 (16)	0 (0)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)
Letting a child sleep in the parent's bed every now and then is bad idea. (n=25)	16.0 (3)	24.0 (6)	36.0 (9)	24.0 (6)	0 (0)
A good Spanking lets children know parents mean business. (n=26)	3.8 (1)	19.2 (5)	34.6 (9)	38.5 (10)	3.8 (1)
A good child will comfort both parents after they have argued. (n=26)	15.4 (4)	34.6 (9)	19.2 (5)	15.4 (4)	15.4 (4)

“Because I said so” Is the only reason parents need to give. (n=26)	0 (0)	11.5 (3)	61.5 (16)	26.9 (7)	0 (0)
Children should be their parents’ best friend. (n=26)	15.4 (4)	34.6 (9)	23.1 (6)	19.2 (5)	7.7 (2)

In Table 33, we present the results of the *Healthy Families Parenting Inventory*, which taps into myriad aspects of parents’ sense of support in parenting, personal functioning, and dealing with the stress of caregiving. Overall, respondents feel that they are supported by family and/or friends, and that others care about them. In addition, most respondents feel positive about themselves and displayed intentional desire to care for themselves. They further noted they were patient with and responsive to their young children. Almost all respondents indicated that they “praise their child every day” and that they “use positive words to encourage their children.” However, respondents were mixed about whether or not they could locate community resources, and also noted they may not get enough sleep, and that some are reluctant to ask for help when they needed assistance.

Table 33: Healthy Families Parenting Inventory

	Rarely or Never (%)	A little of the Time (%)	Some of the Time (%)	Good Part of the Time (%)	Always or Most of the Time (%)
I feel supported by others. (n=27)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	14.8 (4)	22.2 (6)	59.3 (16)
I feel that others care about me. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	18.5 (5)	70.4 (19)
I discuss my feelings with someone. (n=27)	18.5 (5)	11.1 (3)	40.7 (11)	3.7 (1)	25.9 (7)
If I have trouble, I feel there is always someone I can turn to for help. (n=27)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	66.7 (18)
I have family or friends who I can turn to for help. (n=27)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	74.1 (20)
I learn new ways of doing things from solving problems. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	29.6 (8)	29.6 (8)	40.7 (11)
I deal with setbacks without getting discouraged. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	33.3 (9)	18.5 (5)	37.0 (10)
When I have a problem, I take steps to solve it. (n=27)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	22.2 (6)	25.9 (7)	44.4 (12)
When I am faced with a problem, I can think of several solutions. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	18.5 (5)	29.6 (8)	44.4 (12)
I am good at dealing	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	40.7 (11)	37.0 (10)	11.1 (3)

with unexpected problems. (n=27)					
I remain calm when new problems come up. (n=27)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	48.1 (13)	33.3 (9)	14.8 (4)
I feel sad. (n=27)	70.4 (19)	11.1 (3)	18.5 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)
I feel positive about myself. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	88.9 (24)
The future looks positive for me. (n=26)	3.8 (1)	0 (0)	7.7 (2)	15.4 (4)	73.1 (19)
I feel unhappy about everything. (n=27)	92.6 (25)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)
I feel hopeless about the future. (n=26)	92.3 (24)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)
There isn't much happiness in my life. (n=27)	85.2 (23)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)
I have so many problems I feel overwhelmed by them. (n=27)	66.7 (18)	3.7 (1)	22.2 (6)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)
I find ways to care for myself. (n=27)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	7.4 (2)	7.4 (2)	77.8 (21)
I take care of my appearance. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)	25.9 (7)	55.6 (15)
I get enough sleep. (n=27)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	40.7 (11)	11.1 (3)	37.0 (10)
I am a better parent because I care of myself. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14.8 (4)	22.2 (6)	63 (17)
I take time for myself. (n=27)	7.4 (2)	3.7 (1)	25.9 (7)	22.2 (6)	40.7 (11)
I know where to find resources for my family. (n=27)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	29.6 (8)	14.8 (4)	44.4 (12)
I know where to find important medical information. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	25.9 (7)	11.1 (3)	59.3 (16)
I can get help from the community if I need it. (n=27)	11.1 (3)	18.5 (5)	40.7 (11)	3.7 (1)	25.9 (7)
I am comfortable in finding the help I need. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	18.5 (5)	55.6 (15)
I know community agencies I can go to for help. (n=27)	29.6 (8)	11.1 (3)	22.2 (6)	7.4 (2)	29.6 (8)
It is hard for me to ask for help from others. (n=27)	25.9 (7)	11.1 (3)	37.0 (10)	14.8 (4)	11.1 (3)
Because I'm a parent,	29.6 (8)	22.2 (6)	18.5 (5)	11.1 (3)	18.5 (5)

I've had to give up much of my life. (n=27)					
I feel trapped by all the things I have to do for my child. (n=27)	74.1 (20)	11.1 (3)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)
I feel drained dealing with my child. (n=27)	70.4 (19)	14.8 (4)	14.8 (4)	0 (0)	0 (0)
There are times my child gets on my nerves. (n=27)	37.0 (10)	18.5 (5)	22.2 (6)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)
I feel controlled by all the things I have to do as a parent. (n=27)	66.7 (18)	7.4 (2)	11.1 (3)	7.4 (2)	7.4 (2)
I feel frustrated because my whole life seems to revolve around my child. (n=27)	77.8 (21)	11.1 (3)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
I have a hard time managing my child. (n=27)	70.4 (19)	14.8 (4)	11.1 (3)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)
I can be patient with my child. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	70.4 (19)
I respond quickly to my child's needs. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	14.8 (4)	81.5 (22)
I do activities that help my child grow and develop. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	88.9 (24)
When my child is upset, I'm not sure what to do. (n=27)	70.4 (19)	0 (0)	14.8 (4)	14.8 (4)	0 (0)
I use positive words to encourage my child. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	96.3 (26)
I can tell what my child wants. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	18.5 (5)	3.7 (1)	77.8 (21)
I am able to increase my child's good behavior. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	22.2 (6)	66.7 (18)
I can remain calm when my child is upset. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	77.8 (21)
I praise my child every day. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	92.6 (25)
My child has favorite things to comfort him/her. (n=26)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.8 (1)	7.7 (2)	88.5 (23)

I read to my child. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	25.9 (7)	18.5 (5)	55.6 (15)
I plan and do a variety of activities with my child every day. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	29.6 (8)	18.5 (5)	51.9 (14)
I have made my home exciting and fun for my child. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	44.4 (12)	55.6 (15)
I have organized my home for raising a child. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	14.8 (4)	11.1 (3)	74.1 (20)
I check my home for safety. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	74.1 (20)
My child has a schedule for eating and sleeping in my home. (n=27)	7.4 (2)	7.4 (2)	11.1 (3)	14.8 (4)	59.3 (16)
I set limits for my child consistently. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	22.2 (6)	14.8 (4)	59.3 (16)
I make plans for our family to do things together. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)	25.9 (7)	63.0 (17)
I set rules for behavior in my home. (n=27)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)	14.8 (4)	18.5 (5)	59.3 (16)
I feel I'm doing an excellent job as a parent. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	92.6 (25)
I am proud of myself as a parent. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	88.9 (24)
I am more effective than most parents. (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	18.5 (5)	11.1 (3)	66.7 (18)
I have set goals about how I want to raise my child. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	92.6 (25)
I am a good example to other parents. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	18.5 (5)	74.1 (20)
I learn new parenting skills and use them with my child. (n=27)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	14.8 (4)	77.8 (21)

Reflections on their own childhood

We asked youth respondents to complete a standardized scale about their perceptions of their relationships with their own parents/caregivers when they were young (*Child Trauma Questionnaire*). Table 34 summarizes their responses, with the most frequent response for each questions bolded. Overall, this population endorsed very few of the abuse related items indicating the presence of maltreatment in their own backgrounds. In fact, most indicated positive family supports and functioning. There were, however, two-three individuals who did note some troubling family difficulties and that some of these difficulties had previously been noticed by a teacher or other adult. It should also be noted that one respondent was currently living in a foster home.

