

CHILDREN AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTER

CUNNINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOME SUPPORTED EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT FOR OLDER YOUTH IN CARE

Barry Ackerson, PhD, Principal Investigator

Dayna Finet, PhD, Project Director

Misa Kayama, MSW, Graduate Research Assistant

Ozge Sensoy, MSW, Graduate Research Assistant

July 15, 2007

This project was supported by the Children and Family Research Center, School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which is funded in part by the Department of Children and Family Services

**CUNNINGHAM CHILDREN'S HOME
SUPPORTED EDUCATION
AND EMPLOYMENT
FOR OLDER YOUTH IN CARE**

School of Social Work
1207 West Oregon, Urbana, IL 61801

Children and Family Research Center
1203 West Oregon, Urbana, IL 61801

University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

Barry Ackerson, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
217.244.5223, backerson@uiuc.edu

Dayna Finet, Ph.D., Project Director
217.265.0192, dfinet@uiuc.edu

Misa Kayama, M.S.W., Graduate Research Assistant
217.244.9208, mkayama2@uiuc.edu

Ozge Sensoy, M.S.W., Graduate Research Assistant
217.244.4942, osensoy2@uiuc.edu

JULY 15, 2007

CONTENTS

<i>Introduction</i>	3
<i>About the Research</i>	5
<i>Survey Findings, Focus Group, and Career Cruising Data</i>	7
<i>Goals/Plans</i>	8
<i>Information/Resources</i>	13
<i>Skills</i>	17
<i>Self Efficacy</i>	20
<i>Support</i>	23
<i>Satisfaction</i>	27
<i>Summary of Findings</i>	33
<i>Appendices</i>	
<i>Respondent Profiles</i>	36
<i>Goals/Plans</i>	39
<i>Information/Resources</i>	45
<i>Skills</i>	48
<i>Self Efficacy</i>	49
<i>Support</i>	50
<i>Satisfaction</i>	51

INTRODUCTION

Transition to independent adulthood is rarely easy, even for young people with the invaluable asset of consistent family support through years of preparation for a secure and satisfying future. Without the advantage of a stable and supportive family, foster children and youth almost inevitably are more vulnerable as they face the challenges of growing and learning, beginning their work and family lives, and becoming active participants in their communities. “Aging out” of foster care can mean not only sudden financial disruption, but also the ongoing burdens of past trauma, mental/behavioral health and substance use issues, interrupted educational progress, and a history of involvement with the courts and justice system.

The supported education/employment approach may offer these children and youth a better opportunity to achieve their fullest academic and occupational potential. Since the 1980s, supported education/employment programs have been employed to address the needs of young adults with serious mental illness. Program design varies, but philosophically, supported education/employment programs share a common purpose – enabling students with unusual obstacles to accomplish immediate post-secondary educational and long-term occupational goals. Supported education/employment programming may include a variety of features, from career guidance to motivational supports and mentoring. The research described here reports on factors relevant to the potential creation of a supported education/employment model – to this point, primarily implemented in the field of mental health – for the particular needs and promise of foster children and youth.

A collaboration of the University of Illinois School of Social Work/Children and Family Research Center and Cunningham Children’s Home, the research described in this report analyzes empirically the status of Cunningham’s existing vocational programming for foster children and youth. Data reported here primarily come from a survey of 58 Cunningham clients, supplemented by focus group data from a smaller group of Cunningham clients and information on occupational interest from a commercial computer-based career planning program (*Career Cruising*) used by Cunningham youth. Initially, researchers also planned to develop a supported education/employment pilot model designed to serve the specific population of foster children and youth. However, findings from the research suggest the need for a structure and curriculum more compatible with currently accepted models in community mental health and adult education than with the resources and supports available in a largely residential program like Cunningham. This represents a significant barrier to quick implementation of supported education/employment for the foster population, and so development of the pilot model has been deferred. Meanwhile, the authors have incorporated findings from this study into the Children and Family Research Center’s ongoing research agenda on transitioning foster youth, expecting these results will continue to inform both research and practice supporting the progress of these young people toward successful adulthood.

The report begins with a brief description of the research methodology and considerations to keep in mind when interpreting results. Next, the bulk of the report describes survey results in six sections dealing with Cunningham clients' assessment of 1) their own occupational goals and plans (also drawn from focus group and *Career Cruising* results), 2) their perceived sources of career-related information and resources, 3) their own occupation-relevant skills, 4) personal self efficacy, 5) the support they have received from existing vocational programs, and 6) their level of satisfaction with vocational services at Cunningham. The report concludes with a summary of core findings and a series of appendices detailing survey results.

The project team has enjoyed generous support from a number of sources. For material and practical assistance, we would like to thank the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the School of Social Work and Children and Family Research Center at the University of Illinois, the University's Department of Human and Community Development, the leadership and professional staff of Cunningham Children's Home, and most important of all, the participants in this research.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

A collaboration between the Children and Family Research Center (CFRC) and Cunningham Children's Home (CCH), this project involved several components. The core of the research was a survey of residential and non-residential clients at Cunningham, measuring their views on CCH's existing vocational and educational programming. Qualitative data from a focus group of clients in CCH's transitional and independent living programs supplemented survey findings. Finally, the analysis included data on Cunningham clients' occupational choice, collected through a commercial computerized career assessment program (*Career Cruising*).

Client Survey

Survey respondents (N=58) included clients of three Cunningham programs: 1) Circle Academy, a non-residential school for special education students living at home, and referred to Cunningham by their local public school districts (N=20); 2) Gerber School (referenced in the report as "High School"), which provides services to clients in Cunningham's residential treatment and Transitional Living (TL) programs (N=21); and 3) the Transitional Living and Independent Living Opportunities (ILO) programs for youth between 18 and 21 years of age (N=17, referenced in the report as "Post High School"). Appendix Tables 1 through 3 contain demographic profiles of respondents from each of these three survey groups. Respondents received \$25 retail gift cards in exchange for their participation in the survey.

Developed by the CFRC, questionnaires asked survey participants to provide information on six substantive areas: 1) their educational/occupational *goals* and *plans*; 2) their perceived sources of school/career related *information* and *resources*; 3) their own life and work related *skills*; 4) perceived *self efficacy*; 5) assessment of the specific *supports* provided to them by CCH vocational and educational staff; and 6) their level of *satisfaction* with the vocational and educational services they received at Cunningham. While the substantive content of questionnaires for each of the three groups remained consistent, one program-specific section containing primarily demographic items was tailored to apply uniquely to respondents in each of the survey groups. Most items were measured categorically, measuring respondents' agreement/disagreement with a series of statements about the six topical themes. In addition, the questionnaire contained several open ended questions, for example, asking respondents to name their "dream" job and the employment they actually expected to obtain.

Program staff at Cunningham identified potential survey respondents from among their clients at Circle Academy, at Gerber School, and in the TL/ILO programs, then distributed and collected completed questionnaires. CCH staff removed all potential identifying information from the completed surveys before returning them to the CFRC for data entry and analysis.

To analyze survey data, the CFRC generated frequencies and percentages for quantitative items in each of the topical areas. Open ended responses are reported verbatim.

Focus Group

The research project also involved a focus group discussion among clients in the transitional living and independent living programs to obtain more detailed narrative data on their experiences with Cunningham programs. Eight youth participated in the focus groups. Seven were female and one was male. Six were African American and two were White. All were above 18 years old.

An adult facilitator used a 10-item protocol to guide the group's discussion. Questions focused primarily on participants' aspirations for school and work and the factors that supported or hindered their ability to achieve these goals.

Focus group participants were identified by Cunningham program staff and recruited to attend the sessions. The focus group consisted of two sessions, one morning and one afternoon, each two hours long. All participants signed consent forms prior to the meetings, and received \$25 retail gift cards in exchange for their involvement. The facilitator audio taped both morning and afternoon sessions, held on site at Cunningham with CCH staff in attendance. Both morning and afternoon sessions were transcribed in their entirety.

To analyze focus group data, the CFRC extracted transcribed text focusing specifically on the theme of school and work expectations/experiences. Focus group data are reported along with survey findings and *Career Cruising* data in the following section on client goals and plans. Although included in this report, focus group findings should be read with some caution. Focus group members represent only Post High School respondents, with no qualitative data available from Circle and High School clients. Some methodological artifacts, including significant facilitator involvement in the focus group discussion, also may affect the independence of focus group data.

Career Cruising

In addition to survey and focus group participants, a group of Cunningham clients entered occupational choice preferences into a commercial, computerized career planning program, *Career Cruising*. To use the program, clients must create a personal portfolio that contains information on their preferred careers, schools of interest, work and volunteer experience, and a variety of assessment tools. In all, 163 Cunningham clients created portfolios. Of these, 101 were male and 62 were female. Among the 163 clients creating portfolios, grade levels ranged from 4th through 12th, and the program included an "other" grade category for respondents not enrolled in school.

This report presents summary data on the preferred careers identified from the 163 *Career Cruising* portfolios in two tables, described in more detail in the following section on Cunningham clients' educational and occupational goals and plans.

SURVEY FINDINGS, FOCUS GROUP AND CAREER CRUISING

DATA:

EXISTING PROGRAM CONTENT AND OUTCOMES

With parallel versions for Circle Academy, High School, and Post High School clients, the questionnaire used in this research consisted of five separate sections and more than 100 individual questions. Analysis of survey results focused on six substantive areas covered by this questionnaire. While conceptually distinct, these six themes merge to some degree – for example, sections on support and satisfaction both measure clients’ perceptions of Cunningham staff, though support items focus primarily on the actual behaviors of staff and satisfaction items concentrate on clients’ feelings about their experiences with staff.

As a logical starting point, this presentation of research findings begins with a section on the *educational and occupational goals and plans* of Cunningham clients. Three following sections focus on the external and internal assets clients see as helpful in achieving their goals – first, the *information and resources* they bring to their career-related efforts, second, their own assessment of their *educational and occupational skills* as measured by the survey questionnaire, and third, their general perceptions of their own *self efficacy*, or capacity to manage their lives and move in the directions they choose for themselves. Two final content sections report findings on the perceived role of Cunningham staff in clients’ educational and occupational achievement. One of these addresses perceptions of the behaviors and actions of Cunningham staff in *supporting* clients’ goals and progress, while the other concentrates on clients’ feelings of *satisfaction* with their Cunningham experience. Each of the six content sections begins with findings for the entire group of 58 survey respondents, followed by comparative analyses of Circle Academy, High School and Post High School sub-groups.

GOALS/PLANS

Supported education/employment programs are consciously designed to address not merely employment, but occupational aspiration as well. While foster children and youth typically face education and career without the benefit of family assistance, they still have the potential for significant accomplishment through economically secure and fulfilling work.

Questions dealing with educational and career goals appeared in Sections I and II of the client survey. While several items attempted to quantify the future plans of Cunningham clients, much of the most useful data on occupational goals came from two open-ended questions contained in Section II (designated in italics below). Occupational choice data from the focus group and *Career Cruising* also provided information about the career expectations of Cunningham clients. One survey item, bracketed in the table here, was negatively worded, and recoded for analysis so that higher percentage results reflect a more positive response.

GOALS/PLANS: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

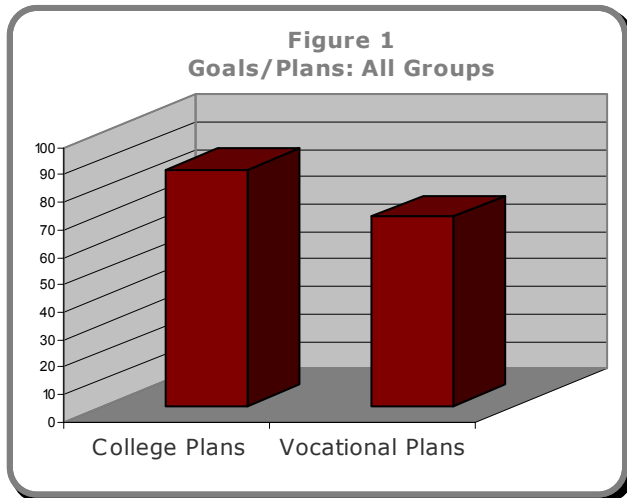
- 1) After high school I plan to attend college.
- 2) After high school I plan to attend job training or a vocational training program.
- 3) *What do you plan to do for a living?*
- 4) *What would you consider your “dream” job?*
- 5) [I don’t think the jobs and work experiences I have now will make a difference in my career.]

Appendix Table 4 presents the number and percentage of respondents who answered “True” to quantitative items about their future goals and plans. This section provides highlights of these data, along with a summary of the open ended qualitative responses to questionnaire items dealing with planned (3) and ideal (4) employment (Tables 5A and 5B) and occupational preferences recorded in *Career Cruising* (Table 6).

Survey Findings: All Respondents

Across the three survey groups, respondents showed significant interest in college-level education.

Almost 90% of total respondents answered “True” to the question “*After high school, I plan to attend college,*” compared to less than 70% responding “True” to “*After high school, I plan to attend job training or a vocational training program*” (see Figure 1). The questionnaire did not require respondents to choose between college or vocational training, so these results include some duplication – respondents who answered “True” to both questions. Because the survey did not distinguish between community college and four-year or graduate education, some respondents anticipating community college-based vocational training also may have indicated college plans.



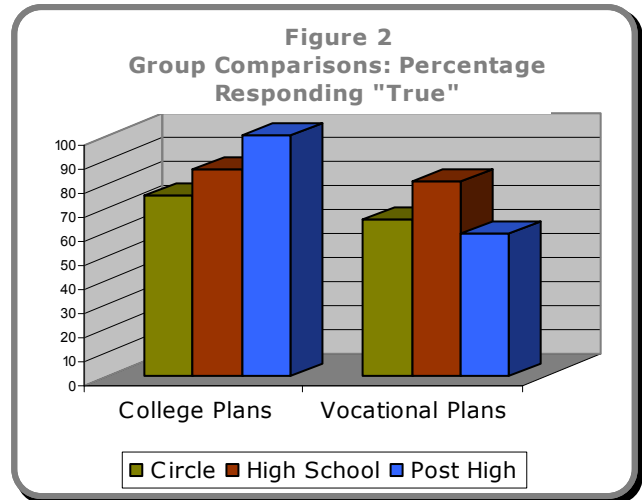
Despite these factors, both quantitative results and the open-ended responses to questions about specific occupational choices show a high level of interest in careers that might be considered outside the scope of traditional vocational programming, and that would require college and/or professional education.

