

2007 REPORT



Youth Impact Program Headquarters

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YOUTH IMPACT PROGRAM (YIP)—*PROGRAM HISTORY*

In 2003, president and founder of the Student Athlete Permanent Impact Foundation (SAPIF), Riki Ellison developed an academic and athletic program for T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia as a catalyst to permanently impact young, at-risk males. The program created an atmosphere that instilled an ethos of teamwork, integrity, and hard work. Activities also emphasized discipline, perseverance, and respect for self and others, all while offering fun and learning on the football field.

While the program at T. C. Williams was successful, Mr. Ellison decided to target a younger, middle-school audience in order to make a more powerful *impact*. This is a challenging group – with one foot in childhood and the other in adulthood.

Mr. Ellison returned to his alma mater, the University of Southern California (USC), where people were eager to offer help and expertise. In addition to the comfort level he had with the school staff, USC was chosen as a pilot site for the Youth Impact Program for two major reasons: 1) USC is a university with a rich tradition of football success, recently earning back-to-back National Championship titles in 2004 and 2005, and 2) USC has decades of experience developing successful, mutually-beneficial partnerships with its surrounding communities.

In November of 2005, Mr. Ellison shared his vision for the Youth Impact Program with Oscar Cobian, Executive Director of TRIO, and Tammara Anderson, Executive Director of the Joint Educational Project (JEP), two of USC's premier programs with strong institutional support and long-standing ties to the community, particularly to local schools. He described his vision of the Youth Impact Program (YIP) as one that innovatively reaches out to economically disadvantaged middle school youth, 90% of whom come from impoverished single-parent homes. The YIP would provide a month-long camp integrated with a football and academic curriculum followed by continued year-round academic support.

YOUTH IMPACT PROGRAM OUTREACH

The students who are selected to participate in the Youth Impact Program are handpicked from schools in educationally underachieving areas around Los Angeles that have previous relationships with USC. According to the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress, 74 percent of eighth graders have not reached a proficient level in reading. Twenty-six percent of those students have not reached a basic level.¹

In Los Angeles, these statistics are even more startling. Test data has shown an urgent need to improve the literacy skills of middle and high school students. For example, in

¹ Statistics drawn from the *Los Angeles Unified School District Secondary Literacy Plan*; http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/newLAUSDnet/pdf/FACTSHEET_secondaryliteracy.pdf. also, *National Association of Educational Statistics*, 1999, p. 6

Stanford 9 test data for 2000-01, 67,000 students grade six through nine scored below the 20th percentile. The 2000-01 California Standards Test shows that 80 percent of fifth to eleventh grade students in Los Angeles failed to meet or exceed proficiency levels. Furthermore, 61 percent of sixth through ninth graders taking district tests in English failed; 74 percent of students who took the same test in Spanish also failed.

Because of this, a major objective of the Youth Impact Program at USC is to combat these somber statistics. The program draws participants from low-performing middle schools in the USC area. The students served by the Youth Impact Program are in desperate need of academic, social, and often physical development. The Youth Impact Program partners with five middle schools from the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to recruit program participants: Foshay Learning Center, Edwin Markham Middle School, John Adams Middle School, Samuel Gompers Middle School, and Audubon Middle School.

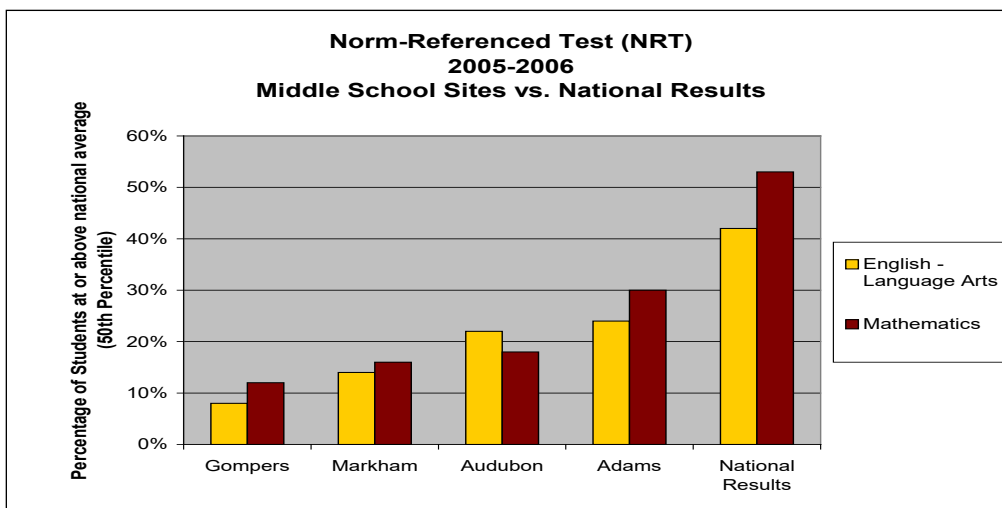
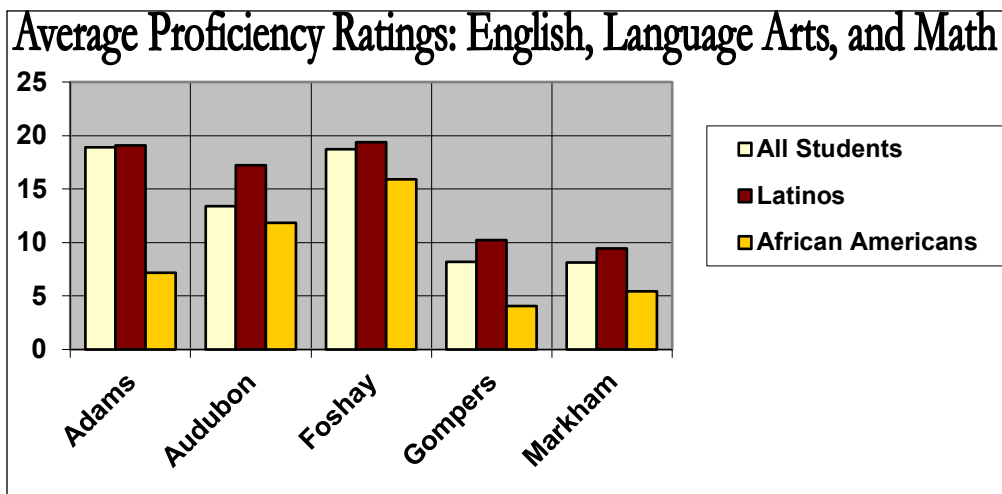
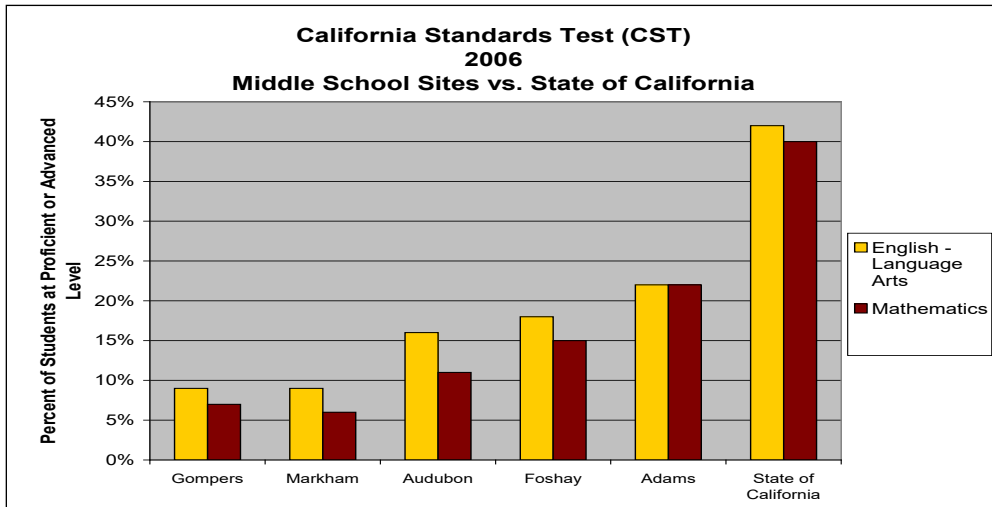
Each of these schools has an active relationship with USC's TRIO, through which they are provided with year-round academic enrichment and pre-college programs for more than 2,500 neighborhood youth. Over the course of the academic year, TRIO and YIP staff will track program participants and monitor improvement in grades, attendance, test scores, student behavior, and college awareness. Results from these analyses will then be compared to statistics from the surrounding community or used as evidence on their own.