Table 34: Child Trauma Questionnaire

	Never True % (n)	Rarely True % (n)	Sometimes True % (n)	Often True % (n)	Very often True % (n)
I didn't have enough to eat (n=27)	85.2 (23)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)
I knew that there was someone to take care of me and protect me (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	85.2 (23)
People in family called me things like "stupid," "lazy," or "ugly" (n=27)	63.0 (17)	11.1 (3)	14.8 (4)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)
My parents were too drunk or high to take care of the family (n=27)	92.6 (25)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
There was someone in my family who helped me feel that I was important or special (n=27)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)	7.4 (2)	77.8 (21)
I had to wear dirty clothes (n=27)	92.6 (25)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
I felt loved (n=27)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	11.1 (3)	3.7 (1)	77.8 (21)
I thought that my parents wished I had never been born (n=27)	77.8 (21)	3.7 (1)	18.5 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)
I got hit so hard by someone in my family that I had to see a doctor or go to the hospital (n=27)	88.9 (24)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)
There was nothing I wanted to change about my family (n=26)	38.5 (10)	11.5 (3)	15.4 (4)	3.8 (1)	30.8 (8)
People in my family hit me so hard that it left me with bruises or marks (n=27)	85.2 (23)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
I was punished with a belt, a board, a cord, or some other hard object (n=27)	70.4 (19)	7.4 (2)	7.4 (2)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)
People in my family looked out for each other (n=27)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	22.2 (6)	7.4 (2)	66.7 (18)
People in my family said hurtful or insulting things to me (n=27)	59.3 (16)	14.8 (4)	11.1 (3)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)
I believe that I was physically abused (n=27)	77.8 (21)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)
I had the perfect childhood (n=27)	29.6 (8)	3.7 (1)	37.0 (10)	18.5 (5)	11.1 (3)
I got hit or beaten so badly that it was noticed by someone like a teacher,	92.3 (24)	3.8 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.8 (1)

neighbor, or doctor (n=26)					
I felt that someone in my family hated me (n=27)	85.2 (23)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	11.1 (3)
People in my family felt close to each other (n=27)	7.4 (2)	3.7 (1)	25.9 (7)	25.9 (7)	37.0 (10)
Someone tried to touch me in a sexual way, or tried to make me touch them (n=27)	88.9 (24)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
Someone threatened to hurt me or tell lies about me unless I did something sexual with them (n=27)	81.5 (22)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)
I had the best family in the world (n=27)	22.2 (6)	3.7 (1)	48.1 (13)	11.1 (3)	14.8 (4)
Someone tried to make me do sexual things or watch sexual things (n=27)	96.3 (26)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)
Someone molested me (n=27)	88.9 (24)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7.4 (2)
I believe that I was emotionally abused (n=27)	70.4 (19)	3.7 (1)	7.4 (2)	0 (0)	18.5 (5)
There was someone to take me to the doctor if I needed it (n=27)	11.1 (3)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	11.1 (3)	74.1 (20)
I believe that I was sexually abused (n=27)	81.5 (22)	3.7 (1)	0 (0)	3.7 (1)	3.7 (1)
My family was a source of strength and support (n=27)	7.4 (2)	11.1 (3)	22.2 (6)	3.7 (1)	55.6 (15)

Experiences with the PLP program

We asked the youth respondents several questions about the services they received from their respective PLP program, their satisfaction with these services, and their overall experiences—both negative and positive—about involvement with the PLPs. We also asked them open-ended questions about how they were referred to the PLP programs and about the perceived strengths and weaknesses or program service and attributes.

➤ How they were referred?

Professional

- *(staff person) came and spoke to me while in school*
- *I was going to XXX High, They told me about it.*
- *Coordinator of the program*
- *DYFS⁷*
- *Through Program Coordinator*
- *Through counseling in HS and through "GRADS" program instead of gym*

⁷ Though the current name of this division is DCP&P (Division of Child Protection and Permanency), we retained the respondent's use of DYFS since this is a direct quote.

- *Friend*
- *My counselor connected me to them*
- *After a gym excuse note re: pregnancy, director found her and told her about it*
- *School took me there for a tour*
- *Through school based at middle school*
- *Daylight Twilight guidance counselor*
- *In the high school, the nurse gave me a pamphlet and I gave them my name and a lady came and talked to me*
- *Through Counselor at Daylight Twilight School*
- *"SBYSP" Through a counselor in high school*

Friend / word of mouth

- *I was applying for Project Teach in Tinton Falls but was referred to the hand-in-hand program*
- *A friend (2 youth)*
- *School*

Family / Word of mouth

- *Mother found out about it (2 youth)*
- *My niece was in the PLP program for my brother's child*
- *I heard from my sister. She had a child in the program.*

Previous Student

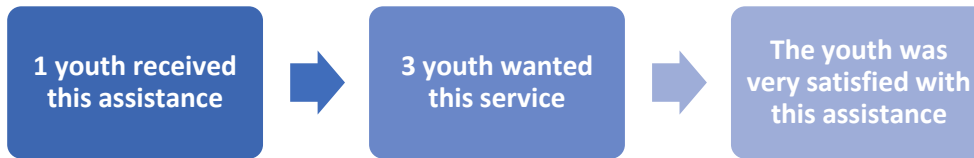
- *Had a friend who was in it. I just went to Coordinator of PLP Program*
- *I had a friend whose babies were in the program*
- *A friend who was in it*

Advertisement

- *Through a flyer in high school*

Regarding the services they had received, we asked about the following specific services provided by the PLP:

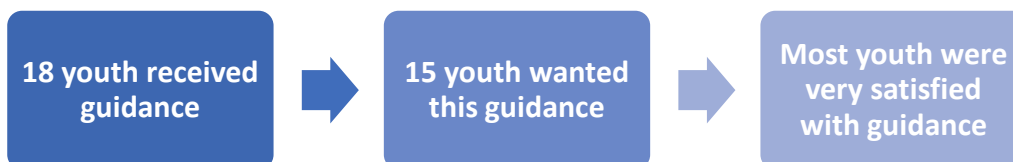
➤ **Housing assistance:**



➤ **Doctor visit services:**



➤ **Nutrition guidance:**



➤ **Parenting skills guidance:**



➤ **Childcare services:**



➤ **Pregnancy prevention:**



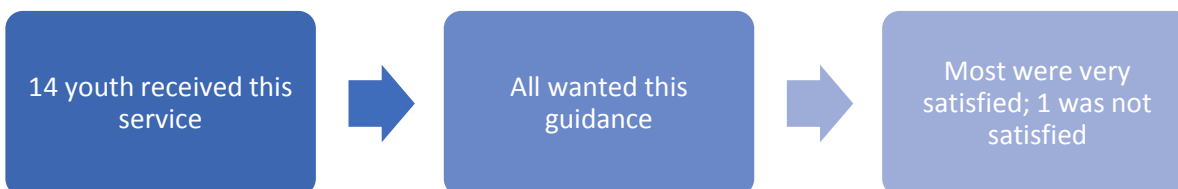
➤ **Counseling:**



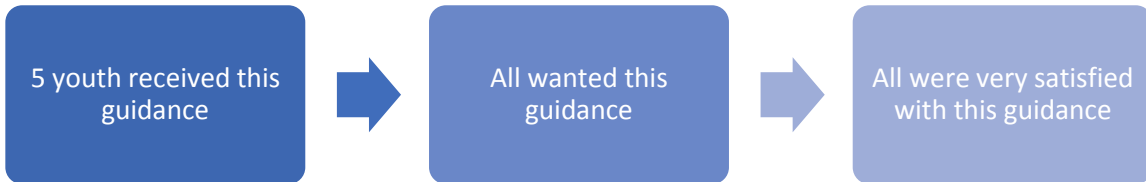
➤ **Co-parenting counseling:**



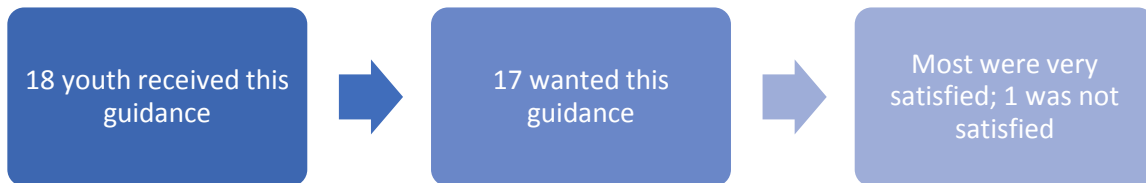
➤ **Newborn/toddler care guidance:**



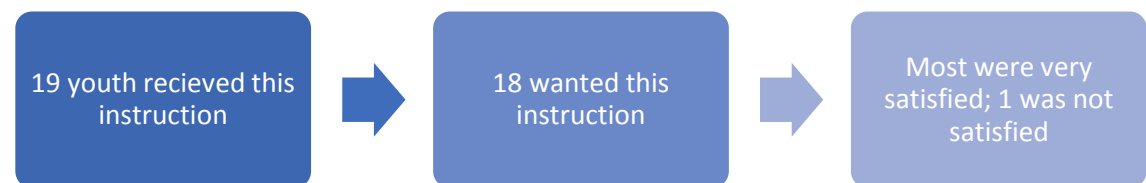
➤ **Grandparent guidance assistance:**



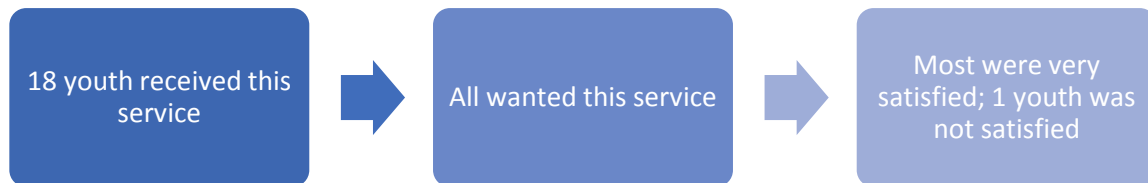
➤ **Guidance pertaining to bonding with child**



