



*Marion County
Safe and Drug Free Schools*

2009-2010 Evaluation Report

July 2010



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WellFlorida Council

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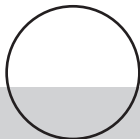
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Executive Summary

The Marion County Public Schools (MCPS) was awarded a part of the Safe and Drug-free Schools (SDFS) and Communities state grants received by Florida Department of Education (DOE). The program provides support for a variety of drug-abuse and violence-prevention activities focused primarily on school-age youths. SDFS funds support the mentor program in five middle schools in Marion County: Belleview Middle School, Ft. King Middle School, Lake Weir Middle School, North Marion Middle School, and Liberty (previously West Port) Middle School. The Department of Juvenile Justice funds the mentor in Howard Middle School, whereas a Drug Free Communities Program Grant funds the mentors in Dunnellon Middle School and Ft. McCoy (K-8) School. Though the funding agencies are separate, the roles and nature of the mentor programs is similar across all the schools.

The current evaluation report reviews the program's operations by measuring the performance and effectiveness of the program based upon predetermined outcome objectives set forth for the grant period covering 2009-10 school year. The status of progress at the end of 2009-10 school year are summarized below:

Objective	Status
Objective 1: By June 1, 2010, of the mentored students, after the students first encounter for alcohol 75% do not return to the mentor for an alcohol issue.	Out of 1615 students mentored, none of the students met with the school mentor for alcohol issues. There were no alcohol-related incidents in the schools linked with the SDFS mentors.
Objective 2: By June 1, 2010, Of the mentored students who drink and who have talked to the mentor about drinking, at least 75% will agree that they drink less since they have been meeting with the mentor.	Since no students were mentored for alcohol issues, the results cannot be evaluated. However, at the end of the 2009-10 school year, 631 mentored students had completed the satisfaction survey. Compared to 43.1 percent of survey respondents in 2008-09, 41% felt comfortable going to the mentor to discuss alcohol issues. Consistently, 41 percent of survey respondents felt that mentors had helped them to make a decision not to drink alcohol in 2008-09 as well as in 2009-10. 31% of survey respondents reported that their mentor had discussed alcohol use with them. A little over one-fifth (22.7%) felt that mentors had been helpful in dealing with issues involving alcohol use.
Objective 3: By June 1, 2010, At least 95% of all students mentored for a bullying issue will not have a repeat bullying incidence after their initial mentor visit for bullying.	86 students were mentored for bullying in the 2009-10 school year, with three students being mentored twice and others only one time each. 104 students in the TERMS database had been reported for a total of 124 bullying events. Eight of the mentored students (13 events) appeared in the TERMS database. Of these eight students, seven had a bullying event after their first mentored contact for bullying. Thus, among the 86 students mentored for bullying 79 (91.9%) did not have a repeat event after they had seen a mentor, thereby nearly meeting the third objective.
Objective 4: By June 1, 2010, At least 95% of all students mentored for a fighting/violence issue will not have a repeat fighting/violence incidence after their initial mentor visit for bullying.	69 students were mentored for fighting/violence in the 2009-10 school year, with four students being mentored twice and others only one time. 454 students in the TERMS database had been reported for a total of 554 fighting/violence events, with 37 mentored students (51 events) appearing in the TERMS database. Of these 37 students, seven had a fighting/violence event after their first mentored contact. Thus, out of the 69 students mentored for fighting/violence, 62 (89.9%) did not have a repeat event after they had been mentored. The fourth objective was thus nearly met.

Objective	Status
<p>Objective 5.1 By June 1, 2010 conduct four (4) focus groups (random selection of the Marion County schools that has a SDFS mentor) with students that have utilized the mentor program to determine student perspective on effectiveness of the mentor program.</p>	<p>The focus group participants have indicated overall satisfaction with the mentors. Students have indicated that without the mentor program, the schools will see a rise in fights and other problems as mentors help with school issues as well as personal/family issues in students' lives.</p>
<p>Objective 5.2 By June 2010 conduct a mentored student survey (one at each of the Marion County schools that has a SDFS mentor) that is identical to the survey conducted of mentored students in 2008-09, and raise the percentage of all respondents that stated "True" by 10 percent for each of the three questions regarding mentored student satisfaction.</p>	<p>The percentage of students indicating that the mentor was helpful remained nearly same between 2008-09 (65%) and 2009-10 (64%) years. There was a decline in the proportion of students reporting that the mentor had helped with schoolwork/grades (from 47% in 2008-09→39% in 2009-10) accompanied by a small decline in students reporting that the mentor had helped to get along with teachers/classmates (49% in 2008-09→46% in 2009-10).</p> <p>The results for comfort levels of students with the mentor in discussing alcohol issues was cross-tabulated with whether the mentor had talked to them about alcohol, whether the mentor was thought to be helpful and whether the mentor had helped the student in deciding against drinking alcohol. The Pearson chi-square value as calculated using SPSS software was 0.00 (less than 0.05) indicating that the comfort level perceived by a student influenced whether the mentor was thought to be helpful in making decisions regarding alcohol usage.</p>
<p>Objective 5.3 By June 2009, Conduct a faculty/staff survey (one at each of the Marion County schools that has a SDFS mentor) that is identical to the survey conducted of faculty/staff members in 2006-07, and raise the percentage of all respondents that stated they "Agree/Strongly Agree" by 5 percent for each of the three questions regarding faculty/staff satisfaction.</p>	<p>During 2008-09, 84.4% had indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the mentor helps make a positive difference with the academic performance of mentored students. This declined by 8.6% in 2009-10. During 2008-09, a total of 91% faculty had expressed strong agreement/agreed that the mentor helped to make a positive difference in the behavior of mentored students. This also decreased by nearly 10% in 2009-10. While a total of 93.4 percent had agreed or strongly agreed in 2008-09 that the mentor is a valuable member of the school staff, this decreased by 9% in the 2009-10.</p>

While 2009-10 is the last year for the Safe and Drug-free Schools program grant in Marion County. The data presented thus far in this report suggests that MCPS is making steady progress towards increasing the opportunities for available for students to interact with an adult for guidance by facilitating the availability of school mentors in eight of its middle schools. While the improvements are steady, because the county has high Alcohol, Tobacco and other behavior prevalence rates, continued intervention will be crucial in sustaining the momentum gained through the SDFS program grant. Thus the impact of the end of the SDFS grant remains to be seen.

Needs assessments were conducted during the 1996-97 school years and more recently during the 1999-2000 school years. It is highly recommended that Marion County undertake a school district-wide "needs and resource assessment". A comprehensive assessment will provide the district with a competitive edge in applying to grant opportunities by helping to demonstrate the basis for their plan when they request participation or financial assistance from government agencies, corporations, foundations or other potential supporters. A resource assessment will enable MCPS to pool community resources. It can also serve as a tool for reenergizing the school system by providing them with measurable milestones for success. Raising awareness by disseminating assessment results will also help to bring the priority issues to the community and media attention, thereby garnering local support.

Introduction

The Marion County Public Schools (MCPS) was awarded a part of the Safe and Drug-free Schools (SDFS) and Communities state grants received by Florida Department of Education (DOE). The program provides support for a variety of drug-abuse and violence-prevention activities focused primarily on school-age youths. The state grant money offered local education agencies (LEAs), i.e., school districts, an opportunity to offer staff training; student instruction; curriculum development or acquisition; parent education and involvement; conflict resolution; peer mediation and student assistance programs such as counseling, mentoring, identification and referral services. The formula for the distribution of funds to LEAs was based on the state's prior year share of Title I (ESEA) funds (60 percent) and enrollment (40 percent). 2009-10 is the last year for the SDFS program grant in Marion County. The current evaluation report reviews the program's operations by measuring the performance and effectiveness of the program based upon predetermined outcome objectives set forth for the grant period covering 2009-10 school year. SDFS funds support the mentor program in five middle schools in Marion County: Belleview Middle School, Ft. King Middle School, Lake Weir Middle School, North Marion Middle School, and Liberty (previously West Port) Middle School. The Department of Juvenile Justice funds the mentor in Howard Middle School, whereas a Drug Free Communities Program Grant funds the mentors in Dunnellon Middle School and Ft. McCoy (K-8) School. Though the funding agencies are separate, the roles and nature of the mentor programs is similar across all the schools.

