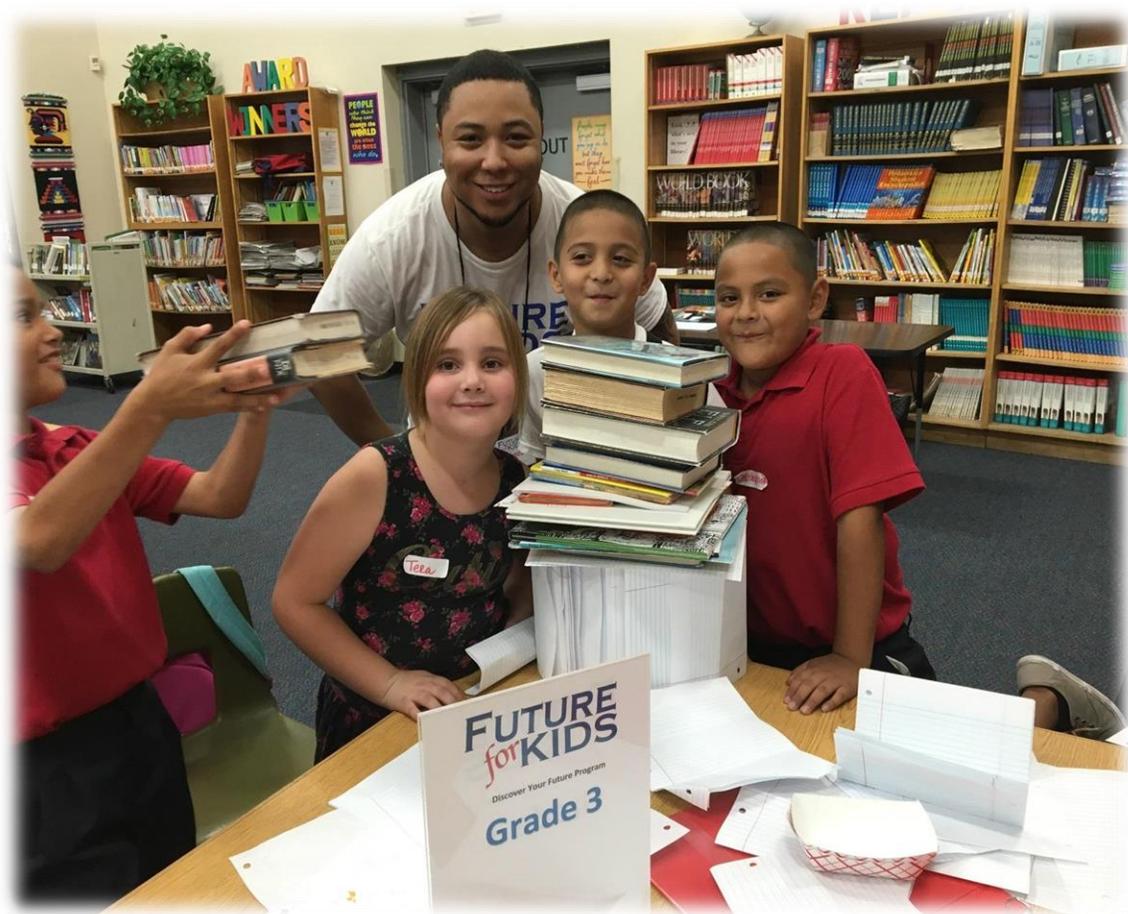


FUTURE *for* KIDS®

2016/2017 Discover Your Future Program Evaluation Report



Introduction

Future for KIDS' mission is to provide mentor-driven out-of-school time programs and camps that focus on academics, athletics and ethics, to improve the lives of youth who face adversity. Our signature out-of-school time enrichment program *Discover Your Future* is the first Trauma Sensitive program in Arizona, and is offered once a week for 2 hours at partner locations throughout the valley. The program features caring adult volunteer mentors who work closely with youth for 25 minutes of ethics discussions to build positive leadership character traits, engage in 35 minutes of physical activity to promote a healthy lifestyle, and 45 minutes of STEAM activities to develop hands on problem-solving skills (Appendix A). With these three components intertwined, it allows the students to create healthy and self-driven outlets and techniques, as well as expose them to various activities to help cope with their toxic stress in the future. Our trained team of volunteer mentors work one-on-one or in small groups with youth to serve as positive role models and provide them with the resources they need to succeed. The goal for our small group mentoring model gives both mentors and students a meaningful and consistent relationship where they can both positively influence one another. The positive impact is measured by allowing students to strengthen self-awareness which helps them reach their full potential of becoming a stronger leader within their family, friends, school and community.