➤ **Classes on recognizing developmental/health/behavioral issues in child**



➤ **Transportation assistance:**



➤ **Financial assistance:**



➤ **Services they wish they had received (specifically from PLP):**

- Housing assistance (7 youth)
- Nutrition guidance (4 youth)
- Assistance with parenting skills (4 youth)
- Childcare assistance (2 youth)
- Newborn/toddler assistance (1 youth)
- General counseling (4 youth)
- Financial assistance (7 youth)
- Transportation assistance (4 youth)
- Employment assistance (6 youth)
- College/vocational assistance (5 youth)

➤ **Reasons service was not obtained:**

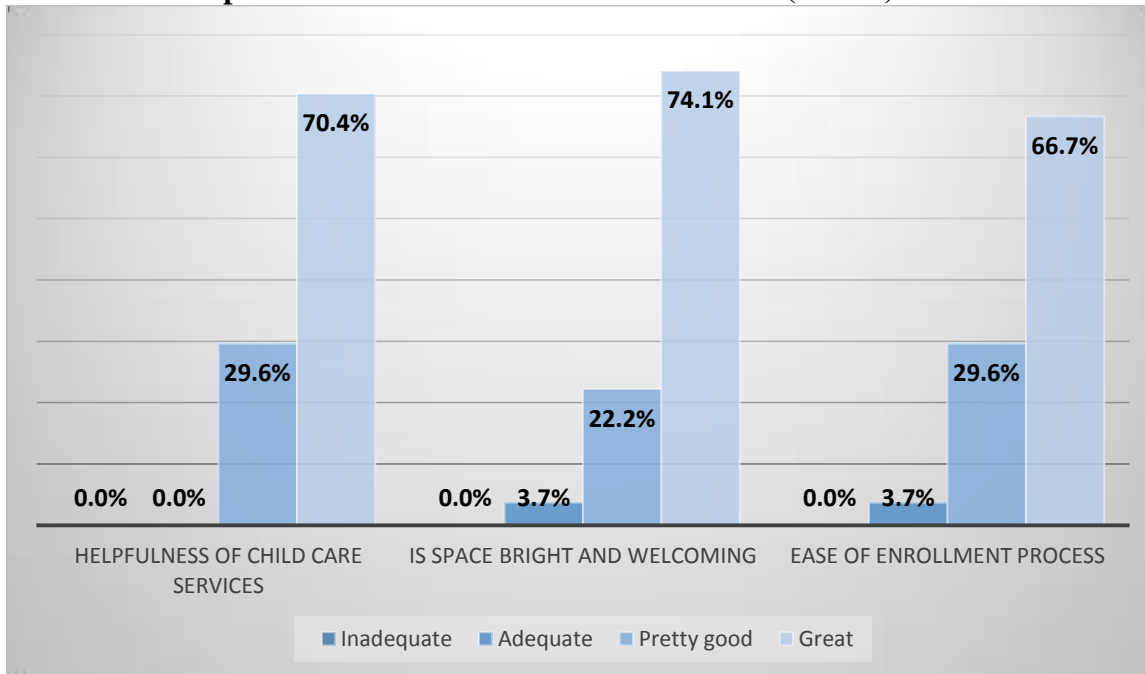
- Unaware of service (4 youth)
- Did not qualify (3 youth)
- Service not offered (9 youth)

- Lack of transportation (1 youth)

Reflections on childcare services provided by PLPs:

When asked about youth respondents’ utilization of PLP’s childcare services, 25 youth indicated that they used these services “always”, and two youth indicated “most of the time.” Moreover, 14 youth indicated that the childcare was located at their school location, while the remainder said they were provided off-site. Of those who said the services were off-site, all youth but one responded that they “always” receive transportation assistance between the child care location and their schools. In Chart 51, we summarize their responses about the childcare environment.

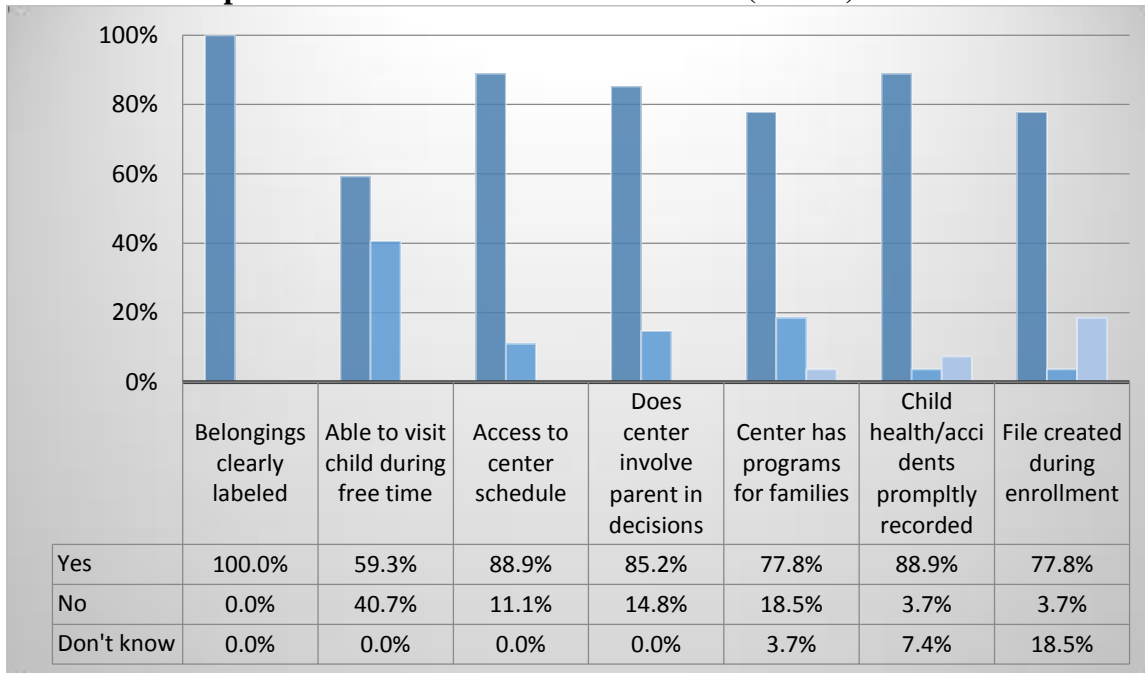
Chart 51: Perceptions of the PLP childcare environment (N = 27)



In addition, 22 youth respondents (81.5%) noted that the child care space was “always” clean and sanitary, while three youth said this was the case “most of the time”; two youth noted the space was “sometimes” clean and sanitary. Moreover, when asked how they would rate the overall respect that the childcare staff had for them as parents, 19 youth (70.4%) responded that the staff were “great” in this regard, while seven youth (25.9) felt it was pretty good. One youth said the staff’s respect was “not very good.”

