2016–2017

Annual Report

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

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Zone 1 2 6

"The program makes you a better person."

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"It helps you gain confidence."

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"I learned how to stand up for each other, and stand up for what you believe in."

—Youth Participants, Zone 126 enACT Programming

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Zone 126

Founded in 2011, Zone 126 uses collective impact to increase student achievement and make strong connections between home, school, and work to break the cycle of poverty. More than 20,000 families are living in concentrated pockets of poverty in Astoria and Long Island City. Over 8,000 are children. A child living in poverty faces multiple environmental, social, and physical barriers to academic success. Zone 126 exists to break down those barriers. Its overarching goal is for every child to graduate from high school prepared for college, and enter the workforce equipped with the skills needed to thrive in a 21st century world.

Evaluation of Zone 126 and Measuring Collective Impact

Owen Consulting Inc. was engaged by Zone 126 in the fall of 2016 to improve overall evaluation design and implementation, build their staff's evaluation capacity and conduct a process and outcome evaluation of their programming and services over the course of the 2016-2017 school year. One of the main goals of the evaluation was to measure the collective impact of partnering programs across sites and participants.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Participation and Attendance

Zone 126 partnered with **10 Schools and 12 non-profit and community-based organizations** that provided a continuum of care – from early childhood through high school, during both the school-year and summer sessions. Evaluation results indicated that **1,459 young people** from partnering schools and organizations interfaced with Zone 126 in some capacity over the school year. The nine programs for which attendance was available demonstrated an **average of 73% attendance** (an average of 6 sessions attended out of 9 offered).

Partner Survey Results

The Partner Survey was completed by five representatives of Zone 126 implementation partner organizations. Questions related to progress towards implementing the Cradle to Career Continuum and awareness of Zone 126 among constituents and decision-makers were generally rated favorably, indicating partners perceived success in these areas. However, responses related to questions about collaboration among partners were more mixed, **bolstering the case that Zone 126 could play a valuable role in strengthening collective impact/cross-sector partnerships.**

Youth Participant Outcomes

With some exceptions, overall outcome evaluation findings suggest that:

Zone 126's partner programs surveyed are well-staffed, provide engaging, meaningful activities, and are having a positive impact on youth participants across a range of evidence-based positive youth development indicators:

- **Academic Behaviors / School Engagement**
- **Cultural Competency**
- **Life Skills**
- **Positive Life Choices**
- **Positive Core Values**
- **Sense of Self**

While actual academic data on all youth participants will not be available from the NYCDOE until the fall of 2017, survey responses indicated that in general, **students felt the partner programs contributed to improved academic behaviors and attitudes and school engagement.**

Areas for Improvement

The evaluation also found areas of program design and implementation that could be improved. These included the following:

Ensuring Program Quality and Fidelity Across Sites:

Evaluation findings also suggested that some programs were stronger than others at positively impacting participants, and in some cases programs from one partner varied in quality and impact from school to school. Focus group results indicated that this may have more to do with varying skill levels and experience of the volunteer coaches/instructors hired by the partnering organization than with the actual program content. It is therefore recommended that Zone 126 work with program partners and school staff to identify and ensure effective instructors are placed in their schools going forward.

Data Collection and Reporting:

It became apparent through the evaluation process that a number of the Zone's partners are not collecting process and/or outcome data internally, which in turn made it challenging for the organization to accurately determine participation rates and program impact. To this end Zone 126 will be working with Owen Consulting to build partner's capacity around evaluation of collective impact for the coming year.

Congruently, while Zone 126 has made great strides in improving its own evaluation systems and processes over the last two years, the organization could build on its successes to strengthen ongoing data collection at the school level related to participation and enrollment. This will better enable Zone 126 to monitor programming in 'real time' and ensure that target enrollment and attendance rates are being met and contracted activities and services are being delivered accordingly.

OVERVIEW OF ZONE 126 AND PROGRAM PARTNERS

Founded in 2011, **Zone 126** (a sponsored project of the Fund for the City of NY) uses a **collective impact** framework to increase student achievement and make strong connections between home, school, and work to break the cycles of poverty.

More than 20,000 families are living in concentrated pockets of poverty in Astoria and Long Island City. Over 8,000 of whom, are children. A child living in poverty faces multiple environmental, social, and physical barriers to academic success. Zone 126 exists to break down those barriers. It's overarching goal is for every child to graduate from high school prepared for college, and enter the workforce equipped with the skills needed to thrive in a 21st century world.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

By design, Zone 126 collaborates with local Community Based Organizations (CBO's) who provide academic, youth development, and general cradle to career support programming based within Zone 126 partner schools. The six organizations who participated in Zone 126's evaluation efforts this year were enACT (a sponsored project of the Fund for the City of NY), Let's Get Ready (LGR), Community-Word Project (CWP), the Child Center of NY (CCNY), and Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House. We provide partner program overviews below:

enACT

(a sponsored project of the Fund for the City of NY)

An evidence-based program, enACT's mission is to help New York City public school students learn social, emotional, and behavioral skills through creative drama and drama therapy techniques. enACT's professional actor-instructors engage in interactive classroom-based activities and specialized role-play, to help students become more productive in school and in their lives. enACT empowers New York City students of all ages and skills levels by helping them understand and manage their own emotional growth through creative drama techniques. The enACT team, made up of teaching artists--all professional actors with numerous stat, screen and television credits--educators, social workers, and drama therapists work collaboratively with teachers and administrators at schools all over the city to show students how to identify and remove learning barriers.

Let's Get Ready (LGR)

Let's Get Ready provides free SAT preparation, admissions counseling, and post-enrollment mentoring to students from low-income circumstances to help them get into and graduate from college. The peer-driven program is administered by volunteer college students, keeping costs low and ensuring outstanding success rates.