Survey Findings: Comparison Across Groups

Though interest in college education appeared strong overall, the data also reflected

some differences among groups (see Figure 2).

While a large percentage of respondents in all three groups indicated college plans, Circle Academy students reported the lowest level – three quarters responding “True” to the question “*After high school I plan to attend college*” – compared to Post High School (100%) and High School (86%) respondents. With 59% answering “True,” Post High School respondents reported the lowest level of intention to pursue job training or vocational plans (“*After high school I plan to attend job training or a vocational training program*”) (65% of



Circle and 81% of High School clients responding “True”). The survey did not collect additional data to explain these findings, but a supported education/employment program for foster children and youth should consider them. Fundamentally, it is important to better understand what underlies these divergent responses. Further, they may have important implications for the implementation of a supported education/employment strategy. Circle Academy students – those least likely to anticipate attending college – are, at the same time, those most likely to benefit from college preparatory planning and study. On the other hand, the college hopes of Post High School clients may be frustrated by a deficit of earlier planning and preparation that supported education/employment programming could address.

Survey Findings: Open-Ended Questions

Two survey items asked respondents to identify what “...*You plan to do for a living*” and “...*You consider your ‘dream’ job.*” Verbatim responses to these questions, for each of 58 survey respondents, appear in Appendix Table 5A. Table 5B shows these responses sorted into *Career Cruising* occupational clusters. This

section summarizes patterns in the data that may have implications for a supported education/employment approach.

More than a quarter of survey respondents gave *non-specific answers* to the item asking about employment plans – for example, “Not sure,” “Get a job,” “Don’t know,” and “Work.” This category of response was less evident in answers to the question of “dream” employment, where only five survey participants indicated no definable ideal career. This finding suggests an important role for supported education/employment – perhaps dissimilar to traditional vocational education – for clients with career aspiration and potential but perhaps without the knowledge and skills to practically achieve these goals.

Survey results showed evidence of some *unrealistic career plans and aspirations*, focused especially on the fields of entertainment and sports – “Acting, dancing, entertainment, music,” “Be a rapper,” “NBA,” “To play in the NFL.” This pattern appeared much more typically in answers to the “dream” job question (11 responses) than to the item asking about actual career plans (three responses). While most respondents appear to recognize these careers as unlikely in practice, their responses raise a question that a supported education design might productively consider – that is, the sources of information and influence on clients’ thinking about their own future work and family life.

Respondents very clearly demonstrated a preference for more realistic (though challenging) careers *outside the scope of traditional vocational training*, more pronounced in answers to the “dream” job question. Out of 58 open-ended responses asking about planned employment, only 10 named occupations likely to be included within the realm of traditional vocational education – including responses such as “Construction,” “Be an X-Ray tech,” “Hairstylist, cosmetologist,” “CNA,” “Chef,” and “Mechanic.” Only two survey participants offered traditional vocational occupations in response to the open-ended question asking them to identify their “dream” job. Still, naming occupations not typically addressed by vocational programs, almost one third of respondents gave identical (or very similar) answers to *both* planned and “dream” employment questions, naming very specific jobs such as “Librarian,” “Sign Language Interpreter,” “Zoo Keeper,” and “Psychologist.” When planned and “dream” employment responses did not match, most typically employment plans were vague or non-specific in comparison to clearly definable “dream” jobs. Together, these results reinforce the impression of a client population with aspirations beyond vocational employment, but without the concrete knowledge and skills to achieve these goals.

Focus Group

For several reasons, focus group data should be read with caution. Participants in the session primarily represented a subgroup of Cunningham clients participating in its independent living program and more specifically, young women from the pregnant and parenting teen program. The unique circumstances and needs of this client group are crucial to understand, especially concerning the obstacles that early parenting can pose to accomplishment of school and work obligations. However, these issues do not generalize well to the larger context of client survey data (and to a lesser extent, *Career Cruising* data as well).

Methodological issues also are of concern in the interpretation of focus group data. Because the discussion occurred in a collective setting, group dynamics are likely to distort individual participants' responses—for example, some individuals may dominate the discussion while others may not feel comfortable sharing information in front of other people. The transcript of this focus group also revealed significant involvement by the facilitator, which may have influenced the discussion and thus, the quality of the data obtained from it.

Though much of the focus group discussion concentrated on participants' experiences of parenting, some data focused on themes of occupational aspiration and educational preparation.

Like survey data, focus group participants voiced interest in occupations not typically part of vocational training and employment.

"Okay, I actually have two dream jobs...a singer or forensic pathologist."

"I always wanted to open my own restaurant."

"I don't know...I have a few dreams and some of them are less realistic than others. One is I'd like to write, you know, a best-selling novel."

"Like when I first went into foster care I wanted to be an engineer, then I wanted to be a doctor, then I wanted to be a policeman, but it change every year."

Also consistent with survey data, focus group participants indicated that their Cunningham program did not provide information or encouragement to pursue their desired careers.

"No, cause they don't ask us what our dreams is, or what our dream job is, or what we really wanna do."

"They don't care so much about that [dream job], it's just the fact that you have a job."

"They just say a job is a job. Whatever."

Focus group participants also focused on education. In particular, they emphasized a need for academic advising, relevant to their specific secondary, post-secondary, and occupational goals, and beginning prior to high school. Respondents expressed the view that they had been encouraged only to aspire to high school completion, not to plan for college or professional careers.

"Like early on, like for the kids who are in DCFS, they need to sit down and let them know...ask them what their goals are. They don't sit and ask us what our goals are early on. Like I've been in DCFS since I was two, but they don't sit down and ask you what your goals are in life once you hit 18 and get out of high school."

"When I was in high school, DCFS, and Cunningham, none of them, anybody's ever brung up college. All they were worried about was me getting my high school diploma. They weren't even so much worried about...cause I was going to finish high school. They wanted me to go and get my GED. I was like, 'No, I'm not settling for a GED.' And still even after that, they never brought up college or what classes I needed to take during high school in order to finish or nothing. I did that on my own."

Career Cruising Data

Not identical to the sample of survey respondents, but with significant overlap, a group of Cunningham clients used *Career Cruising* to identify occupations of potential interest. Appendix Table 6 displays occupations that received the greatest number of client mentions.

Like open-ended survey results on occupational choice, *Career Cruising* data reflect clients' primary interest in professional and creative occupations not traditionally addressed by vocational education and training – “Director of Photography,” “Set Designer,” “Animator,” “Cartoonist,” and “Composer,” for example. The *Career Cruising* data also showed some differences between males and females. More females reported interest in “Child and Youth Worker,” “High School Teacher,” “Nanny,” and “Cartoonist/Comic Illustrator.” Males showed preference for “Heavy Equipment Operator,” “Industrial Designer,” “Animator,” “Architect,” “Crane Operator,” and “Web Developer.” Although limited, the *Career Cruising* data seems consistent with survey results, suggesting a wider range of occupational preferences, with different educational and training needs, than typically addressed through vocationally-oriented programming.

Goals/Plans Data and the Supported Education/Employment Approach

Open-ended data on the goals and plans of Cunningham clients offer valuable insight into their own aspirations and expectations for the future. Most clearly, they anticipate college-level education, and in many cases, continued professional training as well. While a few respondents identified impractical career aspirations – primarily in sports and entertainment – far more (indeed most) of survey participants expressed interest in legitimate careers that could provide them both economic security and purposeful work. To some extent, these occupations require education and training not typically part of a vocational approach, with implications for both clients and staff.

Typically foster children and youth have not received the information, encouragement, and material resources to support their aspirations. Life in the foster care system often entails profound disruption of family, school, and social life. In many cases these factors, rather than any innate limitations, prevent those in foster care from achieving their full potential. They are factors that an appropriately-designed and capably-executed supported education/employment program, targeted specifically for foster care clients, could address. Comprehensive assessment, to match clients with appropriate occupational choices, would represent a crucial element of such a plan.

It is likely this type of program would impose new and different demands on existing vocational staff. For one thing, it implies new and different types of program content – resume-writing, for example – suited to occupations that require more specialized professional training than vocational programs typically provide. A supported education/employment plan to address occupational preferences such as the ones identified by these survey respondents also could demand more concentrated and individualized attention – for instance, with the introduction of formal mentoring – from program staff as well.

INFORMATION/RESOURCES

Educational and occupational success require a foundation of individual abilities and attributes – inherent talents as well as the personal traits associated with achievement. External factors – probably more specifically, the development of clients’ ability to effectively connect with resources – also play a role.

Fourteen items, appearing throughout each of the questionnaire’s five sections, focused on information and resources used by Cunningham clients.

INFORMATION/RESOURCES: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

1) I am aware of the financial aid opportunities available to me, having DCFS as legal guardian.
2) How have you found jobs in the past?
3) I know three reliable adults I can get job references from.
4) Who do you know that would provide a job reference for you?
5) If I end up needing a ride to get to work on time, I know I can rely on CA/CCH staff to give me one.
6) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a certified copy of my birth certificate.
7) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a copy of my Social Security card.
8) I know the person who is in charge of the CA/CCH vocational prep program.
9) There is an adult in town I know who I can always call on when I need help.
10) Who is this adult?
11) I participate in organized activities in town.
12) I have access to a computer.
13) I know how to use the Internet to get information.
14) I have my own cell phone.

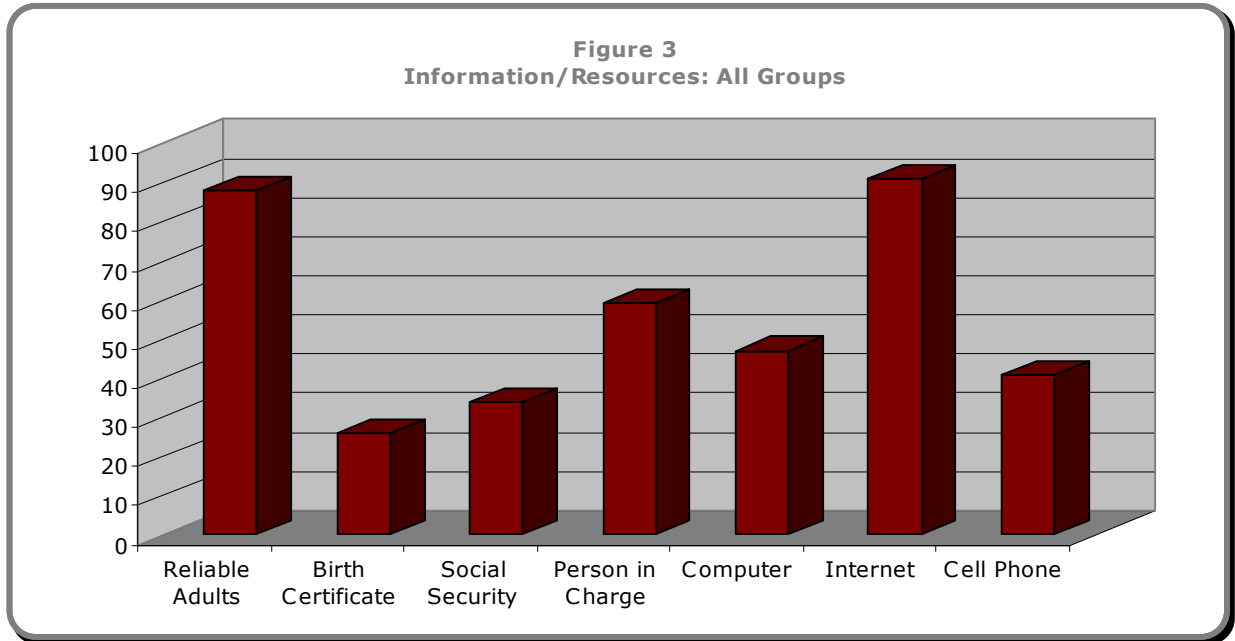
The number and percentage of respondents who answered “True” to the quantitative items measuring information and resources appear in Appendix Table 7. This section focuses on the main findings that emerged from this analysis.

Survey Findings: All Respondents

Information/resources items tended to focus on two broad areas—practical information necessary to manage school and work life, and interpersonal resources of support and assistance.

Across several items, the combined group of respondents indicated some evident deficiencies in terms of practical information (see Figure 3). Just 26% reported that “CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a

certified copy of my birth certificate,” and 34% said that “CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a copy of my Social Security card.” Fewer than half of respondents (47% and 41%, respectively) reported that “I have access to a computer when I need one at school,” and “I have my own cell phone.” Since 91% of survey participants responded that “I know how to use the Internet to get information,” these data could suggest that technology access may hamper clients more than lack of technological knowledge does.

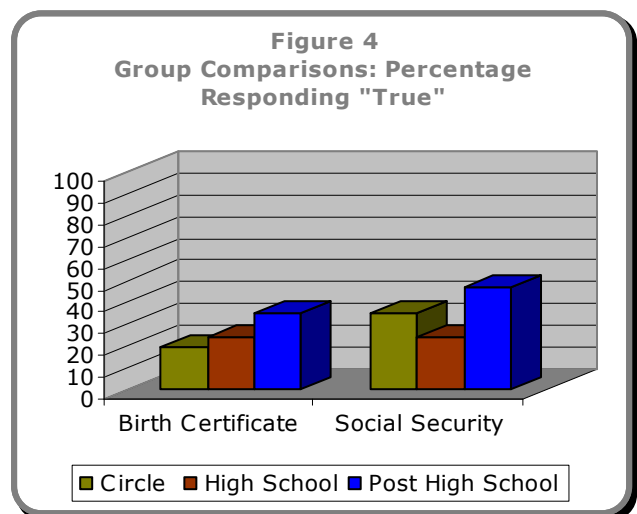


Access to job references is a crucial interpersonal resource necessary in both educational and occupational contexts, and 88% of all survey participants said that “I know three reliable adults I can get job references from.” A smaller proportion, 59%, reported that “I know the person who is in charge of the CA/CCH vocational prep program.”