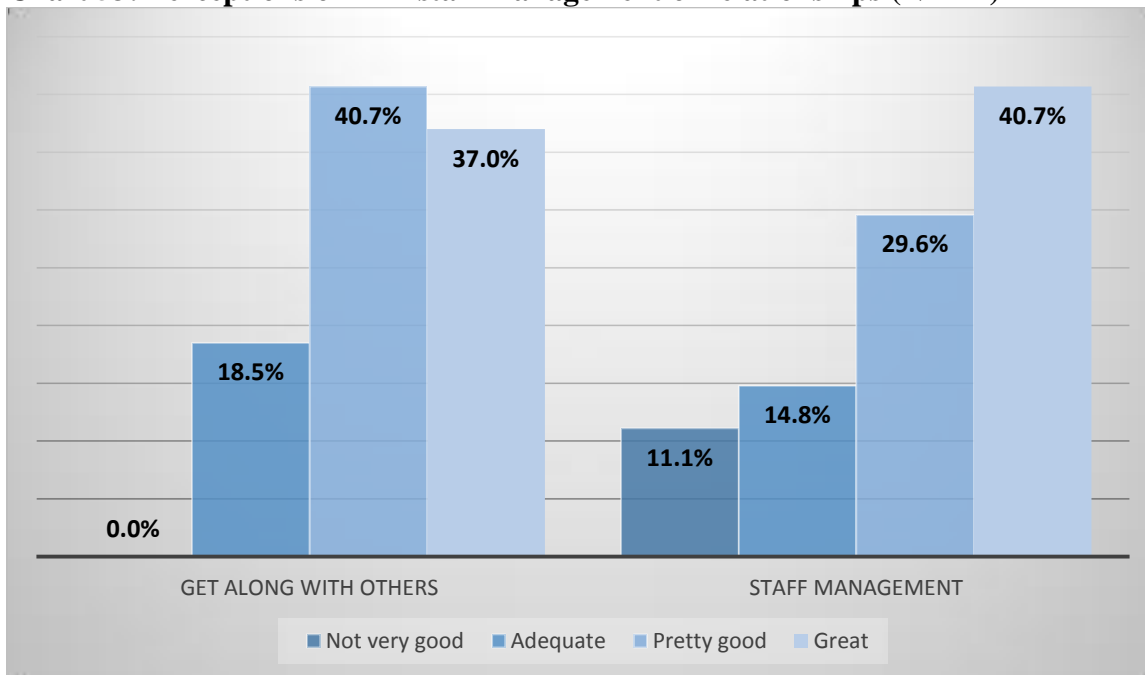
The following chart (Chart 52) indicates youth respondents’ perceptions of specific attributes of the childcare services.

Chart 52: Perceptions about PLP childcare attributes (N = 27)



We also asked the youth respondents about the extent to which they got along with their fellow program participants and how the PLP staff managed relationships among participants.

Chart 53: Perceptions of PLP staff management of relationships (N = 27)



General Youth Feedback about PLP Program

In this section from the youth interviews, we present their open-ended commentary about multiple aspects of the strengths and weaknesses of the PLP programs. Again, the comments are grouped together by theme, but the wording is mostly verbatim responses.

➤ What do youth respondents like most about the PLP programs?

Support

- *I get a lot of help & support.*
- *Daycare and group meetings*
- *They care for you and your child*
- *They are very helpful*
- *They were there, they encouraged me, they helped me, they taught me how to be a better mother, taught me how to chase my goals.*
- *The groups*
- *My counselor/case manager because she helped me with everything*
- *We have a parenting group every Tuesday*
- *The convenience, the care they provided for my baby and the overall support*
- *It is very helpful. They inform me about a lot of things*
- *That they care for my child*
- *I trust them with my son and my son loves the staff and other kids*

Benefits

- *How they work with kids. Don't yell - if they behave bad they teach them right*
- *He learns there. I learn in school and he learns there.*
- *I like the childcare center*
- *How they took care of the kids*
- *Take good care of my child. Make him do some work: math, letters. Help him learn well from bad. I like the way they do the program.*
- *His caregiver*
- *I liked that they took care of my child*
- *My child is learning skills that other kids his age don't know*
- *It helps me go to school and someone watches my son. It allows for me and his father to complete school.*
- *That they do a lot of activities with them. Finger painting, a lot of art/crafts.*
- *Take good care of the baby*
- *I like that he can go be with the child during free periods*
- *Help her continue through school as a teen parent. Likes the caregiver interaction*
- *It's free*

➤ **What do youth respondents like least about the PLP program?**

Staff Behavior

- *The little bit of nagging that they do. (i.e. Beads in daughter's hair they say are a choking hazard.)*
- *Child's belongings get mixed up even though they were labeled. My caregiver would not clean up poop if she knows I would be coming, my child would sit in poop for like 10 minutes*
- *Do not keep the baby as clean as possible; some caregivers do yell at other babies*
- *The staff. I feel like they don't like what they are doing.*

Rules

- *We can't come in between the school day.*
- *I don't like the group every Wednesday and it's mandatory*
- *I like everything*
- *Bus was too small. They should provide daylight/twilight school females with transportation. Some of them lived far, and they had to walk far with their children.*
- *some of the girl's attitude*
- *Everything is here, and I like the way they do it.*
- *She would like transportation. - she would like to store her stroller inside the PLP center*
- *I did not like some of the rules. They don't treat it like a community center.*

Group

- *I don't like the groups. I feel like we talk about a bunch of nothing. Sometimes they talk off topic. I wish it was more activities to help teach our kids.*
- *Group! Sometimes I just don't feel like going*
- *Staying after school for group*

Nothing

- *Several said there was nothing wrong with the program*

➤ **Aspects of PLP programs that youth want to continue?**

Parenting classes/groups/meetings

- *Parenting classes (3)*
- *(general) Group*
- *Meetings with the counselor as a group; just keep running the program in general*

Child care/daycare

- *Childcare services (6)*
- *Continue teaching kids to know how to read. Education staff*
- *Childcare, transportation, and meetings for participants*

- *Potty training*
- *They should keep giving free child care to help girls stay in school*

Program wide services

- *Keep doing what you're doing. Without them we would be struggling.*
- *The whole program because if one part shuts down, the entire program does as well.*
- *The whole program*
- *All activities w/ the babies*
- *Everything (2)*
- *She enjoys the field trip that PLP has at the end of the year. - They offer scholarships, books, and food for the seniors at PLP.*
- *All of them!*
- *The end of the year essay contest for seniors*
- *All of it. Especially trips to Barnes & Noble and reading to kids.*
- *The family fun nights*
- *Transportation because most of the mothers are 16 and have no other way to get anywhere*

➤ **Youth respondents' suggestions for improving PLP programs?**

Transportation

- *Get transportation services for both schools (transportation is provided from daycare to Trenton High to home, but daylight Twilight get transportation because the daycare is in their building).*

Venue

- *To get a bigger place, because there is only one little room for babies. It's kind of small.*
- *Hope they can make a bigger daycare, so more girls can participate. It directed me in the right path.*
- *They need to make the building bigger*

Eligibility & Staffing

- *Give the opportunity to people who really deserve it and not just any one*
- *Get more caregivers - we only had 3. Make sure everyone has what they need*
- *They know what they're doing*
- *Make sure the babies are kept clean; replace some of the older caregivers*
- *For the staff to be more considerate to the mothers*

Classes

- *Have some classes to teach children, for them to not pay much attention to TV, and to tell parents to take good care of their kids*
- *More parenting classes and ways to deal with kids' behavior*

- *I want them to have more activities that teach parenting skills*

Rules

- *I think they should stick to the rules and not bend them for certain moms. They need it help them live in the world.*

Activities

- *Have more field trips with the kids; plan things ahead of time. Give me advance notice on things. Giving one day to get something is not enough time sometimes, as I may not have enough time.*

Several said they would not change anything with the program

- *They were on point with everything*
- *I don't have any suggestions. They're doing a pretty good job. I don't think they lack in anything.*
- *Nothing. Like it how it is*
- *I think everything is great about the program I have no suggestions*

➤ Youth respondent suggestions for improving general high school environments for students with young babies

Prevention/Awareness

- *(Staff) Being more involved. Talk and prevent pregnancy.*
- *I think they (staff) should do more prevention of pregnancy before it happens instead of (intervening) when they are pregnant.*
- *Have professionals talk to other kids about pregnancy. Some of the other kids think pregnancy is an easy thing b/c they see her baby but it's not.*
- *Address the way students talk about one another (gossip)*
- *Resources that will help parents better themselves*

Programs for children in schools

- *Daycare*
- *They should have daycares in the school, b/c we are now seeing a lot of young girls getting pregnant.*
- *Resources in childcare and parenting , because some schools don't even offer daycare services program*
- *Young parents have nowhere to take their child. need someplace to take care of their children so young parents can continue their education*

General

- *More after school activities. More resources for helping with job searching and resume building*
- *Need to have clean bathrooms.*

Teacher behavior

- *Teachers should not be judgmental.*
- *The teachers should be more empathetic to the fact that she is a teen mom*
- *Teachers need to be more understanding about teen pregnancy; finds that some of the general teachers are racist*

Father and Caregiver Involvement

In this section from the youth interview, we asked the mothers (but not the fathers)⁸ about their children's fathers' involvement with child rearing. We also asked them about their own caregivers' (however they defined their primary caregiver) involvement.