Let's Get Ready begins with the College Access Program. This program offers participants SAT preparation and assistance with all aspects of the college admissions process. Each program cohort serves 60 high school students (juniors and seniors) and is led by two college student Site Director managing 15-20 coaches. The college students that volunteer as Coaches receive extensive training and since they have recently taken the SAT and scored well, are uniquely equipped to tutor and mentor high school students through the college admissions process. By harnessing the passion of these enthusiastic volunteers, Let's Get Ready provides its students with concrete skills and knowledge as well as the inspiration and encouragement they need to succeed. Programs are offered during the fall, spring and summer. They are built upon close partnerships with colleges, high schools and community organizations. Each nine-week program cohort includes:

- Two 3-hour classes per week
- Small classes, based on ability level, of approximately five students per Coach
- 30-hours of intensive SAT preparation
- 2 diagnostic SAT exams

- 15-hours of assistance with college selection, applications and financial aid/scholarships including special sessions with college admissions and financial aid officers
- College visits
- Intensive mentoring support in and out of the classroom

In addition to the core program, the organization offer workshops and support services throughout the year. Topics include career exploration, completion of financial aid forms, application essays, and successful transitions.

Community Word Project (CWP)

Community-Word Project (CWP) is a New York City based 501(c)(3) arts-in-education organization that inspires children in underserved communities to read, interpret and respond to their world and to become active citizens through collaborative arts residencies and teacher training programs.

Community-Word Project establishes Collaborative Arts Residencies in New York City Title 1 schools, after-schools, and public libraries bring professional writers and artists to underserved classrooms and provide kids with a unique and stimulating arts-integrated curriculum. Our Teaching Artists work alongside classroom teachers and after-school leaders to integrate creative and critical thinking skills through the arts.

CWP offers multi-disciplinary arts curriculum, often delivering the only educational exposure these children have to creative writing, arts, music, and movement. In accessing alternative learning channels, kids discover their personal passion, strengthen their voice, and engage in learning.
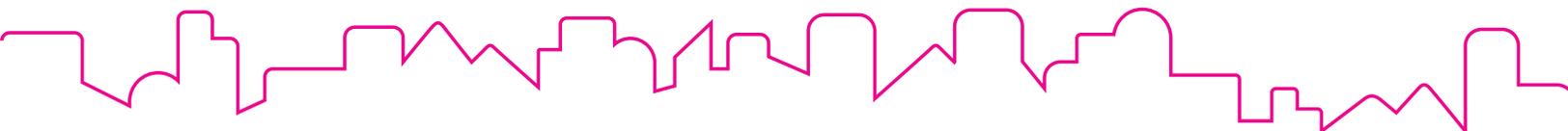
The Child Center of NY (CCNY)

implementation of the Safe Dates Curriculum

The Child Center of NY (CCNY) was founded nearly 60 years ago as the Queens Child Guidance Center. CCNY has been delivering high-quality center and home based Head Start services as a NYC delegate organization since 2000.

CCNY provides a myriad of services beyond Head Start to the high risk children and families of Queens in the area of mental health counseling, after school, and pregnancy prevention activities. CCNY's full spectrum of services addresses the often complex and varied needs of at risk children and families, affording them easy non-stigmatized access and individualized care.

The Safe Dates Curriculum is an evidence-based dating abuse prevention program consisting of five components:

- A nine-session dating abuse curriculum
- A play about dating abuse
- A poster contest
- Parent Materials
- A teacher training outline

The goals of this program are to:

- Raise students' awareness of what constitutes healthy and abusive dating relationships
- Raise students' awareness of dating abuse and its causes and consequences
- Equip students with the skills and resources to help themselves or friends in abusive dating relationships
- Equip students with the skills to develop healthy dating relationships, including positive communication, anger management, and conflict resolution

Safe Dates Main Components:

The Safe Dates curriculum is a nine-session program that targets attitudes and behaviors associated with dating abuse and violence. Each session is approximately fifty minutes in length. Safe Dates is designed to fit various schedule formats (e.g. daily or weekly programs). Reproducible student handouts are included at the end of each session.

Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House (Riis Academy)

The mission of Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement is to build and strengthen underserved communities in Western Queens and to act as a catalyst for change.

Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement, Riis Academy, is a community-based after-school program, that partners with local schools, families and community leaders to provide the best possible services and activities for youth in grades K-12. We offer a supportive, friendly environment where children feel safe to be themselves and make new friends. Riis Academy offers comprehensive services from tutoring and homework help to arts and recreation. Our approach to youth development is based on the simple philosophy that every child can reach his/her greatest potential if given the opportunity to learn and grow in a supportive environment. The overarching goal of Riis Academy is to create a nurturing network of support and services to encourage and motivate students to stay in school, graduate from high school and succeed in post-secondary education, the world of work, and civic life. Riis Academy enhances 1,000 participants' lives annually through project-based learning, academic activities, and recreation.
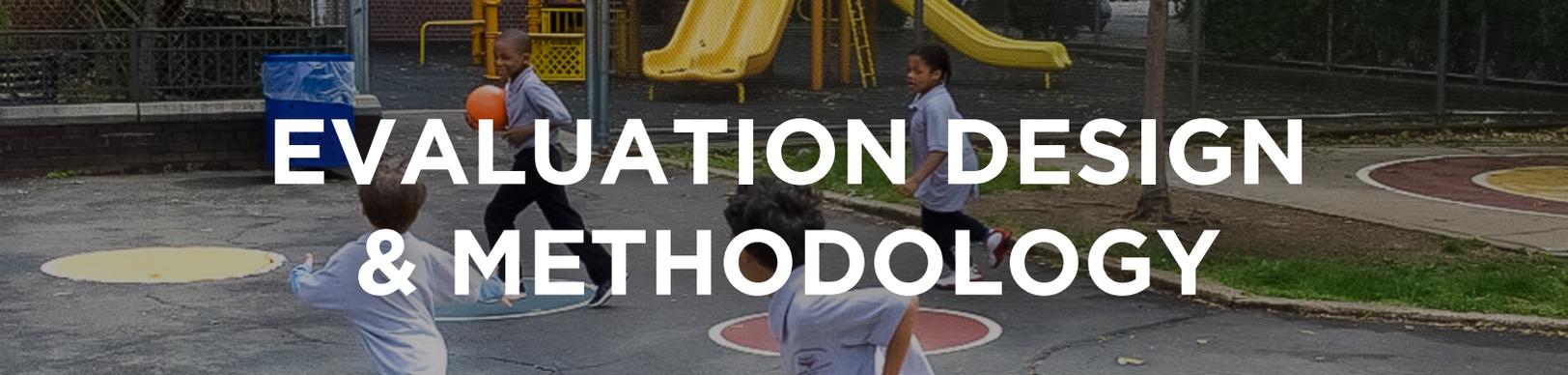
EVALUATION DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION FOR THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR

The evaluation was both formative and summative, documenting program processes, participant achievement, and change over time in key educational and youth development outcomes. The goals of the evaluation were as follows:

1 Improve data collection systems and processes and build capacity for Zone 126 staff.

2 Document program processes/inputs including partner programming and services and attendance/participation rates.

3 Obtain feedback from partners on their perception of Zone 126.

4 Determine the program's impact on youth participants' academic, social-emotional, behavioral, and positive youth development outcomes.

5 Identify areas in which Zone 126 programming and services could be improved.

The evaluation also aimed to enable Zone 126 to make data-informed strategic decisions that can improve program quality and increase positive impact on current and future student participants. Further, the evaluation was a vehicle to provide Zone 126 with a means to demonstrate program impact to advisory board members, the public, and funders.

Owen Consulting (OC) met with Zone 126 staff to collaboratively design the evaluation. Survey data was collected post-program by school-based staff. Qualitative data was obtained for selected programs via focus groups for participants and staff. In some cases, internal data collected by program partners was integrated into the evaluation as well. Additionally, the evaluation examined program enrollment and attendance by site and look for relationships between process and outcome data.

EVALUATION FOR THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR

Process / Participation Data

Attendance/participation data was collected by Zone 126 staff and reported to OC. Attendance data variables included dosage (the number of sessions each participant attended) and the rate of their attendance (the percentage of sessions they attended out of the number of sessions offered to them). Attendance data was reported from nine sites.

Program Partner Survey Data

An online survey was distributed to program partners to obtain their perceptions of Zone 126. Five representatives of Zone 126 partners responded to the survey.

Program Outcome Data

The outcome evaluation was quasi-experimental and mixed method in design, utilizing a research-based post program assessment instrument called the "Toolkit Survey" on an intervention cohort of students to measure change over time as a result of participation in the program. This survey was administered to participants in six programs. Additional outcome data was obtained specific to individual programs via internal data collection by program partners, and qualitative assessments (focus groups) of participants and program staff were conducted by Owen Consulting for two programs. Academic data (grades, school attendance, test scores, credit accumulation) will be obtained in the fall of 2017 when the data becomes available from the NYCDOE.
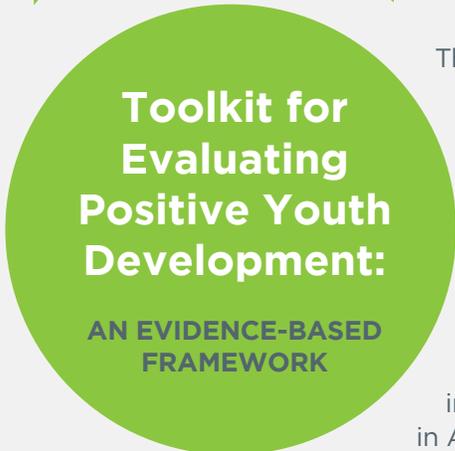
Toolkit for Evaluating Positive Youth Development:

AN EVIDENCE-BASED FRAMEWORK

The primary instrument used to gauge impact on target program outcomes was a valid, reliable, and research-based post-program survey developed by the Colorado Trust, **"Toolkit for Evaluating Positive Youth Development"** (Toolkit Survey). It is designed to be used for students in grades 3 and up (Colorado Trust, 2004). A version of the survey is widely used across 21st Century After School Programs in New York State (Research Works, 2011). The survey includes items designed to measure overall **Program Quality** and **Positive Youth Development**. One of the main reasons for utilizing the survey was to move Zone 126 and partnering organizations towards incorporation of evidence-based instruments when measuring program impact. The full survey can be found in Appendix A of this report.

The Program Quality Domains gauge the extent to which participants perceived the Zone 126 program to possess the following evidence-based elements of effective youth development programs (Eccles & Gootman, 2002, Partee & Halperin, 2006):

Safe, Structured Environment, & Attractive and Meaningful Activities

Research on effective youth programs indicates that providing a safe, well-structured environment with activities and program content that is engaging and connects to young people's lives beyond school and/or to college and career pathways is integral to their success (Benson, 2011, Eccles and Gootman, 2002, Partee and Halperin, 2006).

Supportive, Caring Staff

The presence of caring, knowledgeable adults in young people's lives is not only a key best practice for effective youth development programs and central to participants' growth, but also an important asset for young people's positive development (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Rhodes 2004; DuBois and Karcher 2005; Partee and Halperin 2006; Benson 2011) .

The Youth Development Domains incorporated into the survey are also evidence-based. Research has shown these elements to be critical for young people's short and long-term academic achievement, positive youth development, and social emotional learning (Benson, 2006, 2011, Eccles & Gootman, 2002, Partee, 2006, Taylor et. Al 2017).

The domains are as follows:

Academic Success	Academic Behaviors/School Engagement	Community Involvement	Cultural Competency
Life Skills	Positive Life Choices	Positive Core Values	Sense of Self

Academic Success / Academic Behaviors and School Engagement

Research has shown that young people's academic behaviors, perception of success, and engagement with school are integral to their overall academic achievement (Blumenthal, et. Al, 2005, Ling, 2007).

Community Involvement

Engaging youth as resources is both an asset for positive youth development and a hallmark of evidence-based effective programming (Partee and Halperin 2006; Benson 2011). Furthermore, research suggests that when their community values youth, and young people build strong connections within their own community (school, friends, positive affiliations, etc.) they benefit developmentally (Benson, 2011, Eccles & Gootman, 2002).

