

Working with the Education and Juvenile Justice Systems to Address Social Determinants of Health

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Presentation Overview

- How did we get involved in education and juvenile justice issues?
- What specific projects are we working on?
- What lessons have we learned?



Education: Priority Area

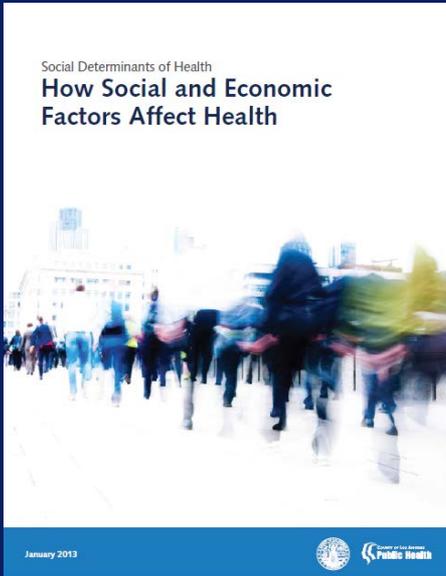
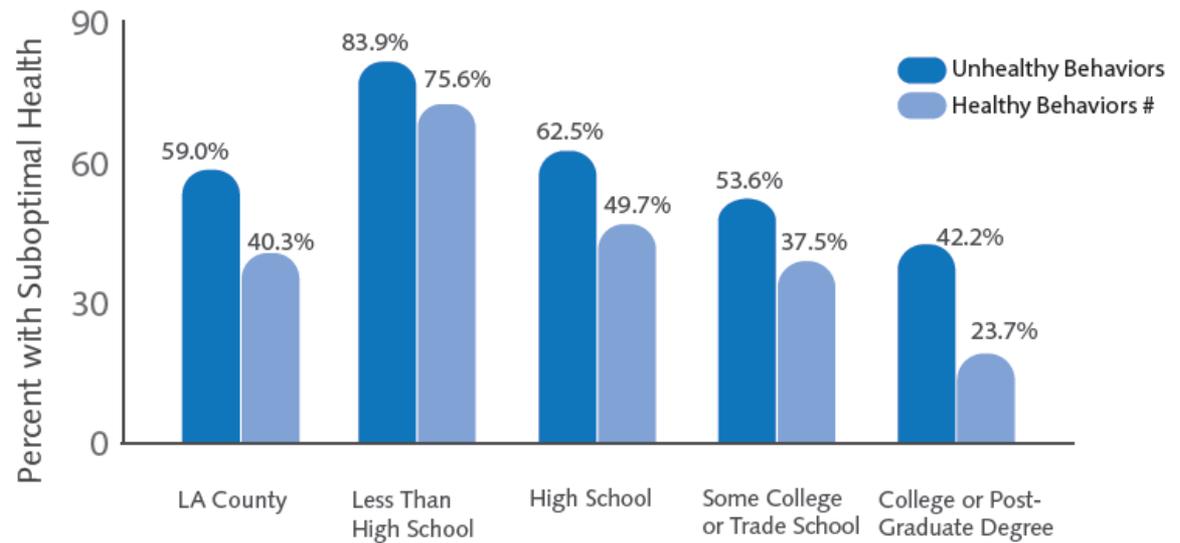


Chart 1. Percent of Adults Reporting Suboptimal Health by Education Level and Participation in Healthy vs. Unhealthy Behaviors, Los Angeles County, 2007



#Healthy Behaviors= non-smoker & meets physical activity guidelines

Results are age-adjusted to 2000 US Standard Population. Self-reported health status: Suboptimal is poor, fair or good. Includes adults age 25-74 years. Source: Los Angeles County Health Survey, 2007.



Beginnings of the Work: Identifying Projects and Securing Funding

- **September 2012:** Engagement with the Los Angeles County School Attendance Task Force (SATF).
 - Lead by Children's Courts Presiding Judge Michael Nash, along with multidisciplinary stakeholders.
- **February 2013:** Receipt of a *Health Impact Project* Health Impact Assessment Program Grant.
- **April 2013:** Receipt of funding from UCLA CTSI for data collection.