WellFlorida Council, under the direction of the MCPS, has been responsible for preparing the SDFS evaluation since the 1996-1997 school years. Initially, the mentor program addressed in this evaluation was funded by SDFS Set-Aside Grant monies; however, when these monies were no longer available in 2002-03, MCPS allocated regular SDFS school district funds to preserving the mentor program. Many beneficial programs have been generated and become self-sustaining based on activities initially funded by the SDFS as detailed in previous evaluations. These include a system-wide grant writer who was originally brought in to find additional funds for SDFS-related programs at Howard Middle School. The services of the grant writer yielded such positive results that the cost of this grant writer has been absorbed by school system funds; the grant writer continues to bring new resources to the MCPS. In addition, the Great Leaps reading program, highly successful and originally funded by SDFS, has expanded throughout the school system and is an example of the success of the SDFS program. The mentor program, first piloted in Howard Middle School, has become a remarkable success.

Mentor Program: An Overview

When SDFS funding first became available, the MCPS created a SDFS Planning Committee to identify needs for violence and drug prevention and education in the school system and offer advice in the development of programs and strategies to address these needs. Under the direction of the MCPS, the SDFS Planning Committee conducted a district-wide needs assessment prior to each Set-Aside Grant period. The purpose of these needs assessments was to identify students most at risk of becoming involved with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) as well as violent activity. Needs assessments were conducted during the 1996-97 school years and more recently during the 1999-2000 school years.

The process of assessing the school district's needs relied on a variety of data sources. Extant reports including the County Risk Factor Report, the School Environmental Safety Incidents Report, the School District Prevention Needs Profile, the MCPS Drug Safety Report, and the School Advisory Council Reports were examined. Data were also extracted from the Marion County Total Educational Resource Management System (TERMS) database to analyze patterns of disciplinary action and state-reported incidents throughout the school system. In addition, focus groups were conducted with middle school

students, guidance counselors, and student advisory council chairs; interviews were conducted with school principals as well as with community leaders in the business, professional, political, and law enforcement communities.

Due to the high degree of variability of discipline data at the school level, the Planning Committee reviewed TERMS data on disciplinary actions and state-reported incidents at the district level to identify specific populations with greatest need and to determine if a particular action or actions was common throughout the school district. The analysis of TERMS data provided supporting evidence for selecting target populations and the types of behaviors upon which SDFS and Set-Aside programs would focus. Reviewing the existing data reports, conducting significance tests and performing a logistic regression with the data elements from TERMS, and conducting focus groups and interviews also supported the identification of a target population.

Review of these data indicated that students in grades 6, 7, and 8 (middle school) who have high numbers of absences from school and poor school performance as measured by cumulative grade point average (GPA) should be targeted. Students who show a pattern of frequent involvement in less serious types of disciplinary incidents were also identified. Based on the review of TERMS data, the characteristics that most commonly reflect the population that would benefit from a prevention and/or intervention program were male, African-American, students with high rates of reported discipline incidents, students receiving lower scores on standardized tests, and students who are absent from school more frequently than other students.

With this information, in 1996-1997, the SDFS Planning Committee identified two schools, Howard and North Marion Middle Schools, as having the highest percentage of students with the above characteristics. These schools were then selected to be the focus of much of the Set-Aside activities for that grant period. Mentoring programs were implemented to address the identified concerns. Howard and North Marion Middle Schools were again selected for the 1998-1999 to 1999-2000 Set-Aside Grant periods, while Belleview and Osceola Middle Schools were also added to the mix. The overall consensus of the Planning Committee was to develop a comprehensive plan that reduces ATOD and violent behaviors in schools. The emphasis of the program plan was to create a more nurturing environment so adolescents covet coming to school and strive to excel in their academic endeavors. The original program plan set forth the programs to be implemented (based on their demonstrated success in research), the target populations and schools, and the objectives upon which to base the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Set-Aside programs. A core element of this plan has been the implementation of school-based mentoring programs for students.

In 2000-2001, it was determined that the Set-Aside funding would be used solely to fund mentor programs at nine middle schools in Marion County as well as South Ocala Elementary School. The 2000-2001 Set-Aside funds were allocated in such a manner to cover one year of funding as opposed to the usual two years. As such, for 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, MCPS determined it would utilize regular SDFS funding to maintain the mentor programs at the eight middle schools.

Since the 2003-2004 school year, the mentor program was sustained in the middle schools as part of the regular SDFS funding, as Set-Aside funding was no longer available. Due to budget reductions South Ocala Elementary and Osceola Middle were not funded for the SDFS program for the 2007-2008 year. As in years past, the evaluation that follows focuses on both quantitative and qualitative analysis of mentoring program activity for the 2009-2010 school year based on the details in the program plan/application submitted to the Florida Department of Education. However, based on recommendations, the evaluation objectives were tailored, with input from the Marion County SDFS Planning Committee, to be more relevant to the current experiences with the mentor program.

Evaluation Plan

The evaluation of 2009-2010 SDFS program activities will be completed by reviewing the program's operations and by measuring the performance and effectiveness of the program based upon pre-determined outcome objectives. These objectives were determined mutually by staff of the MCPS Health Education Department, the Marion County SDFS Advisory Committee, and WellFlorida Council.

Project Components and Deliverables

The evaluation activities began in July 2009 (Table 1). The evaluation of SDFS program activities for the 2009-10 school years consisted of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of program outcomes and objectives aimed specifically at alcohol, tobacco, and drug behaviors (ATOD) and bullying, fighting and other disciplinary incidents. The qualitative insights were derived from focus groups conducted with mentored students. As in previous evaluations, faculty and mentored students were surveyed about the mentor program in order to gauge their satisfaction. Mentors were trained in the process of maintaining student logs for the number of students being mentored and the nature of those encounters. In addition, Total Educational Resource Management System (TERMS) data was obtained from the MCPS Information Services Department to analyze patterns of disciplinary action and state-reported incidents. The data were also analyzed with respect to the relevance to the outcome objectives. The evaluation activities culminated with submission of a written report by July 31, 2010.

Table 1: Timeline for SDFS Evaluation in Marion County Public Schools, 2009-10

Activity	Date
SDFS Advisory Committee Organizational Meeting	July 2009
Development of Evaluation Objectives	August 2009
Revision of Mentor Contact Data Submission Process	August 2009
Revision of Mentor Contact Data Collection Form	August 2009
Data Collection Training for Mentors	August 2009
Meetings with Mentors as Needed for Technical Support	August 2009 – May 2010
Revision of Database to Store Mentor Contact Data	September 2009
Ongoing Data Collection and Data Entry of Mentor Contacts	September 2009 – May 2010
Year End Meeting with Mentors	April 2010
Mentored student and Teacher Surveys	May 2010
Coordination of Collection of TERMS Data	May 2010 – June 2010
Writing the Evaluation Report and Appropriate Data Analysis	May 2010 – June 2010
Completion of Final Report	July 31, 2010
Presentation of Final Report to SDF Advisory Committee and Other Appropriate Groups within MCPS	July 2010 – September 2010

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine if MCPS is utilizing its SDFS funding in a manner consistent with the desired state and federal goals for all SDFS programs. During 2009-10, MCPS directed its funds on the provision of mentor programs at middle schools in Marion County. The emphasis of the mentor programs was to create a more nurturing environment so that adolescents want to come to school, and strive to excel in their academic endeavors. The evaluation focused on the objectives delineated below in

Table 2.

Table 2: Objectives and Baseline Data Sources, 2009-10

Objective	Baseline
Objective 1: By June 1, 2010, of the mentored students, after the students first encounter for alcohol 75% do not return to the mentor for an alcohol issue.	Mentored student survey conducted in 2008-09 and State Reportable Incident Data.
Objective 2: By June 1, 2010, Of the mentored students who drink and who have talked to the mentor about drinking, at least 75% will agree that they drink less since they have been meeting with the mentor.	Mentored student survey conducted in 2008-09 and State Reportable Incident Data.
Objective 3: By June 1, 2010, At least 95% of all students mentored for a bullying issue will not have a repeat bullying incidence after their initial mentor visit for bullying.	Each student's individual bullying incidence rate during the school year of note prior to their first individual mentor contact for bullying.
Objective 4: By June 1, 2010, At least 95% of all students mentored for a fighting/violence issue will not have a repeat fighting/violence incidence after their initial mentor visit for fighting/violence.	Each student's individual fighting/violence incidence rate during the school year of note prior to their first individual mentor contact for fighting/violence.
Objective 5.1: By June 1, 2010 conduct four (4) focus groups (random selection of the Marion County schools that have a SDFS mentor) with students that have utilized the mentor program to determine student perspective on effectiveness of the mentor program.	Reports from previous years' focus groups.
Objective 5.2 By June 2010 conduct a mentored student survey (one at each of the Marion County schools that has a SDFS mentor) that is identical to the survey conducted of mentored students in 2008-09, and raise the percentage of all respondents that stated "True" by 10 percent for each of the three questions on mentored student survey.	A brief mentored student survey conducted in 2008-09.. Focus groups will be used to obtain further details of the students' perspectives.
Objective 5.3: By June 2009, Conduct a faculty/staff survey (one at each of the Marion County schools that has a SDFS mentor) that is identical to the survey conducted of faculty/staff members in 2006-07, and raise the percentage of all respondents that stated they "Agree/Strongly Agree" by 5 percent for each of the three questions regarding faculty/staff satisfaction.	Faculty/staff satisfaction surveys conducted in 2008-09.