During the 2016/2017 program year, Future for KIDS' *Discover Your Future* out-of-school time enrichment program ran once a week for 26 weeks from September 12, 2016 to May 4, 2017 at 10 partner agency locations. All sites had a maximum enrollment of 50 youth in grades 3-6. Participants were hand selected by our partner agencies that identified youth with three or more ACE's- Adverse Childhood Experience. These experiences take place in a child's life before age 18. Common trauma experience include: Recurrent physical abuse; recurrent emotional abuse; contact sexual abuse; alcohol and/or drug abuse in the household; incarcerated household member, household member who was depressed, mentally ill, institutionalized or suicidal; mother who was treated violently; one or no parent; emotional or physical neglect. Our screened and trained volunteer mentors implement program at each site. Program locations included (Appendix B):

- Cesar Chavez Community School (Title I School)
- Eagle Ridge Elementary School (Title I School)
- IG Conchos School (Title I School)
- Boys & Girls Club Guadalupe
- Boys & Girls Club Mesa
- Boys & Girls Club North Tempe
- Coral Canyon Native American Connections Housing Community
- Percy L. Julian Elementary School (Title I School)
- Sequoia Charter School (Title I School)
- Whispering Wind Academy

Program Evaluation Methods

In collaboration with ASU School of Social Work & Sustainability, a thorough program evaluation was used throughout this process to ensure that the programs mission and vision are being delivered effectively across the partnered schools. Both attendance measurements and surveys from teachers/staff, mentors and participants are key, because that information gives insight as it relates to students increase in their positive

youth development. Positive youth development is a major part of the program's mission and vision statements, along with creating effective and meaningful relationships among students and mentors.

To ensure a thorough program evaluation, a combination of tools were used to collect data at every *Discover Your Future* program site including:

- Participant Attendance (Appendix C)
- Mentor Attendance (Appendix C)
- Teacher and Site Staff Surveys (Appendix D)
- Mentor Survey (Appendix D)
- Participant Survey (Appendix D)

Analysis

1. Enrollment and Attendance

515 youth were enrolled and engaged in the *Discover Your Future* program with 47% male and 53% female participants (Appendix C). The *Discover Your Future* program was at 121% participant capacity with all program locations being over-enrolled. Enrollment increased significantly from 83% during the 2015/2016 program year. Future for KIDS set the target enrollment goal at each program site to 50 youth.

The *Discover Your Future* program site with the highest enrollment was at our Boys and Girls Club-Mesa branch with a total of 64 youth enrolled. The smallest program was located at Percy L Julian Elementary with only 27 youth enrolled. This was a new site for our program, the school is a designated turn around school in the Roosevelt School District. The school itself currently struggles with low enrollment and all the challenges of all new staff and administration. Future for KIDS partnership with the school started second semester as a combined strategy to overcome the challenges as a turnaround school.

Of the 515 youth enrolled in the *Discover Your Future* program, 22% renewed from the 2015/2016 program year. This number is significant as many of our partner agencies serve youth who live in unstable conditions and may be transient. Specifically impressive is the 51% renewal rate at the Coral Canyon Housing community program and 41% at Eagle Ridge Academy, PVUSD. This is our second year as a program partner with Eagle Ridge and the Paradise Valley School District. Furthermore, at our new program location Whispering Winds Elementary School, PVUSD had 39 youth enrolled with an average of 56% attendance rate of all program sessions. This is very impressive enrollment and attendance for the school as a new program site. At our other new program location Percy L Julian Elementary, 27 youth enrolled with an average of 50% attendance rate of all program sessions. This program started in January as a pilot to introduce the program to the community.

Future for KIDS success comes from understanding that meeting students where they are at strengthens relationships and connection. We intentionally partner our program on site, in the student's community. Students find more comfort because they are familiar with their classrooms, community rooms and places around the school. The data results prove if an Out of School program is within the student's community and is more accessible, registration and attendance rates increase. Reflective in our programs with high percentage attendance; Eagle Ridge Academy; Coral Canyon Housing Community; Whispering Winds Academy; and Percy L.