Four Major Projects

- Assessing the costs and benefits of providing free public transit passes to students.
- Identifying the highest priority recommendations for reducing truancy.
- Understanding youth's experiences with current "state" of truancy reduction system.
- Evaluation of the Teen Court program.



Project #1



**The Potential Costs and Benefits of Providing
Free Public Transportation Passes to Students
in Los Angeles County**

Background

- In April 2013, on the recommendation of SATF, the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council (ECC) passed a resolution to work with transit stakeholders to provide free transit passes to students.
- DPH joined a working group of the SATF.
- Launch a Health Impact Assessment in order to help synthesize existing data related to program costs and benefits.



Health Impact Assessment

A systematic process that uses an array of data sources and analytic methods and considers input from stakeholders to determine the potential effects of a proposed policy, plan, program or project on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population. HIA provides recommendations on monitoring and managing those effects.

National Research Council, 2011



Why Free Student Transportation Passes?

- Over a quarter (27%) of students (K-12) in Los Angeles County live more than 2 miles from their school.
- Three quarters of Los Angeles County school districts provide transportation for less than 10% of their students.
- Students cite problems with transportation as a barrier to school attendance.
- Fare evasion citations disproportionately given to minority youth.

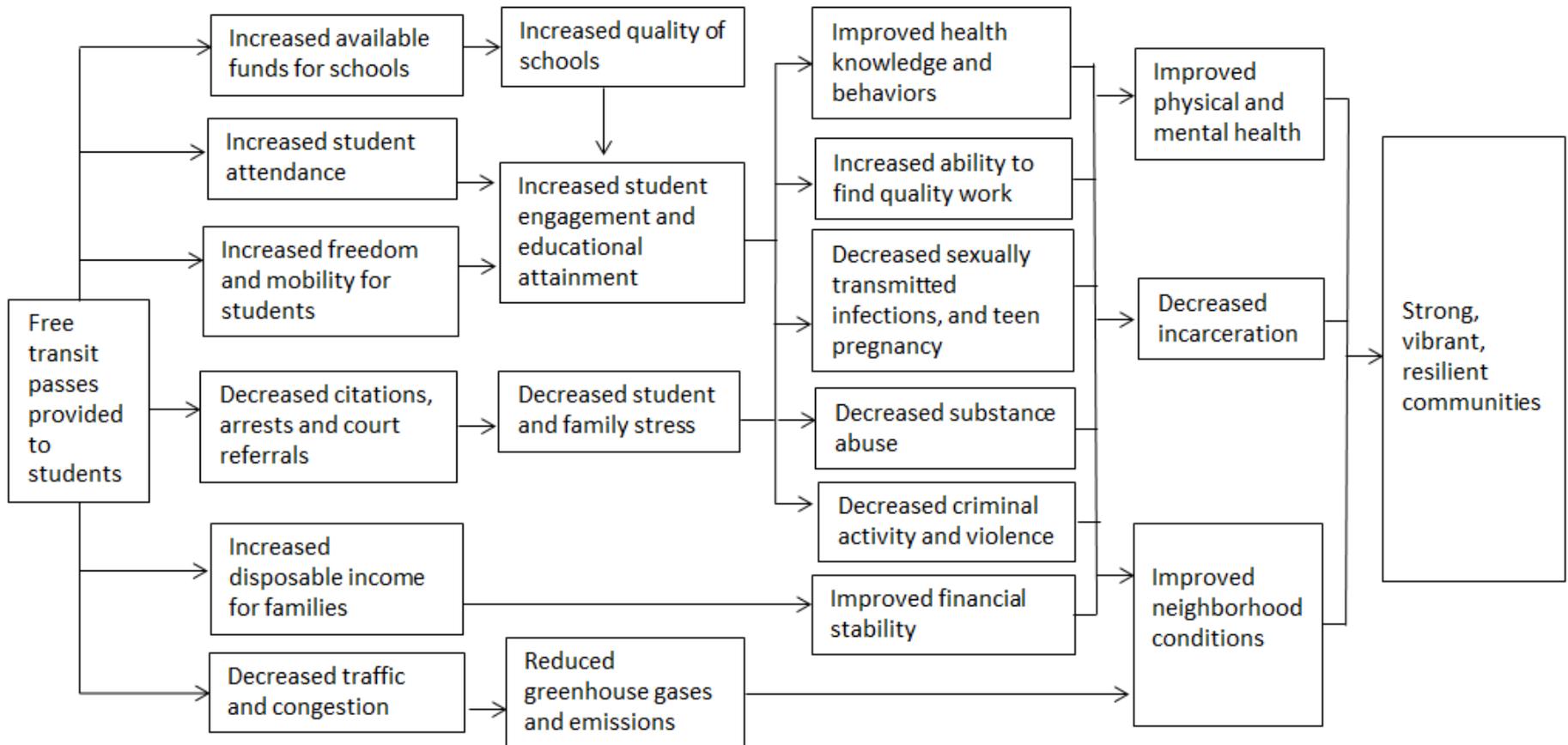


Why is Public Health Involved?

- One of the primary goals of the ECC resolution was to increase school attendance.
- School attendance and high school graduation are associated with short and long-term health impacts.