Description of Findings

The evaluation plan utilized data from the mentor contact logs, mentored student survey, Marion County Total Educational Resource Management System (TERMS) database, faculty satisfaction surveys, and student focus groups. Thus, each of the stated objectives (Table 2) is reviewed and supported with primary and/or secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data available longitudinally across years.

Mentor Contact Logs

The mentor contact log was created as an electronic database to track the reason for mentorship and the progress of students across the school year (Appendix 1). Mentors were required to submit their mentor contact logs online within the first week of each month. All of the participating middle schools submitted online mentor contact logs. The mentors entered data between August 2009 and June 2010. Each mentor encounter was tracked for the name of school, name of student mentored, a six digit student ID that would enable longitudinal analysis, primary reason for meeting with the student, referral

source, number of suspensions, involvement of school or law-enforcement in the incident and demographic information on the student (gender, age, race).

As seen in Table 3 (below), mentors worked with 1615 students and made 3105 mentor contacts. In 2008-09, 20.6% students had seen a mentor. In 2009-10, mentors had seen 18.6% of the total student population (N=8663) at the eight schools participating in the program (these contacts do not include events such as lunch room duty and casual conversations with students). The student enrollment dropped by 2% between 2008-09 and 2009-10. Despite the decrease in the number of students mentored between these two years, Dunnellon, Ft. King and Liberty/West Port Middle Schools have shown an overall increase of 45%, 43% and 12% respectively in the number of students mentored between 2004 and 2010 school years. In addition to these schools, Lake Weir Middle School has also demonstrated an increase of 20% from 2008-09 to 2009-10. The schools showing a decrease in number of students mentored had staffing changes through the 2009-10 school year—e.g., mentors having a shorter term or leaving earlier—as can be seen through statistics of Howard (69%), Belleview (56%), North Marion (48%), Ft McCoy (38%) and West Port/Liberty (12.7) Middle Schools.

Table 3: Students mentored in Marion County, 2009-10

School	School Enrollment		2008-2009		2009-2010		Percent Change 2008-09 to 2009-10		Percent Change 2004-05 to 2009-10	
	2008-2009	2009-2010	Students	Mentor Contacts	Students	Mentor Contacts	Students	Mentor Contacts	Students	Mentor Contacts
Belleview Middle	1254	1153	132	309	58	87	(56.1)	(71.8)	(69.3)	(82.0)
Dunnellon Middle	791	749	129	170	276	545	114.0	220.6	45.3	(19.4)
Ft King Middle	1325	1376	430	950	484	1136	12.6	19.6	43.2	51.7
Ft McCoy (K-8)	592	587	203	587	126	224	(37.9)	(61.8)	(14.3)	26.6
Howard Middle	1087	1101	254	751	78	95	(69.3)	(87.4)	(16.1)	(11.2)
Lake Weir Middle	1598	1538	248	383	299	547	20.6	42.8	(62.0)	(67.7)
North Marion Middle	928	916	235	390	122	148	(48.1)	(62.1)	(66.7)	(83.2)
West Port/Liberty Middle	1272	1243	197	478	172	323	(12.7)	(32.4)	12.4	30.2
Total	8847	8663	1828	4018	1615	3105	(11.7)	(22.7)	(36.5)	(45.8)

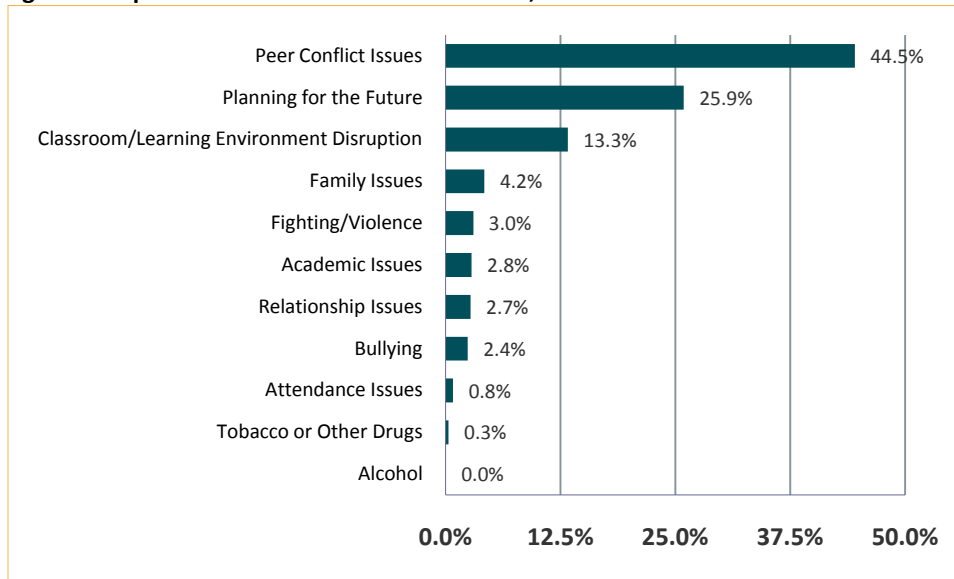
Numbers in parentheses indicate negative change. Only individual student mentoring sessions are reported.

Source: Mentor Contact Logs, 2004-2010.

The roles of the mentors vary considerably based on schools' needs. Though these differences account for a variety of reasons for which mentors are sought across schools, nonviolent peer conflicts, planning for the future and classroom/learning environment disruption were the top three leading reasons (

Figure 1) during the 2009-10 school year consistent with topmost reasons in school years 2007-2008 and 2008-09. Detailed summary of reasons for mentor contact in each of the eight schools—Bellevue Middle, Dunnellon Middle, Ft King Middle, Ft McCoy (K-8), Howard Middle, Lake Weir Middle, North Marion Middle and West Port/Liberty Middle can be found in Appendix 2.

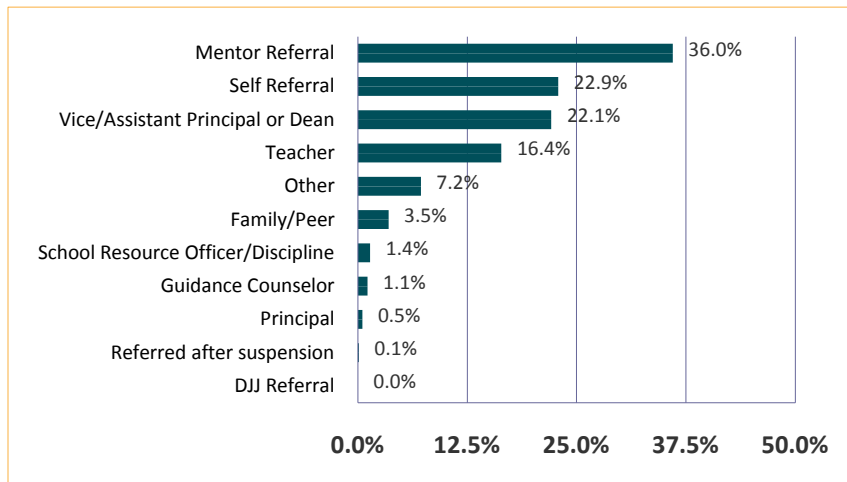
Figure 1: Top-most Reasons for Mentor Contact, 2009-10



Source: Mentor Contact Logs, 2009-2010.

The students were referred by self referral, teacher, principal, vice/assistant principal, guidance counselor, family/peer, school resource officer/discipline, mentor referral, other, and department of juvenile justice (only for Howard middle school). As seen in Figure 2 below, mentors, self, vice/assistant principal, teacher and others were stated as the most common sources of referral. The other sources commonly cited were teacher assistant, bus driver, clerk, attendance secretary, and grandparent.

