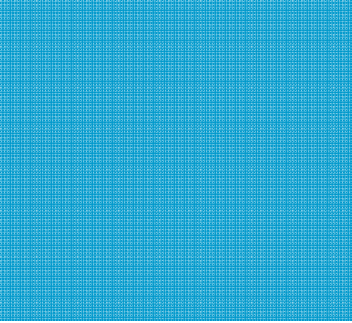


**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
THE CHANGE COLLABORATIVE'S MIDDLE SCHOOL
WELLNESS/COMMUNITY CENTERS TRACKING OF
OUTCOMES 1998-99 ACADEMIC YEAR**




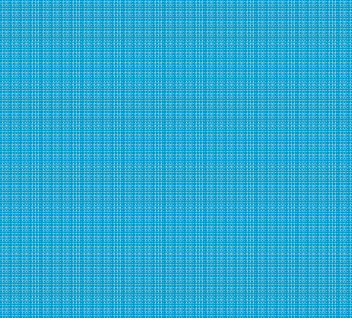
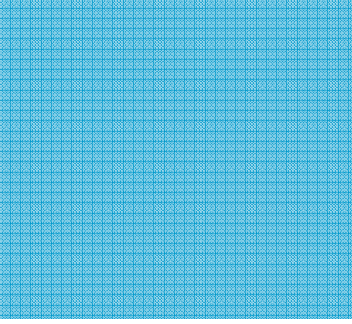
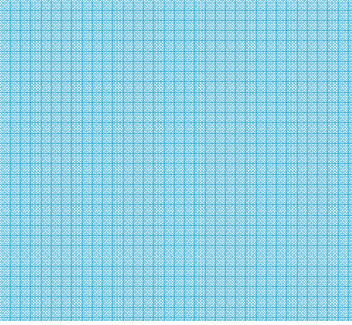
HUGH F. CREAN, PH.D.
DECEMBER, 1999



children's institute
Strengthening social and emotional health



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

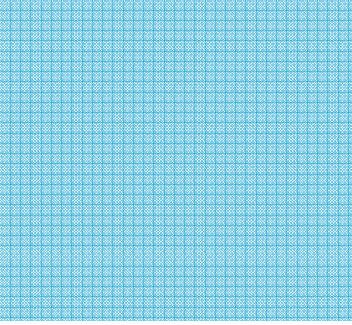
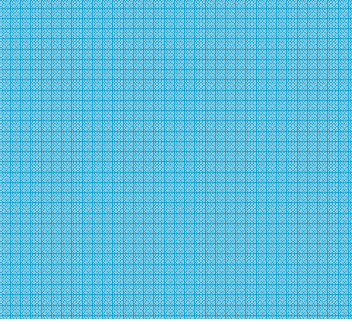


This report presents findings from the 1998-99 year of data collection efforts for the four middle school Wellness/Community Centers collaborative efforts in the city of Rochester. The overarching governance and main funding comes from the CHANGE initiative - a collaboration among leadership from the City of Rochester, County of Monroe, the United Way of Greater Rochester, and the Rochester City School District. The participating middle school sites were Charlotte Middle School, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, the Dr. Freddie Thomas Learning Center, and the James Madison School of Excellence. While each site has a number of unique components, the underlying beliefs stem largely from a "Full Service School" model of human service delivery. This model suggests that the neighborhood school become the hub of service delivery, thereby reducing barriers for families in need of services. Locating education, health and mental health, recreation, social, and other necessary services for students and families at the school not only reduces barriers for a number of needy students and families, but, perhaps more importantly revitalizes urban schools by creating a true partnership between educators and other human service providers. Within the past 18 months, consultants from the Primary Mental Health Project Inc. have worked with the CHANGE leadership and each of the sites to develop an agreed upon battery of student outcomes. Six outcomes identified were: improved mental health of students, reduced delinquent behaviors of students, reduced use of illicit substances by students, reduced number of teen pregnancies, improved academic achievement of students, and improved attendance at school.

A number of positive events occurred at each of the sites, not the least of which was the implementation of a uniform data tracking system designed to provide necessary information for documenting progress as the sites work towards meeting these identified outcomes. The James Madison School of Excellence first opened its doors last year-the South West Community Center and the other partners began serving students and families from the first day of the school's existence. The Thomas Jefferson Middle School was successful in implementing a youth development sports club program for its sixth grade students. At Charlotte Middle School and Dr. Freddie Thomas Learning Center, a much needed mental health counselor provided services and consultation at each of these sites for at least two days per week. Each site has another year of experience in strengthening relationships between school and provider personnel.



Two important caveats provide important context:

- Despite the fact that the histories of implementing such initiatives differs at each site (ranging from a site who was in their first year of implementation to a site with well over five years of experience), the 1998-99 academic year was the first year to systematically collect and analyze data. How such data was to be used and the purpose that such efforts might serve was of concern to a number of school and service provider personnel.
 - The second caveat concerns the focus on academic achievement variables in the current report. Despite beliefs that effective interventions can influence such variables as GPAs, attendance rates, and the numbers of short and long-term suspensions, service providers do not believe that such variables are likely to be impacted quickly, but are more likely to change once the identified barriers to learning (e.g., mental health issues, family issues, learning disabilities) are either reduced or removed. The reason for the attention to such variables in the current report is because these were the only outcome indicators amenable to a focus on change.
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Despite these caveats, the information provided presents a number of interesting findings. The challenge remains - how to effectively use the information to better understand the needs at each of the sites and to help shape effective interventions for students and their families.



Note: Reference T99-528.1

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