EVALUATION FOR THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR

Cultural Competency

Positive interactions between children of different racial, ethnic, or cultural groups can promote positive social development, feeling safe in school, rejecting racism & stereotyping, social justice, empathy, and tolerance (Killen & Smetana, 2009; Knifsend & Juvonen, 2014). Additionally, research suggests that an understanding of other groups' social and cultural values reduces social exclusion, which subsequently reduces the prevalence of stress, depression, anxiety, poor peer relationships, and poor academic performance in minority groups (Killen & Smetana, 2009; Abrams & Killen, 2014)

Life Skills

Developing life skills, such as non-violent conflict resolution, making and sustaining healthy friendships, resisting pressure to engage in risky behavior, setting goals, and solving problems enable youth to succeed and better navigate academic, personal, and social/ emotional challenges that can have an adverse effect on short and long-term life outcomes (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Benson 2011, Taylor et. al, 2017) .

Positive Core Values, Life Choices, and Sense of Self

Developing positive values is an important element to healthy youth development (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Benson 2011) . Research indicates that developing personal values such as caring for other people, integrity, honesty, and responsibility are a critical element for young people's long-term success (Benson 2011, Taylor, et.al 2017) . Additionally, Young people developing positive feelings about themselves is a vital task for healthy development (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Benson 2011) . As defined within the Search Institute's Developmental Assets Framework, Positive Identity is comprised of four categories: Personal power—the young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me" Self Esteem—the young person reports having high self-esteem, Sense of Purpose—the young person reports that their life has purpose, and Positive view of personal future—the young person is optimistic about her or his personal future (Benson 2011) .

Data Collection and Analysis

Owen Consulting coordinated with Zone 126 staff to administer and collect surveys via methods that ensured data quality and participant confidentiality. Process data was provided by Zone 126 staff to Owen Consulting for compilation and analysis. Process and post program data were analyzed using basic descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson correlations were also used to measure statistical significance in interactions between survey responses and attendance variables. Owen Consulting also coordinated with Zone staff and partnering programs to organize and conduct focus groups and obtain internal evaluation data from several partners. Focus group recordings were transcribed and coded via the same outcome domains as those incorporated in the toolkit survey. Owen Consulting will be submitting a data request to the NYCDOE in the fall of 2017 to obtain academic data on Zone 126 program participants and comparison groups to look for impact on academic outcomes.

Limitations

The scale and scope of the evaluation prohibited the possibility of performing a randomized control study or incorporating a control group against which to compare the "intervention" cohort, or in this case the Zone 126 participants. Further, academic data for participants was not available at the time of this report. Lastly, because the surveys administered for this report were limited to students engaged in Zone 126 partner programming ending in the spring of 2017, total survey responses were about 150, or about 30% of all students in programs eligible for Toolkit survey administration over the course of the spring. This was due in large part to the cyclical nature of services provided by Zone 126. The various programs were implemented over a wide range of time frames/dosages, varying from one-day sessions to semester-long interventions, with many operating over several cycles over the course of the school year. Additional reasons for the survey response rate included the following:

Many programs were provided to Pre-K through 2nd grade students that precluded use of the Toolkit survey which is for grades 3 and up.

There was difficulty in obtaining NYCDOE-mandated consent and assent forms required in order to administer surveys for 9th through 12th grade students (where the bulk of programming is happening). This prevented administration of the Toolkit survey to a large number of students.

For Family & Community Engagement Programs such as NYC DOE OACE and NYU ParentCorps, Zone 126 did not have the staffing capacity at the end of the year to survey parents.

PROCESS EVALUATION RESULTS

STUDENT & PARTNER PARTICIPATION

Evaluation results indicated that **1,459 young people** from partnering schools and organizations interfaced with Zone 126 in some capacity over the school year. Zone 126 partnered with **10 schools and 12 non-profit and community-based organizations** that provided a continuum of care—from early childhood through high school, and in both school-year and summer sessions.

See the table below for a list of partnering schools:

See the table below for a list of partnering Community Based Organizations (CBO's):

Zone 126 Partner Schools
PS 017Q-Henry David Thoreau
PS 076Q-William Hallet
CS 111Q-Jacob Blackwell
PS 112Q-Dutch Killes
PS 171Q-Peter G. Van Alst
PS 234Q-School for Performing Arts & Technology
IS 126Q-Albert Shanker School for Visual & Performing Arts
IS 204Q-Oliver Holmes
William Cullen Bryant HS (Q445)
Long Island City HS (Q450)

Zone 126 Partner Organizations
Camp Wilbur Herrlich
Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House
Community-Word Project (CWP)
CATCH/City Harvest
enACT (a sponsored project of the Fund for the City of NY)
Socrates Sculpture Park
Let's Get Ready! (LGR)
The Child-Center of NY (CCNY)
NYU ParentCorps
Rock the Street Wall Street (RTSWS)
Summer Advantage USA
NYC DOE Office of Adult and Continuing Education English as a Second Lanugage (ESL)

PARTNER PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Attendance data was collected for 736 students who participated at nine Zone 126 programs. These sites include Community-Word Project and enACT at IS 126; Community Word-Project at PS 17Q and CS 111Q; as well as Community-Word Project, Lets Get Ready! (LGR), Socrates, enACT, and the Child Center of NY (Safe Dates) at LICHS. A number of students, particularly at LICHS, were enrolled in and attended multiple programs, so data is presented both by total enrollment in each program (which includes duplicated students) and by total enrollment at each school (where total attendance numbers are added across programs to capture complete student dosage).