Current statistics relevant to the population impacted by the program show the following:

- California's proficiency rate is lower than national ratings;
- LAUSD's proficiency rate is lower than the rate for California;
- The total population of all the targeted schools is 12,116 students, with 72 percent of these students being at 130 percent of the poverty level or below;
- The program participants consisted of nearly 100 students who were selected from a pool of 5,000 middle-school boys at neighborhood schools, 67 percent of whom are Latino and 32 percent African American;
- Eighty percent of all dropout students are Latino or African American;
- The math proficiency of African American students at partner schools is 5.6 percent, compared to 45 percent at the national level.

The following charts illustrate the percentage of students at each school site performing at a proficient or an advanced level on the California Standards Test in English Language Arts and Mathematics compared to the entire State of California, and their average proficiency ratings in English Language Arts and Math.²

² School Accountability Report Card. Los Angeles Unified School District, School Information Branch: Planning and Assessment and Research, 2007.



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³ Statistics from Foshay Learning Center were unavailable for this graph.

The data clearly shows that there is tremendous need for academic support at our schools. The Youth Impact Program affords students who are often “left behind” in a regular classroom setting, unique opportunities to learn in different ways through the implementation of strategies specifically built upon the research on how boys learn. Reaching out to these students by way of enriching and authentic academic activities that are relevant to young boys, helps struggling but promising students build confidence and develop an interest in learning, making them better prepared for the regular classroom setting.

The young boys who participated in the program this year were a much different group than last year. Even though we had a cohort of twelve returning participants, many of our new boys came with greater personal challenges—three of them had already been assigned parole officers due to juvenile offenses. In general, the boys were substantially smaller and not as physically strong as last year’s participants. There were three injuries this year that required calls to the paramedics and hospital visits, whereas we had none the first year.

USC RESOURCES AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

In its second year of existence, the Youth Impact Program activated additional resources from throughout the university with experience developing and implementing community programs.

The committee agreed on the following program objectives:

- To provide an opportunity for youth to learn athletic conditioning and football training skills from talented collegiate coaches and student athletes through involvement with the NFL Junior Player Development (JPD) Program;
- To engage the academic interest through football-related curriculum designed to increase positive attitudes towards learning;
- To emphasize higher education’s importance and its attainability;
- To encourage participation in sports, while stressing the importance of teamwork and non-violent conflict resolution;
- To focus on positive elements of sports, such as discipline, confidence, and commitment;
- To enable youths to apply character building lessons gained through athletics to other areas of their lives.

PROGRAM STAFF

As significant as the curriculum is to the success of the program, the staff is equally so. The Youth Impact staff was a group of incredibly committed individuals who believe in the program and in the young men that it serves.

PROGRAM MANAGER

The Program Manager oversaw all program activities on and off the field, ensured that the program ran smoothly, arranged for guest speakers, coordinated fieldtrips, and managed a host of other duties. Program Manager was supported by an Assistant Program Manager.

HEAD FOOTBALL MANAGER

The Football Manager focused primarily on the role and duties of teachers, mentors and coaches *during* football instruction, and managing participants' on-field playing time. The Head Football Manager was also one of the six classroom teachers.

CURRICULUM MANAGER

The Curriculum Manager provided the training for all academic components of the program, developed curriculum, visited YIP classrooms to observe student responses to the curriculum, supported teachers and mentors in curriculum implementation, and assessed and evaluated the academic attitudes and personal growth demonstrated by program participants.

Coaches/Teachers/Mentors

A priority for the Youth Impact Program this year was to hire Los Angeles Unified School District credentialed teachers who could also function as coaches. For the mentors hired, it was a requirement that they actively participate on the football field as well as in the classroom. This was crucial in the relationship development between the campers and the staff. This double interaction gave staff the ability to leverage their relationships as teachers when coaching and vice-versa. This greatly improved the trust the campers had in their teachers and mentors and helped maintain consistent discipline in the classroom as the campers viewed their teachers and mentors also as their coaches.

LAUSD (LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT) TEACHERS

Six certified teachers were hired for the dual roles in the classroom and on the field. The teachers were coaches under the Head Football Manager. In the classroom, the teachers were responsible for introducing academic materials and classroom management. On the field, teachers coached their team in football skill development and rules of the game. Each teacher was assisted by two college mentors, allowing a low student to adult ratio during all camp activities with three adults to no more than twenty students. This program design allowed for more individualized attention in all aspects of the program.

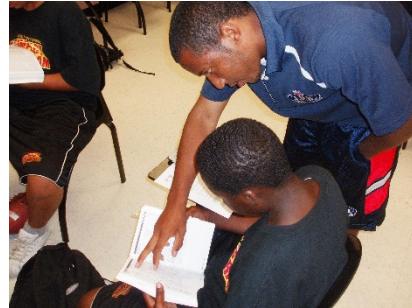
COLLEGE MENTORS

Twelve college mentors (seven from USC) assisted teachers both in the classroom and on the field. Each mentor helped facilitate classroom activities and served as assistant

coaches on the field, helping students to gain proper understanding and execution of football skills, and assisting coaches in field management.

In year two, we retained not only our Program Manager from last year, but also four of our six teachers and four of our twelve mentors. Having these ‘veterans’ return to the program, was incredibly beneficial in our efforts to pull the program together in a relatively short time frame. Additionally, the veterans also improved upon our program design and delivery. Finally, these returning teachers and mentors provided insight and support to new staff.