Figure 2: Referral Source, 2009-10



Source: Mentor Contact Logs, 2009-2010.

The median age of students mentored was 13 years. More female students were mentored (57% contacts) and students were 59% White, 27% Black and nearly 10% Hispanic. Most suspensions were seen at Fort King (36.3%) followed by Lake Weir and Dunnellon at 17% each. Parental, teacher and law-enforcement involvement in the mentoring session was 52.7%, 42.3% and 13.9%, respectively.

Mentored Student Survey

A brief seven question anonymous survey (Appendix 3) was administered to the mentored students with the help of school mentors. The surveys were administered between April 1 and April 30, 2010. 1615 students were mentored in school year 2009-2010. The mentored student survey received a response rate of 38.21% (631 completed survey responses). A summary of the findings from the survey is presented in Table 4. The students were asked about their comfort level with the mentor in discussing alcohol issues, any alcohol-related mentoring received by the students, satisfaction with mentoring and perception about mentors' helpfulness in students' academic performance as well as social interaction with peers and teachers.

Table 4: Student Responses, 2009-10

Question	TRUE		FALSE		NOT SURE	
	2008-09	2009-10	2008-09	2009-10	2008-09	2009-10
The mentor at my school has been helpful to me.	65.4%	63.7%	18.1%	16.6%	16.5%	19.7%
The mentor at my school has helped me to do better with my schoolwork and grades.	47.4%	39.3%	26.2%	29.6%	26.5%	31.1%
The mentor at my school has helped me get along with my teachers and classmates.	49.4%	45.6%	28%	26.1%	22.6%	28.2%
I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use?	43.1%	41.2%	25%	26.9%	31.9%	31.9%
The mentor at my school has spoken to me about alcohol use?	31.1%	25.8%	52.7%	52.8%	16.3%	21.4%
The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use?	22.7%	21.1%	51.3%	52.6%	26.1%	26.3%
The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol?	41.4%	37.9%	36.7%	35.7%	21.9%	26.5%

Source: WellFlorida Database of Student Survey Responses, 2008-2010

As seen in Table 4 above, the percentage of students indicating that the mentor was helpful remained nearly same between 2008-09 (65%) and 2009-10 (64%) years, with a slight increase in number of students uncertain about the helpfulness of their mentor. There was a decline in the proportion of students reporting that the mentor had helped with schoolwork/grades (from 47% in 2008-09→39% in 2009-10) accompanied by a small decline in students reporting that the mentor had helped to get along with teachers/classmates (49% in 2008-09→46% in 2009-10). A higher proportion of students reported uncertainty (not sure response) for the same questions for the comparative period.

The results for comfort levels of students with the mentor in discussing alcohol issues was cross-tabulated with whether the mentor had talked to them about alcohol, whether the mentor was thought to be helpful and whether the mentor had helped the student in deciding against drinking alcohol. The Pearson chi-square value as calculated using SPSS software was 0.00 (less than 0.05) indicating that the contingency were dependent (see Appendix 4). Thus, the comfort level perceived by a student influenced whether the mentor was thought to be helpful in making decisions regarding alcohol usage.

In the year 2009-10, nearly one in four students (26.9%) did not feel comfortable and 41% felt comfortable going to the mentor to discuss alcohol issues. Among the students who did not feel comfortable (n=170), 71% reported that the mentor had not spoken to them about alcohol use (n=122). Among the students reporting that the mentor had been helpful for issues involving alcohol (21.1%), over three quarters (79.7%, n=106) indicated that they were also comfortable in going to the mentor to discuss alcohol use. The student perception of the mentor's helpfulness in making decisions not to drink was also linked to their comfort level with the mentor. Among the 239 students indicating that their

mentor helped them make decisions not to drink alcohol (37.9%), 161 students felt comfortable in approaching the mentor (67%) whereas among the students that had indicated that the mentor did not help (n=225, 35.7%) in making decisions to avoid drinking alcohol, nearly half (49.8%) did not feel comfortable in approaching the mentor to discuss alcohol issues.

Objective 1 stated that by June 1, 2010, of the mentored students, after the students' first encounter for alcohol, 75% did not return to the mentor for an alcohol issue. Out of 1615 students mentored, none of the students met with the school mentor for alcohol issues. There were no alcohol-related incidents in the schools linked with the SDFS mentors.

The second program objective stated that by June 1, 2010, of the mentored students who drank and who had talked to the mentor about drinking, at least 75% will strongly agree or agree that they drink less since they have been meeting with the mentor. Since no students were mentored for alcohol issues, the results cannot be evaluated. However, at the end of the 2009-10 school year, 631 mentored students had completed the satisfaction survey. Compared to 43.1 percent of survey respondents in 2008-09, 41% felt comfortable going to the mentor to discuss alcohol issues. Consistently, 41 percent of survey respondents felt that mentors had helped them to make a decision not to drink alcohol in 2008-09 as well as in 2009-10. 31% of survey respondents reported that their mentor had discussed alcohol use with them. A little over one-fifth (22.7%) felt that mentors had been helpful in dealing with issues involving alcohol use.

Marion County Total Educational Resource Management System (TERMS) Database

At the end of the 2003-04 school year, the Florida Department of Education (DOE) revised its codes for disciplinary incidents. The list was expanded from 130 to 218 general codes that can be used to report incidents. Moreover, of the revised 218 codes, 31 of the most serious incident codes were identified as state reportable. That is, they are reportable to the state and become part of a uniform disciplinary event/incident report created by the DOE for each school district in Florida. Data were extracted from the Marion County Total Educational Resource Management System (TERMS) database to analyze patterns of disciplinary action and state-reported incidents in the SDFS schools.

Compared to 2008-09 when 269 students had been reported to the state, 264 students from the eight schools participating in the SDFS program have been reported in state reportable incident database-TERMS during the 2009-10 school year (Table 5). Liberty Middle School shows a 177% decrease in students with state reportable incidents whereas Fort McCoy (K-8) School has shown a 31% increase in its reportable incidents. It is noteworthy that 18.6% of the students (1,615 of the total 8,663 enrolled in the county) were seen by mentors in these eight schools. However, only 3.04% percent of the students in the SDFS program schools (264 students) appeared in the state reportable incidents database. This underscores the success of the mentor program.

Table 5: Students with State Reportable Incidents, 2008-09 and 2009-10

School	2008-09		2009-10		Percent Change in Students	Percent Change in Incidents
	Students	Incidents	Students	Incidents		
Howard Middle School	26	34	27	39	4%	13%
Dunnellon Middle School	25	27	26	37	4%	27%
Ft. King Middle School	21	45	29	53	28%	15%
Lake Weir Middle School	53	70	59	77	10%	9%
North Marion Middle School	18	23	18	25	0%	8%
Ft. McCoy (K-8) School	22	43	29	62	24%	31%
Belleview Middle School	43	66	46	72	7%	8%
Liberty/West Port Middle School	36	74	13	22	-177%	-236%
Total	244	382	247	387	-1	-1.25%

Source: Marion County TERMS Database, 2008-09 and 2009-10.

The third objective stated that at least 95% of all students mentored for a bullying will not have a repeat incidence after their initial mentor visit. As a baseline measure, each student's individual bullying incident prior to their first individual mentor contact and subsequent to the contact were recorded. A critical element of this evaluation was thus the collection of mentor contact logs and cross-referencing this with discipline referral database of the school district (TERMS). This allowed for a better understanding of mentor involvement and, when necessary, these contacts could be used to identify potential areas of improvement based on TERMS data. 86 students were mentored for bullying in the 2009-10 school year, with three students being mentored twice and others only one time each. 104 students in the TERMS database had been reported for a total of 124 bullying events. Eight of the mentored students (13 events) appeared in the TERMS database. Of these eight students, seven had a bullying event after their first mentored contact for bullying. Thus, among the 86 students mentored for bullying 79 (91.9%) did not have a repeat event after they had seen a mentor, thereby nearly meeting the third objective. The fourth objective stated that at least 95% of all students mentored for a fighting/violence issue will not have a repeat incidence after their initial mentor visit. 69 students were mentored for fighting/violence in the 2009-10 school year, with four students being mentored twice and others only one time. 454 students in the TERMS database had been reported for a total of 554 fighting/violence events, with 37 mentored students (51 events) appearing in the TERMS database. Of these 37 students, seven had a fighting/violence event after their first mentored contact for fighting/violence. Thus, out of the 69 students mentored for fighting/violence, 62 (89.9%) did not have a repeat event after they had been mentored. The fourth objective was thus nearly met.