For duplicated attendance data (some students included multiple times due to attendance to multiple programs: 736 enrollees in nine programs attended six sessions on average (range 0-15) out of an average nine sessions offered (range 1-17), a total of **73% of the sessions offered.**

For unduplicated data (total attendance added across all programs): 657 enrollees across nine programs attended seven sessions on average (range 0-30) out of an average 10 sessions offered (range 1-40), a total of **75% of the sessions offered.**

Attendance by school (unduplicated student totals when attended multiple programs):

	N	Days Present		Total Sessions Offered / Eligible		Percent Present	
		Mean	Range	Mean	Range	Mean	Range
CS 111Q	41	5.90	2-7	6.78	2-7	87.46%	29-100%
PS 017Q	71	1.93	1-2	1.99	1-2	97.18%	50-100%
IS 126Q	230	9.06	2-11	10.99	9-11	82.44%	18-100%
LICHS	315	7.13	0-30	11.77	1-40	62.71%	0-100%
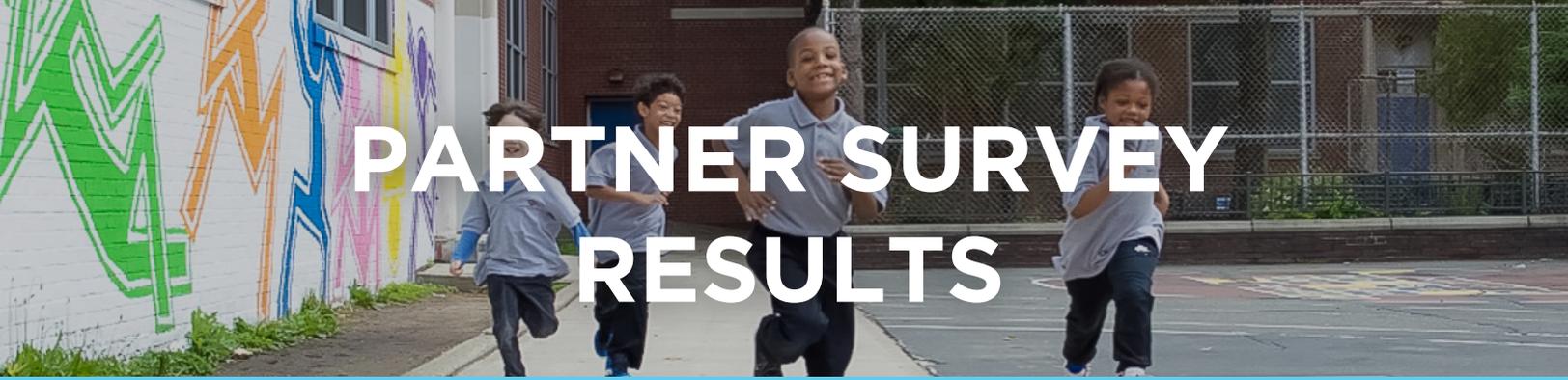
PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was sent out to Implementation Partners in order to measure the satisfaction of Zone 126 partners with the overall mission, operation, and support provided by Zone 126. Five partners completed the survey.

See survey results at right.

"
I learned how to work with other people.

—Zone 126 Student

"

Quantitative Responses from Partner Surveys

Because of the small number of responses, the results from this survey should be considered a pilot test, and not a representative sample of all Zone 126 partners. Among the five partners who completed the survey, participants agreed that it was at least "somewhat true" that they understood the Cradle to Career Project and that their roles were well defined. They also agreed that Zone 126 provides strategic leadership, and that Zone 126 acts as a liaison between other partners and themselves. Respondents indicated agreement that Zone 126 had increased awareness of the Cradle to Career pipeline, and that progress had been made in implementing the project, but some respondents indicated, "don't know/NA" for these questions.

Question	Don't Know/ N/A	Not true at all	Not true	Some-what true	True	Very True	%True or Very True
I can accurately describe the goals and mission of the Cradle to Career Project	0%	0%	0%	20%	60%	20%	**80%**
I discuss and/or advocate for Cradle to Career goals with external stakeholders and general public	20%	0%	20%	0%	60%	0%	**60%**
My role in the Cradle to Career project is clear and well-defined	0%	0%	0%	40%	40%	20%	**60%**
My individual work aligns with the Cradle to Career project objectives	0%	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%	**80%**
I look to Zone 126 for initiative support, strategic guidance and/or leadership	0%	0%	20%	0%	20%	60%	**80%**
I feel supported and recognized for my work	20%	0%	0%	0%	20%	60%	**80%**
Relevant partners are engaged in the Cradle to Career project	20%	0%	0%	20%	40%	20%	**60%**
I communicate and coordinate efforts with other partners involved in the Cradle to Career project, with Zone 126 serving as a liaison	0%	0%	0%	40%	40%	20%	**60%**
I communicate and coordinate efforts with other partners of the Cradle to Career project, independently of Zone 126	0%	40%	0%	20%	40%	0%	**40%**
I have built trust and rapport with other partners involved in the Cradle to Career Project	0%	0%	20%	20%	60%	0%	**60%**
Collaborative efforts have increased in scope since joining the Cradle to Career project	0%	0%	20%	20%	40%	20%	**60%**
I believe parents and children in this community are benefiting from the Cradle to Career project	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	80%	**100%**
My/our ability to implement programs in Zone schools has been more efficient since joining the Cradle to Career project	0%	0%	20%	0%	40%	40%	**80%**
I believe the number of services available in Zone schools has increased as a result of the Cradle to Career project	20%	0%	0%	0%	20%	60%	**80%**
I understand the value of shared data since joining the Cradle to Career project	20%	0%	0%	20%	40%	20%	**60%**
Our/my capacity to collect, analyze and/or report data has improved since joining this Cradle to Career Project	20%	20%	0%	0%	60%	0%	**60%**
I believe community members have become more aware of the issues in Astoria/Long Island City as a result of this Cradle to Career project	40%	0%	0%	20%	40%	0%	**40%**
I believe policymakers and elected officials have become more aware of the issues in this community as a result of this Cradle to Career project	40%	0%	0%	20%	40%	0%	**40%**
I believe this Cradle to Career project helps leverage new resources	0%	0%	20%	0%	40%	40%	**80%**
I believe this partnership helps maximize existing resources	0%	0%	0%	0%	40%	60%	**100%**
I will be able to scale-up programs and/or services as a result of the Cradle to Career project	0%	0%	0%	20%	40%	40%	**80%**
I am satisfied with the media used to promote awareness of Cradle to Career projects goals, actions and accomplishments	40%	0%	0%	40%	20%	0%	**20%**
I am satisfied with the progress being made to meet the Cradle to Career projects objectives	20%	0%	0%	20%	60%	0%	**60%**

PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

Qualitative Responses from Partner Surveys

Below are the full text of responses to qualitative questions on the partner survey. This includes questions about challenges and the overall benefit of Zone 126. The partners who completed the survey indicated that relationship building with school partners was a challenge, indicating a possible role for Zone 126 in facilitating that relationship, especially in regards to recruitment and building relationships with teachers. Other qualitative comments indicate that Zone 126 is already playing that role to an extent.

