

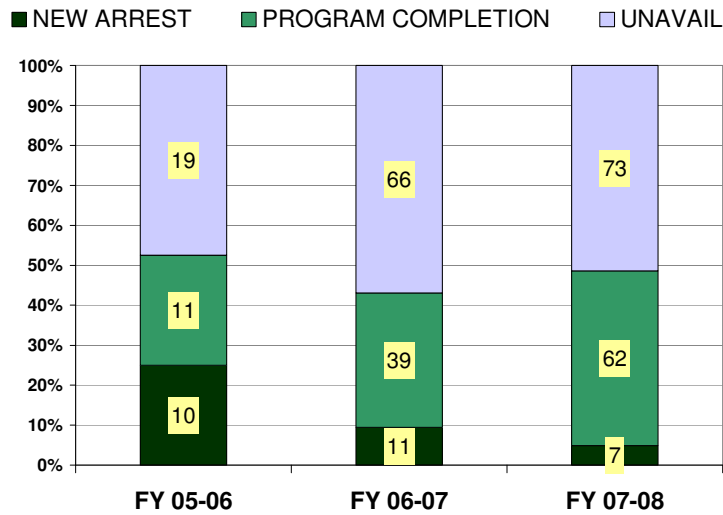
Star View Community Services' (SV-CS) Partnership with Juvenile Probation Yields Results

In 2005 *Star View Community Services* (SV-CS) in Los Angeles County began a partnership with the *Los Angeles County Probation Department* (LACPD) to create a social rehabilitative program for youth returning to the community from juvenile detention. The program is called *High Risk High Needs* (HRHN) because it focuses on youth with very high risk behaviors (including aggression, substance abuse, impulsivity and recklessness, gang affiliations, run-away, and criminal activity), unmet schooling potential (related to learning problems, chronic truancy and disengagement from school), untreated emotional problems, and caretakers who have lost parental influence over their youth (absent, overworked, and/or otherwise unable to provide supervision). HRHN services are one-on-one rehabilitative supports and interventions focused on both the youth and the family. For example, youths' areas of focus include structured discussions that explore world view and attitudes, motivation to change, empathy and social skills, checking of thinking errors, and problem-solving life challenges. Family focus involves psychological education around youths' developmental needs and targeted interventions in three domains -- delinquency, family life, and schooling -- starting prior to the youth's return home from detention. To date, the SV-CS HRHN program has served nearly 500 youth who are 70% male and 30% female, and ethno-culturally diverse (49% Latino/Hispanic, 23% Asian American, 20% African American, and 8% Anglo American). Staffs are selected for their ethnic diversity and street knowledge, and are well trained in principles and practices of cross-cultural intervention.

HRHN management and staff periodically reviews data based on *Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act* (JJCPA) tools which include baseline and discharge measurements of youth and family strengths. An initial review from program start-up through October 2006 showed the program had promise to impact youth and family functioning as well as to reduce re-arrests rates. However, the results were not as strong as administration and program leadership sought and quality improvements were implemented, including one project in which the probation department agreed to change the process of service initiation so that HRHN staff could begin working with the youth -- not just the family -- before the youth left juvenile detention. Other areas of focus included staff training and supervisory support, especially around more difficult cases in which baseline measurements showed few youth or family strengths.

As a result of this partnership and diligence, and improved data collection, recent HRHN results show marked gains in the ratio of youth with successful program completions to new arrests, which is the contractual focus. At the first study this ratio was 1.5 to 1.0 (successes to new arrests) whereas over the last year it is 3.5 to 1.0. In the graph, the "unavailable" category includes neutral circumstances such as moved out of county as well as discharges associates with lack of initial engagement, service refusals, and/or premature withdrawal from the program by the family. In order to improve engagement and retention, program staffs are currently focused on understanding what the "red flags" are that signal these potential outcomes.

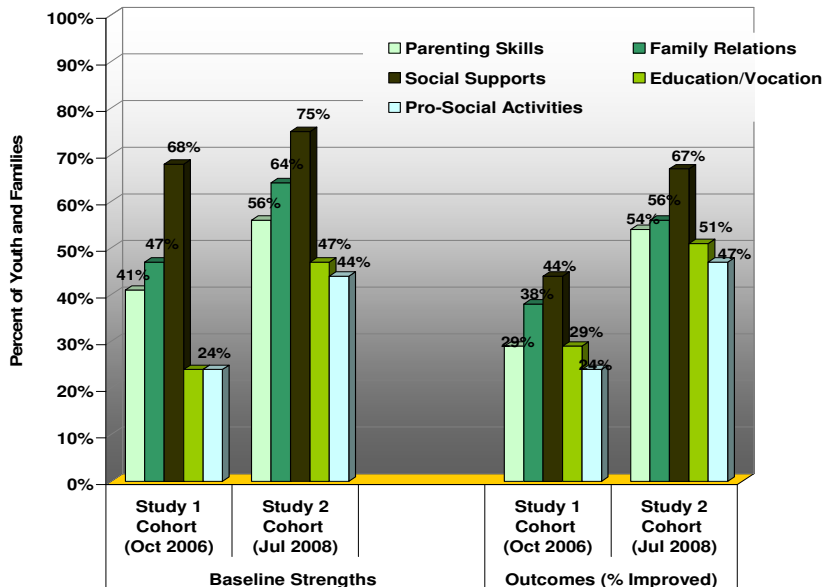
Discharge Reasons by Year (N=300)ⁱ



ChiSquare p<.005

Important and related, over the course of HRHN’s program development, more youths and families experience functional improvements across all measured areas -- strengths regarding parenting skills, family relations, range of community supports, educational or vocational progress, and pro-social involvements. Examples of these results are shown below:

Favorable Comparison to Prior Study



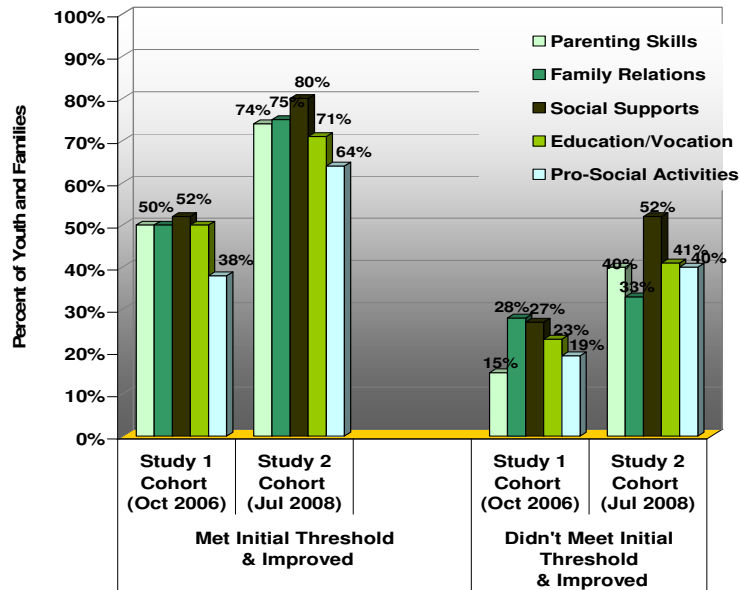
ChiSquare p<.000

The more recent data show both higher levels of baseline strengths among incoming youth and families (possibly reflecting increased staff attention to identifying these strengths)

and higher proportions with gains in these critical strength areas – for example in the educational domain, 51% are showing improvement compared to 29% a few years ago.

While those with higher initial strengths experience more functional gains, it is also the case that the program is positively impacting many who do not meet baseline (threshold) strengths in these areas, and these proportions have increased over time.

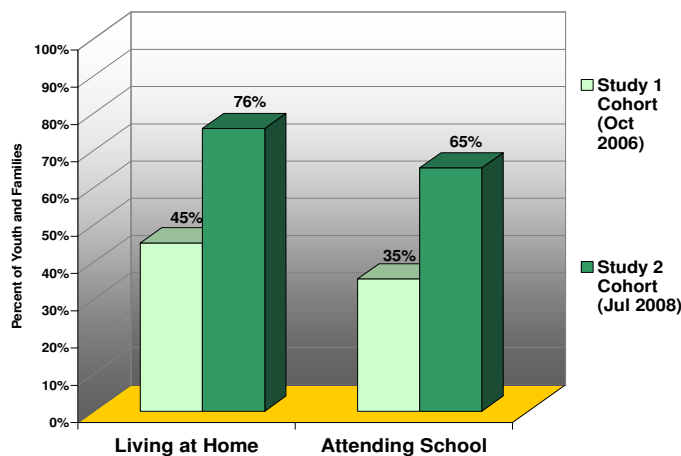
Proportions with Improvements as a Function of Initial (Baseline) Strengths



ChiSquare p<.001

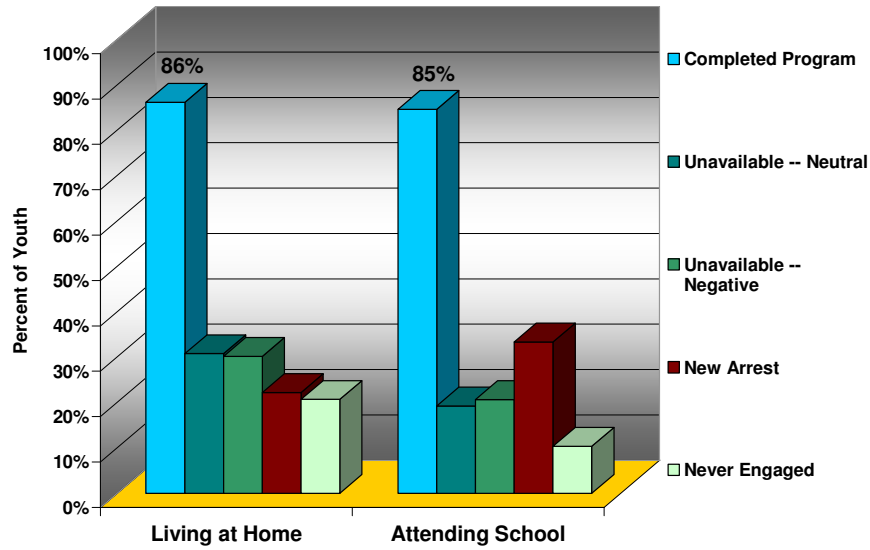
As a result of the partnership around quality focus and improvement, there are significant gains in the proportions of youth living at home and attending school regularly by the time of discharge from HRHN.

Improved Key Outcomes by Discharge



Program completion positively relates to the key outcomes.

Outcomes and Discharge Reasons



These data indicate the HRHN program model -- refined over time and through collaboration -- is robust and compelling enough to undergo randomized clinical trials for establishment as an evidence-based practice.

ⁱ Not included in the sample is the first group of youth served, before measurement protocols were implemented, and currently active cases (not yet discharged).