Survey Findings: Comparison Across Groups

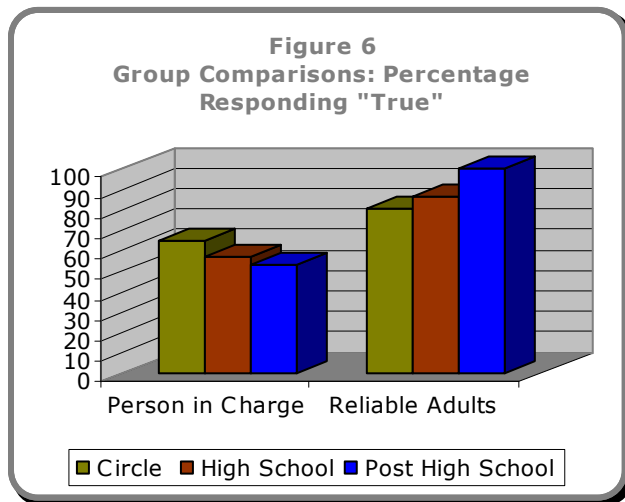
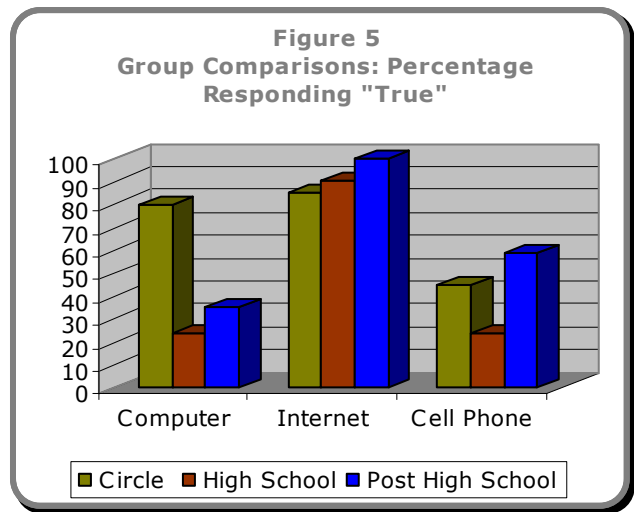
In each of the three separate client groups, respondents showed limited knowledge of some types of practical information – for example, just 20% of Circle Academy clients reported “CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a certified copy of my birth certificate” (with 24% of High School and 35% of Post High School respondents answering this question “True”), (see Figure 4).

Computer access was highest among respondents from Circle Academy, with 80% indicating “I have access to a computer when I need one at



school.” In contrast, much smaller proportions of High School and Post High School clients – 24% and 35%, respectively – responded positively to this question. More Post High School respondents – 59%, compared to 45% and 24% of Circle and High School students, respectively – reported “*I have my own cell phone.*” Though none of the survey items measured Internet access, respondents across groups indicated a consistently high level of Internet competence – 85% of Circle, 90% of High School, and 100% of Post High School clients responding “True” to the question “*I know how to use the Internet to get information*” (see Figure 5).

Differences were not large among the percentage of clients who responded positively to the question “*I know the person who is in charge of the CA/CCH vocational prep program,*” with 65% of Circle, 57% of High School, and 53% of Post High School respondents answering “True” to this question. (Figure 6) Consistently high proportions of respondents in each of the three groups reported access to other supportive adults – 100% of Post High School respondents said that “*I know three reliable adults I can get job references from,*” with 80% of Circle and 86% of High School students also responding positively to this item.



Information/Resources Data and the Supported Education/Employment Approach

Both across and within groups, and with a few exceptions, the level of positive response to information/resources items appeared somewhat lower than to items in other sections of the survey. A supported education/employment approach could improve on some of these items fairly easily – for example, incorporation of practical

information about birth certificates and social security cards into supported education/employment programming. Other improvements may be more difficult but play a critical role in a supported education/employment program designed to address the more challenging aspirations of foster youth clients like those represented in this research. Access to technology is vital, for example, and supported educational/employment programming also should address the need for occupationally-relevant technology skills. Finally, the data presented in this section suggests an important existing asset that a supported

education/employment design probably should exploit. Though only addressed in a limited number of questions, the analysis found some evidence of strong relationships between Cunningham clients and supportive adults within their families and in the community. Building upon this foundation—for example, through the incorporation and extension of effective mentoring—could make a very valuable contribution to supported education/employment at Cunningham.

SKILLS

Data on Cunningham clients' occupational aspirations show that many of them anticipate college training and professional careers. Although other factors also play a role, these clients' capacity to achieve at school and work will depend on their development of a set of skills required in the professional context, not typically part of vocational training, but a potential element in supported education/employment targeting foster children and youth.

Nine survey items designed to measure clients' occupational-related skills appeared throughout each of the questionnaire's five sections. One of these, dealing with respondents' ability to maintain employment, was worded negatively in the questionnaire. This bracketed item was reverse-coded during analysis so that higher percentage scores reflect more positive responses.

SKILLS: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

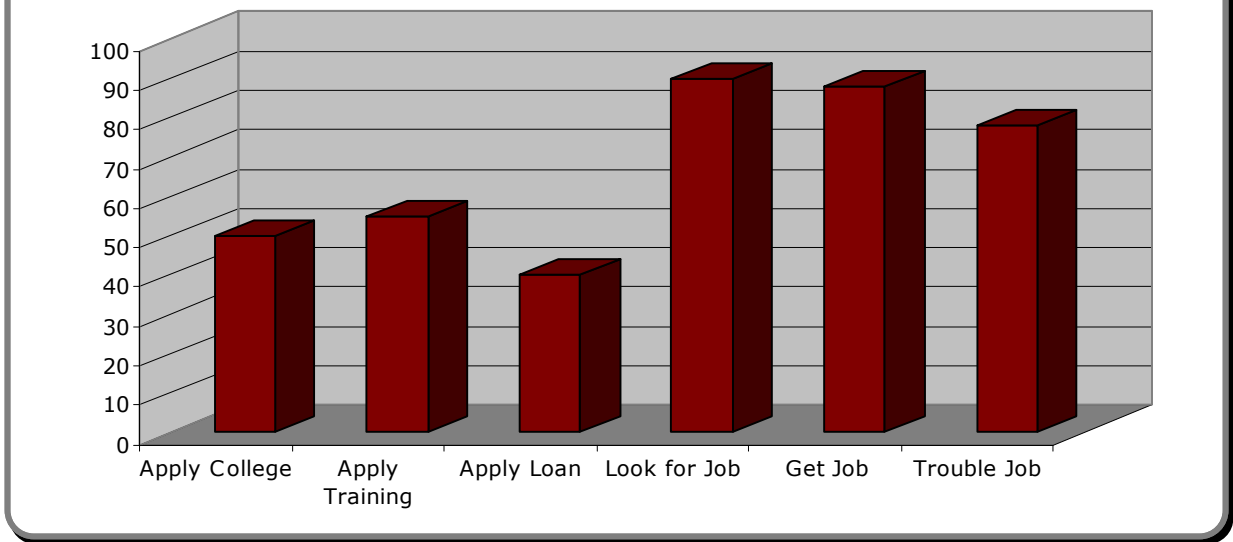
- 1) I am always able to get my schoolwork done on my own and turned in on time.
- 2) I know how to apply for college.
- 3) I know how to apply for a job training/vocational training program.
- 4) I know how to get a loan for college tuition and/or job training.
- 5) I know how to look for jobs.
- 6) I can get and keep a job, no problem.
- 7) [I have problems keeping a job once I have one.]
- 8) I am learning to be independent and feel secure about my plans for college, training, or work after high school.
- 9) I can set goals for myself and know the steps I need to take to achieve these goals.

Appendix Table 8 gives the number and percentage of respondents answering "True" to these nine skills-related items. This section highlights prominent themes reflected in the questions dealing with school and work related skills.

Survey Findings: All Respondents

Among respondents from the three combined groups, only about half (50%) agreed that "*I know how to apply for college,*" and slightly more (55%) said "*I know how to apply for a job training/vocational training program.*" Just 40% of all respondents reported that "*I know how to get a loan to pay for college tuition and/or vocational training*" (see Figure 7).

Figure 7
Skills: All Groups



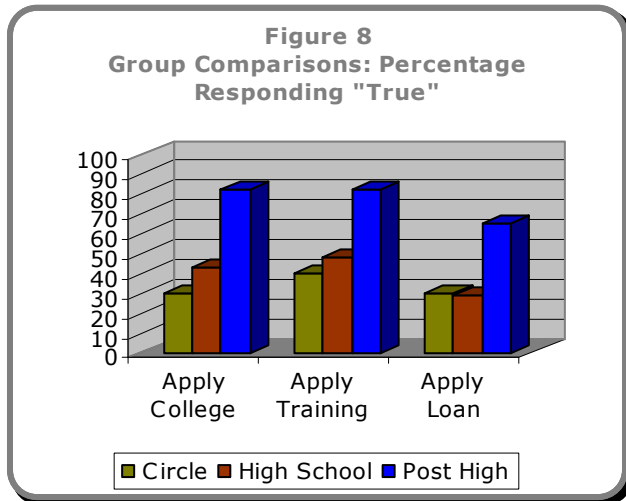
While expressing limited confidence in these skills relevant to long-term career planning and achievement, much larger percentages of survey respondents felt capable of finding immediate employment. Across all three survey groups, 90% responded “*I know how to look for jobs,*” and 88% agreed “*I can get a job and keep a job, no problem.*” These results imply that while survey respondents describe occupational preferences more consistent with academic than vocational training, they currently appear very unprepared to exercise at least some of the specific skills needed to pursue these goals.

Among these data, one other finding seems important to observe. Although Cunningham clients as a whole appear quite confident in their ability to locate and obtain employment, they seem somewhat less secure about their skill in keeping their jobs (and perhaps, had the question been asked, in their ability to advance at work). It will be helpful for the supported education/employment program to address potentially different skills required by the distinct, if complementary, skills of finding, getting, and keeping productive jobs.

Survey Findings: Comparison Across Groups

Analysis of the three separate respondent groups shows much lower percentages of Circle Academy and High School respondents confident in their college and training related skills, compared to clients in the Post High School group (see Figure 8). Only 30% of Circle Academy and 43% of High School students agreed “*I know how to apply for college,*” while 82% of Post High School students answered “True” to this item. Somewhat higher proportions of Circle (40%) and High School (48%) students – but the same percentage (82%) of Post High School respondents – said “*I know how to apply for a job training/ vocational training program.*” Although respondents in all three groups reported less confidence in the skills required to find financial support for their post-secondary plans – the item “*I know how to get a loan to pay for college tuition and/ or job*

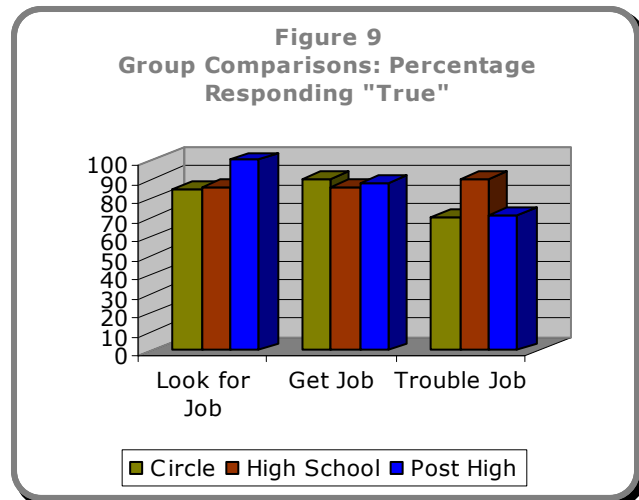
training” – more than twice as many Post High School clients (65%), compared to Circle Academy (30%) and High School (29%) students, responded positively to this item.



Across items, the three client groups demonstrate considerable similarity in their perceived skills at finding, getting, and keeping jobs (see Figure 9). Two exceptions show up in the analysis – among Post High School respondents, 100% expressed confidence in their ability to find a job, compared to 85% of Circle Academy and 86% of High School clients. More High School students – 90% – said they were able to keep their jobs once employed – compared to 70% of Circle Academy and 71% of Post High School respondents.

Skills Data and the Supported Education/Employment Approach

Survey data on a set of Cunningham clients’ perceived educational and occupational skills are especially relevant to a supported education/employment approach. Consistent with results elsewhere in the research, these findings underscore an evident gap between clients’ aspirations and some of the basic skills needed to achieve them. Unique in comparison to a more typical clientele for supported



education/employment, foster children and youth commonly may possess the intellectual capacity, but not the material and experiential (and perhaps social/emotional) resources to accomplish more advanced goals. This suggests a novel supported education/employment approach geared more ambitiously to address these specific deficiencies, focused on higher education, perhaps further post graduate training, and a variety of professional career paths.

Skills data also is consistent with other survey findings that reveal larger perceived deficiencies among Circle Academy (in particular) and High School respondents in comparison to those in the Post High School group. These findings echo focus group data suggesting clients’ wishes for an earlier start to occupational guidance and planning which a supported education/employment program might productively incorporate.

SELF EFFICACY

For students who may have experienced repeated failure in educational settings, the development of greater self efficacy can play a role in achieving more positive academic, emotional, and social results.

Five survey items measured respondents' assessments of self efficacy. Each of these self efficacy items appeared in Section IV of the questionnaire.

