



YCWA EVALUATION TOOLKIT

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**What can be done to reduce crime in your school?
Are students an untapped crime prevention resource?
Can they lead the way to a crime free school?**

YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Introduction

Youth Crime Watch (YCW) is a nationwide, youth-led program with a mission of creating crime-free environments in schools and communities. This is done by engaging students in a variety of YCW activities, including: crime reporting, youth patrols, mentoring, mediation, drug and crime prevention education, school bus safety programs, conflict resolution training, peer and cross-age teaching, and action projects. Involvement in these activities is designed to improve student's sense of belonging, self worth, and increase their involvement in school activities. The expectation is that once students achieve these outcomes they will feel safer in school and experience better academic achievement. This will lead to less crime in school. YCW is also highly focused on ensuring that schools experience less crime through instructing and helping students feel comfortable about making crime reports.

YCWA schools allow for the highest achievement of their students through the creation of a crime-free, safe environment. By offering YCW activities and sharing the philosophy of “watch out, help out,” hundreds of sites in the United States and abroad are developing conscientious

By using this toolkit you will know what effects your program is having on students!

citizens. Youth Crime Watch of America (YCWA) has spearheaded this effort by providing leadership and vision, as well as, training and technical assistance. Now YCWA is embracing an effort to provide evaluation and planning

resources for all sites to conduct hands on, local investigations into how their programs are achieving YCW outcomes.

Through the development of the “YCWA Evaluation Toolkit,” local YCW sites will be able to collect information and get direct feedback on how students feel about their participation in the program and what impact it is having on their character development and school success. The tools included in the kit are also designed to measure the impact of YCW on school crime reporting and the safety level of the school environment.

Using the Toolkit

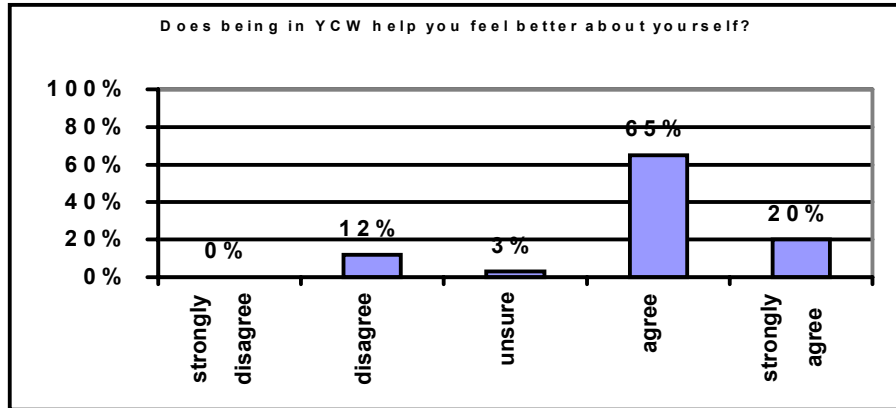
The YCWA Evaluation Toolkit is a user-friendly system for collecting information from YCW students and advisors. Included in the kit are all of the instructions, surveys, and other tools necessary for collecting information at the beginning and the end of the school year. A checklist of toolkit materials is included in the “general instructions” section, along with overall advice on things to think about when getting ready to administer the student and advisor surveys. The “pre-survey” and “post-survey” sections include information and instructions on how to administer the student and advisor surveys and the actual survey questionnaires.

The YCWA Evaluation Toolkit is user friendly. It includes:

- ❑ **Instructions**
- ❑ **Surveys**
- ❑ **Sign-in sheets**

All you need to do is gather the materials and the students in the same room!

All you need to do then is tally the results. The easiest way to do this is to enter the survey responses into a database like Microsoft Excel. Once this is done, you will be able to present the responses for each survey question. For example, you will know whether students feel YCW has helped them improve their self worth. The data can be turned into graphs like the one below.



If your organization does not have the experience or tools necessary to analyze the results, it is possible to contract with Partners in Evaluation & Planning, LLC to do this for you. To get more information on how to do this, call Dr. Christy Lynch at 410-371-0706.

The biggest benefit of using the toolkit will be your ability to keep the pulse of the program and students, while communicating the high quality of YCW with other school officials, community programs, parents, and community members.

Using the Results

Like so many other youth development efforts, YCW sites are constantly being asked to report on their program. Some of the people who might be interested in the quality and impact of YCW could be school officials, parents, community members, police departments, other youth development programs, grant funding agencies, etc. The information received from using the toolkit will provide valuable information to share with others about the quality and impact of YCW.

Using the toolkit will also allow you an opportunity for program improvement. It provides clues about your program's strengths and challenges through student reports. For example, the student survey asks whether students feel comfortable with the methods of crime reporting at their school and what methods they use most. In addition, students are asked to report on any crime or

violence incidents they have witnessed, seen, or heard about. This provides schools with more information about the safety of their environment.