Teachers, mentors and coaches all receive training to prepare them for their roles with the program. The full staff—including administrators and the program’s founder—attended a pre-camp retreat to begin bonding and to set the tone for the month-long camp. This year, the National Football Association (NFL) assisted with our pre-camp training. Jerry Horowitz, Junior Player Development (JPD) National Coordinator, provided a three-hour initial JPD training to go over the essential football skills and lessons. This session was not only instructional, but it also added a feeling of partnership between the NFL and YIP. A second all-day training retreat took place the week before camp. This retreat focused specifically on the academic curriculum, and the instructional strategies and materials that would be used to engage students in enriching language arts and mathematics lessons.



FOOTBALL

The Youth Impact Program’s football component of the camp implemented the NFL Junior Player Development (JPD) Program. Before the commencement of the summer camp, all Youth Impact staff attended a JPD orientation training by Jerry Horowitz, Head of the NFL Junior Player Development Program. Additionally, camp mentors underwent another training session on football technique and theory by the Youth Impact Program Manager and Curriculum Coordinator. Technique, on-field drills, and coaching philosophies were based on the guidelines set forth by the NFL JPD Curriculum.

Contact

Like the JPD curriculum, the Youth Impact Program began the camp with very limited physical contact, and progressively increased the amount as the campers were coached in *proper* tackling and blocking technique. Many of the campers had either never played

football before or had limited amounts of proper coaching, therefore it was critical that the staff teach everyone proper technique to ensure player safety and decrease the risk of serious injuries.

The rationale for beginning with minimal physical contact with gradual increases was to help the campers build courage and grow past their initial fears of contact football. Our goal was for these boys to begin to associate football and physical activity as sources of courage.

Football Fundamentals and Team Play

The Youth Impact Program had two phases: 1) Football Fundamentals and 2) Team 11-on-11. The Fundamentals section of the camp kept the campers strictly separated into 3 weight classes, separated into 6 teams, which focused on the discrete aspects of football. After the campers had a firm understanding of fundamental techniques and were oriented to the physical nature of football, we held a combine where campers were tested on several events and their results were recorded. The results were given to the coaches and a silent player draft was held between the coaches. The coaches drafted players for the teams that they would coach during the Team 11-on-11 portion of the camp.

Football Fundamentals

During the Fundamentals portion, on-field time was focused on teaching fundamental, individual techniques including proper stances, running and ball carrying, catching, throwing, stalk blocking, drive blocking, pass protection, player defense, delivering and receiving handoffs, direct snaps, shotgun snaps, and tackling.

Campers in the Youth Impact Programs were divided into three separate weight categories: Under 100 lbs., 100 – 139lbs., and 140+ lbs. Further adjustments were made based on individual height, ability, and physical maturity. Within each weight category were two equal, color-coded teams. We implemented this organizational system for the fundamental stage of the program because we wanted to create a sense of equality between campers. We wanted them to learn the critical football fundamentals on what they perceived as a “level playing field.” Our theory was if these boys learned and trained with other boys who they saw were physically similar, they would strive and compete to be the best in the group. We minimized their ability to attribute their differences in skill to differences in physical attributes. This helped reinforce the idea that the best players are the ones that pay attention, learn, and have the will, determination, and hunger to be the best.

The second half of each daily on-field session was allocated for 8-on-8 team scrimmages. Players were encouraged to incorporate newly learned skills into game situations. Players were rotated through *all* of the positions on the team. We wanted the players to have a first-hand understanding of all positions, even those at which they may not normally play.

The Combine and Player Draft

After the Fundamentals section of the camp, an all-camp combine was held. Campers were tested on their 20-yard dash, 40-yard dash, speed shuttle, standing leap, pushups and catching ability. They received their results individually at each station before it was

recorded by a staff member. Additionally, campers were given the combine results of some of their favorite professional and college players to give them a comparison and a goal to aim towards.

The player draft was held exclusively between coaches and staff. So as not to discourage weaker players, Youth Impact Program staff decided not to let the campers know the order in which they were selected. Campers of all sizes were drafted into one of four 11-on-11 teams. They would remain in their new teams for the football sessions for the remainder of the program.

Team 11-on-11

While the Fundamentals section of the camp focused on teaching individual roles and techniques, the Team section focused on taking those individual roles and incorporating them into a full 11-on-11 football team. The teams were divided into two divisions, under 140 lbs. and above 140 lbs. There were two teams in each category. Players no longer rotated through all of the positions and instead had an assigned role on the team based on their skill set and size. Campers were now coached on team-oriented topics including offensive plays and strategy, run blocking, pass protection, receiver routes, quarterback-linemen interaction, defensive strategy, man-to-man coverage, zone coverage, and cover 2 defense. The campers concluded the daily on-field sessions with scrimmages and a debriefing that discussed character building, teamwork, leadership, responsibility, and accountability.

The camp culminated with an full-contact, 11-on-11, full-field football game for each of the weight divisions. Friends and family were invited to be in the stands to support and cheer for their children.

Growth and Development

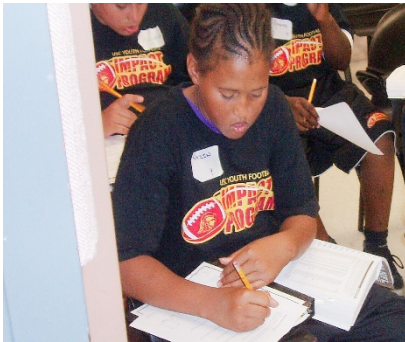
In only four weeks, campers grew both mentally and physically. They vastly expanded their knowledge and understanding of football, studying and analyzing the game as players and scholars. Many of the campers who entered the program without prior knowledge of the rules of the game, by the end, were helping to call the plays and providing leadership for their teams. Every camper exited the program knowing how to *properly* enter a three-point stance, carry and protect the football, throw, catch, block, and tackle. There were campers who entered the program unable to do one correct pushup who, by the end of camp, were easily able to complete 25 *good* pushups. The campers who struggled to run one lap around the track developed the mental and physical stamina to finish two miles wearing full pads and helmet. One camper, Sammy, lost a total of 25 pounds in the month he was in the camp and developed a love for football and a commitment to an active lifestyle.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND RESEARCH— *FOOTBALL A CATALYST FOR LEARNING*

Aware that football is the primary draw in recruiting students to join this program, the YIP staff's greatest challenge was to effectively address the academic needs of students

by creating a curriculum that would enrich, engage and have relevance for the boys⁴. The program's design is based on research on middle school-aged boys and on how they learn. The goal was to create an academic program that would not only *attract* attention, but also *keep* their attention, enabling positive participation and vital learning experiences in the academic classes. Committee members gathered for bi-weekly planning meetings beginning May 29, 2007.

Research has shown that there are many biological gender differences that influence learning. For instance, girls generally talk sooner, and typically develop stronger vocabularies, reading ability, and fine motor skills. On the other hand, boys typically develop stronger auditory memory and are stronger in three-dimensional reasoning, abstract design ability, and have a stronger interest to explore.