SELF EFFICACY: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

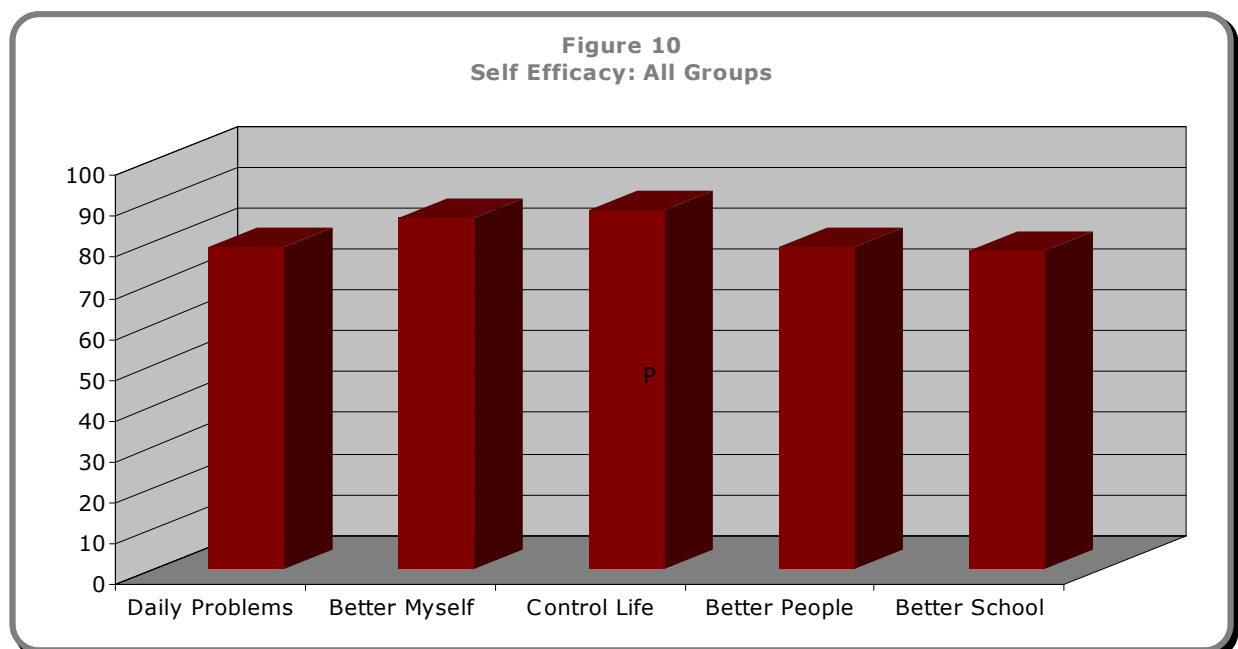
As a result of the services I receive at CCH:

- 1) I deal more effectively with daily problems.
- 2) I feel better about myself.
- 3) I am better able to control my life.
- 4) I get along better with other people.
- 5) I do better in school.

Survey results provide the number and percentage of respondents answering “True” to each of the five self efficacy questions. These data appear in Appendix Table 9, and with highlights illustrated here.

Survey Findings: All Respondents

Overall, survey participants responded positively to the five self efficacy questions (Figure 10).

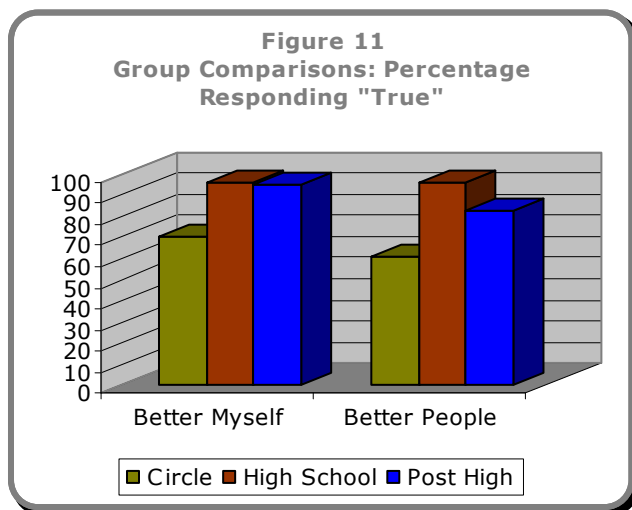


The item “*I feel better able to control my life*” ranked highest, with 88% responding “True,” but an item with similar content, “*I deal more effectively with daily problems*,” received only 79% “True” responses. This potential contradiction may reflect a real divergence between respondents’ relatively abstract (and more optimistic) perceptions of their lives and prospects on the one hand, and the more difficult practical realities of their experiences, on the other.

For the three groups combined, respondents reported the lowest level of efficacy (78% “True”) to the item “*I do better in school*.” This result may be especially important if it represents a perceived or actual deficit that supported education/employment programming specifically can address.

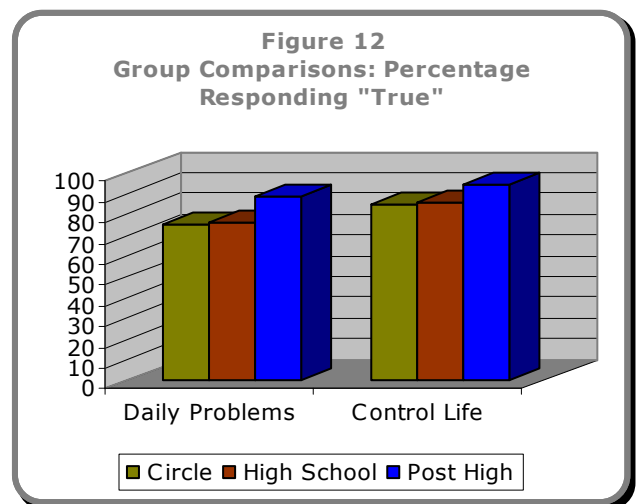
Survey Findings: Comparison Across Groups

High School and Post High School respondents reported higher levels of self efficacy, across items, than did respondents in the Circle Academy group. (Figure 11) This difference was most apparent for items that indicate perceptions of self and social competence.



On the item “*I feel better about myself*,” 70% of Circle respondents reported “True,” compared to 95% among High School and 94% of Post High School respondents. The gap between groups was even more distinct on the item “*I get along better with other people*” (among Circle respondents, 60% “True,” with High School reporting 95%, and Post High School, 82% positive responses to this question).

A second apparent difference among groups appears in comparisons of two items similar in content—“*I deal more effectively with daily problems*” and “*I am better able to control my life*.” (Figure 12) While Circle and High School respondents scored similarly for the percentages responding “True” to these questions (75% and 85%, respectively, for Circle and 76% and 86%, respectively, for High School groups), Post High School respondents reported positive responses between 10 and 15 percentage points higher than the younger groups (88% and 94%).



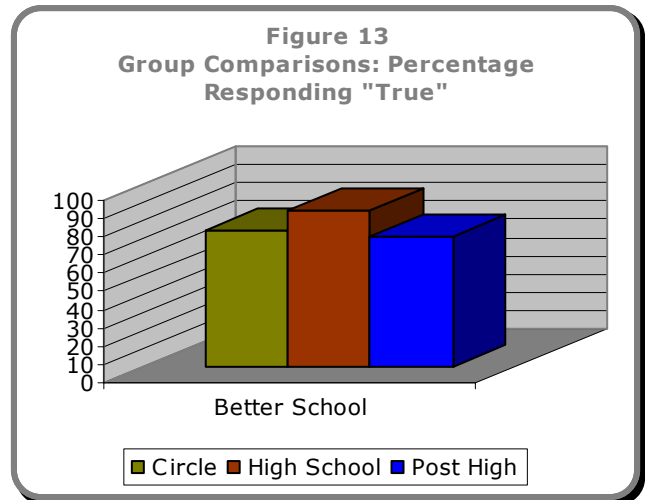
High School respondents reported the highest percentage (86%) of “True” answers to the item “*I do better in school*”—a finding potentially relevant to the design of a supported education/employment program which may need to address possible deficits in services to both younger clients (Circle Academy, 75% “True”) and those already past high school age (Post High School, 71% “True”), (see Figure 13).

Self Efficacy Data and the Supported Education/Employment Approach

Across questionnaire items and survey groups, findings indicate a fairly high level of self efficacy among Cunningham clients—for most questions, at least 70% of respondents in the three groups report positive feelings of efficacy, and combined group data reveals positive feelings of efficacy among 80% to 90% of respondents.

Because an important role of supported education/employment is to address emotional issues that may limit clients’ success at school and work, this should represent an important part of a supported education/employment strategy. The wording of questionnaire items links respondents’ perceptions of efficacy to their evaluation of Cunningham services, a possible methodological artifact which should be considered in the interpretation of findings. A supported education/employment program also should address possible gaps between feelings of self efficacy and the actual, concrete skills necessary for academic and occupational achievement. While feelings of competence matter, real ability and accomplishment also are necessary for success.

In terms of program development, two central findings emerge from the self efficacy data, and the strategy of supported education/employment potentially could address both. First, self efficacy perceptions appear lowest for the item directly related to school performance. In other words, respondents felt more positive about themselves, their relationships, and their ability to manage their lives than they did about their capacity for academic achievement. Second, Circle Academy respondents consistently reported lower perceptions of efficacy than those in the High School and Post High School groups. Along with focus group findings, these data suggest that an effective supported education/employment program should focus specifically on the educational, career and life planning needs of younger clients.



SUPPORT

A supported education/employment program offers two significant types of assistance to its clients. First, students can benefit from the social and emotional support provided by professional staff. In addition, supported education/employment programming may provide significant material information about potential careers and the skills necessary to achieve clients' educational and occupational goals.

The client satisfaction survey included 14 questions designed to assess both these types of support, as evaluated by Cunningham clients. In contrast to items measuring client satisfaction (reflecting the feelings of respondents about staff), questions about Cunningham support services focused on the perceived actions and behaviors of CA/CCH staff.

SUPPORT: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

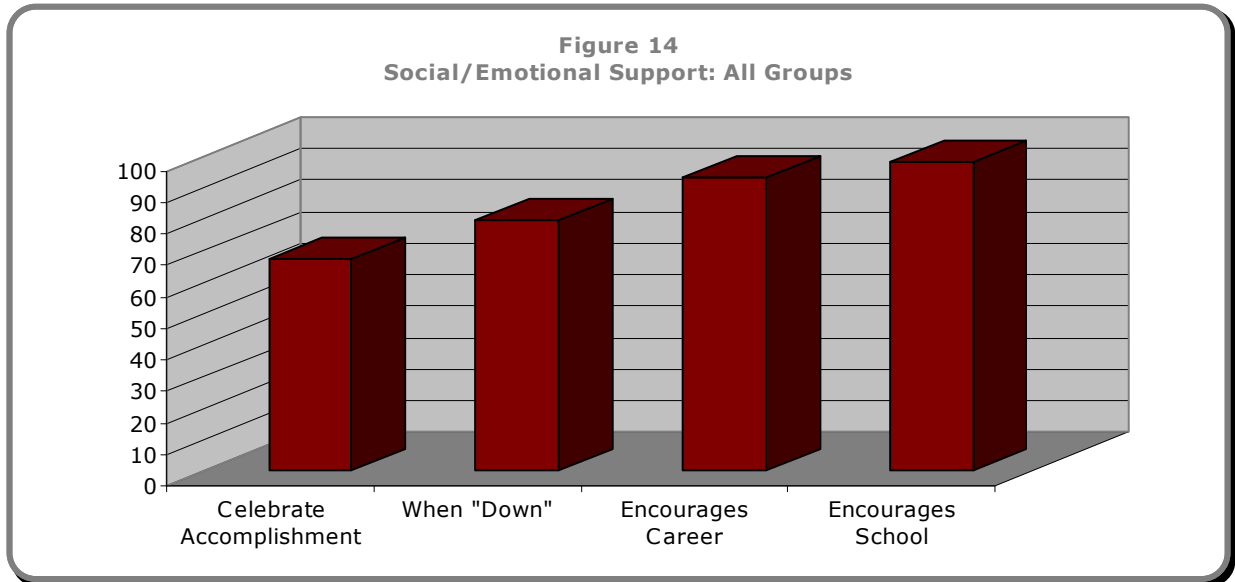
- 1) CA/CCH staff help me with my schoolwork whenever I need it.
- 2) CA/CCH staff encourage me to do well in school.
- 3) While in school, CA/CCH staff has encouraged me to participate in work related learning or work experiences.
- 4) I have received a lot of help from staff with planning for college or job training after high school.
- 5) I have received help from an adult other than staff with planning for college or job training after high school.
- 6) CA/CCH staff encourage me to consider pursuing a career I might be good at or enjoy.
- 7) CA/CCH staff has helped me learn how to prepare for a job interview.
- 8) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to complete a job application.
- 9) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to write a resume.
- 10) CA/CCH staff support and encourage me in positive ways, to keep my job no matter how hard it feels.
- 11) When I'm not sure how to do something at work, I can ask CA/CCH staff for help.
- 12) When I'm feeling "down" and discouraged about my job, there is always some at CA/CCH I can talk to.
- 13) CA/CCH staff celebrate my accomplishments with me.

Appendix Table 10 provides both the number and percentage of survey respondents who answered "True" to these 13 support items. This section describes the main themes emerging from the results.

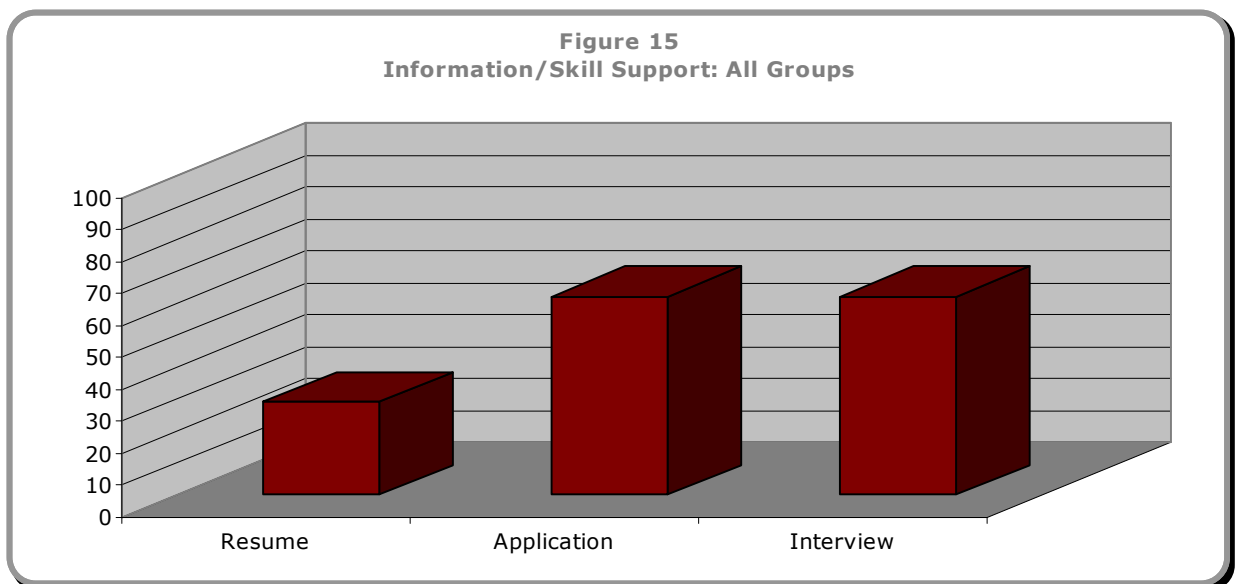
Survey Findings: All Respondents

Survey findings indicate perceptions of greater help for respondents' social and emotional needs than for the practical information and skill-related support related to education and career.