Father Involvement:

When asked if they wished to have more involvement from the fathers of their children, four youth indicated that the fathers were not very involved, but only one indicated a desire to have him "involved as much as possible."

When asked why the fathers were not very involved, one young woman indicated that "he has other kids"; another noted, "he chose not to"; and a third young woman noted, (he) "said my daughter is not his."

The following is a summary of the young women's open-ended responses to several questions about their children's fathers. As with other open-ended commentary, we grouped the responses according to general themes, and present their responses in (mostly) verbatim format.

➤ **In what ways is your child's father involved with raising your child?**

Emotional support

- *He is involved in every way possible. (Taking him to school, helping w/homework, bonding)*
- *He lives with us, supports her and her child*
- *He plays with her, talks to her, takes her places, and helps her with activities*
- *When he's home, he'll bring book, and will put children's TV show on for them. Brings jokes for children to laugh. He runs and plays with children and house.*

Financial support

⁸ Because father involvement was a key challenge identified in the research literature for adolescent mothers, this one domain was only asked of the mothers and not of the fathers.

- *He helps me financially, He helps me care for her -> change her , shower her*
- *He provides food, clothes, and shelter.*
- *Buys everything she needs. Babysat just once, don't feel comfortable, not sure why*

Multiple sources of support

- *Mentally, emotionally, Financially, Physically -sees my son on weekends and when I go to work.*
- *In every way*
- *He works watches him, does what a dad is supposed to do.*
- *Buys everything baby needs, visits when he can.*
- *Fully involved*
- *He's involved all of the time. He takes him out and he stays at his dad's house sometimes*
- *My youngest son's father helps in every way.*
- *In every way*
- *In every aspect. He's there for doctors' visits and he's there when we need him*
- *On the weekends he'll pick him up and watch him because I work, sometimes he'll stay the night. He basically cares for him in all ways on the weekends.*
- *Feeds her, washes bottles; financially; plays with her*
- *He buys him what he needs and will babysit him when I'm at work. He supports him and plays with him.*
- *Financially, emotionally, and physically. He is involved in everything we do.*
- *He helps me watch him; he spends time with him and gives me alone time. He helps me teach him and buys him things.*

➤ What are his greatest strengths in his relationship with you and your child?

Communication

- *Communicating with him (child) and spending time with him*

Emotional and Tangible Support

- *Keeping us together*
- *Always being there for us*
- *Providing, being there*
- *Supportive (general)*
- *They play around a lot.*
- *Checks on family, buys stuff for children.*
- *He supports me emotionally, physically, educationally, and financially*
- *He knows how to help with emotional balance and solving problems.*

- *When I'm upset, he knows what's going on. He takes care of the child when I'm sick.*
- *He's very supportive and always there for us. He's very caring.*
- *That they care for my child*
- *If I'm running low on something, he'll give me money to get it even though I get child support. And he'll get me something if I need it.*
- *Wants her to finish school and go to college so the baby could have a role model. He didn't finish high school*
- *Tries to seek ways emotionally and financially. Tries to improve what he feels he's doing wrong.*

Providing Bond/Quality Time with Child

- *Greatest strength is we're trying to grow together. His strength with my child is they have a beautiful bond*
- *We have a lot of fun with both of us*
- *He spends quality time with us*
- *He knows how to make him laugh and he plays with him. He knows what he likes.*
- *My son loves being with his dad because he plays with him. I can be myself around him and talk about anything*
- *Spending time with our daughter*
- *He knows how to play with him and makes him happy. He knows our son really well and is very observant.*
- *They get along with him and look up to him as a father figure. This is the one I live with.*

➤ What are some of the challenges in having him involved in your child's life?

- *There aren't any challenges (8 youth)*
- *None. He's good with him and me.*
- *My parents trying to be in control of everything & it's hard to please them & him at the same time.*
- *Not always agreeing on everything*
- *She (child) only listens to him. He takes her out of time out, softer.*
- *He doesn't try. He's in jail*
- *We have disagreements*
- *When I'm busy I leave kids with him, and he may be tired, kids give him a hard time.*
- *Her boyfriend doesn't like bathing him*
- *He thinks it's supposed to be his way, or his way is the only way to raise a kid*
- *We argue sometimes*
- *He does not really discipline the children and does not help with that.*

- *He is not involved*
- *He's always working; not around a lot*
- *Our different opinions on parenting cause issues sometimes. Stuff like what to feed her or how to dress her.*
- *That they care for my child*
- *He can get lazy; no patience*
- *He works too much. He doesn't get to see her as often.*

Caregiver Involvement

When asked about caregiver involvement, 19 youth indicate that their biological mothers were the principal caregiver/adult assisting them with raising their children. Other responses included biological fathers (1 youth), foster parent (1 youth), boyfriend's mother (1 youth), boyfriend (1 youth), sister (1 youth), and both biological parents (1 youth). The remaining youth did not indicate a primary caregiver in their lives with their children. When asked why they did not have an adult in their lives to assist them, most declined to answer expect for the following: one youth who said their caregiver was "always working," another indicated "nothing (prevents their involvement)" and that they could reach out to their extended relatives if the felt they really needed them.

The following is a summary of the youth respondents' open-ended comments about myriad aspects of their relationships with their caregivers.

➤ **In what ways is this caregiver involved with raising your child?**

- *She spends time with him (watches him when I need to study)*
- *Because if I don't have money or something then she would be there.*
- *Live together, mother feeds us and gives us a roof over head. - When son is sick, mother watches him so I can go to school/work.*
- *She watches him sometimes.*
- *Take care of him , spend time with him*
- *She watches him, she helps financially as well*
- *She helps with everything, financially, emotionally, physically, mentally.*
- *With me, she has no great strength. With my child, my child loves her. My child knows that's her grandmother.*
- *She watches him*
- *She buys stuff for baby. Buys food and clothes.*
- *He is the father*
- *Financially, and she interacts with her and teaches her things*
- *She helps me a lot. She watches him and she provides him with things he needs.*
- *Anything I need she is there.*

- *She takes care of him when I'm away, like at work*
- *Takes care of him and disciplines him (childcare)*
- *They help me when I ask for help. They want me to learn on my own.*
- *In every way*
- *He has him under his insurance, he pays co-pays.*
- *Helps teach the baby morals like not to curse, etc. Diapers, feed, buys clothes and toys*
- *Feed him, shower him, take care, money, transport*
- *Feeds her, takes care of her; babysits*
- *She will show me how to do things and will babysit sometimes and buy him things*
- *She helps me when my child is sick and takes care of her when I need help*

➤ **What are her/his (caregiver) greatest strengths in their relationship with you and your child?**

- *Communicating and bonding with him*
- *When I'm upset, she's there to help me & fix the situation so I can learn & do it better than before.*
- *My child loves her; always being there for us*
- *She is supportive sometimes.*
- *Play with him; give him a lot of affection*
- *He likes her food and likes to play with her. She teaches him things when he comes over.*
- *Being a parent , being loving , caring, independent*
- *She really tries to help a lot.*
- *Takes care of children when they're sick. She will check on me and my children.*
- *Very supportive*
- *Getting my child to express herself*
- *She takes care of both of us.*
- *She has more patience than me and watches the kids so I can have down time.*
- *She feeds us when I'm lazy; she will already have food on the table. She puts him to bed when I work late.*
- *She loves him so much*
- *They play with him and teach him.*
- *She's compassionate, loving. She understands my daughter sometimes more than me.*
- *He still helps and likes helping even though it's not his child.*
- *She loves her*
- *Being able to watch and feed him*
- *A lot of advice how to make herself and the baby better*
- *She is our main support*
- *She has patience*

- **What are some of the challenges in having this adult involved in your child's life?**
- *When she tries to be the mother of my child. I'm the parent of my child. If I say no, then she will go & let her do it. But I'm the parent and she can't override me.*
 - *Her overriding my authority towards my son*
 - *Sometimes I don't want to ask her for help because I'm an adult and shouldn't have to ask her.*
 - *Sometimes she does not respect my wishes*
 - *If I'm not home sometimes when children are sick she'll take them to hospital. She often doesn't have a ride to get there.*
 - *He works a lot, and never any together/alone time*
 - *We have disagreements when she disagrees with something I want to do with him.*
 - *Sometimes I don't want to hear what she has to say.*
 - *Sometimes she thinks she is his mom. She will give him attention whenever he wants and I think that is spoiling him.*
 - *She's bossy sometimes and I have to remind her that she's my daughter not hers.*
 - *Mom wants her(the mother) to spank the baby but she won't*
 - *Sometimes she tells her what to do*
 - *She gets jealous when I can't visit or call her*
 - *There are no challenges.(5 additional youth indicated no challenges)*

Overall, 70.4% of the youth respondents said they were “very satisfied” with the amount and type of involvement they receive from their caregivers, 11.1% were “pretty satisfied”, and one youth apiece were “a little satisfied” or “not at all satisfied.”

