



★ Stars Community Services ★

Stars High School and STEP Program

BRIEF REPORT from the Department of Research and Program Practices
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The Stars High School provides a structured educational environment and tailored rehabilitation and therapy to youths grades 7th to 12th referred for behavioral support and education at one of three levels of care – starting with STEP* (School-based Enriched Therapy Program, two classrooms) as the most intensive care level, then with the Counseling Enriched classroom as a step down, and the Supported Study classroom as the least intensive. Our goal is to help students return to mainstream high schools, graduate and go on to fulfilling adult lives. We work to provide our students with the tools they need to pursue more education, with strong work prospects and good family relationships. Here in this **BRIEF REPORT**, we present outcomes from the most recent year and a half (September 2013 to April 2015).

Participants:

Students were 51% African American, 19% Latino/Hispanic, 15% White, 3% Asian and 12% other, mixed or unknown, with 39% female and 61% male. The median age on entry was 15.3 years. Students were referred from eleven school districts including Oakland (56%), Hayward (15%), San Leandro (10%), Alameda (5%) and Castro USDs (4%).

The median length of stay in the STEP program was 7.6 months and 9.3 months total including the less intensive milieus of the Counseling Enriched classroom and the Supported Study classroom.

Introduction to Our School:

Teachers and staff warmly welcome prospective students and families. The staff make every effort to understand the students' needs and they respond with an individualized plan of care so families can see the quality of support their child will receive.

Stars' classrooms offer a continuum of more intensive to less intensive care. Individualized mixes of therapy, groups, and/or rehabilitation services help each child succeed. **STEP** represents the most intensive milieu, including individual therapy, group rehabilitative sessions, counseling support in the classroom and a highly structured classroom experience.

Counseling Enriched is the next most intensive with some individual and group educational counseling. Finally, **Supported Study** includes some individual educational counseling support, if needed, and provides a shortened day to allow for students to work in the community and/or attend vocational or job training while completing their high school diploma.

Teaming up to Support our Students' Success!

“When Johnny (not his real name) entered Stars High School in the STEP program, he was frustrated with school, and had a history of aggression towards peers and poor school attendance. He and his new therapist quickly identified a common love – sports! They talked as they kicked a soccer ball around together; therapy helped Johnny see how his strengths could help him control his own behavior.

During his 8th grade year at Stars HS, Johnny acclimatized to the structure of the school environment, and his aggressive behaviors decreased in frequency. He became able to attend school more regularly. His mother, teacher, therapist and counselors could see that Johnny was nearly ready to enroll in a regular high school at Oakland USD, and were all concerned that he have the support he needed to be successful in the move. With school staff support, his mother arranged for Johnny to meet the school's football coach. He began attending team football practices before the start of the next school year. As a result of his time at Stars High School and the carefully planned move, Johnny smoothly transitioned to his new school, and now plays on the football team.”

Parents and Caregivers:

Parents and caregivers are the first and best supporters and healers of their children. Stars staff know this. Staff work to connect with family, and then support family to support their children.

- ★ Family therapy
- ★ **Family Night!** events for the whole family
- ★ Parental involvement in care (see “Teaming up for our Students’ Success” on the previous page).

Our Results:

Students made great headway on indicators reflecting behavior and functioning during school years 2013/14 and 2014/15 (to date) as can be seen in the charts to the right.

IEP (Individualized Education Plans) identifies the students’ greatest academic and behavioral challenges for the years. On average, students had six IEP goals and met or partially met three of those six during that year. Considering how challenging these goals are, their achievements are impressive.