These key discoveries lead to the following pedagogy in regards to teaching male students:

- **Boys are aware of, and react negatively to, what they view to be irrelevant curriculum and poor teaching.**
 - **Boys engage more fully when they know that the material they are learning relates to their life outside of school.**
- **When confronted with dull subject matter or uninspiring teaching, boys are likely to respond with overt and challenging behavior. This behavior disrupts their own and others' learning.**

Curriculum development for the YIP also stems from the research and findings of Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligence. Gardener defines intelligence as "the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings."⁵ Gardner also breaks down intelligence into seven distinct types, six of which are employed in the Youth Impact Program:

- ***Linguistic*** - engaged during reading, writing, listening, and talking;
- ***Logical-Mathematical*** - includes solving logical puzzles and word problems, and performing calculations;
- ***Spatial*** - determination of one's orientation in space while moving from one location to another, which is applied to both math and football;
- ***Bodily-Kinesthetic*** - the use of one's body (or parts of it) to perform skillful and purposeful movements, applied here to football;
- ***Intrapersonal*** - to understand and have insight into one's own thoughts, actions, and emotions (self-understanding);

⁴ Much of the curriculum developed in the pilot year of the program was revised and re-used for 2007. The curriculum was developed through the collaborative efforts of Tina Koneazny (JEP Associate Director, Administration & Educational Outreach) Kim Thomas-Barrios (Neighborhood Academic Initiative), and Lauren Carter (Youth Impact Program Curriculum Manager).

⁵ Gardner & Hatch, 1989

- **Interpersonal** - to understand others and one's relations to others.

The meta-cognitive techniques used by the Youth Impact Program are keys to success in school and life:

•**Issues of Identity** - *How do I fit in at school? Do I see myself as a scholar?*

In order to help the boys understand their own strengths and the value they can bring to the classroom, YIP staff must respect and familiarize themselves with the boys' home and community.

•**Communication** - *How is what I am learning relevant? What is the purpose of learning?*

YIP staff must help boys develop answers and ways of doing things that will allow them to share their knowledge through either public exhibit or cooperative and collaborative conversations and demonstrations.

•**Interdependence** – *How does what I am learning and doing in the classroom and on the football field relate to the real world?*

Football is the theme and subject that crosses over all content areas - reading, writing and math. Football is real and relevant for adolescent boys, and weaving football-based subject matter into academics gives them a basis and real interest in learning.

In order to keep participants' attention and interest, the Youth Impact Program also utilizes structured programs with articulated steps, short lessons with achievable goals, and frequent changes of structured activity and visuals. YIP staff also provides constant and consistent encouragement to succeed by recognizing good behaviors and work.

INTEGRATED MATH AND READING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

MATERIALS

The Youth Impact Program uses integrated reading and math curriculum as a means to make learning meaningful and relevant to boys because each aspect is designed around the game of football.

Students are introduced to both fiction and non-fiction literature through the integrated curriculum. This year's texts were:

Fiction – *Crash* by Jerry Spinelli, Newberry Award medalist. This is a story about a middle school football star and his relationships with family, friends, and his world. It includes themes of sportsmanship, bullying, environmental awareness, and personal revelations about what is most important in life.

Fiction – *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli, Newberry Award medalist.

Twelve-year-old Maniac Magee, who is a homeless but also an amazing football and baseball star, tries to find his place in a racially divided town. It includes themes of respect, racism, segregation, personal growth, family, and friendship.

Non-fiction – *The National Football League’s 2005 Record and Fact Book*.

Published by the NFL, this text includes facts and statistics from the 2004 – 2005 NFL season, including game-by-game statistics, individual player stats, and record history. This text allows rich opportunities for math skill development in an authentic and meaningful context.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Reading and math activities take place within cooperative groups of four to five students, facilitated by teachers and tutors. In the groups, they engage in five distinct learning experiences:

1. *Reading aloud* – Teachers read a portion of the day’s reading to model expressive reading, to initiate interest, and to build background for students.
2. *Independent reading* – Students read the assigned section of the text independently. Struggling readers receive support from more advanced group members as well as from the teacher and mentors.
3. *Literature circles* – Students gather in their “teams” for cooperative discussion groups to process, discuss, and reflect on what has been read independently. This instructional strategy fosters vocabulary development, comprehension, and interest in reading for a shared, social purpose.
4. *Writing reading responses* – Students write reflective responses to the readings and literature discussions.
5. *Math problem solving* – Students work in cooperative groups to read and tackle word problems drawn directly from the NFL statistics.

Reginald Grant, a former NFL Player for the New York Giants and Youth Impact teacher, explains why this program design and the embedded teaching strategies work:

“This program makes an impact specifically because it ties in something they love and have passion about, which is football, and all the classroom elements are tied to football.”

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT— *DISCIPLINE, CONFIDENCE, COMMITMENT, TEAMWORK*

PEACE GAMES

Another instructional component of the Youth Impact Program is Peace Games—an organization and curriculum whose mission is to empower students to create their own safe classrooms and communities by forming partnerships with schools, families, and young adult volunteers. Peace Games supports young people as Peacemakers and is designed to help change the way our nation views young people in the context of violence.

Through a curriculum of cooperative games, students work together positively in order to accomplish a set task, reach a goal, and practice pro-social behaviors. Peace Games is a nearly daily component of the Youth Impact Program, providing our young men with many of the personal and social skills essential to helping them develop and grow into positive, contributing citizens in society who will, in turn help to create a better, brighter, and non-violent future.

One mentor discussed the impact that Peace Games had on her assigned group:

“I’ve really seen our class bond. I’m trying to get them to encourage each other more, and they are beginning to keep each other in line...I see them exhibiting more discipline overall.”

- Angela Esquivel, YIP Mentor

FIELD TRIPS

Beyond the typical week’s structure and activities, additional enrichment outings introduced the boys to experiences away from campus. The trips provided opportunities to see and do things unavailable to them within their own communities.

Hermosa Beach in Hermosa, California — USC Trams (through USC Transportation Services) brought boys to the beach after eating lunch at USC. They spent the afternoon swimming and playing in the ocean, searching for seashells, and burying one another up to their necks in the sand. When leaving the beach, a donation of 15 pizzas given from a local pizzeria in Hermosa Beach helped soothe the hunger the boys felt from all the physical activity on the sand and in the water. Many of the boys were sad when the day had finally come to an end, and begged to go back to the beach the following week.



The Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Simi Valley, California – This field trip was completely funded by the Reagan Library. This trip was new to YIP and was a first time adventure to the library for all of the students and many of the staff. A large number of the boys were reluctant to believe that they would enjoy their time at a

historical library, but after the trip many of them expressed the desire to return and to bring their parents with them.

During their visit, the boys took a guided tour through museum exhibits gaining information about President Ronald Reagan’s life and legacy. They were treated to lunch, and each boy was received both an *Air Force One* cap and a special souvenir photograph of himself taken while boarding the aircraft. It was the kind of trip that more than on boy stated that he “would always remember.”



GUEST SPEAKERS

Throughout the camp, guest speakers were brought in at least twice a week to speak to the boys about their life experiences and how academics played an important part in their lives. Guest speakers often spoke of personal obstacles endured within their professional and/or football careers and the importance of a positive attitude and belief in oneself. The guests included current and retired NFL players, football coaches, a sports writer, a nutritionist, and a sports agent. All of the guest speakers were either USC alums or staff members.



PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT—*MEASURING SUCCESS*

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The success of the Youth Impact Program is measured through the use of multiple assessments: weekly team comprehensive assessment reports, teacher action research journals, students' self-assessments ("Give and Takes"), student-athlete surveys, and teacher-mentor program evaluations.⁶



Weekly Team Assessment Reports drew comments from teachers and mentors about each student's participation and progress in their classroom. These brief, informal assessments document individual student improvements and track five characteristics: team participation, shared responsibilities, positive attitudes, reading/writing skills, and math skills.

Action Research Journals provided an effective means by which teachers and mentors share personal assessments of curriculum and program effectiveness, changes in student behavior, and recommendations for improvement. Journals were shared for review with the YIP Curriculum Manager at the end of each week. Staff discussions were produced from these journals, and program modifications and improvements were made based on comments and concerns shared through daily reflection responses.

Student Weekly Self-Assessments ["Give and Take"] prompted students to reflect upon and write about their weekly experiences with the program. This assessment tool gave YIP staff information about participants' football and physical development, and insights into the connections they were making between football and their classroom learning experiences. First, they shared in writing what they *contributed* in their participation ("give"), and then what they *learned* ("take"). See examples below:

Give: *I told one of my smaller teammates to not give up and to always give his best. I try to help all my teammates by encouraging them to play better or to continue to study hard.*

Take: *I learned how to run faster by listening to the tips given to me. I am learning discipline by keeping my shirt tucked in. I learned how to get through things without whining.*

-Lineker Gomez



⁶ See samples in Appendix

Give: I showed my friends how to do push-ups. I taught my classmates our team chant and how to do football math.

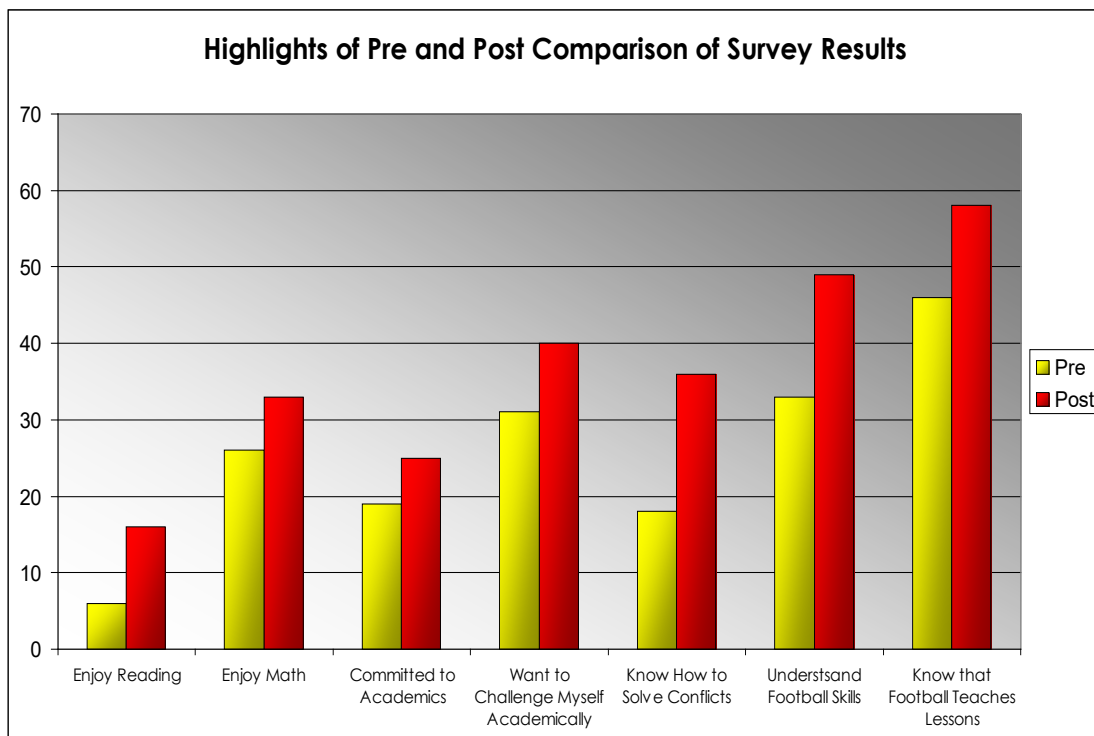
Take: I learned how to run the football correctly. I have better reading skills. I learned the 3-point stance and a quarterback stance.

-Derrius Morrow

The **Student-Athlete Survey** was designed to provide YIP staff with better measures of attitudinal changes toward academics and self-confidence as learners. Participants were asked to reflect upon and complete a self-evaluation on the first and last days of camp to measure growth. The surveys assessed topics such as self-efficacy, interest and engagement in academics, self control, and knowledge of football skills, as well as life lessons that can be gained through the discipline of football. The pre and post surveys contained the same questions to allow YIP staff to compare the data.



Results from our surveys are revealed in the graph which follows:



Teacher-Mentor Program Evaluations were conducted the last week of the program to give YIP staff an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the program. This evaluation also allowed the teachers and mentors to evaluate the administrative staff and offer any additional comments.

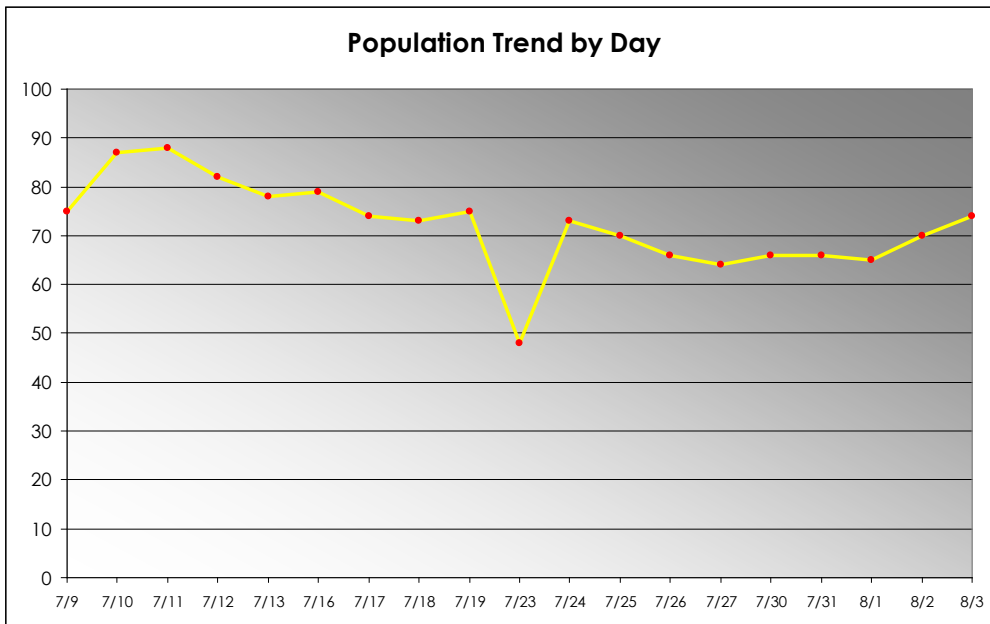
ATTENDANCE

During the length of the camp, we had an average of 73 students. The highest total of participants was 88. The lowest total attendance was 48.