What value did your organization add to the Cradle to Career project?

Zone 126 and the Cradle to Career project have added incredible value our programming in Long Island City/Astoria. This partnership has helped us to increase number of students served in these neighborhoods and has improved the overall quality of our partnerships with these schools, allowing us to provide deeper, richer programming to these students.

We are generating momentum and college going culture support to LICHS as well as practical support for their students' academic readiness for college.

We were able to establish on site therapeutic services to Students and Families. We were also involved with providing support and professional developments to school staff.

As a valued after school partner

What were some of the logistical challenges your organization faced during program implementation in Zone schools?

Our largest logistical challenges were around communication, scheduling and planning with less responsive school administrators.

The estimated number of students who would participate was much higher than the actual participation which caused us to devote a lot of human resources to the school that were not warranted by the number of students served. Otherwise, the Zone team is great to work with and committed to supporting the students who are enrolled in the program. We also had a number of students applying for the program who were too young to participate in our curriculum.

Challenges faced in starting up therapeutic program. Establishing relationships with school faculty. Developing procedures for referrals.

Too many players at the table- made it difficult to establish roles, schedules and accountability.

What resources would your organization need to increase the scope, reach and effectiveness of your program in the Zone?

Funding is the major resource needed to increase our scope of work in the Zone.

Improved student recruitment practices to ensure that we are engaging our target demographic of students at LICHS. Because it is also related to generating a college going culture at the school, we understand this will take time. We also need further college student recruitment for the area to ensure the needed number of volunteers for the program.

We received great support from Zone 126 to increase schools awareness of therapeutic services, as well as promotion to students. Zone 126 also plays a big role in keeping our services connected with the school's faculty.

More outcomes assessment/evaluation capacity

If funding were to remain at the current levels, what are some strategies that your organization could undertake to increase the scope, reach and effectiveness of your program in the Zone?

We are actively working to fundraise to support increased work in the Zone.

Work with the school to be allowed to recruit students for the program much earlier than we have in the past; starting in September for our Fall program and in November/December for our spring programs.

We would continue to grow our services. The funding plays a key component to maintaining the therapeutic services available to the students and families.

Increase quality of programming/curriculum; better alignment with school-day activities and goals

What are some external/environmental factors that could impede your organization's ability to function optimally in our Zone?

The most important factor is engagement on the part of school administrators and teachers. Our programs are exponentially more successful when all players are engaged and committed to the partnership.

location--travel for volunteers can be a challenge and our model relies heavily on college student volunteers

Relationships with school faculty, faculty's awareness of services and using of services by referring Students and families. Continued education on social emotional needs of the Students and faculty's ability to see these needs.

Lack of communication; lack of support of the Zone from elected officials.

If Zone 126 ceased to exist, what would be lost?

A major supportive network that enriches, stabilizes and provides invaluable support for our work in the Zone!

Our connection to LICHS would be difficult to maintain because the teacher and counselor relationships for student referrals are held primarily with Zone staff.

Zone 126 is a key factor and helping services remain connected to the school, faculty and community. This would be lost if Zone 126 did not exist.

Collective, collaborative, idea-generating, solution-based work.

Please use the space below to provide any additional comments or suggestions for improvement

We are so very grateful to have Zone 126 as a partner!

Keep up the great work. Sharpen the roles and expectations of members!

OUTCOME EVALUATION RESULTS

Across the six programs surveyed (enACT, Let's Get Ready, Community-Word Project, Jacob A Riis Neighborhood Settlement House, and the Child Center of New York), the evaluation indicated that overall, **the Zone 126 Implementation Partner Programs were delivered with a high degree of quality and had an positive impact on youth participants' academic behaviors and youth development.** Further, survey and qualitative findings suggested that the program was instrumental in helping students build many of the assets and achieve key developmental tasks that enable young people to realize positive developmental and life outcomes (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Benson 2011). Findings also indicated areas in which the program could be improved. Our results are presented below.

Toolkit Survey Data

Toolkit survey data was available for 150 participants across six school-based programs. For the purposes of brevity, rather than report results on every item within each domain, we aggregated results by domain for each program surveyed.

Mean composite scores were created for each domain by averaging the ratings of each sub-item within that section. For reference, all items were on a 3-point Likert scale, where 0 was "not really," 1 was "kind of," and 2 was "yes." These points can be used to interpret values in the tables and sections.

Program quality indicators are marked in the results as follows:
Safe, Structured Environment, & Engaging and Meaningful Activities = **(Program Quality A)**
Supportive, Caring Staff = **(Program Quality B)**

Survey Response Rates

The Toolkit survey was administered in six programs during the spring term: Community Word Project and enACT at IS 126Q; Community-Word Project, Let's Get Ready, and the Child Center of NY implementing the Safe Dates curriculum at LICHS; and Jacob A. Riis Neighborhood Settlement House at CS 111Q.

There were 447 students in the six programs for which Toolkit surveys were administered, and 154 actual responses, for a **30% response rate**. Participant surveys were completed by program staff, from Zone 126 and partner organizations. In all of the areas where surveys were completed, the attendance rate was higher than the response rate.