Table 6: Disciplinary Incidents by Type, 2009-10

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents
1A-Behavior Phy/inapp/sch/bus	1047
1B-Behavior Oth/inapp/sch/bus	277
1D-Disrespect For Others	169
1E-Disruptive Conduct(minor)	727
1F-Dress Code Violation	142
1G-Failure To Comply/sch Rule	1119
1I-Inappropriate Gesture/language/mate	154
1J-Insubordination	325
1K-Medication Over The Counte	13
1L-Violate Attendance Procedu	1843
Sub Total	5816

Table 6 continued: Disciplinary incidents by type, 2009-10

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents
2AA-Violation School Red/Yel	10
2A-Behavior Phy/inapp/sch/bus	3199
2B-Bullying - 1st Offense	112
2C-Celph/wlesscom/electdev/vi	568
2D-Cheating/plagiarism	48
2E-Disrespect For Others	1467
2F-Disruptive Conduct	2351
2G-Drugs Otc/prescriptive	24
2H-Failure To Comply/sch Rule	2889
2I-Fighting/mutual/no Inj/no	434
2K-Insubordination	1276
2L-Intent Damg/prsn/sch/prp26	60
2N-Profn/obsc/abus/lang/gest/	1021
2O-Repeated Misconduct	838
2P-Theft (less \$300)	114
2Q-Tobacco Possess/use Under	34
2S-Unauthor/use/person Name/s	9
2T-Violation Attendance Proce	646
2U-Behavior Oth/inapp/sch/bus	1179
2V-Contraband	61
2X-Threat	138
2Y-Harrassment - 1st Offense	48
2Z-False/Misleading Informati	144
Sub Total	16670

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents
3A-Alcohol	22
3B-Criminal Street Gang Activ	32
3D-Contraband Possession	9
3E-Disorderly Conduct	107
3F-Drugs - Illegal	31
3FF-Drugs Otc/prescription	9
3G-Extortion Threats/intim/bu	30
3H-Fighting/inj/weap/not Mutu	115
3J-Gross Insubordination/open	192
3K-Other Serious Misconduct	52
3L-Repeat Misconduct/more Ser	39
3M-Sexual Harrassment	13
3N-Sexual Offense/indecen Ex	23
3P-Trespassing	2
3S-Weapons	51
3T-Bullying - Repeated	12
3U-Inhalant/inhaling/huffing	4
3V-Harrassment - Repeated	6
3W-Force/violence Agn/board E	8
3X-Intent/damage Sch/prp 200-	5
3Y-False Fire Alarms	7
3Z-Arson	1
Sub Total	770

Type of Incident	Number of Incidents
4B-Bomb Threat/explosions	2
4E-Drugs Illegal	16
4EE-Drugs Otc/prescription	8
4H-Felony Charge	11
4I-Fighting Inj/weap/not Mutu	5
4J-Force/violence/agst/employ	18
4M-Repeat/miscond/serious/nat	2
4N-Serious Campus Disruption	4
4P-Sexual Offenses	6
4R-Weapons	16
4T-Criminal Street Gang Act	5
Sub Total	93
TOTAL INCIDENTS (2009-2010)	23349

Source: Marion County TERMS Database, MCPS, 2009-10.

Faculty Satisfaction Survey

A survey of faculty/staff was conducted to gauge what other school staff thought of the effectiveness of the mentor program (Appendix 5). 71 faculty members participated in the survey. Since mentors from Liberty and North Marion Middle Schools had left earlier than anticipated, faculty from these two schools did not take the survey. Faculty from Fort King Middle School did not respond to the survey on

invitation for participation. The majority responses are a reflection of perception of faculty from Dunnellon (29.6%), Fort McCoy (26.8%) and (35.2%) Howard Middle Schools.

Three quarters of the faculty (75.8%) agreed or strongly agreed that the mentor made a positive impact on mentored students' academic performance. 81.5% of faculty agreed or strongly agreed that the mentor helped to make a positive difference in the behavior of mentored students. Overall, 84.3% of the faculty agreed or strongly agreed that the mentor was a valuable member of the school staff. Results from the survey are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Responses to Faculty Satisfaction Survey

Survey Question	Response Percent				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The mentor has helped make a positive difference in the academic performance of the students with whom he/she is working.	32.9%	42.9%	15.7%	5.7%	2.9%
The mentor has helped make a positive difference in the behavior of the students with whom he/she is working.	32.9%	48.6 %	10 %	4.3 %	4.3 %
The mentor is a valuable member of our staff.	48.6%	35.7 %	8.6 %	5.7 %	1.4 %

Source: Faculty Satisfaction Survey 2009-10.

The program objective 5.3 stated that by June 2009, the percentage of all respondents that stated they "Agree/Strongly Agree" will increase by 5 percent for each of the three questions regarding faculty/staff satisfaction. During 2008-09 faculty surveys, 84.4% had indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the mentor helps make a positive difference with the academic performance of mentored students. Thus the satisfaction declined by 8.6%. During 2008-09, a total of 91% faculty had expressed strong agreement or agreed that the mentor helped to make a positive difference in the behavior of mentored students. This also decreased by nearly 10% in 2009-10. While a total of 93.4 percent had agreed or strongly agreed in 2008-09 that the mentor is a valuable member of the school staff, this also decreased by 9% in the 2009-10 school year.

Overall, there was a slight decrease (8.6 % to 10%) in the satisfaction of faculty for the year 2009-10.

When faculty were asked to identify ways in which the mentor program could be improved, they generally thought that the mentor program was very helpful and had helped prevent behavioral problems and academic issues before the problems became worse:

"Keep one on every middle and high school campus because they have and can stop alot of things from happening before it gets out of hand. "

Some teachers indicated that the teachers are not amenable to the completely flexible hours of the mentor as it disrupted regular class attendance for the pupil. A suggestion was made as follows:

"It would help if student's time with the mentor was more structured. It is difficult for teachers to let students out of class whenever they want to see the mentor as some students take advantage of the system when they really just want to get out of class. Sometimes students are taken out of academic classes to resolve issues to the detriment of their academic performances. There needs to be a more structured plan put into place so that these things do not happen! Teachers are paid on the basis of students' performance on the FCAT and when they have to let students go to the mentor, some may not like it for this reason."

Limited financial resources of the schools had resulted in some mentors being utilized as substitute teachers, on cafeteria and other discipline duties or had forced the schools to end mentors' terms

sooner than previous years. In 2008-09 surveys, faculty had emphasized that while the role of discipline office was reactive, a mentor 's role was proactive. This was also echoed in 2009-10. Some of the comments in that light are presented below:

"It would be helpful if the mentor was made more available to the student body and teachers instead of handling other tasks like subbing."

"Many times there are greater volumes of students to work with and more complicated issues to deal with by just one mentor. Additional help by another mentor would be ideal on an as needed basis."

"Mentors should have a permanent placement. Being consistent with the same mentor and not changing every school year helps students and staff with continuity."

"Be more involved with the students, not just on disciplinary issues. It would be nice to see mentor more often in class so that the students would be able to know her better. Maybe not physically, maybe even more appearances on school's news network might help students to be more receptive to her."

Student focus groups

The SDFS mentor program serves eight middle schools in Marion County. The program was developed as a comprehensive plan to reduce the risk factors contributing to higher occurrences of student involvement with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs (ATOD) as well as violent behaviors in schools. As part of the qualitative component of the evaluation process and in alignment with the program objective, four focus groups were conducted with students that had utilized the mentor program to determine their perspectives on the SDFS mentor program. The focus groups were conducted between April and May 2009 and had between eight and fourteen participants (Table 8).

Table 8: Focus Group Participants 2009-10

School	Number of participants in focus group
Dunnellon Middle School	11
Fort King Middle School	9
Fort McCoy (K-8) School	10
Belleview Middle School	9

Source: WellFlorida Council, 2009-10.

Methodology: Students who utilized the SDFS mentor program were asked to participate in focus groups to determine their perceptions, attitudes, and recommendations regarding this program. To determine the composition of the focus groups, four of the eight middle schools that participate in the SDFS mentor program were randomly selected from the SDFS mentor program database. Mentors were asked to randomly select students from each of the middle schools. In order to account for absences and scheduling conflicts, 14 students were chosen from the selected middle schools and each focus group consisted of no fewer than 8 students. In addition, parental consent forms (Appendix 6) were distributed to the selected students and any students without consent of parents were excluded.