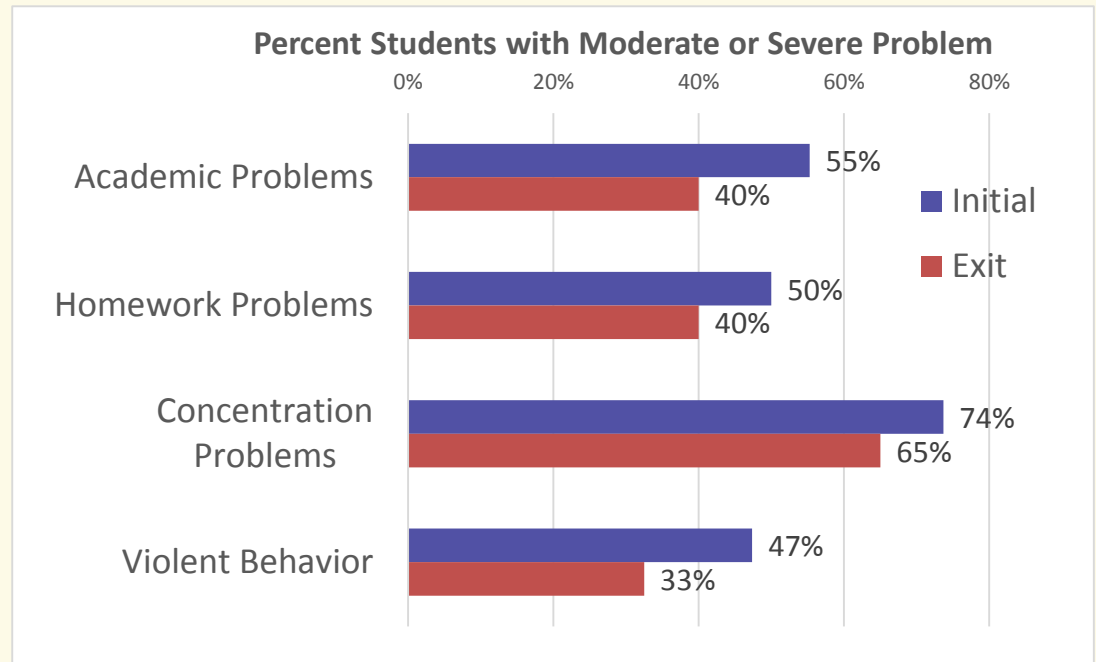
With the use of targeted behavioral interventions, the risk of violent behavior is significantly decreased by discharge as seen in the top chart to the right. Students referred to the STEP program frequently have issues with violent behavior toward others. This improvement is also seen in the CAFAS as an improvement in Behavior Toward Others between initial and exit measures (lower chart).

In addition, students improve significantly in their outcome measure of functioning at school between enrollment and exit (lower chart); specific measures of academic performance, homework completion and concentration show positive trends (upper chart).

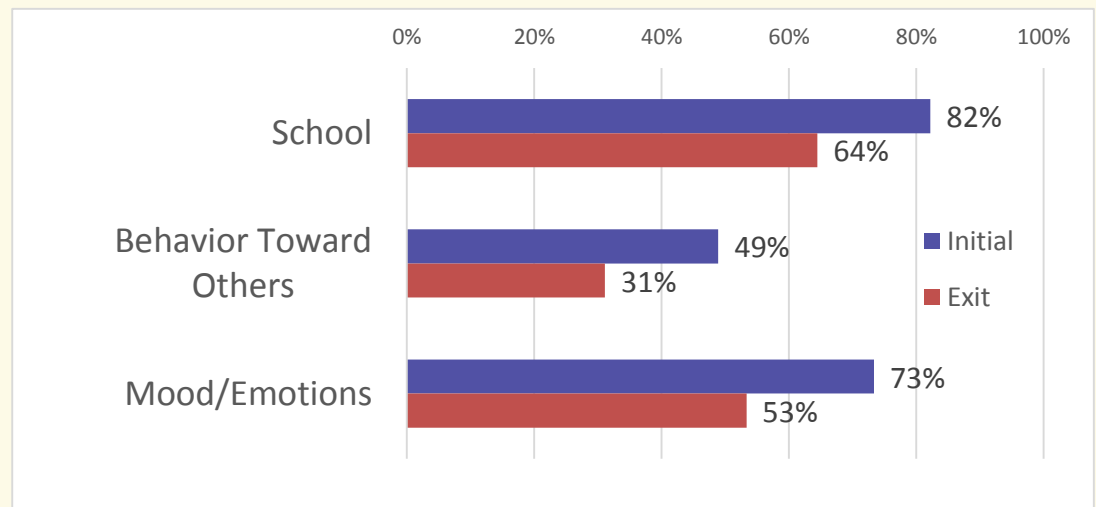
Students with emotional issues also benefit from attending Stars; functional issues with Mood/Emotions (lower chart) decrease significantly between enrollment and exit.

The majority (53% in the last year and a half) of our exiting students transitioned to comprehensive high schools, graduate, or joined Job Corps. The Stars team is very proud of the students’ accomplishments, happy to support them as they move toward a brighter future!

Decrease in Behavior Problems and School Problems (n=37; CFE outcomes)



Decrease in Functioning Problems (n=45; CAFAS outcomes)



*The STEP mental health program is Stars’ version of Alameda County Department of Behavioral Health Care Services’ Intensive Counseling Enriched Day Class program and is provided by Stars Community Services. Stars High School educates students meeting criteria under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and referring school districts. Stars High School and Stars Community Services are part *Stars Behavioral Health Group* (SBHG), a statewide provider of behavioral health care and related educational and social services to children, adolescents, young adults and adults and their family members.