Cross-Program Toolkit Survey Results

When aggregated, toolkit survey results for all programs show that, overall, **Zone 126 programming is perceived as high quality by at least 85% of participants, and approximately 75% of all participants feel that participation positively influenced the development of cultural competency, like skills, positive life choices, positive core values, and sense of self.** Academic Success, Arts and Recreation, and Community involvement were areas that showed the least impact. **About 66% or 2/3 of respondents felt that programming helped develop positive attitudes and behaviors related to academic achievement.** Overall, the programming across sites showed an average attendance rate of 73%. Attendance for students completing surveys was about 10% higher than overall program attendance. See the table below for detailed findings:

> ## "
> ## The program just brings you out as a person more, makes you more social, friendly.
>
> *—Zone 126 Student*
>
> ## "

Aggregate Toolkit Survey Responses (from six programs):

	N	% Averaging "Kind Of" (1) or Higher	Mean	SD	Range
Program Quality A	154	84.8%	1.43	0.47	0-2
Program Quality B	154	88.5%	1.49	0.46	.08-2
Academic Success	153	48.6%	0.92	0.69	0-2
Attitudes and Behaviors related to Academic Success	151	66.3%	1.10	0.70	0-2
Arts and Recreation	154	43.7%	0.83	0.73	0-2
Community Involvement	154	49.8%	0.85	0.71	0-2
Cultural Competency	153	72%	1.27	0.71	0-2
Life Skills	154	75%	1.30	0.66	0-2
Positive Life Choices	82	79.3%	1.46	0.71	0-2
Positive Core Values	152	77.7%	1.31	0.68	0-2
Sense of Self	152	75.6%	1.27	0.70	0-2

Total Cross-Program Attendance (from nine programs)

	N	Mean	SD	Range
Total Days	736	9.06	3.78	1-17
Days Present	736	6.40	3.55	0-15
% Present	736	72.79	27.59%	0-100%

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

Initial findings for the 2016-2017 program year indicate that **Zone 126 was successful at achieving many key objectives for the year.** Findings included the following:

Zone 126 **improved data collection and evaluation design** compared with years past.

The organization **engaged 1,459 young people** over the course of the year.

Programs demonstrated **strong attendance**, with an average rate of **73%.**

Program partners appeared to offer **high quality, impactful programming** across a number of evidence-based program quality, positive youth development, and academic behavior indicators.

Partners surveyed clearly **valued the organization's efforts** towards building a cradle to career continuum of care within its catchment area.

"We showed up at school because we were looking forward to the program.

—Zone 126 Student

"We learned how to make the situation better instead of having conflict."

The evaluation also found areas of program design and implementation that could be improved. These included the following:

ENSURING PROGRAM QUALITY AND FIDELITY ACROSS SITES:

Evaluation findings also suggested that some programs were stronger than others at positively impacting participants, and in some cases programs from one partner varied in quality and impact school to school. Focus group results indicated that this may have more to do with varying skill levels and experience of the coaches/instructors hired by the partnering organization than with the actual program content. It is therefore recommended that Zone 126 work with program partners and school staff to identify and ensure effective instructors are placed in their schools going forward.

DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING:

It became apparent through the evaluation process that a number of Zone 126 partners are not collecting process/enrollment/attendance, and/or outcome data internally, which in turn made it challenging for the organization to accurately determine participation rates and program impact. This finding underscores the need and value of having the organization provide evaluation support to partners.

Congruently, while Zone 126 has made great strides in improving its own evaluation approach, systems, and processes, the organization could build on its successes over the past year by strengthening ongoing data collection at the school-level related to participation and enrollment and survey administration. Improving data collection overall will better enable Zone 126 to monitor partner programs in 'real time' and ensure that target enrollment and attendance rates are being met, contracted activities and services are being delivered, and enable data-driven decision making. To this end, after entering historical data into the data base over the past year, Zone 126 is now poised to begin utilizing the Apricot data platform to enter current year participation data as it becomes available. In support of this, the organization has hired a new Data Entry Assistant that reports to the Managing Director that will assist with data collection and processing, and OCI has scheduled a training session with her and Zone 126 staff to build capacity and ensure summer, fall, winter and spring data are entered in an efficient and timely fashion. OCI will also be meeting with Zone 126 staff early in the 2017-2018 school year to discuss evaluation challenges at the school and partner level and devise strategies for addressing these to ensure that data is relayed to the specialist on a prompt and regular basis.

NEXT STEPS

ACADEMIC DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In order to accurately gauge whether Zone 126 /Implementation Partner Programs are actually moving the needle on academic outcomes for participants (state test scores, attendance, credit accumulation, and graduation rates), a formal data request to the NYCDOE Research and Policy Support Group will be made in November 2017 to obtain records on Zone 126 participants (and look at outcomes by program) and identify a comparison group of students against which to measure progress for the 2016-2017 school year. Where possible, Owen Consulting plans on using sophisticated regression analysis to look at differences between treatment and control groups, which will provide the organization with a robust assessment of whether their partner programs are impacting participants academically.

Next steps include Owen Consulting meeting with Zone 126 and school-based staff to identify student cohorts for the data request based on student demographic information, school, program participation, and academic performance prior to interventions.

ENSURE QUALITY INSTRUCTORS FOR PARTNER PROGRAMS

Given the focus group findings, its recommended that Zone 126 staff meet early in the school year with school staff and partnering agencies to ensure that high quality staff are implementing programs for their participants. This can be done informally and easily but could significantly improve consistent strong program implementation across sites.

IMPROVING DATA COLLECTION AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

As mentioned above, in addition to providing training to the organization's new Data Entry Specialist, Owen Consulting will meet with Zone 126 staff early this fall to review the data collection process for the previous year and explore ways to improve process/participation data collection and survey administration/ collection. It's' recommended that Owen Consulting host a meeting with staff from participating schools in order to address data challenges, including collection of process and survey data. Owen Consulting will use this training to identify capacity building needs for Zone 126 around data management, to work with new data management staff to build that capacity, and possibly to identify and deliver training for line staff as well. Furthermore, given that the Toolkit survey can only be used for students in grades 3 and up, Owen Consulting will work with Zone 126 to identify instruments to be used to measure program impact on younger participants.