Personal attributes, strengths, and growth

Finally, we wanted to hear from the youth about their personal reflections on their own personal strengths and challenges, how they have grown (or not) in light of some of the stressors in their lives, and how they would counsel other adolescent who may find themselves in similar situations. Their open-ended remarks follow.

- **What do you think are your best attributes or characteristics?**
- *I am very motivated. As a mother I am very dedicated to him, comforting, and aware of his needs and very loving.*
 - *How strong I am. I am a strong woman. I hold on.*
 - *Personality & brains*
 - *Like to help others; nice , good advice , giver and a listener ; good friend*
 - *My personality. I can be fun and responsible at the same time.*

- *I never give up.*
- *I'm good at math, reading, basketball, football, decision making, being responsible, I'm a go getter.*
- *Singing and dancing. People person. Very outgoing, very positive.*
- *Self-motivated, truthful*
- *I'm a great mom. Very determined.*
- *My parenting skills*
- *Hardworking; minds own business; nice*
- *Funny, can be smart without distractions, very happy person.*
- *I'm good at incorporating what I learn into my daily life*
- *I am a helpful and caring person.*
- *I think I'm a good person. I think I'm funny and have a good spirit.*
- *I am very confident, I have good work ethic, I take care of myself and my child.*
- *My personality - I don't let others put me down*
- *I'm a good listener, artist, writer, good nurturer. I'm a good mother.*
- *I'm smart, responsible and a good decision maker I believe.*
- *Thinking of my daughter, easy-going, love people, caring*
- *I get along with people quickly. I like to talk to new people.*
- *Calm, like attitude*
- *Positive, funny, honest*
- *Very patient with daughter; independent; very determined; intelligent*
- *I'm a great parent. I'm smart and I have goals. I want to make it in life.*
- *I am patient with my child and I am not selfish.*

➤ **How have your experiences shaped you as a person?**

- *It made me more mature. It made me respect my parents more and made me want to do my best at all times for my son.*
- *They made me who I am. Through everything I've been through.*
- *Shaped me to do better, be better*
- *Made me stronger*
- *I wouldn't be who I am now, so it turned out good.*
- *I care more about school; I'm more responsible*
- *Growing up without a dad helped me to be a better man than my father.*
- *It made me a stronger person*
- *Made me to want better; just from what everybody thought of me wrong*
- *Taught me how to act in certain situations*
- *Greatly shaped me*
- *Went through a lot, do what I can do, take care of my kids, go to shop to braid hair and make money. boyfriend provides, and to focus on my education*
- *Stronger as a person, learned a lot of stuff*
- *It makes me look at things differently; it makes me a better person*

- *They made me change certain things I used to do, like give attitudes and throw fits. I had to grow up.*
- *It made me stronger. If there's something I want, I can work hard to get it.*
- *A lot*
- *I learned that no one has the right to tell me, "No". No one has the right to put me down.*
- *It changed me to become a better person not only for myself but for my son. I changed my actions.*
- *A lot. It's like a 360 I did when I had my daughter. I learned to be responsible and to have patience.*
- *Make me strong*
- *It's matured me a lot. It's made me see a lot of things differently than how I would have seen them before.*
- *Changed me a lot, don't think the same. Learn now to make better decisions than before.*
- *Baby influenced me to be a better person*
- *Become more mature/grow up faster than expected*
- *It made me the person that I am. Made me a smart young lady and helped me to grow up.*
- *After becoming a mother, it has changed me a lot in my behavior and the way to see things.*

➤ **What advice would you give to another teen that was going through what you have been dealing with?**

- *Make sure you finish high school. Having a baby doesn't stop your life. You have to make sure whatever you had planned before the baby you can accomplish with the baby. You just have to find your own way of getting it done. You have to recognize who your support system is and be open to suggestions*
- *It's not easy. You have a kid -> it's a whole other ball game. You're not the same person you were. Everything changes-> friends leave. It's not about you anymore.*
- *Don't let it discourage you, let it build you up instead*
- *Never give up , keep moving forward no matter the circumstances*
- *To stay positive. That's the only thing you can do.*
- *The strongest battles are given to the strongest soldiers*
- *I would tell them to keep your head up and don't let no one bring you down.*
- *Stay strong & never give. You don't care to quit anything. Just b/c you have a child.*
- *To make use of programs that is helpful. If you're going through a situation at home, talk about it. Don't allow anyone to disrespect you in any way. Keep going you can do it.*
- *You have to be strong , and you have to be prepared for the worst but pray for the best*
- *Pray about it sis /bro*
- *Should forget about that is going on and pay attention to future, go to school, career, do good for themselves, not pay attention to what other people say about them*

- *Be positive in every way, keep calm and have patience*
- *To keep going to school, stay in school, and stay focused*
- *Try to stay strong and know your baby is there for you if you feel like you don't have anyone.*
- *Just because you have a baby does not mean your life is over. They should present themselves and be their children's role model. You're somebody's mom now.*
- *Do what's best for your child, put your child first.*
- *Keep strong.*
- *Stay strong. There's someone who's looking up to you and you can't be depressed around them because it could mess up their future.*
- *Try to be patient with your child and learn to be responsible. And be understanding.*
- *Be strong, just focus on your baby and you*
- *I'd tell them to keep their heads up and not think negatively.*
- *Don't get pregnant again. Once is okay but twice, no. Protect yourself not to get pregnant.*
- *Not give up, not everything goes the way you planned. Things may get worse before they get better*
- *Have a lot of patience, do not give up on your dreams, and strive for the best*
- *Stay in school and make something out of your life for you and your child*
- *To always put their child first and to never give up.*

➤ **Can you think of a challenging situation that helped you learn something new about yourself? What was this situation and what did you learn?**

- *Having to do 10th grade and 11th grade in one year, I learned that if I put my mind into something it can be done. Also, putting yourself on a schedule and prioritizing is definitely important.*
- *When I was with the father of my child, he would go out & I would be taking care of my kid. I learned I'm not who I was before.*
- *Having my son. - Learned that I can still be what I want to be even if I was a young parent*
- *Having my daughter taught me what it was to have a meaning to life*
- *Being a parent is challenging, but I am more responsible now. So, it kind of changed me.*
- *When my kid's paternal grandmother denied him, I learned that I really didn't need her; I had the support of my parents.*
- *When I learned how to make decisions just being in the situation I was in and making my decision helped me realize what I had*
- *I ran away & I learned it doesn't solve anything.*
- *Learned to not allow anyone to disrespect me, to use hurtful words against me, and to believe in myself and not what others think.*
- *Giving birth to my son made me realize that I am very strong*
- *Growing up as a teenager - I learned from all mistakes. They bettered me as a person.*

- *Parents told me I wouldn't be a better person , but my boyfriend told me I would be a better person if I pay attention to what I have to do .*
- *Having her baby, and she learned not to have any more kids!*
- *Dealing with my daughter emotionally. She used to cry a lot, as a baby, I used to let her cry. So I started with my counselor, I learned that talking to and interacting with your kid helps them*
- *When I got into an argument with someone and I was the bigger person.*
- *When I was with my son's dad (ex) I was crazy because he was cheating. Once I left him alone I felt better.*
- *When I was 16 my baby's father decided he doesn't want to be a father anymore and he stopped supporting us. So I got a job. I learned to be resilient and that I liked to work.*
- *Going from babysitter to babysitter because my parents were always working... I learned that just because they're not here doesn't mean that they don't care.*
- *Becoming a mom. I did not know I had that much patience because it takes a lot. I get irritated quickly.*
- *Having my daughter. Learned about myself, I'm strong. Anything I put my mind to, I can do it. The sky's the limit.*
- *Having a baby made me realize I am responsible. Now I don't hang out with friends or do things I would have before the baby.*
- *Nothing (2 youth)*
- *Boyfriend has not been working as much, so she has been paying a lot of the bills; taught her that she can be independent, and can live without him*
- *Having a kid. It made me grow up and make better decisions*
- *My pregnancy and becoming a mother taught me to listen when people tell me things. I never expected this to happen to me.*