Across groups, 98% of respondents answered “True” to the question “CA/CCH teachers and staff encourage me to do well in school.” Almost as many (93% of total respondents) agreed that “CA/CCH staff encourage me to consider pursuing a career I might be good at or enjoy” (see Figure 14).



Respondents showed a lower level of agreement with two other items measuring their perceptions of the support offered by Cunningham staff – “When I’m feeling ‘down’ and discouraged, there is always someone at CA/CCH I can talk to about my feelings” (79%) and “CA/CCH staff celebrate my accomplishments with me” (67%). These data appear to reflect an asset of Cunningham’s existing vocational education program, worth building upon, but probably in need of some development. In particular, clients credit staff with encouraging them to work hard and succeed in school and a career. Fewer of the respondents agreed that staff was personally supportive, particularly in acknowledgement of these clients’ successes.



Items reflecting support in the development of career skills received the lowest percentage of “True” responses among survey participants from the combined three groups (see Figure 15).

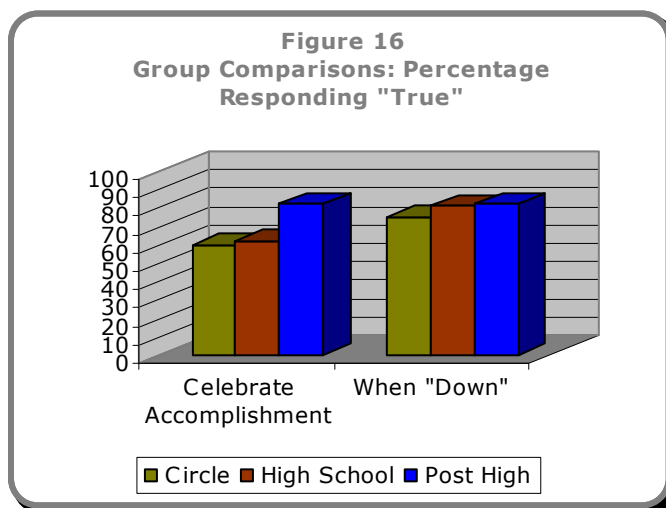
For two items – “CA/CCH staff have helped me learn how to prepare for a job interview” and “CA/CCH staff have shown me how to complete a job application” – 62% of respondents answered “True.” Only 29% of respondents agreed that “CA/CCH staff have shown me how to write a resume.” The gap between social/emotional support and information/skill support is crucial in terms of supported education/employment, even more important because so many survey participants identified career aspirations outside the typical scope of vocational education and training. These data clearly suggest that the development of (professional) career skills should represent a principal feature of a supported education/employment plan.

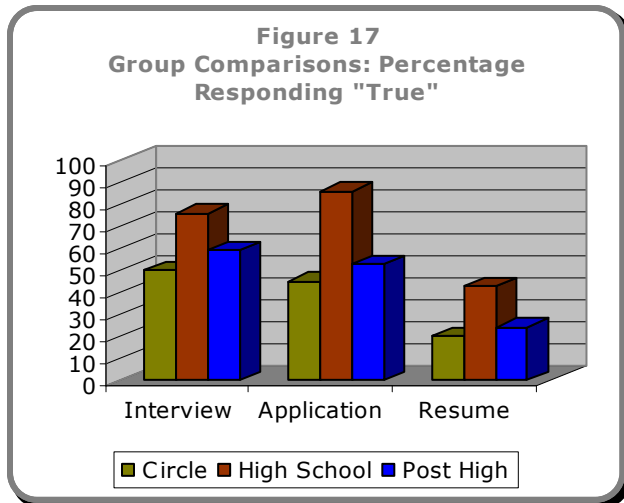
Survey Findings: Comparison Across Groups

Differences in perceived social/emotional and information/skill support also emerged in analysis of data comparing Circle, High School, and Post High School groups.

Respondents in each of the three groups reported the highest perception of support – between 85% and 100% “True” – for items “CA/CCH teachers and staff encourage me to do well in school” and “CA/CCH staff encourage me to consider pursuing a career I might be good at or enjoy.” Among groups, Post High School respondents indicated the highest percentage of “True” responses to the other two social/emotional support items – “When I’m feeling ‘down’ and discouraged, there is always someone at CA/CCH I can talk to about my feelings?” and “CA/CCH staff celebrate my accomplishments with me” (with 82% of Post High School in agreement with each question). The lowest percentage of “True” responses to these items appeared among Circle Academy clients – 75% and 60% answering “True,” respectively (see Figure 16).

Mirroring combined group findings, analysis of data from the three individual groups showed a much lower level of perceived support for career-related information and skills training (see Figure 17). Respondents from Circle Academy reported the lowest percentage of agreement with each of the three questions asking about staff assistance with interviewing (50% responding “True”), job application (45% “True”) and resume-writing (20% “True”). Clients in the High School group showed the highest level of perceived support with interviewing (76% “True”), application (86% “True”), and resume-writing (43% “True”). For all three groups, perceived assistance in the development of resume-writing skills ranked at least 25 percentage points lower than reported support for the two other types of work-related skills.





In addition to the disparity between types of support across groups, the analyses of Circle Academy, High School, and Post High School data individually reflect much lower levels of perceived staff support – both social/emotional and information/skills – among the younger respondents from Circle Academy. In planning for any supported education/employment program, it is important to know whether these clients actually do receive less support than High School and (to a lesser extent) Post High School

clients. If so, a supported education/employment program may represent an ideal opportunity to start preparing students at an earlier age for secure and meaningful work.

Support Data and the Supported Education/Employment Approach

Survey participants' answers to questions about support revealed differing perceptions of interpersonal support and support for school and work related needs.

In combination and separately, the three groups of respondents reported higher levels of perceived support on a group of social/emotional-related items – especially for staff encouragement to perform well at school and work, and slightly less evident for emotional support (in good times and bad). By implication, these findings suggest that a supported education/employment design should continue to encourage academic achievement while also addressing clients' need for personal support.

Data analysis showed much lower perceived support for items related to the development of specific occupational skills and, in particular, for professional capabilities such as resume-writing. This is an important finding and very relevant to supported education/employment programming for foster children and youth. Respondents in this research clearly indicated interest in a variety of careers requiring general professional skills, and a supported education/employment plan should provide the training to better prepare clients with the interest and ability for professional achievement.

SATISFACTION

Foster children and youth represent a new population of clients who may benefit from a supported education/employment approach. These clients' circumstances, needs, obstacles, and goals probably will differ from those of clients currently served by supported education/employment programming. Their assessment of current educational and occupational services provides a necessary baseline for supported education/employment specifically designed for foster children and youth.

Questions about satisfaction made up most of the client survey. These 28 items appeared throughout the questionnaire, primarily in Section III. While similar in content to the questions measuring perceptions of support, satisfaction items focus more specifically on respondents' feelings about staff services (instead of the actions and behaviors of staff themselves). Unlike other content areas contained in the survey, a number of satisfaction items were worded negatively – in essence, measuring dissatisfaction – and are identified with brackets in the table here. To make interpretation easier, the data analysis reverse-coded these items, so that higher percentages consistently reflect high levels of client satisfaction.

SATISFACTION: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

1) Overall, I think CA/CCH is doing a good job in helping me with my college/job plans after high school.
2) I like most of the vocational program staff I know.
3) The vocational program staff seem to really care about me as a person, and about my career goals.
4) [Vocational program staff just don't understand how hard it is for me to get and keep a job.]
5) Vocational staff always take the time to answer my questions or listen to my ideas.
6) I was involved in developing my vocational plan with vocational staff.
7) [Vocational staff sometimes make changes in my plan without consulting me first.]
8) Vocational staff respect my privacy.
9) Vocational staff value my opinions about planning for my own future.
10) Vocational staff believe in me.
11) [I feel like no one here really listens to me.]
12) I thought no one could ever help me until I came here.
13) Staff involve me in important decisions related to my life, education, and career.
14) [Staff rarely offer me enough information and advice to make a good decision about school or a job.]
15) [Staff sometimes don't seem to know much about people like me.]
16) Vocational staff have been helpful in identifying local community resources for my education and employment.
17) [I don't get to meet on a regular basis with vocational program staff, and it frustrates me.]

SATISFACTION: QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

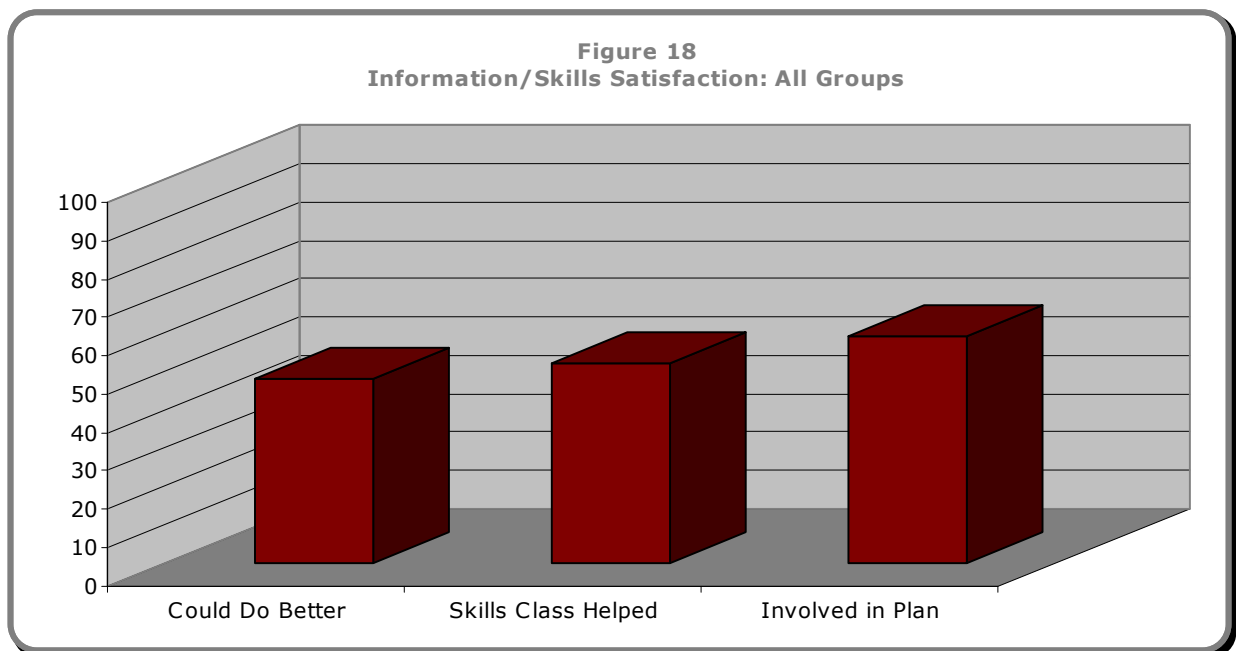
(CONTINUED)

18) Vocational staff is helping me learn how to help myself.
19) [Staff only want to do things their way, instead of helping me find my way.]
20) Staff comfort and reassure me when I'm feeling dow, or confused about where my life is headed.
21) [Mostly I just get the "run-around" from staff, when I have a problem with work or school and need help.]
22) The staff and vocational program are a big help to me in finding and keeping a job.
23) [I think CA/CCH could do a better job in helping me plan my life and long-term career goals.]
24) [I feel I don't get enough help from staff in planning my future career path.]
25) I have learned a lot in my program about how to deal with work and school problems when they come up.
26) I have learned to like going to school/living here/my program at CA/CCH.
27) [Things have gotten worse for me as result of coming to CA/CCH.]
28) The life skills class really helped me.

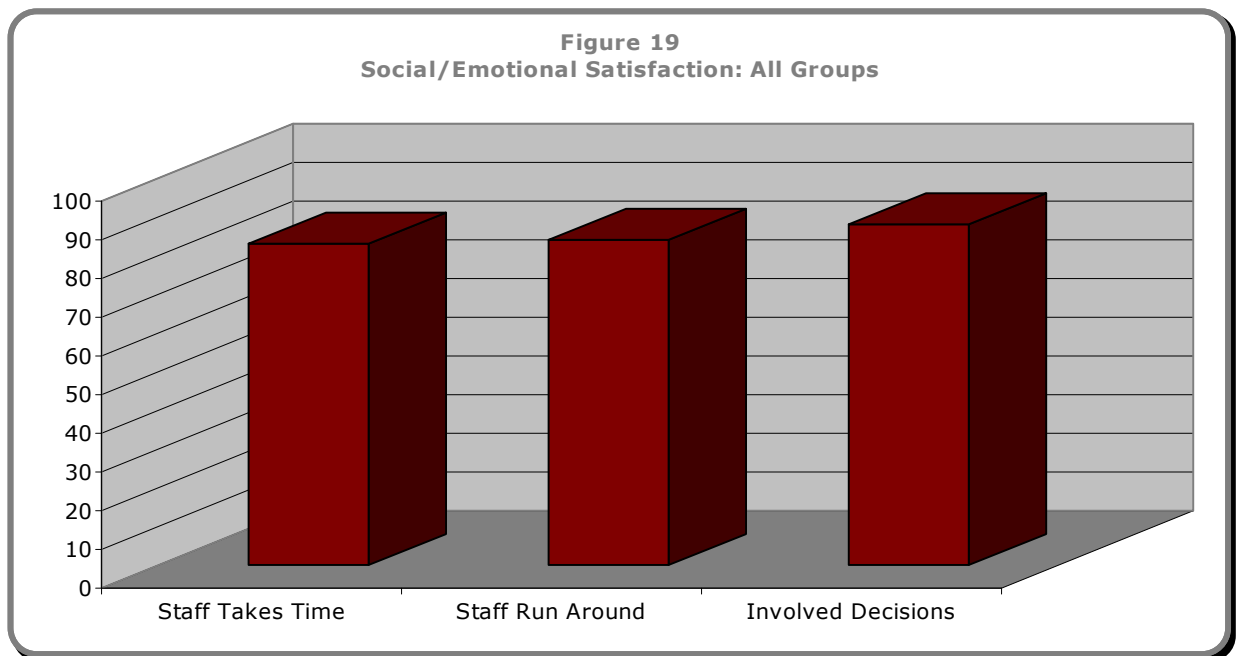
Appendix Table 11 gives the number and percentage of respondents who answered "True" to each of the satisfaction questions. This section summarizes the surveys' most prominent findings on the theme.

