

Sunday Friends' Measured Outcomes

Sunday Friends has 10 years of professionally measured results showing that our program is effective. Over the years, the external evaluations have been conducted by professor-led teams from Santa Clara University and San Jose State University.

The Year 2016 External Evaluation

In 2016, a Santa Clara University (SCU) research team led by Dr. Gittens analyzed extensive data collected in 2015 and 2016 through Sunday Friends programs. This evaluation had a special focus. The goal was to assess our program's success in instilling "Developmental Assets" in children.

The goal was guided by the research of the Search Institute, which has demonstrated that 40 Developmental Assets - values and experiences - directly support and predict healthy youth development as well as success in school and in life. Examples of developmental assets (the ones that scored highest with Sunday Friends, in fact) are: Responsibility, Achievement Motivation, Self-Esteem, Planning and Decision Making, School Engagement, and Homework.

The Search Institute has shown that 31 assets are sufficient to predict successful futures. The SCU Evaluation demonstrated that Sunday Friends is effectively imparting 38 out of the 40 possible.

Dr. Gittens wrote:

"The results from the 2016 Supplemental Parent Survey revealed that the Sunday Friends Program has tremendous positive impact across the many internal and external domains – known as assets - recognized by the Search Institute as being vital for a child's well-being and development. These impacts are attributable to the numerous and varied classes, presentations, community partnerships and support services, and volunteer interactions available to parents and adult participants as well as the robust youth activities that occur at each site throughout the program day.

"There was overwhelming endorsement among the parents that Sunday Friends has helped them as parents to develop strategies for attending to and supporting their children (Developmental Assets, External Category A: Support). For example, Asset 6 refers to the parents' involvement in their children's schooling. The Sunday Friends families were virtually unanimous. 100% of the parents reported that they are more involved in helping their children succeed in school and that they are spending meaningful and educational time with their children. 80% of parents report reading regularly with their children and 90% report regularly helping their children with writing.

"Parents were unified in their praise of Sunday Friends for helping them to spend more constructive time with their children (External Developmental Asset Category D: Constructive Use of Time). 97% of parents reported spending more time with their children doing creative activities. Parents consistently lauded Sunday Friends because their children are spending time more constructively. 97% of parents reported that their children enjoyed writing more; 100% stated that their children have more positive

relationships with adults outside the family such as teachers or Sunday Friends volunteers; 100% said their children are participating in more activities; and 95% replied that their children are helping more with household cooking and chores.

“Parents’ increased commitment to supporting their children and being more involved in helping their children succeed in school was echoed in the parents’ sense of how participating in Sunday Friends has improved their children’s commitment to learning (Internal Developmental Asset Category E: Commitment to Learning). Over 95% of the parents agreed or strongly agreed that their children were eager and motivated, want to do their best, enjoy learning more, enjoy writing more, are paying more attention, and are learning science, math and computer skills.

“Sunday Friends contributes meaningfully and recognizably to children’s positive sense of self and self-esteem (Internal Developmental Asset Category H: Positive Identity). Over 95% of parents resoundingly affirmed that Sunday Friends has helped their children like themselves better, feel more like life can be good, make better decisions, be better able to stand up for themselves, feel closer to their family, and have better ways of getting what they want. Sunday Friends was also praised for helping children develop a positive cultural identity (Project Cornerstone Supplemental Developmental Asset 41). Over 95% of the parents asserted that Sunday Friends has helped their children feel proud of themselves and respected and appreciated by others. 99% of parents said that their children liked themselves better. An impressive 95% of parents also said that their children felt confident in themselves and that they are more comfortable being around people from other cultures.”

The full, numerical data results of this evaluation are available upon request.