LAYING THE GROUND WORK FOR MEASURING COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Owen Consulting has contracted with Zone 126 to support their evaluation efforts over the course of the current school-year 2017-2018. This includes meeting with Zone 126 staff to identify core evaluation partners based on the organization's goals for the year, the previous year's evaluation findings, and commitments from partners towards measuring collective impact. Owen Consulting will collaborate with Zone 126 to convene 'one to one' meetings with partners in the fall of 2017 and a subsequent core-partner strategy meeting to achieve the following evaluation objectives:

a   Identify partner organizations' **evaluation needs** for improving data collection on Zone 126 participants for the coming year

b   Begin development of plan for **tracking participants longitudinally** through the cradle career pipeline of continual care across Zone 126 partners, not just at community schools.

c   Set mutually determined **target performance indicators** for enrollment, participation, and outcomes for the 2017-2018 school year.

d   Establish minimum internal reporting requirements for each organization.

e   Lay the groundwork for establishing **a data sharing plan for the 2018-2019 school year** to be overseen and managed by a shared evaluator across agencies.

For Zone 126, evaluation objectives for the current and subsequent school years include:

YEAR 1

School Year 2017-2018

The goal for 2017-2018 is to improve process and outcome data collection (see above) while laying the ground work for shared database usage. By the end of the year, Zone 126 should be entering shared data from a small group of partners via data import or direct entry. Important steps in reaching this goal include negotiating shared consent forms, identifying and addressing barriers to database usage, and creating the database framework. This may include upgrading Apricot to Efforts to Outcomes (ETO).

YEAR 2

School Year 2018-2019

During year two of this process, Zone 126 and partners would continue entering data into a shared data base (via manual import or direct entry) while developing the database build-out, including back-end connections to partner databases. Usage of the data base would expand to additional partners via manual import and direct entry, with at least one functional back-end connection by the end of the year.

YEAR 3

School Year 2019-2020

By year three, the Zone 126 shared database would include all key partners entering data into the system, by manual import, direct entry, or back-end connections to the databases used in their own organizations. This will allow Zone 126 and Owen Consulting to provide valuable data updates across partners and the Zone to identify progress towards collective impact goals and support data-driven decision-making throughout the partnership.

ABOUT OWEN CONSULTING

Owen Consulting Inc. helps clients make a difference for youth. Our clients include non-profit organizations, City and government agencies, corporations, and schools committed to helping young people succeed. We provide evaluation services, technical assistance and training, curriculum development and fundraising services to clients nationwide. Owen Consulting's evaluation approach utilizes a collaborative model that has helped us build long-term partnerships with program operators and service providers, and resulted in stronger program implementation and sustainability.

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APPENDIX A:
Tool Kit Survey: An In-Depth Look

The survey asks participants to indicate one of three responses for each item: "Yes, Kind of, or Not Really." Domains and individual survey items are presented below:

Program Quality A: Safe, Structured Environment, & Attractive and Meaningful Activities
Please check the box below that is closest to how you feel about this program.
There are interesting activities at this program
The activities are fun at this program
I learn about new things at this program
I like coming to this program
There are rules I am expected to follow at this program
I feel safe at this program
I feel like people are happy to see me here
I tell my friends to come to this program
Program Quality B: Supportive, Caring Staff
Please check the box below that is closest to how you feel about this program.
Staff care about me
Staff help me feel important
Staff give me lots of support
Staff spend time with me one-on-one
Staff can be trusted
I like the staff here
Staff expect me to try hard and do my best
Staff tell me when I do a good job
I could go to a staff member at [this program] for advice if I had a serious problem
Staff listen to what I have to say
Staff encourage me to plan, choose, or lead activities
Staff encourage me to do volunteer work
Staff treat all kids fairly
Academic Success
Coming to [this program] has helped me to…
Improve my grades in school
Improve my grade in language arts
Improve my grade in math
Improve my grade in science
Do better in school
Do better in language arts
Do better in math
Do better in science
Try harder in school
Spend more time doing my homework

Attitudes and Behaviors Related to Academic Success / School Engagement

Coming to [this program] has helped me to…

Participate more in class activities

Become more interested in going to school

Care more about my school

Get along better with my classmates

Get along better with my teachers

Spend more time reading for fun (not for school)

Arts and Recreation

Because I came to [this program]…

I spend more time doing arts and crafts

I enjoy arts and crafts more

I am better in arts and crafts

I spend more time in music, dance, and/or theater

I enjoy music, dance, and/or theater more

I am better at music, dance, and/or theater

I spend more time doing sports, exercise, and/or recreation activities

I enjoy sports, exercise, and/or recreation activities

I am better at sports and/or recreation activities

Community Involvement

Coming to [this program] has helped me to…

Spend more time volunteering or helping others in my community

Spend more time looking for opportunities to help others in my community

Feel more important to my community

Feel a stronger connection to my community

Feel better about myself because I help others

Cultural Competency

Because I came to [this program]…

I know more about the good things that people who look or sound different than me have done (like African Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans and others)

I talk more with young people who look or sound different than me

I feel more comfortable being around young people who look or sound different than me

I understand that someone who looks or sounds different than me may not be that different after all

Life Skills

Because I came to [this program]…

I get along better with other people my age

I am better at making friends

I am better at telling others about my ideas and feelings

I am better at listening to other people

I work better with others on a team

I make better decisions

I am better at planning ahead

I am better at setting goals

I am better at solving problems

I am more of a leader

I am better at taking care of problems without violence or fighting

APPENDIX A:

Positive Life Choices
Coming to this program has helped me to…
Better say "no" to things I know are wrong
Stay out of trouble
Stay away from tobacco
Stay away from alcohol
Stay away from drugs
Stay away from sex
Stay away from violence and fighting
Positive Core Values
Because I came to [this program]…
I care more about other people
I care more about the feelings of other people
I am better at standing up for what I believe
I tell the truth more often even when it is hard
I am better at taking responsibility for my actions
I am more interested in community and world problems
I am better at speaking up for people who have been treated unfairly
Sense of Self
Coming to [this program] has helped me to…
Feel better about myself
Feel I have more control over things that happen to me
Feel that I can make more of a difference
Learn I can do things I didn't think I could do before
Feel better about my future
Feel I am better at handling whatever comes my way