Survey Findings: All Respondents

The questionnaire reflects some degree of conceptual overlap between support and satisfaction items. So it's not surprising to find some similarity in findings on these two themes.



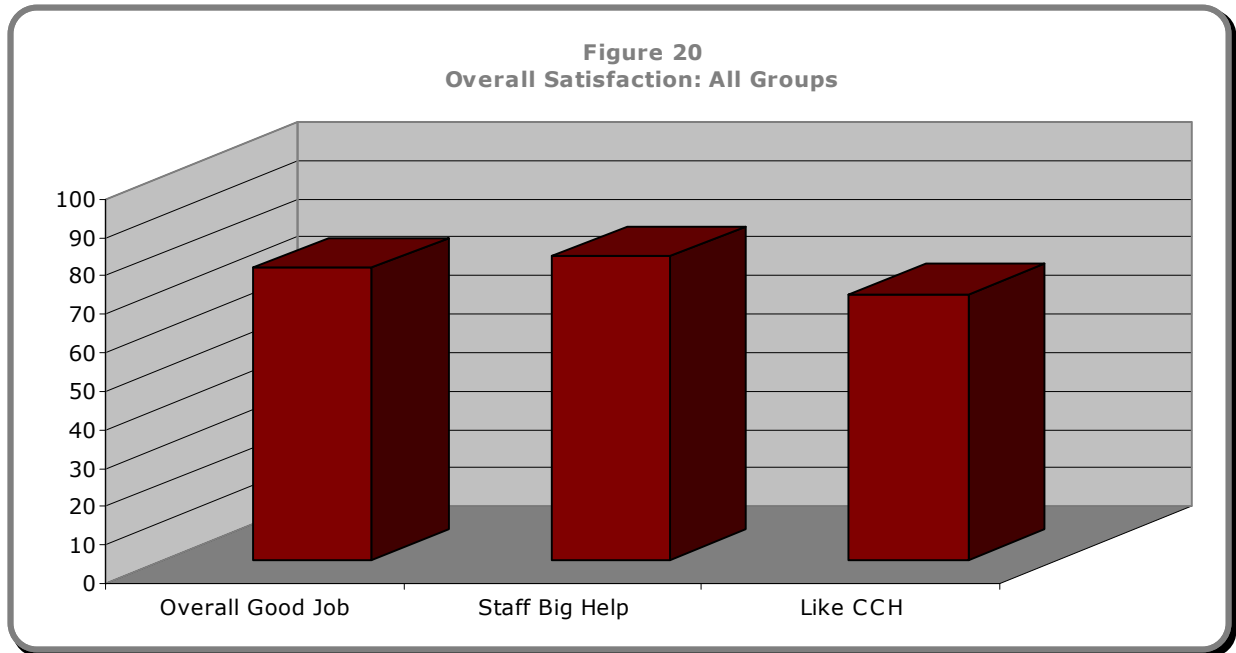
Like results from the analysis of support questions, findings for client satisfaction show respondents least content with a cluster of items that deal with practical information, the development of specific occupational skills, and detailed planning for careers they actually want to pursue (see Figure 18). Just around half of all respondents felt satisfied in answering the questions “CA/CCH staff could do a better job in helping me plan my life and long term goals” (48% satisfied) and “The CA/CCH life skills class really helped me” (52% satisfied). With 59% of respondents answering “True,” the question “I was involved in developing my vocational plan with CA/CCH staff” probably also reflects more concern over the actual substance of the plan and less dissatisfaction over interpersonal relationships with Cunningham staff involved in this planning.



The bulk of satisfaction items measured respondents’ assessment of their interpersonal relationships in working with Cunningham staff (see Figure 19). Clients reported the highest level of satisfaction with three of these social/emotional items—“CA/CCH staff involve me in the important decisions related to my life, my career, and my education” (88% satisfied), “Mostly I just get the run-around from CA/CCH staff whenever I have a problem with school or work and need help” (84% satisfied), “CA/CCH vocational staff always takes the time to answer my questions or listen to my ideas” (83% satisfied).

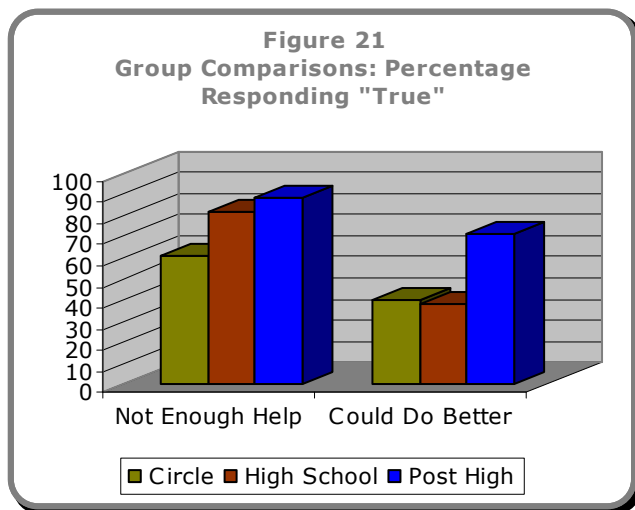
Assessment of client satisfaction included some items to measure their overall Cunningham experience, encompassing both information/skills and social/emotional findings (see Figure 20). Of all respondents, 76% answered “Overall, I think CA/CCH is doing a good job in helping me with my college/job training plans after high school,” and 79% reported “The CA/CCH staff and vocational program are a big help to me in finding and keeping a job.” A smaller percentage, 69% of respondents, answered “I have come to like going to school/ living here/ my program at CA/CCH.” Occurring between ratings of satisfaction with the practical and the interpersonal aspects of their Cunningham experience, overall satisfaction data probably indicate that

respondents take both of these issues into account when reporting on their overall happiness with Cunningham programs and staff.



Survey Findings: Comparison Across Groups

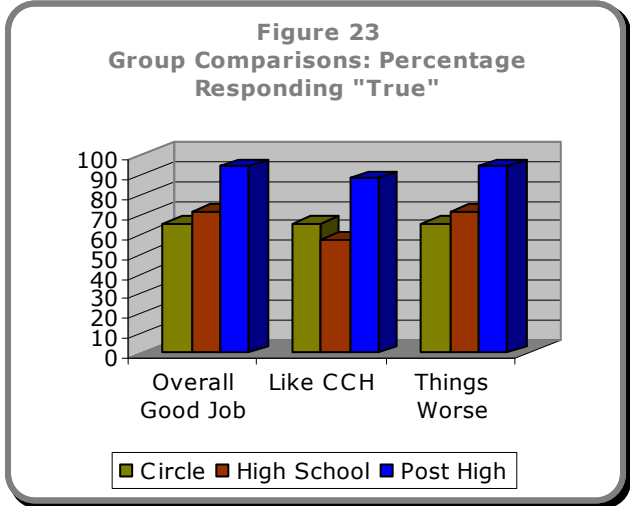
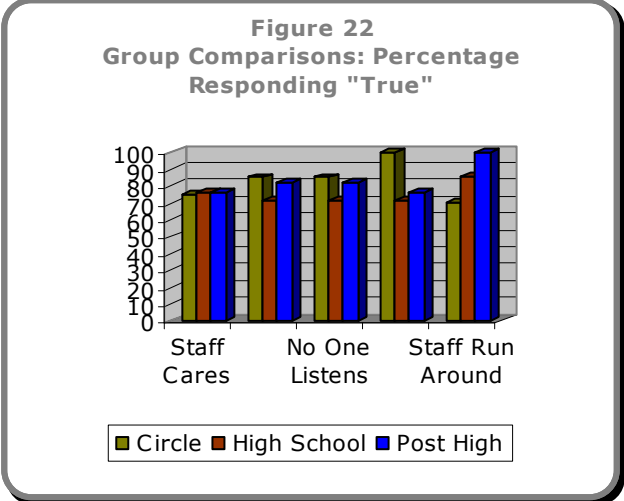
Like data on perceived support, survey results show some differences in satisfaction among Circle Academy, High School, and Post High School respondents.



Across most items measuring satisfaction with the concrete, practical aspects of occupational planning, a smaller percentage of Circle students, compared to High School and Post High School clients, reported happiness with Cunningham staff and services (see Figure 21). This pattern appeared, for example, in response to the question “I feel I don’t get enough help from CA/ CCH staff in planning my future career goals,” where 60% of Circle clients were satisfied in comparison to 81% and 88% of High School and Post High School

respondents, respectively. Post High School respondents reported the highest level of satisfaction with career-related information and skill development—reflected, for example, in the question “I think CA/CCH could do a better job in helping me plan my life and long term goals,” with 71% of Post High School respondents, compared to 40% of Circle and 38% of High School clients, reporting satisfaction on this item.

Several patterns—not clearly consistent—show up in the comparison of Circle, High School, and Post High School respondents’ satisfaction with their interpersonal connections to Cunningham staff (see Figure 22). For some items, respondents from all three groups reported similar levels of satisfaction. For example, 75% of Circle Academy, 76% of High School, and 76% of Post High School clients answered “True” to “*The CA/CCH staff seem to really care about me as a person, and about my career goals.*” In several instances, High School students indicated substantially lower levels of satisfaction than Circle and Post High School clients. Items reflecting this pattern included “*CA/CCH vocational staff value my opinions about planning for my own future*” (“True” for 71% of High School respondents, but 85% of Circle and 82% of Post High School clients) and identically, “*I feel like no one here listens to me,*” with 71% of High School, 85% of Circle, and 82% of clients indicating satisfaction in response to this question. Twice, individual groups of survey respondents reported complete satisfaction with aspects of their social/emotional experience at Cunningham. Among clients at Circle Academy, 100% agreed that “*CA/CCH staff always take the time to answer my questions or listen to my ideas*” (71% “True” for High School and 76% “True” for Post High School respondents). Responding to the question “*Mostly I just get the run-around from CA/CCH staff when I have a problem with work or school and need help,*” 100% of Post High School respondents were satisfied, compared to 70% of Circle and 86% of High School clients.



Post High School clients appeared most satisfied with their overall experience at Cunningham (see Figure 23). Several questionnaire items, in particular, revealed substantial differences in the percentage of satisfied Post High School clients, compared to respondents from Circle Academy and High School groups. To the question “*Overall, I think CA/CCH is doing a good job in helping me with my college/job training plans after high school,*” 94% of Post High School respondents answered “True” compared to 65% of Circle and 71% of High

School respondents. A higher level of satisfaction among Post High School clients also appeared in responses to the item “*I have come to like going to school/living here/my program at CA/CCH*” (among Circle clients, 65% “True,” for High School students, 57% “True,” and for Post High School respondents, 88% “True”). And

94% of Post High School respondents, compared to 65% of Circle and 71% of High School students, reported satisfaction in response to the item “*Things have gotten worse for me as a result of coming to CA/CCH.*”

Satisfaction Data and the Supported Education/Employment Approach

Questions about client satisfaction make up a significant part of this research, and deserve detailed analysis and discussion by Cunningham leadership and professional staff. Some conclusions, based on the findings here, seem useful to the further development of supported education/employment aimed to serve foster children and youth.

Most obviously, satisfaction data reinforce findings from survey questions about clients’ perceptions of support. Respondents consistently reported greater satisfaction with social/emotional aspects of their Cunningham experience. They were much less satisfied with information/skills preparation for their desired careers—in some instances, with just around half of all respondents describing themselves satisfied with the practical occupational-related support provided by Cunningham.

The comparison of client subgroups offers some encouragement, suggesting strengths of the current vocational effort at Cunningham. A consistently high percentage of Post High School clients responded very positively to a number of survey questions, especially those dealing with their overall experiences at Cunningham. So a strategy for supported education/employment planning should consider what factors have encouraged such favorable response. On the other hand, Circle Academy students appeared far less happy with the vocational program’s training and planning, and High School clients expressed less satisfaction with the interpersonal support of Cunningham staff. These findings along with more detailed information on current program services, should contribute to planning for supported education/employment. While building on existing strengths in the vocational program’s service to older clients, supported education/employment programming may need to focus especially on the educational and work-related needs of younger students, at earlier stages of school, work, and life planning.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Youth transitioning from foster care into adulthood anticipate all the challenges commonly faced by young adults, yet are more vulnerable to a range of serious risks that threaten their prospects for successful independent life. At the same time, foster youth leaving care most typically confront adult life without a network of reliable family support to help them effectively negotiate its challenges. Despite these obstacles, former foster youth can and do leave the system to emerge successful at home, at work, and in their communities. Adequate preparation for transition and a sufficient system of ongoing supports can make the difference. This research project examined the potential value of supported education/employment—previously used with success to help adults with serious mental health conditions achieve their educational and occupational goals—to both prepare and support foster youth as they approach and pass through the transition from state care into independent adulthood.

Based primarily on survey findings and supplemented by data from the focus group and *Career Cruising*, this research suggests a set of conclusions that appeared consistently throughout the study and which deserve consideration in the development of supported education/employment programming for foster youth transitioning from care.

Goals/Plans

Survey, focus group, and *Career Cruising* data all showed significant educational and occupational aspiration. Not only are these goals often beyond the scope of traditional vocational training, but they also typically require college degrees, even postgraduate or specialized professional training. While not all clients will show the aptitude or discipline to achieve ambitious goals, some will, and an effective supported education/employment plan for foster youth would need to address training for both groups.