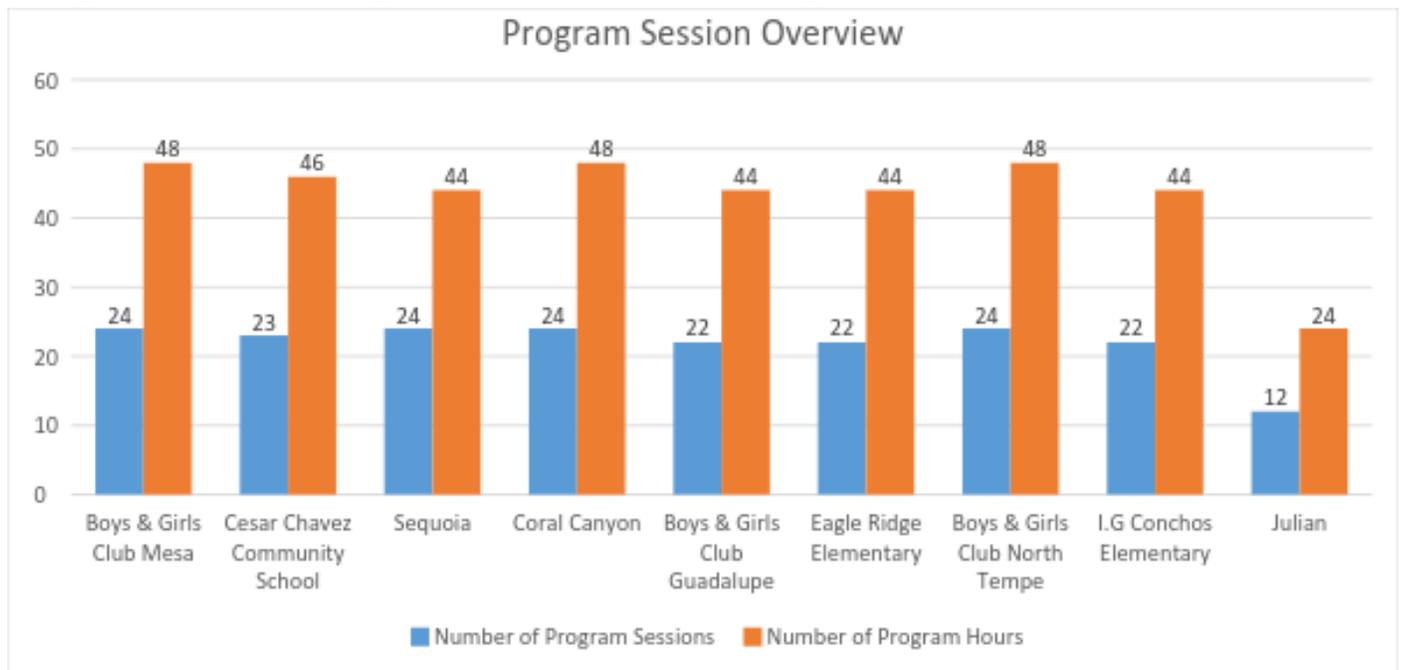
Julian Elementary. Unfortunately due to state and school funding transportation for youth outside of school hours is still a challenge for our program.

On average students attended 62% of all program sessions. This number is an increase from last year's average of 53%. Overall, this is a significant accomplishment considering that a common difficulty of out-of-school time mentoring programs is mentee absences.¹ All of these numbers point to the fact that Future for KIDS provided a strong educational program that youth participants enjoyed and benefitted from.