Week 1 began with 75 and ended with 78. The week's average attendance was 82.
 Week 2 began with 79 and ended with 75. The week's average attendance was 75.
 Week 3 began with 48 and ended with 64. The week's average attendance was 64.
 Week 4 began with 66 and ended with 74. The week's average attendance was 68.⁷

At the end of week two of camp, home phone calls were made to determine the reasons why students dropped out of the camp. The staff discovered a variety of factors:

- Conflicts with summer school plans because of late recruitment of the program;
- Conflicts with family vacation plans;
- An initial misunderstanding of the physical nature of the program;
- Inability to obtain a physician's clearance before the given deadline.



A total of twelve students returned for a second year, having first participated as either sixth or seventh graders in last year's NFL Impact Program. These students, in particular, showed an excellent attendance record averaging only two missed days for the entire duration of the camp. Two of the returning participants received "Perfect Attendance" awards at the end of camp, while thirteen of the new participants received the same award. Eleven of the twelve returnees completed the entire program. The new participants as a group missed an average of five days for the duration of the camp.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

In program planning meetings prior to the camp, there was an underlying assumption that the main draw for these boys was the opportunity to play football and to be coached by top rated coaches from around the country. The boys all wanted to talk, walk, and look

⁷ See table which summarizes daily attendance.

like football players. The academic portion of the camp, we assumed, was just something they would have to endure in order to get to the football field everyday.

However, student self-assessments reflected surprisingly positive participant responses to all academic activities. In fact, many of the boys actually *requested* from their teachers more time with reading or more math problems. Examples of student comments follow:

My goal is to work hard in school now. At first, I thought if you do good in sports then you can go to the NFL or the pros, but after all the speakers, they said you have to get good grades and stuff to be a good athlete.

- Eduardo Guarda, YIP participant



I want to keep reading Maniac Magee and see what happens.

- James Fisher, YIP participant

When I read with my group, we talk about how [the character] Crash is kind of like us. I like to share my stories from school with everyone in Team 2.

- Isaac Washington, YIP participant

Substantial change in academic attitudes and personal growth was evident in many of our students. One student in particular struggled with following directions and staying on task. He was disruptive during class time and was easily frustrated on the football field. At the end of camp, he stated that YIP was “the best experience I’ve ever had.” He claimed that the most important thing he learned was how to follow directions. He stated, “Football and the math stuff is something I love, so I learned how to follow directions so that I could learn more.”

The Youth Impact Program was a huge success in reaching out to male students who otherwise might not demonstrate an interest in the core subjects of reading and math. Through cooperative learning opportunities, the boys developed a sense of teamwork and togetherness, building friendships and memories.

The biggest lesson I learned was teamwork. Together everyone achieves more. If one person messes up, we all mess up and we are responsible for everyone.

- Osmel Rodriguez, YIP participant

I learned not to judge another person by their color, where they are from or what they look like. They could end up being your friend.

- Rodrigo Cardos, YIP participant

TEACHER/MENTOR REACTION

Teacher and mentor reaction to the Youth Impact Program was very positive. None of the teachers or mentors had ever been involved with a camp consisting of so many

different components, yet which still allowed them flexibility in curriculum implementation. Because research shows that students learn at different paces and in different styles, our teachers were encouraged to make creative adjustments to the basic framework of the curriculum based on individual skills and student needs.

Program success is heavily correlated with teacher buy-in and enthusiasm for what and how curriculum is designed and implemented. During debriefing sessions, YIP teachers communicated their support for the Integrated Reading and Math curriculum, and the way that its implementation seemed to promote learning and enriching student discussions. See sample comments below:

The literature circles and curriculum provide the structure to help the students achieve. They are adapting to the routine and embracing the content, the novel and math. "Football Math" is awesome because it uses terminology they are familiar with and will engage in.

- Reginald Grant, YIP Head Coach/Teacher

Class went great as usual! We had a discussion on the 'isms' in society and that really got the attention of the young men. The literature circles seem to give the students an opportunity for peer instruction and to help each other.

- Morris Jones, YIP Teacher



Other activities that were included in YIP, such as field trips and guest speakers, were regarded a positive and effective ways to keep the kids excited about learning new things. Even the notion of going to college, which may not have been a serious consideration for students prior to participation in the program, became a concept that students believed just might be within their reach:

At the Reagan Library, our docent was telling the boys about how much Ronald Reagan liked Jelly Bellys. Isaac raised his hand and told the docent that coconut was President Reagan's favorite. The docent praised Isaac for being so smart, and he completely lit up with the compliment and swelled with pride.

- Kiana Brede, YIP Mentor

My goals are to get a 4.0 and to go to college. I really want to succeed in my life. I want to show that Latinos can do better things: play football, succeed, and go to college.

- Faustino Angel, YIP participant

We try and connect our experiences those that of the kids and to be a role model for them. We teach them what it is like to be a college student and also the mindset that one needs to have in order to become a college student. For example, Mr. McVay had us talk in class about the schedule of a student in college.

- Hiram Sims, YIP Mentor

The intertwining of football through academics was indeed the most important component of making the program work:

I think the greatest strength of the program has been the academics. The curriculum keeps the kids attention; it motivates them and keeps them interested in what's going on. The books were great. The kids could actually relate a lot of the situations that the books were talking about to what they're going through in their own lives. And in the math, a lot of the students are not interested in math at the schools that they go to, but to apply it to something that they are interested in, football, that keeps them really engaged and wanting to learn.

- James McVay, YIP Teacher

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Involving middle-school boys in a multifaceted four week summer camp is a great way to start participants on a positive path. However, in order to truly make a long-term and permanent impact, it is imperative that there is continued, consistent contact with the boys over the course of the school year.

Beginning this year, USC TRIO staff will begin tracking program participants during the school year (monitoring test scores, classroom grades and meeting with teachers). This is their commitment to the YIP, as well as part of their federal mandate.



Follow-up with Y.I.P. participants has been through in-person communication by visiting the different school sites, as well as through mailings to the homes of Y.I.P. participants. Since the end of summer camp, YIP staff and program participants have joined together for three follow-up events at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum: a USC inter-squad scrimmage game; USC's first game of the season against Idaho State; and the Angel City Classic Football game between Prairie View A&M and North

Carolina A&T. These events were conducted by Y.I.P. mentors and teachers. In two of the three events, transportation and food was provided.

Currently, an average of thirty-three boys has been attending YIP follow-up events. Of those thirty-three boys, eighteen are already playing football on a recreational team.

FUTURE PLANS

Immediately following the camp, teachers and mentors completed post-camp program evaluations and engaged in group debriefing sessions with the full Youth Impact staff. A

number of comments and suggestions emerged that will assist in program planning and development for year three and beyond:

Earlier program planning and student recruitment—Continuing to improve program quality each year, and reaching out to a larger number of students hinges on an earlier start-up date. As a result of late approval of program funding, (recruitment did not officially get underway until June, a month in which most schools are doing state standardized testing and preparing for the end of the school year), YIP reached only 100 students rather than 125 as originally proposed. Next year, the program will begin heavily recruiting in March before students and schools become overwhelmed with end-of-the-year activities.

