

## Project Learn

### Public Health & Prevention: Community-based

Literature review updated February 2020.

As part of WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies, WSIPP determines "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using an approach called meta-analysis. For detail on our methods, see our [Technical Documentation](#). At this time, WSIPP has not yet calculated benefits and costs for this topic.

**Program Description:** Project Learn is an educational program targeting youth in subsidized public housing that provides after-school activities to youth already participating in Boys and Girls Club (BGC). Local BGC staff, assisted by parents and other volunteers, deliver educational enhancements at BGC/Program Learn sites. Teams monitor youth progress, communicate with youths' teachers, and provide an orientation to the program for youths' parents. Every week, youth participate in structured activities which include discussions with knowledgeable adults, creative writing, leisure reading, school homework completion, peer tutoring, and board games or recreational pursuits that draw on cognitive skills and talents transferable to school. Finally, program site staffs encourage the youths' parents to participate with their children in selected educational activities (e.g., homework completion, reading, discussion of current events, board games). Youth are incentivized to participate in Project Learn by allowing them the ability to earn field trips, school supplies, and additional computer time and special privileges within each local BGC.

In this analysis, students participated in Project Learn for six months.

### Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	No. of effect sizes	Treatment N	Adjusted effect size and standard error			Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)	
			ES	SE	Age	ES	p-value
Grade point average	1	81	0.663	0.161	12	0.663	0.001
Office discipline referrals	1	81	-0.167	0.157	12	-0.167	0.287
School attendance	1	81	1.518	0.178	12	1.518	0.001

Meta-analysis is a statistical method to combine the results from separate studies on a program, policy, or topic in order to estimate its effect on an outcome. WSIPP systematically evaluates all credible evaluations we can locate on each topic. The outcomes measured are the types of program impacts that were measured in the research literature (for example, crime or educational attainment). Treatment N represents the total number of individuals or units in the treatment group across the included studies.

An effect size (ES) is a standard metric that summarizes the degree to which a program or policy affects a measured outcome. If the effect size is positive, the outcome increases. If the effect size is negative, the outcome decreases.

Adjusted effect sizes are used to calculate the benefits from our benefit cost model. WSIPP may adjust effect sizes based on methodological characteristics of the study. For example, we may adjust effect sizes when a study has a weak research design or when the program developer is involved in the research. The magnitude of these adjustments varies depending on the topic area.

WSIPP may also adjust the second ES measurement. Research shows the magnitude of some effect sizes decrease over time. For those effect sizes, we estimate outcome-based adjustments which we apply between the first time ES is estimated and the second time ES is estimated. We also report the unadjusted effect size to show the effect sizes before any adjustments have been made. More details about these adjustments can be found in our [Technical Documentation](#).

## Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

Schinke, S.P., Cole, K.C., & Poulin, S.R. (2000). Enhancing the educational achievement of at-risk youth. *Prevention Science*, 1(1), 51-60.

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