2. Sessions and Mentor: Child Ratio

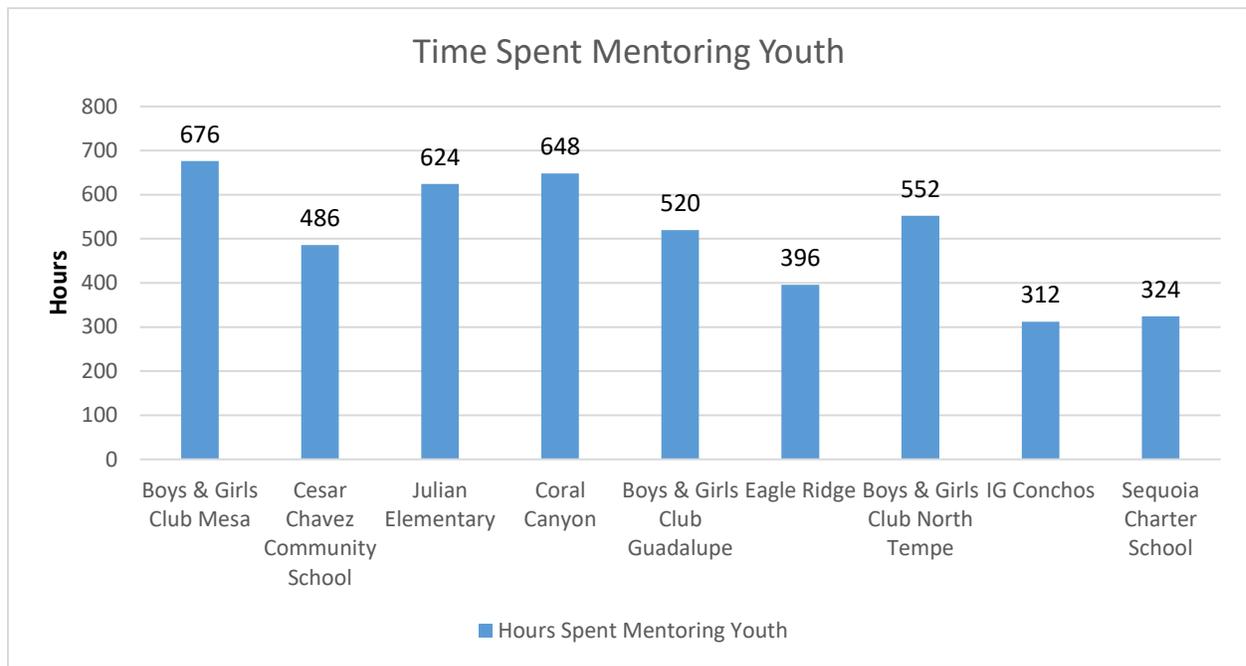
A target of 26 *Discover Your Future* program sessions were conducted at each partner site, with all sites hosting between 22-27 sessions to accommodate for Fall Break, Spring Break, Parent Teacher Conferences and Special Events (Figure 1). Each program session was 2 hours long, allowing each mentor to spend up to 52 hours with the youth. With 78 mentors, a total of 3,503.5 hours were spent mentoring youth, a 65% change from the 2015/2016 program year (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Number of Program Sessions and Hours Per Program Site



¹ Center for Applied Research Solutions. *Mentoring Tactics: Designing and Implementing a Group Mentoring Program*. April 2006

Figure 2: Total Hours Spent Mentoring Youth per Program Site



In total, there were 246 program sessions conducted, up from 228 sessions conducted the previous program year. During these sessions, Future for KIDS achieved an average weekly mentor to child ratio of 1:4, which meets the goal of the program youth to mentor ratio.

3. Positive Outcomes

Over the program year, mentors provided youth with the resources needed to foster their social and emotional development. In an onsite open dialogue mentor feedback session, 100% of respondents reported that they developed a bond with the youth they worked with, and 100% of mentors noticed positive changes in youth's attitudes towards athletics, academics, reading, peers and themselves. Mentors reported that the youth learned social and emotional skills that led to sharing, cooperation, engagement and openness to participating in new areas of physical and emotional learning.

This high success rate is due to the careful identification and selection of youth who need positive role models to participate in *Discover Your Future* by partner agencies, and the strategic placement of mentors. Establishing a stronger connection with the communities in which the youth spend most of their time positively affected their relationship to the program and mentors. Working closely with the participants' schools and afterschool agencies created a cohesive sharing of support. This approach bolstered youth understanding of the importance in attending all program sessions and promoted maximized benefit.

The positive outcomes are also due to the extensive training and support that Future for KIDS mentors received. 98% of mentors reported that they received sufficient training to be an effective mentor and 100% reported that they received the necessary staff support during *Discover Your Future*. Mentors also appreciated the extra effort of Future for KIDS to provide ongoing professional development through the Lunch and Learn series. Due to the schedule of sessions, many mentors could not attend. Mentors unanimously agreed that if their schedule allowed they would have taken advantage of these opportunities. Those mentors that did attend the Lunch and Learn series reported using techniques and information learned during program.

Furthermore, the low child to mentor ratio that was met, allowed our program participants to receive the individualized attention necessary. This attention assisted participants with academic, athletic, and ethics activities, as well as provided the support system and role models that they need to succeed.