Administrative personnel on staff throughout the year—A program of this depth and breadth requires consistent administrative support throughout the year. Year-round staff is essential for tracking camp participants throughout the school year, providing enrichment activities for participants, and conducting monthly workshops and/or mentoring meetings at the respective school sites.

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Summer School credit—YIP staff will meet with LAUSD officials to discuss the possibility of hours spent at our summer camp applying toward credit for students required to complete summer school. Summer school certification may be acquired in the subject areas of reading/language arts, math, or physical education. Depending on information gathered at these meetings, additional conversations will most likely be needed to discuss any curriculum changes that may be required.

Program Expansion—One of the primary goals for our 2008 summer camp and beyond is to reach more students. YIP staff will use a “phased-in” approach to reach our ultimate goal of 150 boys over the next three years. As previously mentioned, an increase in the number student participants will require additional administrative staff, teachers, and mentors so that we can maintain program quality and educational effectiveness.

Additionally, YIP at the University of Southern California intends to add a fifth week to its summer camp. Inherently, the first week of camp becomes an “orientation” week. Rules, expectations and logistics are covered, pre-test surveys are administered, football gear is distributed, and all participants in the camp—administrative staff, teachers, mentors, and boys alike—adjust to the daily routine of camp. By adding an extra week, the boys will be exposed to four solid weeks of streamlined academic instruction and football training.

CONCLUSION

The Youth Impact Program began with a seven hour a day, five day a week, four week multidimensional summer camp -- a partnership between the University of Southern California (USC) and the National Football League (NFL Junior Player Development). It offered a well-balanced program using small, cooperative learning teams, involvement of positive role models, and mentoring to address the particular academic, social and athletic needs of at-risk youth. By using credentialed teachers from the Los Angeles Unified School district, mentors from USC and other universities, coaches from the local area, and a healthy combination of enrichment classes in reading, math, life skills and football education, each participant was given the tools to develop a positive outlook on life, improved self-image, self-confidence and a set of values that will guide them in becoming contributing members of society. The program ended with kids from some of the roughest neighborhoods in South Los Angeles, coming to campus each day, anxious to see new friends, and excited to perform both in the classroom and on the playing field.



FINAL THOUGHTS

I've seen change in all of these boys. A lot of the boys have grown more in one month than many students grow in an entire school year.

- Joe Kearney, YIP Teacher

I learned how to have a strong heart and to never give up.

- Samuel Dominquez, YIP participant

I have learned about respect and how to have a positive attitude. I also learned how to be a leader, not a follower and to not put people down.

- Lincoln Wiley III, YIP participant



The greatest strength of this program is that you are providing an opportunity to a group of young people, people in our society that for the most part would never have an opportunity like this. [These kids] are what this program is all about...we have to give these kids another chance. If we kick them away, who knows what they will be doing. I think everybody here: teachers, mentors, and staff want this program to work. And when you have everyone collectively, pooling their resources for the common good, it will be successful.

- Morris Jones, YIP Teacher

APPENDIX I – USC PARTNERS

USC TRIO program - USC TRIO federally-funded programs [Upward Bound Mathematics and Science Regional Center and Educational Talent Search] provide year-round academic enrichment and pre-college programs for more than 2,500 neighborhood youth. EOPC administers the programs for low-income, first-generation, college-bound young people between the ages of 11 and 27.

The Joint Educational Project, (JEP) coordinated through USC’s College of Letters, Arts & Sciences, is one of the oldest and largest service-learning programs in the country. Since it’s founding in 1972, JEP has placed nearly 50,000 students in local schools, agencies and hospitals. Through its innovative community outreach programs, JEP provides vital educational opportunities and community outreach services to children and families in the neighborhoods surrounding USC’s two campuses. At the same time, JEP offers USC students important opportunities to learn through service.

USC Keck School of Medicine – Third year medical students (under the supervision of a physician) provide medical check ups, information and referrals prior to the summer camp.

The USC Athletic Department – Athletic Director Mike Garrett, and Head Football Coach Pete Carroll both are huge proponents of this program. Coach Pete Carroll is involved with the program first hand, speaking to the students about the process of becoming a scholar athlete.

USC Trojan Services - Our catering department provides lunch for Youth Impact participants and staff.

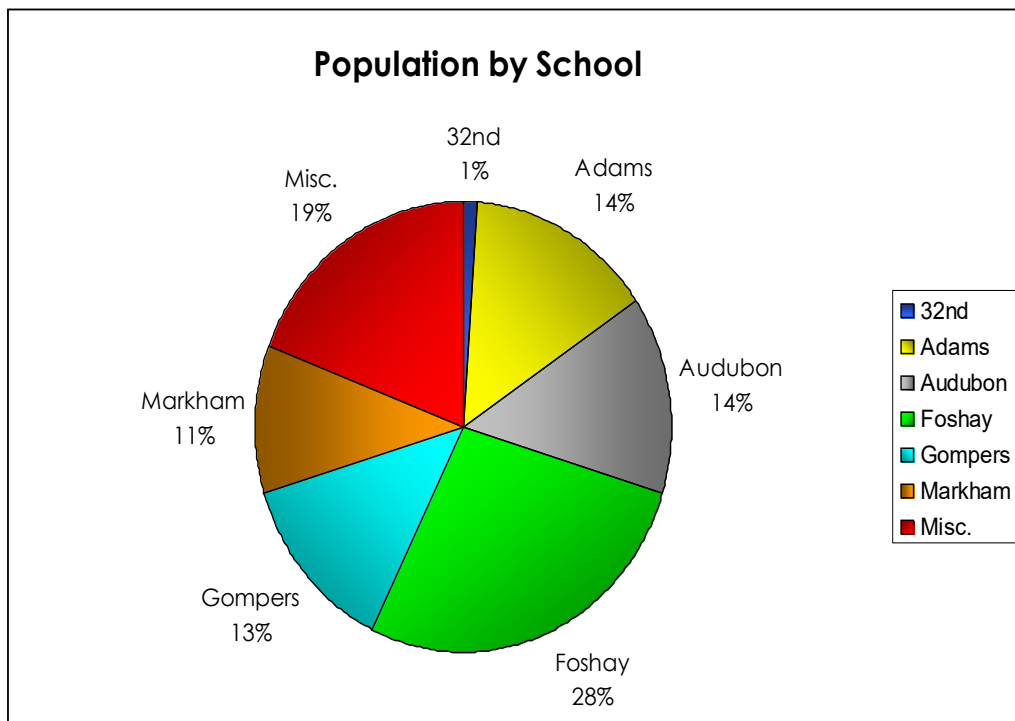
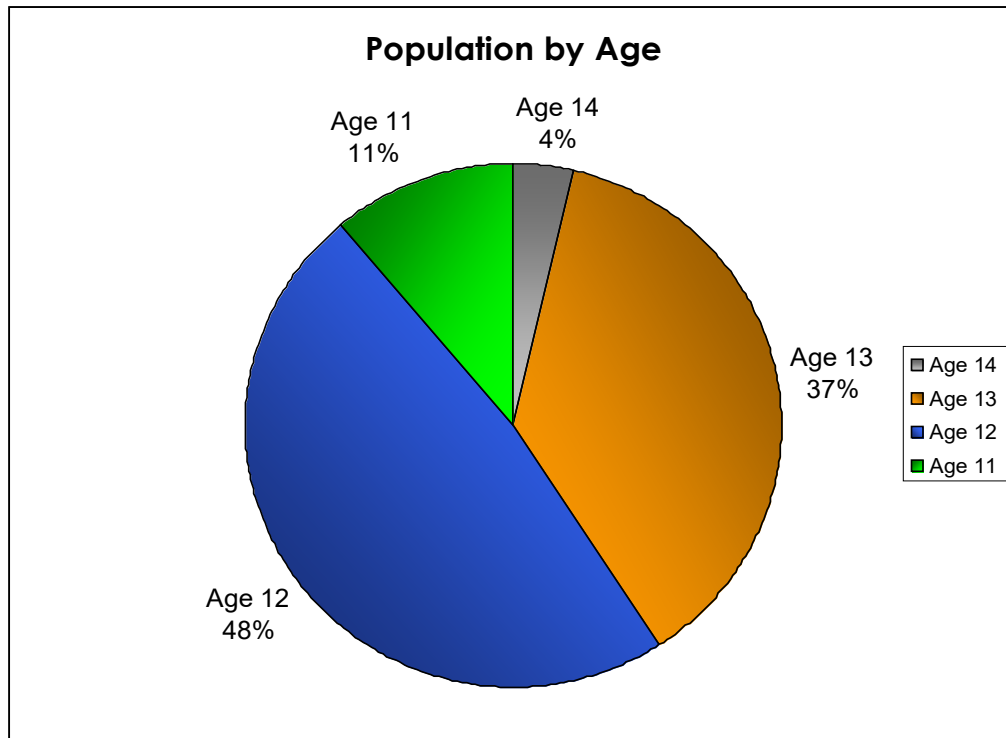
USC Transportation Services – Spacious and comfortable trams with professional drivers are used for the camp field trips, and daily pick-up and drop-off from school sites.