Each focus group was held in classrooms of the selected middle schools in Marion County. The students were of varying ages and enrolled from sixth to eighth grades. Participants were advised that WellFlorida Council and the SDFS mentor program would maintain their confidentiality, and were asked to respect one another's confidentiality once the session ended.

The process used for conducting focus groups is fairly informal. The strength of this qualitative technique is flexibility; it is ideal for generating new ideas for investigation on an issue. Focus group

members were encouraged to initiate discussion about concerns, preferences, and other issues that were not necessarily introduced by the facilitator or others in the group, but that they felt were relevant to the discussion. The questions (Appendix 7) that were developed focused on perceptions of the SDFS mentor program; communication with others about the SDFS mentor program; personal experiences and involvement with the SDFS mentor program; and recommendations regarding the SDFS mentor program.

Focus Group Findings: The comments of focus group participants in the following summaries reiterate the sentiments of either a single group member or the group as a whole and include direct quotes that reflect those viewpoints. This section merely summarizes comments made by the participants and have not been validated for their authenticity.

Meaning of the mentor program

Participants were asked what comes to mind when they hear the word “mentor.” A vast majority of the participants indicated that a mentor was someone who “gives you advice”, “helps”, “talks to you and hears you out”. Students said mentors helped with solving problems in academics, family crises and peer relationships. Unlike guidance counselors, who were often referred by their designation of a “guidance counselor”, students didn’t refer to the mentor as a “mentor” and preferred to call them by their last names. Students also commented that even though they had a guidance counselor at school, the mentors were more accessible compared to the counselors and they didn’t have to schedule any appointments to be seen by a mentor. In general students agreed that mentor meant a trustworthy person

“He is more like a friend you know... you can trust him, he won’t judge you and he will keep it between you two.”

Most students were not aware of a mentor position at their school in the beginning of school year. Students were introduced to the mentor by other teachers, discipline office, Physical Education coach, or the mentor himself.

Perceptions of program beneficiaries participating in the focus group

To gauge the perception of students who have benefitted from the program they were asked what they would tell a friend about the mentor program. Students responded

“If you are in trouble, go see Ms. XYZ. She calms you down. She has that voice which helps you. She doesn’t judge you.”

When students were asked how they would describe the mentor program to their parents, a student replied

“I have someone at school that I can talk to or tell anything I want.”

School teachers’, friends’ and family’s perceptions about the mentor program

Focus group participants were asked what their friends, family and teachers say about the mentor program. Substantial number of focus group participants indicated that their teachers had referred them to the mentor from time to time but some teachers don’t let the students meet with a mentor during class hours:

“Teachers are aware of the mentor, they will let you go and see her most times too.. but some teachers you know? They think anything besides their class and study is crap. They make you finish the work before you can see Mr. XYZ. Sometimes, you have had a tough day and you want to talk to the mentor and they won’t let you.”

Majority indicated that they sought out the SDFS mentor or were referred by teachers, guidance counselors or principals. Most of participants indicated that their families had no prior knowledge of the mentor program at the school but once told liked having it available for their wards. The participants' friends' were unsure of the mentor program as they feared that the mentor will discuss their personal issues with other teachers:

"A lot of my friends ask me about the visit when I come back from talking to him, because I think they want to know if they can share a secret, can trust him, can talk to him, can he help with personal problems."

Students also indicated that since mentors have started being substitute teachers, their dual role has created some bias in students' minds.

"Sometimes when she is substituting she yells, and they think that's how she is as a mentor."

Students also indicated that going to see the mentor was sometimes perceived as a sign of weakness or a sign of snitching on other students:

"If I go and see the mentor, I don't like to tell others that I did. And a lot of people feel the same. It's because if you are being bullied and you go see him, others call you "tattletale" and no one wants that."

Reasons for seeking the mentor program

When asked about some of the reasons for which students went to a mentor, students indicated that the mentors didn't judge their behaviors and understood them. Students understood that sometimes, mentors had to report certain issues to the authorities:

"She usually keeps things to herself you know... unless there is something that endangers others. That's the rule."

Participants saw their mentor when they had problems at home or in their personal lives—

"My sister was accused of doing a few things in the school and I couldn't focus and sit in my class. So the mentor called my sister. Then, I and my sister just talked it out. It turned out that it was just rumors. A lot of people start rumors to just make you mad. I thought that it was a rumor too, but she (mentor) helped me validate it."

"He (mentor) helped me a lot with family issues, because my mom and my step-dad got divorced and my step-dad was like... really... mean to me... and I used to try to tell my mom about it but I couldn't. So I would tell the mentor and he showed me ways to not avoid the situation and ways to tell my mom. She wouldn't believe me first and then she saw the true side of my step-dad. It was tough."

Students indicated that having the same mentor at the school over several years has helped in establishing a mutually trusting relationship, where the mentor is sensitive to students needs and seeks them out on observing any sudden changes in behaviors:

"He knew my brothers, because they were at this school and had a lot of anger issues. He knew that as my reputation, so he came to me and said- I know your brothers have anger issues. If you would like to talk to me I am here-and it helped a lot for me too. Because my brothers had a problem with their mother and I had problems with my father and I am much calmer now."

"Everybody knows that I am a fun, energetic person, lovable, great to be around and have a great personality and so when she (mentor) sees that I am mad or upset about something, she usually knows it because sometimes I don't know my feelings and I keep it bottled up inside. She is standing

by the bus and sees you as you enter the school or in the hallway...she knows me over the years now..."

Perceived benefits of the mentor program

Across the different focus groups, a majority of participants indicated that the mentor program is instrumental in alleviating stress among students and is critical to controlling violence in their schools. Students shared personal stories on how the mentor had individually helped them and their friends. A student involved in one such fight shared this story:

"There would be so many more fights if she (mentor) was not here. We had a lot going on last year. There was this fight of Puerto Rican guys and Black guys. People hang out in ethnic groups—white kids, black kids, Hispanics. In the morning when school starts they hang out in circles in their own places. The Puerto Ricans have a lot of weapons and then other groups were talking about jumping each other after school. It was getting out of hand because they took it outside the school. So she took us to this big conference room with us on one side and them on the other side. We talked—like real wild mad at each other at first—and then we heard each other out and we are much friendlier now. It starts with an argument and then she says calm down, calm down. She helps diffuse the tension."

Mentors and Alcohol, smoking/drugs and bullying issues

Most students had not discussed alcohol and smoking with the mentors. Students seemed reluctant to admit their personal drug/alcohol/bullying issues. Students however indicated their knowledge of smoking and alcohol use on school campus by other students.

I hear a lot about drug incidents but not a lot about alcohol. People bring it to school and use it in the bathrooms and stuff.

4/20 (April 20th) is national pot smoke out day. Everyone was either home for smoking pot or came to school but smoked pot on going home, some even smoked pot before coming to school that day.

Similar to previous years, students in 2009-10 focus groups disagreed on when to report alcohol use or smoking on school campus directly to the mentor. Students believed that the mentors will have to report the student using drug/alcohol to discipline authorities. Some students also feared the consequences of reporting someone.

"I will probably tell someone about it because what if that kid talks others into it."

"A girl offered me some alcohol on the bus once, it was in her water bottle, but even though I talk to the mentor for all my personal issues I didn't know how to report it and I didn't want to be called a snitch. "

"If someone finds out that you snitched then a whole bunch of people bite you, it's a done deal then! People don't like snitches. Ms. XYZ (mentor) keeps your name to herself though. But not all students know that!"

Bullying over the internet and text messaging was identified as a new form of bullying during 2009-10. Students noted that both physical and verbal bullying were common and they felt comfortable in reporting an incident. Students acknowledged that mentors maintain confidentiality when addressing it.

"It happens a lot over MySpace a lot... people post anonymously some nasty things. Especially rumors about the girlfriend-boyfriend stuff."

Suggested improvements

Participants were asked what is frustrating at their schools regarding the SDFS mentor program and what advice they could provide to improve the mentor program at their schools. The students were generally satisfied with the program. Students expressed dissatisfaction over using the mentors in additional school duties such as patrolling or substitute teaching as it reduced their availability.

They have him substituting at times or escorting or patrolling students and then he is not available for mentoring. He shouldn't be asked to do anything else, he should be free. He is running all the time and not in one spot, you know? It is difficult to see guidance counselors anyway; there is a huge waiting list. Sometimes you want to see the mentor right away and he is not there."