Future for KIDS worked with the ASU School of Sustainability to gather all the data for program evaluation. The evaluation tool is based on incorporating the Positive Youth Development Inventory (PYDI) instrument, designed to measure changes in levels of positive youth development as an outcome of youth development programs. The PYDI follows a specific set of criteria set forth by Eccles and Gootman (2002):

1. Programs intentionally create a place for youth to experience physical and psychological safety.
2. Programs provide intentional and appropriate structure for participating youth.
3. Programs emphasize supportive relationships; particularly youth-adult relationships.
4. Programs intentionally create a place for youth to belong and to matter.
5. Programs develop and enforce clear social norms, with clear expectations for youth.
6. Programs provide opportunities for the development of mastery and efficacy.
7. Programs provide distinct opportunities for youth to build specific skills.
8. Programs intentionally seek to integrate youths’ family, school and community.

This version of the instrument follows the 6 C’s model of youth development, by measuring the constructs of 1) Confidence; 2) Competence; 3) Character; 4) Caring; 5) Connection and 6) Contribution. Each item is rated at a five-point scale: (1) Strongly disagree; (2) Disagree; (3) Neutral; (4) Agree; and (5) Strongly Agree.

Figure 3: PYDI metrics explanation

Assets/Characteristics	Definition	Source
Competence	Includes academic, social, vocational, and health competence	Caplan et al. 1992; Weissberg, Caplan, and Sivo, 1989
Confidence	Believing in one’s self and ability	Fetterman, Kaftarian, and Wandersman, 1996
Character	Knowing what is right or wrong and how to do the right thing	Piaget, 1952, 1965; Kohlberg 1963, 1969, 1981; Hoffman, 1981
Connection	Working collaboratively with parents, peers, siblings, teachers, coaches, or other community members	Ainsworth et al. 1978; Bowlby 1973, 1979, 1982; Mahler, Pine, and Bergman 1975
Caring	A sense of compassion or social justice	Salovey and Mayer , 1989; Goleman, 1995
Contribution	When youth are demonstrating strengths in all five Cs, this leads to a sixth C, known as contribution This means a young person enacts behaviors indicative of the five Cs by contributing positively to self, family, community, and, ultimately, civil society	Lerner, 2004; Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Lerner, 2005

Teacher and program partner staff surveys conducted at all program locations reflect results indicating that the *Discover Your Future* program had a positive impact on students' attitudes and academic performance. Partner staff communicate daily that all students were excited to come to the program every day and they were very impressed by program lessons that were delivered to the students. The feedback indicated that student's social and emotional development positively grew by participating in the *Discover Your Future* program. Unanimously, partner staff look forward to the program returning and plan to engage more of their students in our program. Each program site conducted surveys with the first few weeks of programming (pre-test) and a few weeks before programming ended (post-test). Survey data was collected using a scale of 1-5 (1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree), observations and open-ended questions. A total of 464 completed surveys were received by mentors; teachers; partner staff and FFK staff, this reflects a 47% increase in data collected from last year's pilot research implementation.

Youth surveys indicated that seven of the nine sites showed a positive improvement in attitude towards reading, while one site showed negative and one was neutral.

In regards to happiness, support networks saw happiness levels improve across the board, with the exception of Coral Canyon.