➤ **Think back to where you were this time a year ago. Name a part of you (a skill, an aspect of your character, a way that you think about things or interact with people) that you've gotten better at over the past year.**

- *Managing time. I get better at it every year, because something with him is always changing as he gets older.*
- *I've learned patience. I've way more than I do now.*
- *School - parenting - overall person*
- *Better person , back in school, getting license , want to do better for me and my daughter*
- *I am more responsible.*
- *I'm skinny.*
- *Last year I was in a program and the skills I picked was a better level of maturity.*
- *Being quieter -> controlling my voice. I feel safe now & don't have to take it now. I don't take any meds. (thus learning to cope & make good decisions & confide in others)*
- *Self-respect, to love myself.*

- *Dealing with situations*
- *Connecting with people*
- *I used to think I'm not going to school, can't do school, other kids will laugh at me. I can't pay attention to that. Must pay attention to my education.*
- *Patience has improved; positivity; self-love has improved*
- *Managing my time*
- *I make better choices now than I did one year ago.*
- *I don't think so.*
- *I became more responsible with money.*
- *I understand my parents much better*
- *My educational skills and learning*
- *I improved on parenting and school and myself. My perspective has changed.*
- *Taking crap from people. Before I never used to, but now I can.*
- *I think I am friendlier now.*
- *Attitude, before I was bad, I would curse out people. Changed so baby wouldn't follow that.*
- *Meeting people*
- *More socially interactive with peers, less shy with everyone*
- *I have a smart mouth so I have gotten better with saying things a certain way*
- *I matured a lot and I am back at doing well in school.*

➤ **Is there anything else that you would like to share with us? This may be about the Parent Linking Program, you or your personal family history, your current situation.....**

- *The program played a big part in the person I am today. They helped me finish school, taught me parenting skills, and provided me with great counseling. 2. Having a support system also played a major part in me being a better person and parent. 3. Although you are in a relationship, put your child first. No relationship is guaranteed to last, so you want to put yourself and your child first to better your situation. 4. Don't be a part of the negative statistic put on teen parents.*
- *Hopefully I'll be married in 5 years to her dad.*
- *I have overcome a lot, and I truly thank the PLP program because they the reason that I am here today.*
- *Now that she is no longer an immigrant she can drive, work, and help herself and her baby. She obtained citizenship on her own by working, and paid a lawyer to help her through everything. She is still learning English because she is not from here, and only speaks English in school.*
- *No, wish we (the research project) could meet the baby*
- *It can get rough and bumpy at times. Keep your head high and do not look back at the past.*

Caregiver Feedback

As noted earlier, we completed far fewer caregiver interviews than we anticipated (7 total interviews). Thus, we primarily present the open-ended, descriptive comments from their surveys as there are too few respondents to present any quantitative results.

All caregiver respondents were women: six were mothers and one was a foster mother. They ranged in age from 36 to 45 years. Five of the caregivers report being “very involved” with raising their grandchild, and two state they are “somewhat involved.” All report being “very satisfied with this level of involvement.

We started by asking them about the **chief difficulties currently facing their families**. Their responses are summarized as:

- *Babysitting issues*
- *Financial concerns (chronic unemployment and can't find work)*
- *My daughter and her sister don't listen to me; they talk back to me and expect me to do everything. I can't wait until she turns 18.*
- *Financial concerns*
- *Apartment issues*
- *The baby cries a lot*
- *None*

We then asked them to describe their **family's strengths and positive qualities**:

- *I like the baby and to play with baby*
- *We know how to work things out when there's a situation*
- *We are very open and team players; we look out for one another*
- *Just okay*
- *We are good with communicating; we get along and play together*
- *We always make it through; I try not to throw the negativity*
- *We are a close-knit family and we look out for one another*

Subsequently, we asked them to describe how **they learned of their daughter's (or son's) pregnancy**:

- *I kinda had a feeling but was in denial. I was very disappointed*
- *I was so upset! She just graduated middle school and got pregnant. I wanted her to get rid of the baby*
- *I almost fell over. I didn't yell, I just talked to her and told her to learn from her mistake*
- *I was upset in the beginning. I talked to her about it and told her what to expect. I let her know about her responsibilities as a mother and that she's doing a good job*
- *I 'almost killed him.' Too young!*

- *I was not here for that as I was not her foster mother then*
- *She didn't know she was pregnant until she went to the hospital for another reason and found out she was 37 weeks. She had an emergency C-section. I was very shocked and unprepared because I was pregnant with twins at the same time.*

We then asked the caregivers to provide open ended feedback about the PLP program. Specifically we asked about PLPs' role in academics; suggestions for improving academics; level of support from PLPs; and strengths and weakness of the program.

- **What is going well in PLP's role in helping adolescents to meet their academic needs?**
 - *They don't put the burden on the grandparent; It's encouraging that they are there and helping prevent more pregnancies*
 - *I'm glad they have daycare for the kids—it's very helpful to keep them focused*
 - *They talk to students to not make the same mistakes; they have meetings at school*
 - *They take my grandson for childcare*
 - *Being very supportive so they can finish school. They went above and beyond for us, especially when she ran away. They are very good-close and supportive with what our family needs*
 - *They teach them to be independent and responsible and help them to balance school and families*
 - *Gives him responsibility knowing he has to be on time; won't see the baby if he is late*
- **To what extent do you feel your son/daughter is receiving the support and services that you feels she needs?**
 - *They are doing a good job so he can go to school*
 - *She's receiving the guidance she needs; once a week they have a parenting group*
 - *I think she is*
 - *She is definitely getting the support she needs*
 - *They do enough because you will never find another program like this. It's a good program*
 - *I feel that she's getting the support she needs with this program to help her graduated. Helps me out during the day because I can have some downtime*
 - *I think she's receiving very detailed info about the things she needs in her life right now. She also has others to talk to in similar situations and get different perspectives*
- **What do you like most about the PLP program?**
 - *The open door communication with her. She feels very comfortable talking with them. They even include me with that.*
 - *I like that it helps her stay in school. It helps her because she is in a support group and they help with daycare.*
 - *It's free and they help young mothers. I think there should have been a program like this when I was younger*
 - *They are involved and have the group once/week to help them with parenting skills. Just a program in general to help them finish school is helpful*

- *The communication*
 - *They teach the teens how to care for their babies—what to expect; give them extra information to take home*
 - *Makes him responsible; teaches him the baby is not a dog.*
- **What do you like least about the PLP program?**
- *I really have nothing bad to say about it*
 - *Nothing—they show him to be organized*
 - *Their transportation situation; the schedule changes without notice. Also, they make her prepare food, change his diapers, and read to him after she drops him off. This makes her late to school in the mornings*
 - *She does not have transportation to get to program and back to school*
 - *Nothing*
 - *The support group is getting out of control. Big fights have broken out with one another and the social worker is too nice to the girls.*
 - *I really don't have much. They have been very supportive and I don't have anything negative to say about them.*
- **What parts of the program do you hope they continue?**
- *I strongly believe that involving me and having me participate is really great. That they don't exclude me or my husband from anything that occurs.*
 - *The parenting group sessions; the support they give to young mothers*
 - *The childcare and the group, if they get security*
 - *Everything*
 - *The whole program just so kids can finish high school when they have a kid.*
 - *Everything. Really like the scheduling.*
 - *The transportation; the communication log*
- **What are your suggestions for improving the PLP program?**
- *Put more bosses so they can transport the parent and child*
 - *Just transportation but not sure they can change that*
 - *None*
 - *Basically improving the group to make it safer*
 - *There have to be more caregivers watching the babies. Twice my grandson's diapers went all day without being changed*
 - *More communication is necessary when situations arise. I can't think of anything else. They do a pretty good job there.*
 - *Maybe showing them how to be more self-sufficient, organized, and responsible. Teach them preventative treatment*

Report Summary

Recap of Project Goals

This project was developed in summer 2013 to help understand the needs and challenges of the population served by the Parent Linking Program (PLP) in New Jersey. There were three phases to this project: Phase 1 focused on the analysis of program administrative data for two full academic school years; Phase 2 entailed web-based data collection with program and school personnel; and Phase 3 involved data collection with youth participants (with mothers and fathers) and their caregivers. These were separate interviews that were conducted individually by trained MSW-level Research Assistants; Spanish-speaking RAs were available for participant recruitment and interviewing with Spanish-speaking youth or caregivers.