However, data from this study also reflect some ambiguity over goals for future schooling and work that supported education/employment programming might address. While nearly all survey respondents could provide specific answers to open ended questions about their “*dream*” jobs, more than one quarter were vague (“not sure,” “don’t know,” “get a job,” “work”) when asked to indicate what they *planned* to do for work. As an essential element, supported education/employment for foster youth in transition should deal with the gap between their career aspirations and potential, on the one hand, and the skills and knowledge needed for them to practically achieve meaningful life goals.

Information/Resources

Both within and across groups, Cunningham clients reported fairly significant deficiencies in the information and resources needed to succeed academically and at work. Only between one quarter and one third of respondents knew how to obtain their birth certificate or Social Security card—basic, practical skills

but also essential to survival in our complex current society. Access to technology also emerged as problematic. Although claiming a high level of technological knowledge, fewer than half of respondents reported having access to a computer or cell phone—necessary tools for full participation as students and workers now and in the future.

Slightly more positive, yet additional worrisome, findings appeared in responses about the availability of supportive adults at Cunningham and in the community. Almost 90% of survey participants could rely on at least three adults, including CCH staff, to provide job references – an optimistic result. Yet most of these respondents still said they had found jobs on their own or through newspaper ads and not through referrals from Cunningham staff or other adults. Among those who knew adults they could ask for help, almost three times as many named someone other than Cunningham staff. Just over half of respondents reported participation in organized activities helpful for building both personal and professional connections.

Skills

Despite interest in post secondary schooling and later professional work, only around half of survey respondents felt confident in the basic knowledge and skills—applying for college or financial aid, for example—that these long term goals require. In contrast, a large percentage of respondents felt capable of seeking and finding immediate employment, regardless of its relationship to their long term plans. Findings suggest some concern, among respondents, about their ability to keep their jobs.

Skills data reinforce a disparity between respondents’ ambitions and the practical resources they need to achieve challenging goals. In existing form, vocational education can do a very good job of preparing clients to find entry level work that provides a basic income. For clients with interest and ability, supported education/employment should integrate that foundation with specific training in the knowledge and skills essential to long term planning, career achievement, and economic opportunity.

Self Efficacy

Though not a major focus of the study, self efficacy is relevant to supported education. Commonly students in foster care, and especially those with multiple placements, experience disruption and failure in academic settings. This study did not focus extensively on respondents’ perceptions of their own self efficacy, but it provides some insight relevant to the design of a supported education/employment plan for transitioning foster youth. Overall, respondents felt more able to “control their lives” than to “deal effectively with daily problems,” a seeming contradiction that might reflect a gap between relatively abstract (and optimistic) perceptions of their prospects and the more difficult practical realities they actually face. It suggests that a supported education/employment plan should focus not just on clients’ perceptions of their potential, but also on the concrete skills and behaviors associated with success at school and work. Data analysis also showed the lowest level of self efficacy for an item asking about school performance, and

supported education can play an important role in addressing academic deficiencies that can occur during time in foster care.

Support

The survey of Cunningham clients included a series of questions asking respondents to describe the level of support they received from Cunningham’s professional staff. Measures focused on both social/emotional support and assistance in the form of practical information related to school and work. In general, respondents perceived a high level of personal support coming from the Cunningham staff, especially encouraging clients to work hard, do well in school, and consider rewarding jobs and careers. Fewer respondents felt personally supported, though, during discouraging times and even less so when they had accomplishments to celebrate. Respondents reported the lowest levels of perceived support in the development of occupational and career relevant skills such as completing job applications, preparing for interviews, and writing resumes.

Data on perceived support is consistent with other survey findings. Cunningham clients express significant interest in a variety of occupations that require post secondary, and possibly graduate or professional, training. Yet—despite generally positive regard for the personal support of staff—they feel their Cunningham education has not prepared them with the skills they need to move toward these goals. A supported education/employment program for foster youth could better serve those clients with the potential for professional employment by expanding the current program to include specific training in key professional skills.

Satisfaction

Questions about client satisfaction appear similar to items measuring perceived support, yet their focus is different. While support items ask respondents to describe services they received, satisfaction questions specifically concerned respondents’ feelings about their experiences with Cunningham staff. Comprising the bulk of survey items, these results provide a useful baseline to determine the perspective of foster children and youth potentially served by a supported education/employment program.

Similar to other survey findings, results of the satisfaction analysis show respondents least happy with items reflecting training in practical information, the development of specific academic and occupational skills, and long term planning for desired careers. Respondents appeared much more satisfied with a number of questions about their interpersonal relationships with Cunningham staff, particularly staff receptiveness to clients’ emotional needs. Overall satisfaction ratings appear to mediate the two types of perceptions, with about three quarters of respondents reporting themselves generally happy with their Cunningham experience.

APPENDIX TABLE 1

PROFILE: CIRCLE ACADEMY

(Total Respondents = 20)

		Number ¹	Percent
Age	15 and under	7	35%
	16 or 17	10	50%
	18 and older	3	15%
Sex	Male	17	85%
	Female	3	15%
Race/Ethnicity	African American	7	35%
	White	11	55%
	Hispanic/Latino	0	0%
	Biracial	1	5%
	Other	1	5%
Live at CCH	Yes	1	5%
	No	18	90%
Tenure at Circle	One year or less	5	25%
	One to three years	8	40%
	Three to five years	4	20%
	Five years or more	3	15%
Time at Circle	Full time	16	80%
	Part time	4	20%
Legal Guardian	Parents	14	70%
	DCFS	0	0%
	Other	6	30%
	Don't know	0	0%
Have a Job	True	9	45%
	False	11	55%
Looking for Job	True	15	75%
	False	5	25%
Enrolled in Life Skills	True	14	70%
	False	5	25%

¹ Missing cases not reported in Table.

APPENDIX TABLE 2

PROFILE: HIGH SCHOOL

(Total Respondents = 21)

		Number ¹	Percent
Age	15 and under	5	24%
	16 or 17	9	43%
	18 and older	7	33%
Sex	Male	11	52%
	Female	10	48%
Race/Ethnicity	African American	6	29%
	White	15	71%
	Hispanic/Latino	0	0%
	Biracial	0	0%
	Other	0	0%
Live at CCH	Yes	19	90%
	No	1	5%
Program at CCH	Gerber	14	67%
	Boys Group Home	1	5%
	Independent Living	1	5%
Tenure at CCH	One year or less	10	48%
	One to three years	5	24%
	Three to five years	4	19%
	Five years or more	2	9%
Enrolled in School	True	21	100%
	False	0	0%
Type of School Enrollment	On CCH grounds	14	67%
	Public high school	3	14%
	Both	4	19%
Legal Guardian	Parents	4	19%
	DCFS	13	62%
	Other	1	5%
	Don't know	1	5%
Have a Job	True	10	48%
	False	11	52%
Looking for Job	True	10	48%
	False	11	52%
Enrolled in Life Skills	True	15	71%
	False	5	24%

¹ Missing cases not reported in Table.

APPENDIX TABLE 3

PROFILE: POST HIGH SCHOOL

(Total Respondents = 17)

		Number ¹	Percent
Age	15 and under	0	0%
	16 or 17	0	0%
	18 and older	17	100%
Sex	Male	7	41%
	Female	10	59%
Race/Ethnicity	African American	13	76%
	White	3	18%
	Hispanic	1	6%
	Biracial	0	0%
	Other	0	0%
Live at CCH	Yes	5	29%
	No	12	71%
Program at CCH	Pregnant/Parenting Teens	4	24%
	Transitional Living House	5	29%
	Independent Living	5	29%
Tenure at CCH	One year or less	10	59%
	One to three years	5	29%
	Three to five years	1	6%
	Five years or more	1	6%
Enrolled in College/Vocational Program	True	12	71%
	False	5	29%
Legal Guardian	Parents	0	0%
	DCFS	13	76%
	Other	2	12%
	Don't know	0	0%
Have a Job	True	11	65%
	False	6	35%
Looking for Job	True	11	65%
	False	6	35%
Enrolled in Life Skills	True	9	53%
	False	7	41%

¹ Missing cases not reported in Table.

APPENDIX TABLE 4

GOALS/PLANS

(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RESPONDING "TRUE")

	CIRCLE ACADEMY (N=20)		HIGH SCHOOL (N=21)		POST HIGH SCHOOL (N=17)		TOTAL (N=58)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
1) After high school I plan to attend college.	15	75%	18	86%	17	100%	50	86%
2) After high school I plan to attend job training or a vocational training program.	13	65%	17	81%	10	59%	40	69%
3) [I don't think the jobs and work experiences I have now will make a difference in my career.] ¹	4	44%	1	10%	2	18%	7	23%

¹ Of respondents who currently have a job.

APPENDIX TABLE 5A

VERBATIM RESPONSES: PLANNED EMPLOYMENT AND “DREAM” EMPLOYMENT
(ALL SURVEY GROUPS)

RESPONDENT	PLANNED EMPLOYMENT ¹	“DREAM” EMPLOYMENT ¹
1	Not sure	Be a rapper
2	Work, have a job, take care of my family	Doctor or lawyer
3	Be a doctor	I never really had one
4	Construction	To play football
5	I don't know yet	Crime scene investigator
6	Be a librarian	Be a librarian
7	Open up my own restaurant	Restaurant
8	Video game developer, rock star, programmer	Programmer
9	Sign language interpretation	Sign language interpreter
10	Artist	Art degree
11	Get a job	Central Illinois Produce
12	Not applicable	A cop
13	Work	I don't know
14	Don't know	NBA
15	Pediatrician, janitor	Pediatrician
16	Acting, dancing, entertainment, music	Producer
17	Breed wolverines	Piano player in a cat house
18	Chef	Chef
19	Don't know	Something I enjoy doing and getting paid
20	Be good and do my work	Cooking
21	Social worker	Professional basketball
22	Something in the medical field	Forensic pathologist
23	Registered nurse	The highest nurse in medical
24	Work in clubs	Food tester
25	<i>(Not interpretable)</i>	Firefighter
26	Be an X-ray tech	Be a foster parent for animals
27	Work at a morgue	Be a medical examiner
28	Art teacher or artist	MLB player for Cardinals
29	Be a football coach	To play in the NFL
30	Toco ball (<i>Taco Bell</i>)	Toco ball (<i>Taco Bell</i>)
31	Baseball	Policeman
32	Take care of animals	Running animal shelter
33	I don't know	Game shop
34	Don't know	Test drive four-wheelers
35	Be a car repair woman	Car designer
36	Hair stylist, cosmetologist	Singing, acting, “Coyote Ugly”
37	Day care	Singing
38	Working	Being a photographer
39	Dance teacher	Doctor
40	Fire service, computer industry	Firefighter
41	Zoo keeper	Being a zoo keeper in Seattle
42	Paralegal, lawyer, legal field, law professor	Lawyer, judge
43	Something in child care	Owning my own restaurant, day care
44	Eventually pharmacy or other medical field	At home mom
45	Working with computers	Working with computers
46	Manager of own restaurant	Playing baseball

VERBATIM RESPONSES: PLANNED EMPLOYMENT AND "DREAM" EMPLOYMENT

(CONTINUED, 2)

47	Accounting field	Being my own boss
48	CNA	EMT
49	Psychologist	Psychologist
50	Business owner	Football coach
51	Architecture	Architecture, being a porn star
52	Work	Sitting behind a desk barking orders
53	Electrician, mechanic	Mechanic
54	Don't know	Don't know
55	Kindergarten teacher, paralegal	A job where I am paid and happy
56	I want to be a CAN and do hair on the side	I don't know yet
57	Work	Whatever I decide to major in
58	Financial management or business	Upper management

¹ Responses edited for spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

APPENDIX TABLE 5B

CLUSTERED RESPONSES: PLANNED EMPLOYMENT AND “DREAM” EMPLOYMENT
(ALL SURVEY GROUPS)

PLANNED EMPLOYMENT	“DREAM” EMPLOYMENT
LAW & GOVERNMENT	LAW & GOVERNMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paralegal ▪ Lawyer ▪ Legal field ▪ Fire service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Judge ▪ Lawyer ▪ Crime scene investigator ▪ Fire fighter ▪ A cop/policemen ▪ Forensic pathologist
MEDICAL & HEALTH	MEDICAL & HEALTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pharmacy or other medical field ▪ CNA ▪ Something in the medical field ▪ Registered nurse ▪ Be a doctor ▪ Pediatrician ▪ Be an X-ray technician ▪ Work at a morgue ▪ Psychologist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EMT ▪ The highest nurse in medical ▪ Doctor ▪ Pediatrician ▪ Be medical examiner ▪ Psychologist
ARTS & CULTURE	ARTS & CULTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acting ▪ Rock star ▪ Stunt man ▪ Artist ▪ Dancing ▪ Entertainment ▪ Music 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being a porn star ▪ Be a rapper ▪ Art degree ▪ Artist ▪ Producer ▪ Singing ▪ Acting ▪ Being a photographer
SERVICE	SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Something in child care ▪ Manager of own restaurant ▪ Open up my own restaurant ▪ Janitor ▪ Chef ▪ Toco ball (<i>Taco Bell</i>) ▪ Work in clubs ▪ Take care of animals ▪ Day care ▪ Do hair on the side ▪ Cosmetologist ▪ Hair stylist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Owning my own restaurant, day care ▪ Manager of own restaurant ▪ Restaurant ▪ Chef ▪ Cooking ▪ Toco ball (<i>Taco Bell</i>) ▪ Food tester ▪ To be foster parent for animals ▪ Running animal shelter ▪ Game shop

CLUSTERED RESPONSES: PLANNED EMPLOYMENT AND "DREAM" EMPLOYMENT

(CONTINUED, 2)