Figure 4: FFK specific program data results

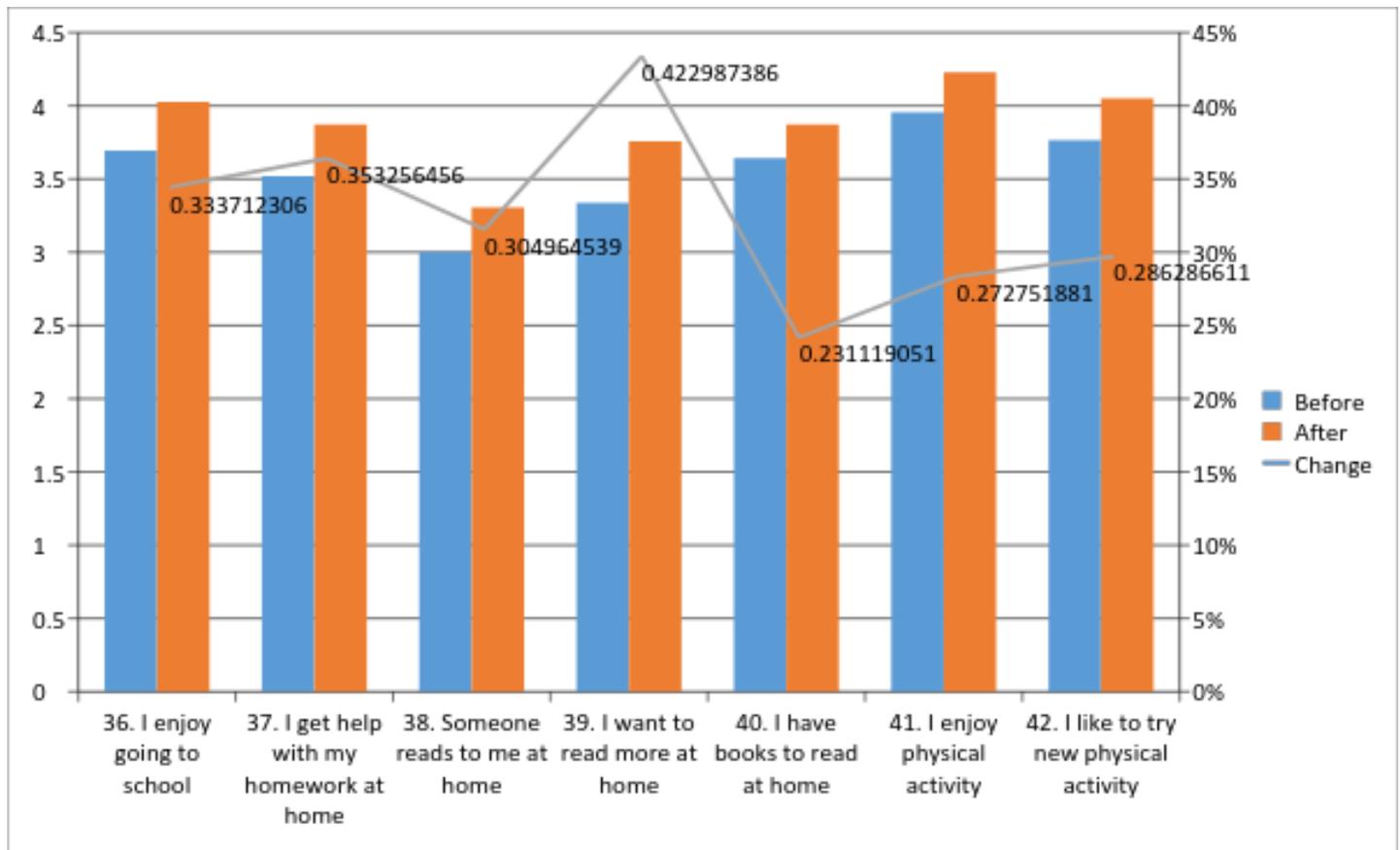


Figure 5: FFK specific