The students also echoed the same sentiments as 2008-09 year regarding location of the mentor's office and its association with discipline office—

I would like to have the mentor in her own room, instead of the discipline office where people are around.

Finally, students suggested that their mentor interaction should be kept discreet.

I don't want to be embarrassed by the mentor—he/she shouldn't say that I go see him in front of anyone. Because others have opinions about your situation and they judge you for asking for help. Sometimes they announce over the microphone that so and so student is being called by the mentor. They shouldn't do that.

Recommendations

2009-10 is the last year for the Safe and Drug-free Schools Program Grant in Marion County. The data presented thus far in this report suggests that MCPS is making steady progress towards increasing the opportunities for available for students to interact with an adult for guidance by facilitating the availability of school mentors in eight of its middle schools. While the improvements are steady, because the county has high ATOD risk behavior prevalence rates, continued intervention will be key to sustain the momentum gained through the SDFS program grant. Thus the impact of the end of the SDFS grant remains to be seen. Based on the program outcomes and evaluation results, following recommendations are suggested:

Recommendation 1

MCPS and its Safe and Drug-free Schools program have made significant strides. However, different schools implement the mentor program in different ways. It would be helpful if schools have a forum where they can receive feedback on practices implemented at each school. This will also help MCPS to document best practices for the district and share learned lessons with schools and in turn will conserve resources by replicating successful program components and doing away with others.

Recommendation 2

Overall evaluation efforts should not just focus on discipline data as an outcome measure but also on documenting some of the other risk and protective factors identified by FYSAS. Since mentored students are showing a steady decrease in the repeat incidents, all the students with disciplinary incidents should get an opportunity to meet the mentor.

Recommendation 3

Marion County schools have established an excellent foundation of trust and have built the capacity of its system by funding mentors in schools for several years. Mentors should make at least one presentation about the impact of the last years' mentor program and illustrate the mentors' roles and responsibilities. The presentation will allow for increased exposure of the mentors and the mentor program and will provide faculty/staff with an increased understanding of the benefits of the mentor program. Guidelines for referral may be discussed to optimize the utilization of mentors in a way that does not interfere with academic class activities of the students.

Recommendation 4

As indicated by the focus groups, mentor program is a valuable addition to the schools' support system and widely welcomed by the benefiting students. This success should help the district in securing additional funding to sustain these effective programs. To increase accessibility of the mentor, mentor's office should not be shared with others. The hours and program should be advertised on the door. The limited funding in schools has resulted in mentors being given additional responsibilities (substituting, patrolling, etc.). The schools should be cognizant that this does not interfere with the mentor's primary role.

Recommendation 5

The schools differed widely on their discipline referral rates and the nature of discipline incidents. Schools should be tiered according to their discipline/incident rates and other risk behaviors as

identified in FYSAS. Targeted interventions addressing schools with higher rates will enhance benefits and outcomes in these schools.

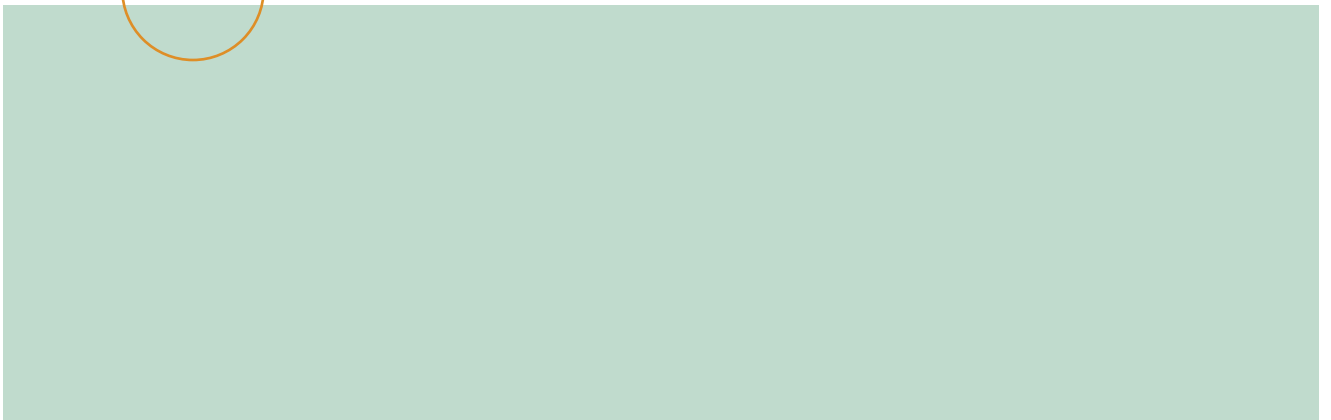
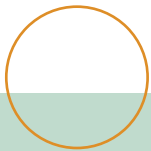
Recommendation 6

To increase parental awareness of SDFS mentor program—a brochure/informative sheet can be sent to incoming 6th grade students or a phone call can be made before the start of the school year. Increase students' active involvement in the program. Offer students a sign-up sheet at the beginning of the year to help with the marketing of the program. Students have suggested a peer-mentor involvement. Invite young guest speakers (eg. sports figures, successful alumni) who can relate with the students.

Recommendation 7

Needs assessments were conducted during the 1996-97 school years and more recently during the 1999-2000 school years. It is highly recommended that Marion County undertake a school district-wide "needs and resource assessment". A comprehensive assessment will provide the district with a competitive edge in applying to grant opportunities by helping to demonstrate the basis for their plan when they request participation or financial assistance from government agencies, corporations, foundations or other potential supporters. A resource assessment will enable MCPS to pool community resources. It can also serve as a tool for reenergizing the school system by providing them with measurable milestones for success. Raising awareness by disseminating assessment results will also help to bring the priority issues to the community and media attention, thereby garnering local support.

Appendix



Appendix 1: Individual Mentor Contact Log

NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL

STUDENT'S FIRST NAME

STUDENT'S LAST NAME

STUDENT ID

DATE OF CONTACT

(mm/dd/yyyy)

CONTACT CODE:

What is the PRIMARY reason for meeting with the student?

- Academic Issues
- Tobacco and Other Drugs
- Attendance Issues
- Bullying
- Classroom/Learning Environment Disruption
- Family Issues
- Fighting/Violence
- Non-Violent Peer Conflict Issues
- Planning for the Future
- Relationship Issues
- Alcohol

The CONTACT CODE logged for each contact should reflect the MAIN reason for the mentor contact. Do not include multiple codes. Record only one code in the CONTACT CODE on the mentor log.

REFERRAL CODES:

Who referred the student to the mentor?

- Self Referral
- Teacher
- Principal
- Vice/Assistant Principal
- Guidance Counselor
- Family/Peer
- School Resource Officer/Discipline
- Mentor Referral
- Other
- DJJ Referral (ONLY FOR HOWARD MIDDLE SCHOOL)

The REFERRAL CODES logged for each contact should reflect the MAIN source of the referral. (Check all that apply).

NUMBER OF SUSPENSIONS

(# of times suspended this year if known) _____

GENDER OF STUDENT

- Male
- Female

AGE OF STUDENT

- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17

RACE OF STUDENT

- White
- Black
- Hispanic
- Asian
- Other/Multiple

Involvement Code (Check all that apply): Please tell us if any of these people were involved in this session with the student.

- Teacher
- Parent
- Law Enforcement
- Other (Please Specify) _____

Appendix 2: Reasons for Mentor Contact by School, 2009-10

Contact Reason	Bellevue Middle		Dunnellon Middle		Ft. King Middle		Ft. McCoy (K-8)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Academic Issues	27	31.0	7	1.3	3	0.3	25	11.2
Alcohol	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Attendance Issues	0	-	1	0.2	20	1.8	0	-
Bullying	6	6.9	4	0.7	18	1.6	21	9.4
Classroom/Learning Environment Disruption	16	18.4	87	16.0	123	10.8	26	11.6
Family Issues	12	13.8	4	0.7	26	2.3	33	14.7
Fighting/Violence	0	-	43	7.9	20	1.8	16	7.1
Peer Conflict Issues	17	19.5	66	12.1	765	67.3	37	16.5
Planning for the Future	8	9.2	316	58.0	145	12.8	24	10.7
Relationship Issues	1	1.1	16	2.9	15	1.3	39	17.4
Tobacco and Other Drugs	0	-	1	0.2	1	0.1	3	1.3
Total	87	100	545	100	1,136	100	224	100

Contact Reason	Howard Middle		Lake Weir Middle		Liberty Middle		North Marion Middle	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Academic Issues	7	7.4	0	-	16	4.9	2	1.4
Alcohol	0	-	0	-	0	-	0	-
Attendance Issues	2	2.1	0	-	3	0.9	0	-
Bullying	2	2.1	5	0.9	2	0.6	15	10.1
Classroom/Learning Environment Disruption	6	6.3	80	14.6	16	4.9	60	40.5
Family Issues	3	3.2	28	5.1	24	7.4	0	-
Fighting/Violence	1	1.1	7	1.3	3	0.9	3	2.0
Peer Conflict Issues	67	70.5	260	47.5	104	32.1	67	45.3
Planning for the Future	7	7.4	158	28.9	146	45.1	1	0.7
Relationship Issues	0	-	9	1.6	5	1.5	0	-
Tobacco and Other Drugs	0	-	0	-	5	1.5	0	-
Total	95	100	547	100	324	100	148	100

Source: Mentor Contact Logs, 2009-2010.