 - E.g., Teen pregnancy, violence, substance abuse, chronic disease



Potential Benefits of Providing Free Transit Passes to Students – Plausible Pathways to Better Health and Social Outcomes



Report Methods

- Research/Policy Questions
 - What are the potential costs of implementing a free transit pass program for students?
 - What are the potential benefits of implementing a free transit pass program for students?
- Methods
 - Rigorous review of published literature
 - Analyses of existing datasets
 - Consultation with experts
 - Community input



Summary Results

- Costs to transit agencies
 - Short term ridership could increase between 6% and 15%, representing an additional ~152,000 to 381,000 riders.
 - Loss of at least \$21.5 million in transit fare revenue.
- Benefits to students, families, school districts, and communities
 - Some benefits are difficult to quantify, since there have been few published studies.
 - Largest impact: decreasing fare evasion citations, increased disposable impact for families.



Project Impacts

- Synthesized data to help inform communication and decision-making.
- Identified gaps and sparked additional questions and dialogue.
- Demonstrated DPH credibility & increased collaboration with SATF stakeholders.



Project #2: Recommendations for Reducing Truancy

- Convened a work group of the SATF:
 - District Attorney, City Attorney, School Police, Probation, Los Angeles County Office of Education, Department of Mental Health
- Goals
 - Describe how are truancy-reduction systems operating and interacting in Los Angeles County.
 - Identify highest priority program and policy options to effectively address truancy.



Methods

- Expert panel working group
- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups with school administrators
- Survey with school-based mental health providers
- Review of programmatic data