The key objectives included:

1. Assessing teen parents' knowledge of parenting skills and of healthy child development;
2. Measuring the extent to which teen parents avoid or reduce involvement with child protection services;
3. Assessing the logistics of the programs and child care centers (e.g., in the school where the teen is enrolled versus outside of the school);
4. Assessing and describing the resources and activities of each of the 10 PLP program sites.

Despite an enormous level of cooperation on behalf of the ten PLP programs and the school personnel where these programs are housed, our original data collection goals were not met and we ultimately conducted far fewer youth and caregiver interviews than anticipated. Nonetheless, we believe the information provided by the project participants reveals a great deal of descriptive information about how they have benefited from the program, their goals in life, the changes they would like to see in the programs, and how they relate to their children, families, and their babies' fathers. However, it is important to note that this project was not intended to measure the efficacy of the program itself.

Summary of data collected with youth and caregivers:

From the interviews with 27 program participants (24 young mothers and three fathers), it is overwhelmingly evident that the youth had positive feedback about the PLP programs with which they were involved. They also conveyed a commitment to their parenting roles and none of the youth interviewed were currently or formerly involved with DCP&P (or had been reported to DCP &P). While they had constructive feedback about the programs, this was mostly pertinent to the need for more resources and supports. General summaries of the respondents' key reflections based on each of the objectives follow.

- **Assessing teen parents' knowledge of healthy parenting.** Based on structured scales that we used to assess their parenting approaches, many parental strengths were noted. From the

Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory, it was notable that the young parents endorsed an understanding of infant and toddler psychosocial development and fostering the capacity to develop autonomy. In addition, there was wide disagreement with the use of spanking as a discipline method; an endorsement of wanting their children to share their feelings with them; and an endorsement that children “should be potty trained when they are ready and not before.” Yet, some respondents endorsed responses that indicated the desire for children to focus on *their* own (the parents) needs. For example, some endorsed that children should be their parents’ “best friend” and that a child can provide comfort after parents have argued.

Based on responses from the *Healthy Families Parenting Inventory*, overall it was apparent that by and large the young parents felt encouraged and supported by friends and families and were relatively intentional about self-care. They also noted they were patient with and responsive to their young children. Similarly, almost all of the respondents indicated that they “praise their child every day” and that they “use positive words to encourage their children.” On the other hand, some noted deficits in getting adequate sleep, and though they felt supported by others, they were reluctant to seek help when they needed it. And, responses were mixed about the ability to locate community resources.

From some of the open-ended or semi-structured interviews, significant majorities of the participants indicated that they lived with their own caregivers and that these relationships were fairly positive and supportive of their parenting efforts. They indicated regular and ongoing dialogues with these caregivers and/or other individuals with whom they lived around parenting advice or discussions of personal problems. They also received concrete assistance such as financial help, babysitting, and transportation fairly regularly. It is further important to note that almost all of the youth indicated the presence of a mentor in their lives, and that the relationships with these mentors were very positive.

Regarding the open-ended feedback that participants provided about their own caregivers’ involvement in providing assistance with their children, several noted that these caregivers “watch over” their children so they can study, work or relax. Commented one youth: “anything I need, she is there.” This is not to suggest that all participants enjoyed a problem-free relationship with their caregivers in this regard. Said one youth: “With me, she has no great strength. With my child, my child loves her. My child knows that’s her grandmother.”

- **Assessing the logistics of the PLP programs.** A critical component—noted by the participants, caregivers, and program personnel is that child care is integrated into the PLP program services. However, not all programs have child care facilities located on site. We were unable to directly assess how this logistic arrangement may have affected the young parents’ abilities to focus on and interact with their children during the school day, though all youth except for one indicated that they received transportation assistance to these off-site locations. Still, when asked if they were able to visit with their children during free time during school, 41% of respondents indicated they could not. Regarding the atmosphere of the childcare environment, most respondents had positive perceptions about the centers’ “cleanliness” and “bright and welcoming” appearance. They also held mostly positive

reflections of the logistics around enrolling in the centers and how the program staff respond to issues that arise for the infants and toddlers.

- **Strengths and challenges of PLP programs.** In addition to gauging participants' reflections about the childcare services provided by PLPs, we also asked them about other attributes of the programmatic services and resources. Aspects of the programs that they wished to continue included the general group meetings and parenting classes, the family fun nights and field trips, the program methods for teaching and caring for the participants' babies, and the encouragement, nurturance, and support they provide to the young mothers and fathers. States one youth: "I was having a hard time dealing with daughter emotionally. She used to cry a lot, as a baby, I used to let her cry. So I started with my counselor and I learned that talking to and interacting with your kids helps them."

On the other hand, attributes of the program they disliked included some of the rules and "nagging" that the PLP staff do, and one youth commented that her "child's belongings get mixed up even though they are labeled." They further disliked the restrictiveness of some of the programs and that they couldn't visit the day care during the day. However, it should be noted that when asked about what they disliked, several participants said there was nothing wrong with the program. Yet they did offer suggestions for improving the PLP programs: additional transportation services; bigger facilities; increase in the number of staff and services like parenting classes to "tell parents to take good care of their kids." One youth commented that it would be good to have "more girls participate. It directed me in the right path."

Caregivers appreciated that the PLP programs relieve some of the burden on grandparents and that these programs supports the completion of high school, especially by providing concrete services such as child care. Moreover, several caregiver viewed the programs as a valuable source of support both from the PLP staff and from peers in similar circumstances. When asked what they liked most about the programs, caregivers offered: "open door communication"; groups that focus on parenting and child rearing; cultivation of responsibility; the comforting atmosphere. States one caregiver: "I think there should have been a program like this when I was younger." When asked what they wished would be improved, the caregiver respondents suggested the following: transportation services; additional caregivers in the day care centers; enhancing the safety of the parenting groups; and teaching them about prevention.

- **Personal attributes and strengths of the participants.** When asked to provide open-ended feedback about their own best attributes, many youth noted that they were very strong, resilient, and hardworking. They also valued the sense of responsibility they developed, partially out of becoming young parents. And, several noted their determination to be a loving parent. States one young parent: "I'm a great parent—I am smart and I have goals. I want to make it in life." When asked what advice they would give to another teen that was going through similar circumstances, most offered that it was important to stay strong and not give up. There was also recognition of how their loves changed too. Offered one young parent: "It's not easy. You have a kid and it's a whole new ball game. You are not the same

person you were. Everything changes and friends leave. It's not about you anymore.” Another credited the programs for helping them through a difficult transition as a young parent:” the program played a bit part in the person I am today. They helped me finish school, taught me parenting skills, and provided me with great counseling. She continued by suggesting to other teen parents: “Don't be part of the negative statistics put on teen parents.”

Summary of data collected with PLP personnel:

Although we had a relatively low response rate to the survey, respondents provided candid and detailed feedback about the programs. The structured survey responses revealed that most felt positively about the program structure, how the programs relate to the large school environments, and about their outreach and engagement strategies with youth. That is not to say that the responses were uniformly positive, with the need for additional resources and funding identified as a chief challenge they are facing. Transportation, in particular, was a chief obstacle for their program participants. Readers are advised to read the open-ended feedback for descriptive ideas for suggested changes, as well as comments about what has worked well in their programs. For instance, one respondent suggested that it would be helpful if their program could serve *pregnant* mothers, and not have to wait until after they had given birth. Moreover, they offered many specific ideas for training needs. On the other hand, others commented that the comprehensive array of services they offered was quite valuable and allowed them flexibility to address participants' multiple needs.

Respondents also offered open-ended comments about the strengths of the programs, with the presence of child care services as one of the most frequent response in this regard. Respondents also noted many positive insights about working with this population such as enjoying facilitating positive youth development and resilience, and that they are happy to play a role in helping the young participants move forward with their lives.

Conclusion

This report provides detailed feedback about the structure, promise, and challenges of the PLP programs. The feedback was provided by caregivers, young parents, and program personnel. While our number of completed interviews fell far short of our overall interview goals, the information we obtained was candid and comprehensive and provided insight into being a young parent and their burgeoning skill as parents, their relationships with their own caregivers and the babies' other parent, how they navigate the responsibilities and challenges of being young parents, how they view the strengths and weaknesses of the services and resources provided by PLP programs, and how they relate to the program staff and other program participants. By and large the respondent feedback was positive and encouraging, with many suggestions for continuing with certain elements of the program or ideas for revamping other components. In addition, we provide a summary of two years' worth of administrative program data to provide a context for the types of services offered by programs.

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