Appendix 3: Mentored Student Survey

Dear student, please complete and submit this survey. Mark an appropriate choice with a ✓ mark. Do NOT write your name on this sheet. Your honest responses will help us improve the Safe and Drug Free Program at your school.

1. The mentor at my school has helped me to do better with my schoolwork and grades.

True False Not Sure

2. The mentor at my school has helped me get along with my teachers and classmates.

True False Not Sure

3. The mentor at my school has been helpful to me.

True False Not Sure

4. I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use?

True False Not Sure

5. The mentor at my school has spoke to me about alcohol use?

True False Not Sure

6. The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use?

True False Not Sure

7. The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol?

True False Not Sure

Thank you for your help!

END OF SURVEY

Appendix 4: SPSS Crosstab Results for Mentored Student Perceptions about Alcohol

Crosstab

			The mentor at my school has spoken to me about alcohol use.			Total
			False	True	Not Sure	
I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	False	Count	122	30	18	170
		Expected Count	89.7	43.9	36.4	170.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	71.8%	17.6%	10.6%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school has spoken to me about alcohol use.	36.6%	18.4%	13.3%	26.9%
	True	Count	120	99	41	260
		Expected Count	137.2	67.2	55.6	260.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	46.2%	38.1%	15.8%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school has spoken to me about alcohol use.	36.0%	60.7%	30.4%	41.2%
	Not Sure	Count	91	34	76	201
		Expected Count	106.1	51.9	43.0	201.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	45.3%	16.9%	37.8%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school has spoken to me about alcohol use.	27.3%	20.9%	56.3%	31.9%
Total	Count	333	163	135	631	
	Expected Count	333.0	163.0	135.0	631.0	
	% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	52.8%	25.8%	21.4%	100.0%	
	% within The mentor at my school has spoken to me about alcohol use.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
		% of Total	52.8%	25.8%	21.4%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	80.050 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	76.327	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	631		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 36.37.

Crosstab

			The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use.			Total
			False	True	Not Sure	
I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	False	Count	145	8	17	170
		Expected Count	89.4	35.8	44.7	170.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	85.3%	4.7%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use.	43.7%	6.0%	10.2%	26.9%
	True	Count	96	106	58	260
		Expected Count	136.8	54.8	68.4	260.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	36.9%	40.8%	22.3%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use.	28.9%	79.7%	34.9%	41.2%
	Not Sure	Count	91	19	91	201
		Expected Count	105.8	42.4	52.9	201.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	45.3%	9.5%	45.3%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use.	27.4%	14.3%	54.8%	31.9%
Total	Count	332	133	166	631	
	Expected Count	332.0	133.0	166.0	631.0	
	% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	52.6%	21.1%	26.3%	100.0%	
	% within The mentor at my school has been helpful to me for issues involving alcohol use.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
		% of Total	52.6%	21.1%	26.3%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	177.318 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	176.933	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	631		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 35.83.

Crosstab

			The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol.			Total
			False	True	Not Sure	
I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	False	Count	112	35	23	170
		Expected Count	60.6	64.4	45.0	170.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	65.9%	20.6%	13.5%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol.	49.8%	14.6%	13.8%	26.9%
		% of Total	17.7%	5.5%	3.6%	26.9%
	True	Count	55	161	44	260
		Expected Count	92.7	98.5	68.8	260.0
		% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	21.2%	61.9%	16.9%	100.0%
		% within The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol.	24.4%	67.4%	26.3%	41.2%
		% of Total	8.7%	25.5%	7.0%	41.2%
	Not Sure	Count	58	43	100	201
		Expected Count	71.7	76.1	53.2	201.0
% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.		28.9%	21.4%	49.8%	100.0%	
% within The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol.		25.8%	18.0%	59.9%	31.9%	
	% of Total	9.2%	6.8%	15.8%	31.9%	
Total	Count	225	239	167	631	
	Expected Count	225.0	239.0	167.0	631.0	
	% within I feel comfortable going to the mentor at my school to discuss alcohol use.	35.7%	37.9%	26.5%	100.0%	
	% within The mentor at my school helps me make decisions not to drink alcohol.	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	35.7%	37.9%	26.5%	100.0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	189.901 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	178.028	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	631		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 44.99.

Appendix 5: Faculty Satisfaction Survey

Would you help us evaluate the mentor's performance at your school?

This web-based survey is part of an ongoing evaluation of the Safe and Drug Free Program (SDFS) in Marion County School District. As a faculty invested in the future of students and a colleague to the school's mentor, we would appreciate your insight on the performance of the SDFS mentor at your school. Please select the best answer to each of the five questions below.

The completion of this survey takes less than 5 minutes. All responses are anonymous. Thank you for helping us in improving the SDFS program!

1. What is the name of your school?

- Belleview Middle School
- Dunnellon Middle School
- Fort King Middle School
- Fort McCoy School (K-8)
- Howard Middle School
- Lake Weir Middle School
- Liberty Middle School
- North Marion Middle School

2. The mentor has helped make a positive difference in the academic performance of the students with whom he/she is working.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. The mentor has helped make a positive difference in the behavior of the students with whom he/she is working.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. The mentor is a valuable member of our staff.

- Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. How could the mentor program be improved? Please enter your suggestions in the box below.

Thank you for your help!
END OF SURVEY

Appendix 6: Parental consent form for focus group participants

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child has randomly been selected to participate in a focus group on Thursday April 22nd at his/her school. The focus group, which will be conducted by staff from the WellFlorida Council, will concern the mentoring program in place at your child’s school through the Safe and Drug Free School program. Questions will concern the children’s attitudes, perceptions, use, and opinions of the mentor program. If you consent to your child’s participation in the group discussion, here are some things you should know:

- Your child’s participation is completely voluntary. He/she may choose to not answer a question.
- His/her name will not be used in any reports about this discussion group.
- The discussion will be tape recorded so that when the report is written the evaluators can make sure that they understood everything that was said. All information will be identified with a number and stored in locked file cabinet. While all the information in the discussion is confidential, if cases of abuse are detected, these must however be reported to the proper authorities.
- The discussion will last approximately 60 minutes.

We appreciate your and your child’s willingness to participate in this exercise, as it is an important part of the evaluation process, essential to securing future funding.

IF YOU HAVE ANY OBJECTION TO YOUR CHILD’S PARTICIPATION, PLEASE SIGN THE BOTTOM OF THIS FORM AND RETURN IT WITH YOUR CHILD BY THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2010. IF YOU AGREE TO HIS OR HER PARTICIPATION, THEN NO ACTION IS NECESSARY.

XXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Please do NOT include my child in the focus group discussions

Child’s name: _____ Parent’s name: _____

Parent’s signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature and stamp of School Authority: _____

Thank you!

Appendix 7: Focus group questions

When you hear the word "mentor" what comes to mind?

Did you know you have a mentor program at this school? Your mentor is <Name of Mentor>

What would you tell a friend or a family member about the mentor program at school?

What are some reasons why you would go to the mentor?

What do your friends say about the mentor program? What do your teachers say? Family?

Do you think the mentor program makes a difference at your school? Why or Why Not?

How has the mentor program helped you personally? A friend?

Have you discussed alcohol use with your mentor? How comfortable are you talking about alcohol use with your mentor?

Have you ever discussed smoking or using tobacco with your mentor? How comfortable are you talking about smoking or using tobacco with your mentor?

Can you describe what a "bully" is? Have you ever discussed "bullying" with your mentor?

What is frustrating about the mentor program at your school?

What advice can you give us to improve the mentor program at your school?

Do you have any additional comments, questions, or concerns?