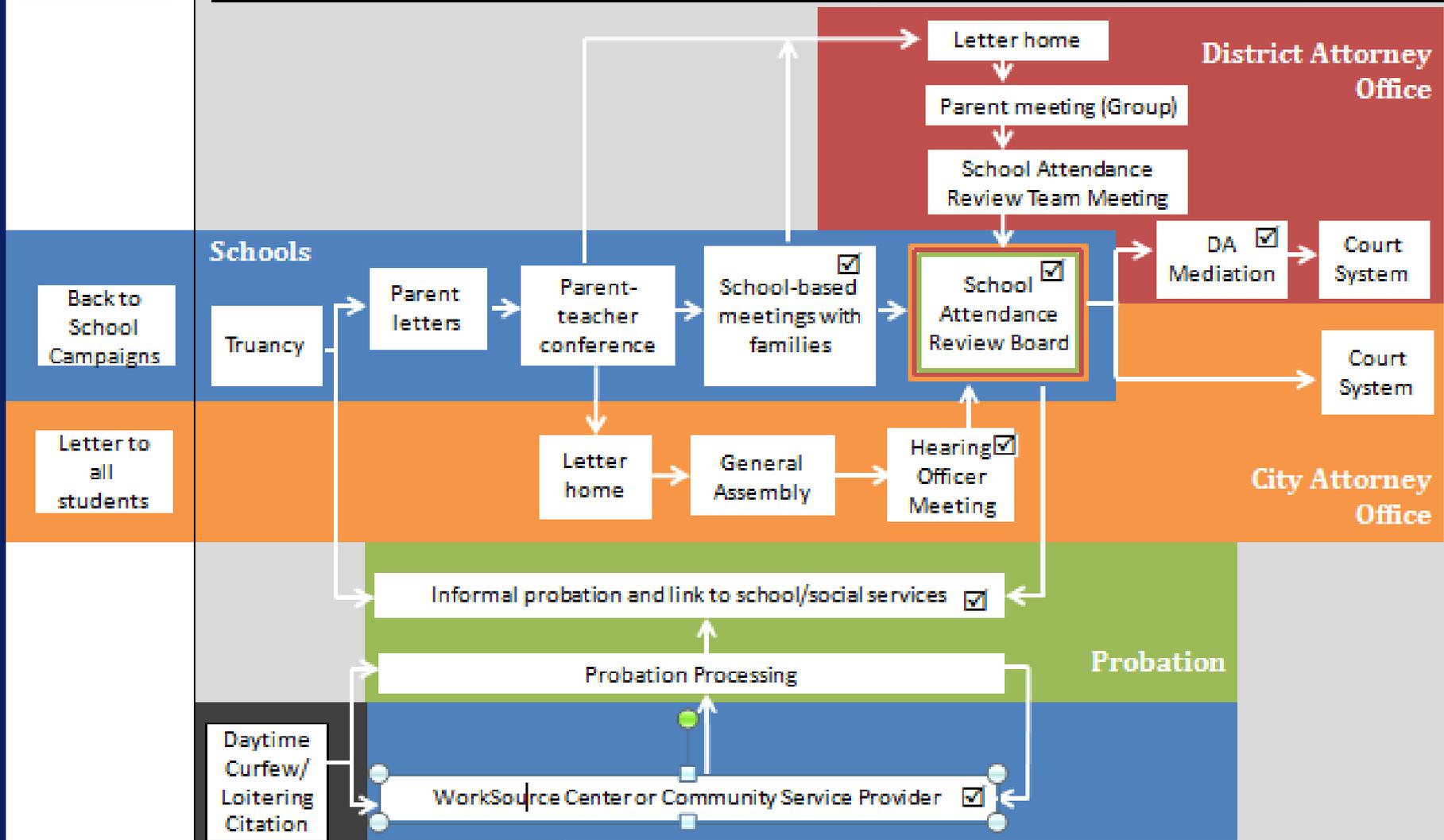


Summer Prevention Activities

Truancy Intervention Process in Los Angeles County - DRAFT

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF ABSENCES

1	3 <i>truant</i>	5	9 <i>habitual</i>	10+	18+ <i>chronic</i>	50+
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Law Enforcement

☑ = Opportunities for referral to social services (e.g. Department of Mental Health, Department of Children Family Services)

Project #3: Youth Experiences with Truancy Reduction Systems

- Goal
 - Identify youth experience with truancy reduction systems in order to inform policy and program recommendations.
- Methods
 - Partnered with the Youth Justice Coalition to hire 3 research assistants.
 - Qualitative interviews with 39 youth in South and East Los Angeles who had experience cutting or skipping class.
 - Asked to describe their “trajectory,” from when they first starting skipping class to present day.



Project #4: Evaluation of the Teen Court Program

- Teen Court
 - Los Angeles Superior Court currently directs and supports 21 Teen Courts.
 - An alternative to traditional processing in the juvenile justice system for first time offenders.
 - Youth are questioned, judged, and sentenced by their peers and issued a variety of restorative sentences (e.g., counseling, community service, curfews).
- Outgrowth of our partner relationships at the SATF.



Evaluation of the Teen Court Program

- Retrospective evaluation of the impact of Teen Court program on social (e.g., recidivism), academic (e.g., grades, graduation), and health outcomes (e.g., depression and substance abuse).



Lessons Learned

- Build credibility as an unbiased source for assessment and evaluation expertise.
 - Participant → convener → consultant
- Link to existing collaborations/partnerships.
- Start with THEIR goals, resist putting health at the center of the agenda.
- Be prepared to offer many types of tools.
 - Health impact assessment, evaluation, policy assessment



Lessons Learned

- Messaging about the relationship between sectoral goals is important.
- A broad conceptualization of the potential policy impacts brings opportunities and challenges.
- Finding the right “role” for public health.



Acknowledgments – Contributors and Members of the Health Impact Evaluation Center

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