YCWA Previous Research

Since March 2000, several evaluation activities have been completed by Youth Crime Watch of America, including:

- ✓ The design of a YCWA Program Logic Model (program theory) that illustrates the components of the program, and hypothesizes linkages among the initial, intermediate and longer-term outcomes expected from students and schools. This model was initially constructed by stakeholders who attended the National Crime Prevention Council Conference in March, 2000.
- ✓ The completion of a study of the outcomes of YCW programs in 15 Florida schools.
- ✓ Case studies of YCW programs in community based settings in Ft. Pierce and Riviera Beach, Florida.
- ✓ Case studies of YCW at Millard West School in Nebraska and Peabody High School in Pittsburgh, to validate the program theory and explore the feasibility of gathering standardized data on school crime at a national level.
- ✓ National Outcome Study of 27 YCW school programs across the US and Guam conducted during 2001-2002 to test the program theory (logic model), the impact of influencing factors, and specify the importance of crime reporting and youth patrols to the YCW program.
- ✓ YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Pilot of 20 YCW schools in DeKalb County, Georgia during the 2003-2004 school year to test the potential use of a national level toolkit.

These studies have established a program theory for YCW, identified important factors influencing success, and developed student and advisor survey tools for measuring program implementation and outcomes achieved. The next step in the evaluation process was to design a comprehensive monitoring system that all YCW programs can use to evaluate their programs. The goal is for every YCW program to have an evaluation ‘toolkit’ that allows them to monitor their own success at achieving important outcomes, as well as, providing YCWA with aggregate data to report on the impact of the program overall.

Youth Crime Watch of America Logic Model (Program Theory)

The logic model portrays what and how outcomes accrue from participation in YCW. The logic model was first created by a panel of national YCW experts which included YCWA Board members and staff, YCW site advisors and students. This panel had an in-depth knowledge of the YCW mission and implementation process. Previous evaluation results were used to refine the model to more clearly identify outcomes specific to the YCW Program (SPEC Associates, 2001).

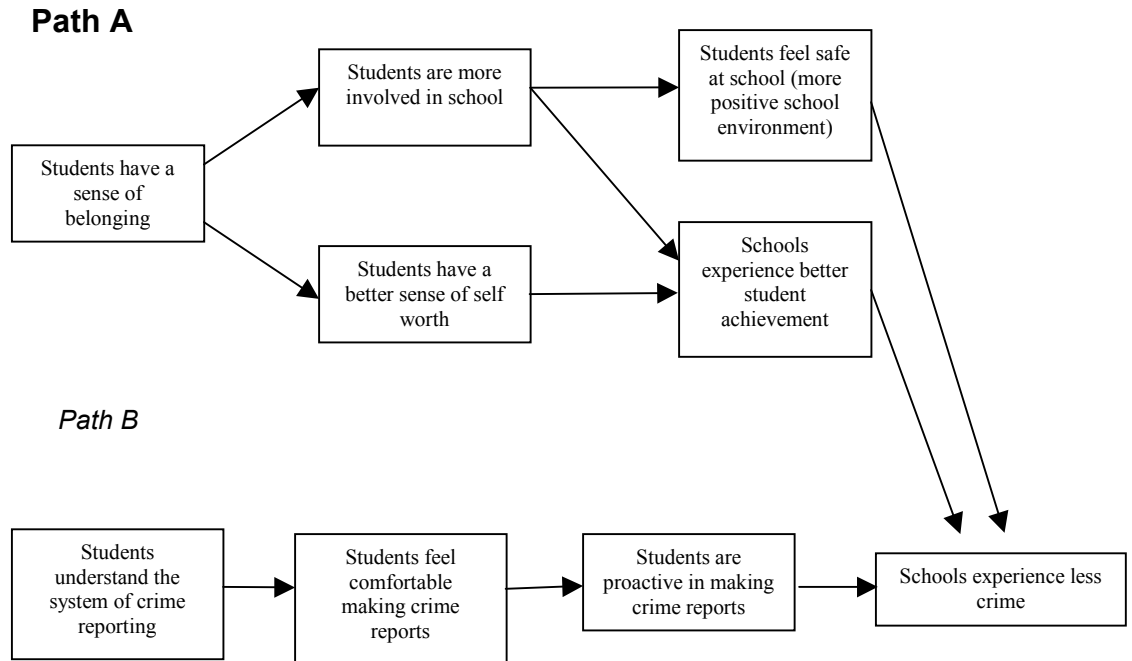
Smaller scale studies using the YCWA logic model were conducted in 15 schools in Florida (SPEC Associates, 2000) and in two case study investigations in Nebraska and Pennsylvania (SPEC Associates, 2001). The recommendation from these evaluations was to conduct a national study with a larger and more representative sample of schools to further understand the impact of YCW programs. As a result, this YCW National Outcome Study 2001-2002 was undertaken. The YCW National Study supported the elements of the logic model, particularly Path A outcomes. The impact on Path B outcomes is somewhat less clear (SPEC Associates, 2002).