APPENDIX II – YIP TYPICAL WEEK

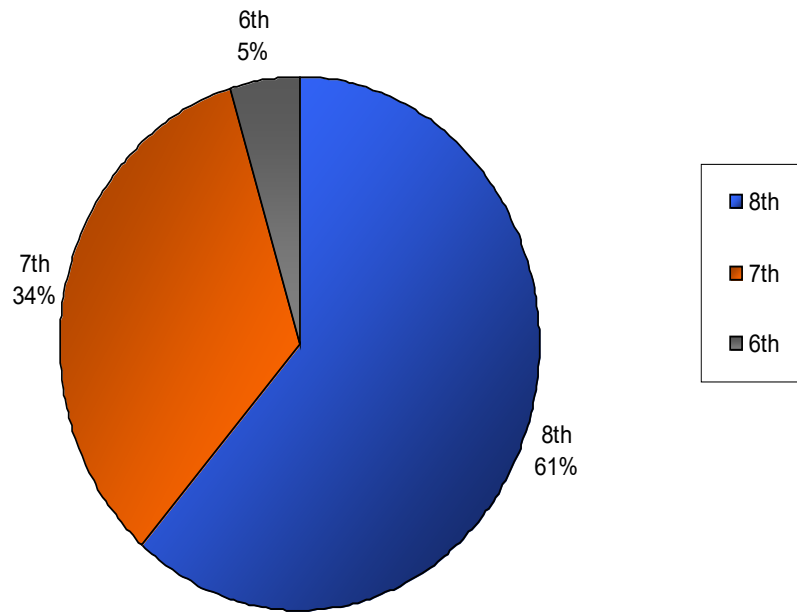
The design of a typical week follows:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:30a– 9:45a <i>Team-Building / Peace Games</i>	Team-Building / Peace Games	Team-Building / Peace Games	Team-Building / Peace Games	Team-Building / Peace Games
10:00- 11:45a <i>*** Integrated Reading and Math Instruction</i>	Math/Reading Instruction	<i>*** Integrated Reading and Math Instruction</i>	Math/Reading Instruction	Finish up weekly class assignments
11:50a – 12:35p Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45 – 1:45p Open Block: <i>Teachers are given the freedom to bring in outside sources for academic enhancement</i>	Open Block: <i>Example - Creative writing</i>	Open Block <i>Example – University tour of campus, Heritage Hall, and libraries on campus</i>	Open Block <i>Example – Poetry session</i>	Workshops: ² <i>Health / Nutrition / Sexual Education [other pertinent subjects]</i>
1:55 – 3:55p Football Training	Football Training	Football Training	Football Training	<i>No Football – Possibly Guest Speakers</i>
4:00p Wrap-up of daily camp: <i>Breakdown of gear/Reflection</i>	Wrap-up: Breakdown of gear/Reflection	Wrap-up: Breakdown of gear/Reflection	Wrap-up: Breakdown of gear/Reflection	<i>Get back to campus from fieldtrip: Reagan Library/ Hermosa Beach</i>
4:15p <i>Dismissal</i>	<i>Dismissal</i>	<i>Dismissal</i>	<i>Dismissal</i>	<i>Dismissal</i>

APPENDIX III– SUPPLEMENTAL GRAPHS



Population by Grade



APPENDIX IV–TEACHER WEEKLY ASSESSMENT



Youth Impact Program
@ the University of Southern California

Weekly Team Comprehensive Assessment Report

1 = In progress 2 = Meets Standards 3 = Exceeds Standards NA = Not Applicable

<i>Players Names</i>	Team Participation	Shared Responsibility	Positive Attitude	Reading / Writing Skills	Math Skills

Anecdotal Comments: (player classroom performance or growth goals)

Teacher/Mentor Name

Date

APPENDIX V—STUDENT SELF ASSESSMENT



Give and Take – Share something positive that you **gave away** today – something that contributed to the learning of someone in your team, or the team as a whole. Then write about something you **took away** today – something you learned from a team member or the work that you did together.

Give:

Take:

Player Signature

Date

APPENDIX VI – STUDENT ATHLETE INTERVIEW

Student - Athlete Interview

8/3/2007



Name: _____

School: _____

Grade: _____

Teacher(s)' name: _____

I agree that I...	Never	Some	Most	All of the time
		of the time	of the time	
enjoy reading	1	2	3	4
enjoy doing math	1	2	3	4
am committed to academics	1	2	3	4
am a hard worker	1	2	3	4
want to challenge myself academically	1	2	3	4
work well as part of a team	1	2	3	4
demonstrate self-control	1	2	3	4
am respectful of others	1	2	3	4
make safe choices	1	2	3	4
live a healthy lifestyle	1	2	3	4
take responsibility for my actions	1	2	3	4
know how to solve conflicts (problems)	1	2	3	4
with others				
can discipline myself	1	2	3	4
demonstrate good sportsmanship	1	2	3	4
am proud of myself	1	2	3	4
believe I will go to college	1	2	3	4
have confidence in myself	1	2	3	4
understand football skills	1	2	3	4
know that football teaches lessons that	1	2	3	4
can help me in school and life				

I have people in my life that are positive role models for me.

YES

NO

If yes, who are they and why are they a role model to you?