program data results

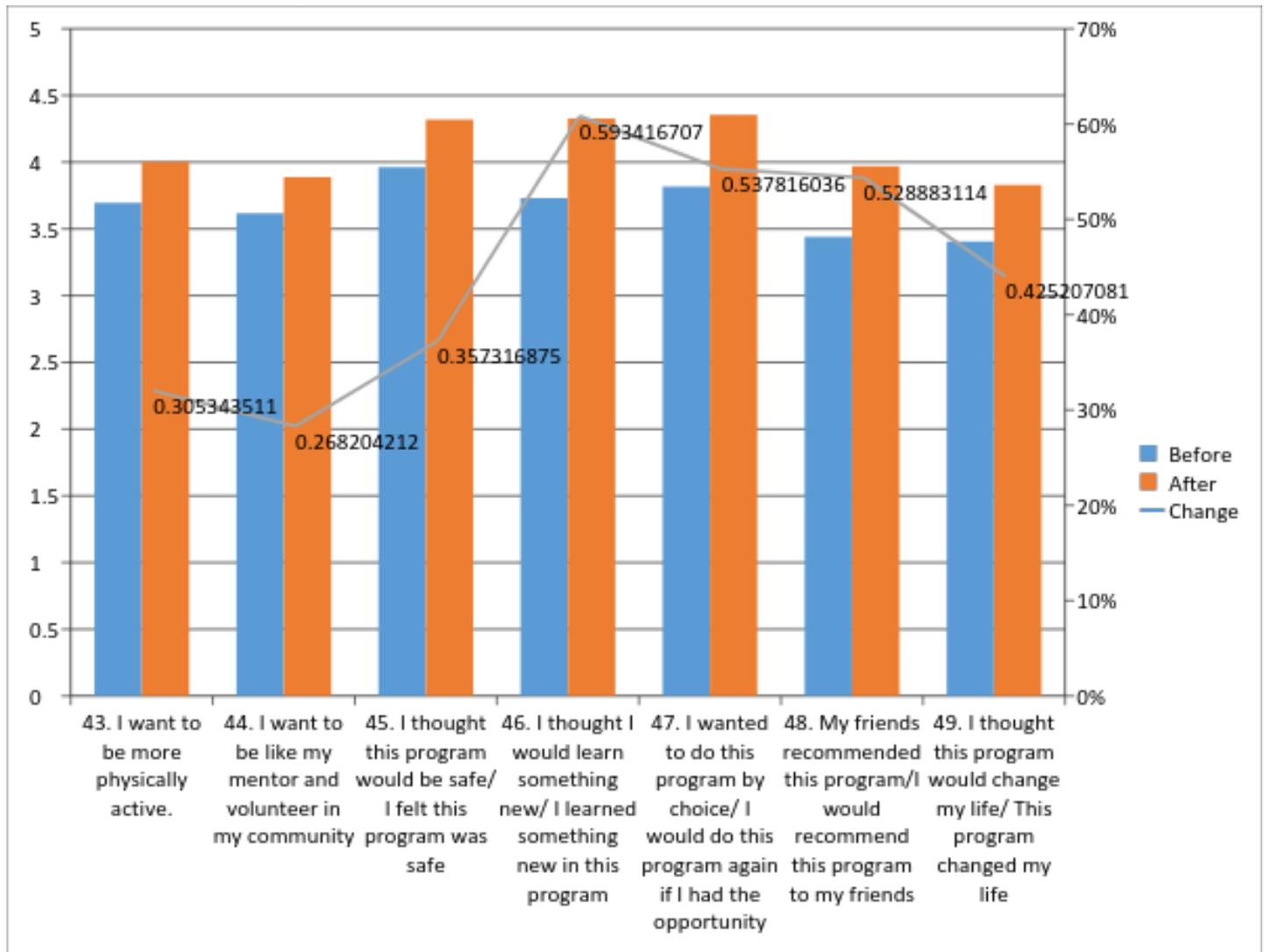
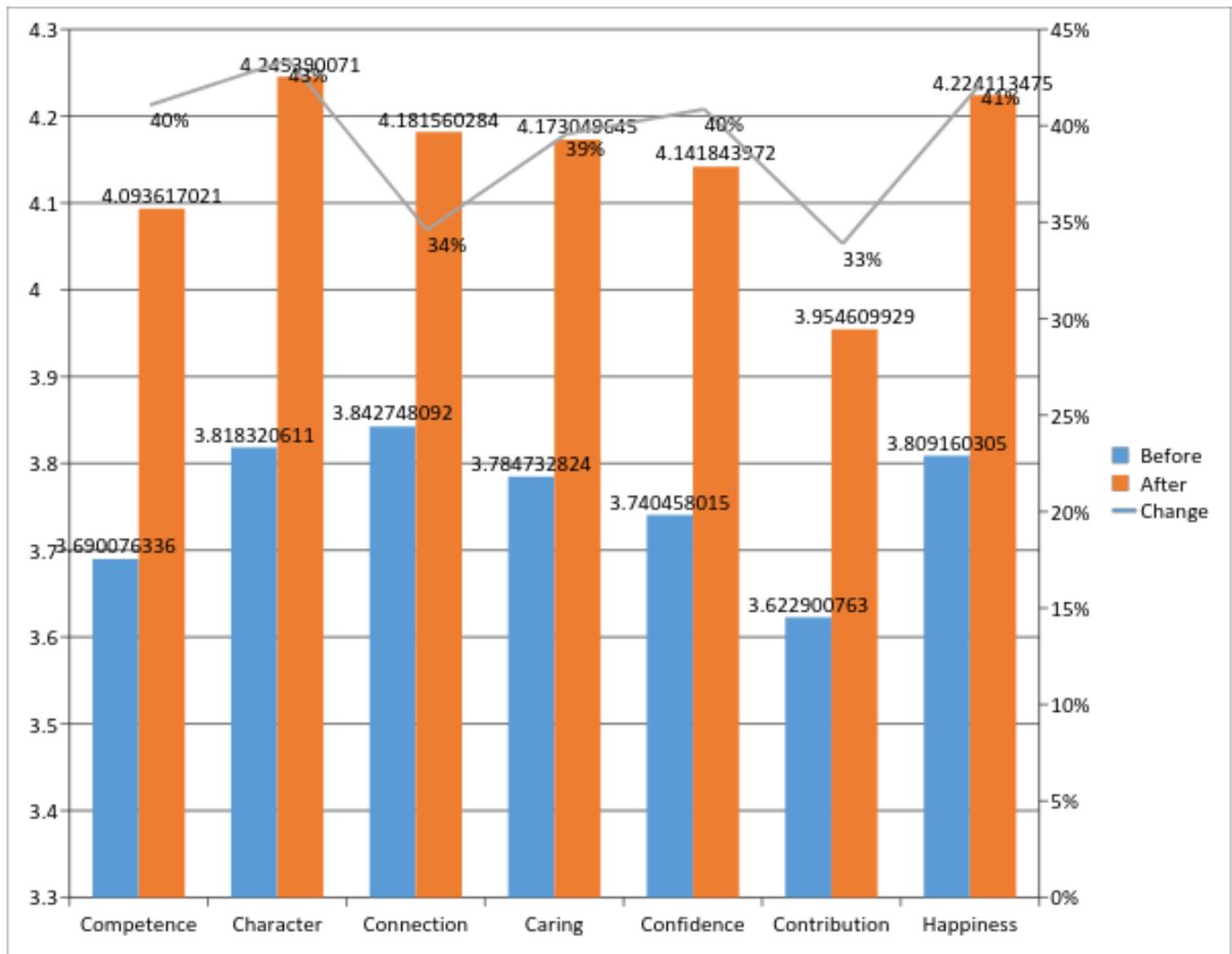