SKILLED TRADES	SKILLED TRADES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mechanic ▪ Be a car repair woman ▪ Electrician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mechanic
ARCHITECTURE & CONSTRUCTION	ARCHITECTURE & CONSTRUCTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Architecture ▪ Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Architecture
EDUCATION & SOCIAL SCIENCES	EDUCATION & SOCIAL SCIENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Law professor ▪ Social worker ▪ Kindergarten teacher ▪ Art teacher ▪ Dance teacher ▪ Be a librarian ▪ Sign language interpreter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be a librarian ▪ Sign language interpreter
BUSINESS & FINANCE	BUSINESS & FINANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business owner ▪ Accounting field ▪ Financial management/business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being my own boss, help people with financial situations ▪ Upper management
COMPUTERS & TELECOM	COMPUTERS & TELECOM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with computers ▪ Video game developer ▪ Programmer ▪ Computer industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with computers ▪ Programmer
SPORTS & RECREATION	SPORTS & RECREATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be a football coach ▪ Baseball 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playing baseball ▪ Football coach ▪ Professional basketball ▪ To play football ▪ NBA ▪ MLB player for Cardinals ▪ To play in NFL
NATURAL SCIENCES & TRANSPORTATION	NATURAL SCIENCES & TRANSPORTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Breed wolverines ▪ Park Ranger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Being a zookeeper in Seattle ▪ Test drive four-wheelers ▪ Park Ranger ▪ Car designer

APPENDIX TABLE 6

CAREER CRUISING: OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS OF GREATEST INTEREST

(ALL SURVEY GROUPS)

OCCUPATIONAL TITLE	TOTAL RESPONSES	MALE RESPONSES	FEMALE RESPONSES
Child and Youth Worker	9	3	6
Special Effects Technician	9	6	3
Director of Photography	8	5	3
Fashion Designer	8	4	4
Set Designer	8	5	3
Combat Engineer	7	4	3
Heavy Equipment Operator	7	6	1
Industrial Designer	7	6	1
Special Education Teacher	7	3	4
Animator	6	5	1
Costume Designer	6	3	3
Director	6	1	5
Hotel Manager	6	2	4
Teacher Assistant	6	2	4
Architect	5	4	1
Art / Music Therapist	5	2	3
Cartoonist / Comic Illustrator	5	1	4
Composer	5	3	2
Crane Operator	5	5	0
High School Teacher	5	1	4
Medical Illustrator	5	2	3
Musician	5	3	2
Nanny	5	1	4
Physical Education Teacher	5	1	4
Recreation Therapist	5	2	3
Sign Maker	5	3	2
Web Developer	5	4	1

APPENDIX TABLE 7

INFORMATION/RESOURCES

(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RESPONDING “TRUE”)

	CIRCLE ACADEMY (N=20)		HIGH SCHOOL (N=21)		POST HIGH SCHOOL (N=17)		TOTAL (N=58)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
1) I am aware of the financial aid opportunities available to me, having DCFS as a legal guardian.	2	10%	12	57%	16	94%	30	52%
2) How have you found jobs in the past?								
<i>a) Help from staff¹</i>	10	59%	12	67%	13	76%	35	35%
<i>b) Help from other adult¹</i>	7	41%	5	28%	6	35%	18	35%
<i>c) On my own¹</i>	7	41%	9	50%	15	88%	31	60%
<i>d) Through a newspaper ad¹</i>	5	29%	7	39%	15	88%	27	52%
<i>e) Through a friend¹</i>	6	35%	8	44%	13	76%	27	52%
<i>f) Through school counselor¹</i>	3	18%	8	44%	11	65%	22	42%
<i>g) Through someone else¹</i>	3	18%	8	44%	11	65%	22	42%
<i>b) Through other resources¹</i>	3	18%	1	6%	1	6%	5	10%
3) I know three reliable adults I can get job references from.	16	80%	18	86%	17	100%	51	88%
4) Who do you know that would provide a job reference for you?								
<i>a) Staff</i>	6	30%	16	76%	13	76%	35	60%
<i>b) Teacher</i>	11	55%	16	76%	9	53%	36	62%
<i>c) Counselor</i>	6	30%	7	33%	7	41%	20	34%

INFORMATION/RESOURCES

(CONTINUED, 2)

<i>d) Coach</i>	1	5%	5	25%	2	12%	8	14%
<i>e) Pastor</i>	2	10%	1	5%	3	18%	6	10%
<i>f) Case manager</i>	4	20%	7	33%	7	41%	18	31%
<i>g) Former employer</i>	5	25%	4	19%	11	65%	20	34%
<i>h) Relative</i>	7	35%	10	50%	10	59%	27	47%
<i>i) Mentor</i>	2	10%	1	5%	2	12%	5	9%
<i>j) Others</i>	6	30%	2	10%	3	18%	11	19%
5) If I end up needing a ride to get to work on time, I know I can rely on CA/CCH staff to give me one.	16	80%	17	81%	10	59%	43	74%
6) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a certified copy of my birth certificate.	4	20%	5	24%	6	35%	15	26%
7) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to get a copy of my Social Security card.	7	35%	5	24%	8	47%	20	34%
8) I know the person who is in charge of the CA/CCH vocational prep program.	13	65%	12	57%	9	53%	34	59%
9) There is an adult in town I know who I can always call on when I need help.	14	70%	17	81%	15	88%	46	79%
10) Who is this adult?								
<i>a) Staff</i> ²	1	7%	3	18%	4	27%	8	17%
<i>b) Someone else</i> ²	13	93%	10	59%	7	47%	30	65%
<i>c) Both</i> ²	0	0%	2	12%	3	20%	5	11%
11) I participate in organized activities in town.	11	55%	14	67%	8	47%	33	57%
<i>a) Church/ church groups</i> ³	5	45%	5	36%	3	38%	13	39%
<i>b) Study group</i> ³	4	36%	2	14%	2	25%	8	24%

INFORMATION/RESOURCES

(CONTINUED, 3)

<i>c) Sports</i>								
<i>d) Art classes</i> ³	2	18%	5	36	0	0	7	21
<i>e) Volunteer work</i> ³	7	64%	8	57%	1	13%	16	48%
<i>f) Job internship</i> ³	3	27%	2	14%	2	25%	7	18%
<i>g) Community political group</i> ³	1	9%	3	21%	2	25%	6	18%
<i>h) Youth advisory boards or other youth programs</i> ³	4	36%	1	7%	1	13%	6	18%
<i>i) Other activities</i> ³	1	9%	2	14%	1	13%	4	12%
12) I have access to a computer.	16	80%	5	24%	6	35%	27	47%
13) I know how to use the Internet to get information.	17	85%	19	90%	17	100%	53	91%
14) I have my own cell phone.	9	45%	5	24%	10	59%	24	41%

¹ Of respondents who “know how to look for jobs.”

² Of respondents reporting “there is an adult in town I can call on.”

³ Of respondents reporting they “participate in organized activities.”

APPENDIX TABLE 8

SKILLS:

(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RESPONDING “TRUE”)

	CIRCLE ACADEMY (N=20)		HIGH SCHOOL (N=21)		POST HIGH SCHOOL (N=17)		TOTAL (N=58)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
1) I am always able to get my schoolwork done on my own and turned in on time [Circle and High School only].	12	60%	12	57%	---	---	24	59%
2) I know how to apply for college.	6	30%	9	43%	14	82%	29	50%
3) I know how to apply for a job training/vocational training program.	8	40%	10	48%	14	82%	32	55%
4) I know how to get a loan to pay for college tuition and/or job training.	6	30%	6	29%	11	65%	23	40%
5) I know how to look for jobs.	17	85%	18	86%	17	100%	52	90%
6) I can get a job and keep a job, no problem.	18	90%	18	86%	15	88%	51	88%
7) [I have problems keeping a job once I have one.]	6	30%	2	10%	5	29%	13	22%
8) I am learning to be independent and feel secure about my plans for college, training, or work after high school.	17	85%	19	90%	16	94%	52	90%
9) I can set goals for myself and know the steps I need to take to achieve these goals.	16	80%	20	95%	17	100%	53	91%
Reasons why I can set goals and achieve them: ¹								
<i>a) Support from CA/CCH staff</i>	9	56%	16	80%	15	88%	40	75%
<i>b) Support from other adults who know me</i>	12	75%	18	90%	14	82%	44	83%
<i>c) Connection with adults in my town</i>	6	38%	6	30%	6	35%	18	34%
<i>d) Easy access to community resources</i>	4	25%	5	25%	5	29%	14	26%
<i>e) Past success in setting and achieving goals and living my dreams</i>	3	19%	5	25%	9	53%	17	32%
<i>f) Other resources</i>	5	31%	0	0%	2	12%	7	13%

¹ Of respondents who answered “I can set goals...and achieve [them].”

APPENDIX TABLE 9

SELF EFFICACY

(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RESPONDING "TRUE")

As a result of the services I receive at CCH:	CIRCLE ACADEMY (N=20)		HIGH SCHOOL (N=21)		POST HIGH SCHOOL (N=17)		TOTAL (N=58)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
1) I deal more effectively with daily problems.	15	75%	16	76%	15	88%	46	79%
2) I feel better about myself.	14	70%	20	95%	16	94%	50	86%
3) I am better able to control my life.	17	85%	18	86%	16	94%	51	88%
4) I get along better with other people.	12	60%	20	95%	14	82%	46	79%
5) I do better in school.	15	75%	18	86%	12	71%	45	78%

APPENDIX TABLE 10

SUPPORT

(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RESPONDING “TRUE”)

	CIRCLE ACADEMY (N=20)		HIGH SCHOOL (N=21)		POST HIGH SCHOOL (N=17)		TOTAL (N=58)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
1) CA/CCH staff help me with my schoolwork when I need it [Circle and High School only].	18	90%	20	95%	---	---	38	93%
2) CA/CCH staff encourage me to do well in school.	20	100%	21	100%	16	94%	57	98%
3) While in school, CA/CCH staff has encouraged me to participate in work-related learning or work experiences.	19	95%	20	95%	14	82%	53	91%
4) I have received a lot of help from staff with planning for college or job training after high school.	12	60%	9	43%	13	76%	34	59%
5) I have received help from an adult other than staff with planning for college or job training after high school.	13	65%	12	57%	12	71%	37	64%
6) CA/CCH staff encourage me to consider pursuing a career I might be good at or enjoy.	19	95%	18	86%	17	100%	54	93%
7) CA/CCH staff has helped me learn how to prepare for a job interview.	10	50%	16	76%	10	59%	36	62%
8) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to complete a job application.	9	45%	18	86%	9	53%	36	62%
9) CA/CCH staff has shown me how to write a resume.	4	20%	9	43%	4	24%	17	29%
10) CA/CCH staff support and encourage me in positive ways, to keep my job no matter how hard it feels.	14	70%	13	62%	14	82%	41	71%
11) When I'm not sure how to do something at work, I can ask CA/CCH staff for help.	15	75%	14	67%	15	88%	44	76%
12) When I'm feeling “down” and discouraged about my job, there is always someone at CA/CCH I can talk to.	15	75%	17	81%	14	82%	46	79%
13) CA/CCH staff celebrate my accomplishments with me.	12	60%	13	62%	14	82%	39	67%

APPENDIX TABLE 11

SATISFACTION

(NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE RESPONDING “TRUE”)

	CIRCLE ACADEMY (N=20)		HIGH SCHOOL (N=21)		POST HIGH SCHOOL (N=17)		TOTAL (N=58)	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
1) Overall, I think CA/CCH is doing a good job in helping me with my college/job plans after high school.	13	65%	15	71%	16	94%	44	76%
2) I like most of the vocational program staff I know.	16	80%	16	76%	13	76%	45	78%
3) The vocational program staff seem to really care about me as a person, and about my career goals.	15	75%	16	76%	12	71%	43	74%
4) [Vocational program staff just don't understand how hard it is for me to get and keep a job.]	4	20%	8	38%	4	24%	16	28%
5) Vocational staff always take the time to answer my questions or listen to my ideas.	20	100%	15	71%	13	76%	48	83%
6) I was involved in developing my vocational plan with vocational staff.	13	65%	11	52%	10	59%	34	59%
7) [Vocational staff sometimes make changes in my plan without consulting me first.]	6	30%	5	24%	4	24%	15	26%
8) Vocational staff respect my privacy.	16	80%	15	71%	13	76%	44	76%
9) Vocational staff value my opinions about planning for my own future.	17	85%	15	71%	14	82%	46	79%
10) Vocational staff believe in me.	17	85%	18	86%	11	65%	46	79%
11) [I feel like no one here really listens to me.]	3	15%	6	29%	3	18%	12	21%
12) I thought no one could ever help me until I came here.	10	50%	11	52%	7	41%	28	48%
13) Staff involve me in important decisions related to my life, education, and career.	18	90%	19	90%	14	82%	51	88%
14) [Staff rarely offer me enough information and advice to make a good decision about school or a job.]	8	40%	5	24%	3	18%	16	28%
15) [Staff sometimes don't seem to know much about people like me.]	9	45%	8	38%	3	18%	20	34%
16) Vocational staff have been helpful in identifying local community resources for my education and employment.	14	70%	13	62%	12	71%	39	67%
17) [I don't get to meet on a regular basis with vocational program staff and it frustrates me.]	7	35%	11	52%	3	18%	21	36%

SATISFACTION

(CONTINUED, 2)

18) Vocational staff is helping me learn how to help myself.	16	80%	14	67%	12	71%	42	72%
19) [Staff only want to do things their way, instead of helping me find my way.]	9	45%	7	33%	2	12%	18	31%
20) Staff comfort and reassure me when I'm feeling down, or confused about where my life is headed.	13	65%	17	81%	12	71%	42	72%
21) [Mostly I just get the "run-around" from staff, when I have a problem with work or school and need help.]	6	30%	3	14%	0	0%	9	16%
22) The staff and vocational program are a big help to me in finding and keeping a job.	16	80%	18	86%	12	71%	46	79%
23) [I think CA/CCH could do a better job in helping me plan my life and long term career goals.]	12	60%	13	62%	5	29%	30	52%
24) [I feel I don't get enough help from staff in planning my future career path.]	8	40%	4	19%	2	12%	14	24%
25) I have learned a lot in my program about how to deal with work and school problems when they come up.	16	80%	19	90%	14	82%	49	84%
26) I have learned to like going to school/living here/my program at CA/CCH.	13	65%	12	57%	15	88%	40	69%
27) [Things have gotten worse for me as a result of coming to CA/CCH.]	7	35%	6	29%	1	6%	14	24%
28) The CA/CCH life skills class really helped me.	8	40%	12	57%	10	59%	30	52%