The core elements of the YCW logic model are shown on the following page. The nine key components of YCW are listed, along with two paths of outcomes. Path A shows the linkages among outcomes related to student bonding and self worth. Path B shows the linkages among the outcomes related to crime reporting and crime reduction.

**Figure 1 Youth Crime Watch of America
Program Logic Model
(Revised 6-5-01)**

Nine Key Components of YCW

- 1. crime reporting**
- 2. youth patrols**
- 3. drug, crime and violence education**
- 4. bus safety program**
- 5. one on one mentoring**
- 6. conflict resolution training**
- 7. peer mediation program**
- 8. peer and cross-age teaching**
- 9. action projects**



The logic model hypothesizes the following relationships among the outcomes:

Path A Outcomes:

1. If students have a sense of belonging, then they will be more involved in school activities and have a better sense of self-worth.
2. If students are more involved in their school, then they will report feeling safer in school and better academic achievement.
3. If students have a better sense of self-worth, then they will report better academic achievement.

Path B Outcomes:

1. If students understand the system of crime reporting, then they will be more comfortable making crime reports (more likely to report crimes).
2. If students feel comfortable making crime reports, then they will be proactive in making those reports.
3. If students make crime reports, then schools overtime will experience less school crime and victimization.

Both Path A and Path B Longer Term Outcome:

1. If schools are perceived to be safer and if schools have better student achievement, then schools will experience less school crime.

Both the YCW Student Survey and YCW Advisor Survey are designed to measure the impact of YCW on the logic model outcomes. A pre and post-survey evaluation design is important to establishing any changes that might occur in these outcomes during the year. Use of the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit will further assist in the development of the logic model, as well as, providing important information on how well individual programs are working.

What to do Next

- ❑ Look over the toolkit package and make sure you have downloaded or received all of the materials listed in the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Checklist (below)!
- ❑ Make a commitment to using the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit as a regular part of your YCW program!
- ❑ Read the general instructions for things to think about when administering the student and advisor surveys!
- ❑ GO FOR IT – give those surveys!
- ❑ Use the results to share with others and improve your program!
- ❑ Call if you have any questions or concerns: Dr. Christy Lynch, Partners in Evaluation & Planning, 410-371-0706!

References

SPEC Associates (2000). *Youth Crime Watch of America Florida Outcomes Report*. Detroit: Michigan.

SPEC Associates (2001). *Youth Crime: The Theoretical Model*. Detroit: Michigan.

SPEC Associates with Partners in Evaluation and Planning (2003). *Youth Crime Watch of America: 2001-2001 National Outcome Study*. Detroit: Michigan.

Partners in Evaluation & Planning with SPEC Associates (2004). *Youth Crime Watch of America 2003-2004 YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Pilot Study DeKalb County, Georgia*. Sykesville: Maryland.

Youth Crime Watch of America (YCWA) Evaluation Toolkit Checklist

The YCWA Evaluation Toolkit was designed for small and large-scale evaluations of YCW programs in individual schools or school systems. By using the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit, you will gather information on how students feel about their participation in the program and what impact it is having on their character development and school success. The tools included in the kit are also designed to measure the impact of YCW on school crime reporting and the safety level of the school environment.

Items included in the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit are:

- ❑ *The YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Introduction* – this gives you background on how the toolkit was developed, and information on how and when to use the toolkit.
- ❑ *The YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Pre Survey Instructions* – these are complete instructions on how to administer the YCW Student Pre Survey and YCW Advisor Pre Survey.
- ❑ *The YCWA Evaluation Toolkit Post Survey Instructions* – these are complete instructions on how to administer the YCW Student Post Survey and YCW Advisor Post Survey.
- ❑ *The YCW Student Pre Survey* – this is the student survey to be given at the beginning of the school year.
- ❑ *The YCW Advisor Pre Survey* – this is the advisor survey to be given at the beginning of the school year.
- ❑ *The YCW Student Post Survey* – this is the student survey to be given at the end of the school year.
- ❑ *The YCW Advisor Post Survey* – this is the advisor survey to be given at the end of the school year.

If you have questions about the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit, please call Dr. Christy Lynch, Partners in Evaluation & Planning, LLC, at 410-371-0706. Partners in Evaluation & Planning, LLC may also be contracted to assist in implementing the YCWA Evaluation Toolkit in your school or school system. If you are interested, please call for more information.