Figure 6: PYDI-6 C's data results



Program Development

In pursuit of continually improving its programming, Future for KIDS signed the Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence 'Make it Count Pledge' committing to deliver quality out-of-school time programming and follow the Quality Standards. (Appendix E). As step one in a "three-step continuous quality improvement process," the Quality Standards were developed in the context of best practices and are organized into seven key areas.² Future for KIDS strives to follow these standards and has made significant achievements during the 2016/2017 program year (Figure 7).

² <http://azafterschool.org/promoting-quality/quality-standards/>

Figure 7: Future for KIDS Achievements towards Arizona Center For Afterschool Excellence Case Quality Standards

AZ Case Quality Standard	Future for KIDS Achievements
I. Safe and Healthy Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved mentor training AZ Fingerprint clearance cards required for all Program Leads
II. Positive Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentor and Program Lead trainings include ACE's and Mindful Discipline presentations Program curriculum includes focus on bonding with the mentor instead of completing the tasks.
III. Intentional Programming and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All programming activities are intentional and aligned with Future for KIDS' mission to provide programs focused on academics, athletics and ethics Youth contribute to program evaluation
IV. Equity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth represent the full diversity of the community The needs of diverse youth are emphasized during Program Lead and volunteer mentor training Program is free for participants
V. Family, School and Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents, teachers and program partner staff are all involved in program evaluation Discover Your Future program structure depends upon strong partnerships with 9 different schools, Boys & Girls Clubs and low income housing communities
VI. Program Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and volunteer roles are clearly defined and training provided Program Manager and Program Lead conduct onsite evaluations Future for KIDS recruits and hires staff and volunteers that reflect the diversity of the community Regular staff meetings, professional development sessions are conducted
VII. Program Evaluation and Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed evaluation in collaboration with ASU School of Sustainability. Surveyed all teachers and program partner staff

Future for KIDS will continue to follow the Quality Standards set out by the Arizona Center for Afterschool excellence. The FFK Program Manager attends and completes all Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence training to improve all Future for KIDS programs in accordance to AZ Case Quality Standards. Our Program Manager also has an active role in the Arizona State ACE's Consortium with Phoenix Children's Hospital to guide programming to focus on improving each session intentionally as a solution to ACE's. Another focus will be on strengthening our STEAM learning modules with a continued objective of bonding, learning success that mitigates toxic stress in our youth.

Conclusions

Overall, the *Discover Your Future* 2016/2017 program year was a success with volunteer mentors, teachers and partner staff reporting they noticed positive changes in the youth that they worked with, and pre-posttests indicating that the program had a positive impact on participants' behavior, attitudes, and academic success.

Future for KIDS seeks to use the data and information gathered by this evaluation to expand and improve its programming. Future for KIDS will increase participant and volunteer mentor retention and satisfaction rates by continually monitoring data and addressing potential issues. Furthermore, by September 2017 Future for KIDS will strengthen and add additional *Discover Your Future* programs in the Phoenix area to provide increased services to youth with Adverse Childhood Experiences. With the addition of increased services, more youth and communities will be positively impacted by our trauma sensitive out of school time programs.

Future for KIDS is an organization recognized for excellence and innovation committed to creating brighter futures for our community's most vulnerable youth and it will continue to offer the quality programming made possible by generous donors and dedicated program partners.