

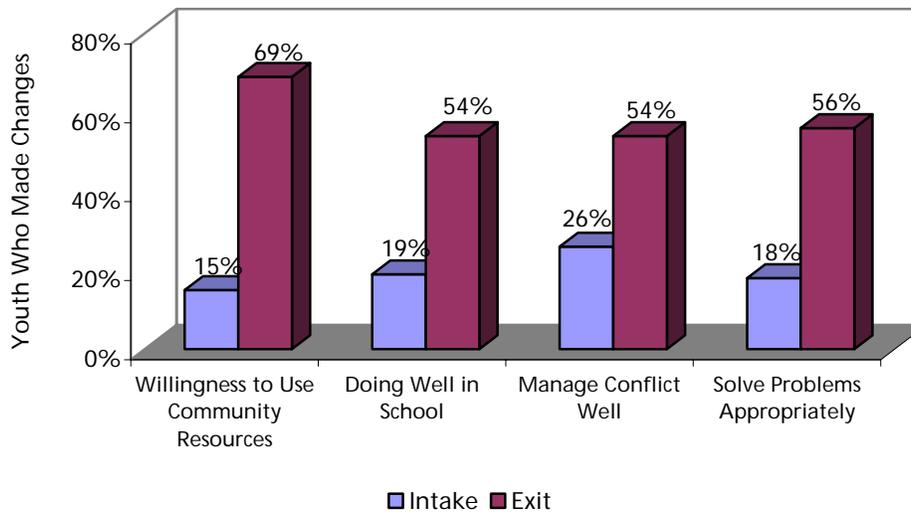
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The Value of Juvenile Justice Prevention Programs

As many organizations are aware, budget deficits at the state and federal level often result in reduced funding for prevention programs. As such, it is even more important to know what works when addressing youth risk factors for substance use and other types of delinquent behavior. The Community Assessment and WINGS Teams (CA/WINGS)¹, a countywide, community-based and family-oriented program focused on prevention, has made it a priority to measure changes in participants' lives after their involvement in the program. With an emphasis on strengthening factors that are known to help buffer a youth from entering the juvenile justice system, the program has realized positive results in the areas of school performance, family dynamics, delinquent behavior, and increased knowledge of resources available to clients. As Figure 1 illustrates, youth clients noted increases in their knowledge and willingness to access other community resources, as well as positive changes in their abilities to problem solve and handle conflict after participating in CA/WINGS. Parents/guardians also noted positive changes in their youth's behavior, as well as improved family dynamics (not shown). These changes offer participants tools to help them navigate risks and challenges that may be present in their lives.

Figure 1
CA/WINGS INCREASE THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS OF PARTICIPANTS



SOURCE: SANDAG; San Diego County Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act Evaluation Report 2005.

There are five CA/WINGS programs throughout the county (serving North Inland, South Bay, East, Central, and North Coastal communities) which accept referrals from schools, law enforcement, and community agencies, as well as from individuals themselves. To learn more about the outcomes of the CA/WINGS program you may download a copy of the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act Evaluation Report located on our Web site at www.sandag.org/cj, or contact Carol Winters at (858) 514-3203 at San Diego County Probation Department to locate the CA/WINGS program in your area.

¹ Formerly known as CAT, until the CAT and Working to Insure and Nurture Girls' Success (WINGS) programs merged in July 2003. This program is collaboration among the San Diego County Probation Department, Health and Human Services Agency, and Community-Based Agencies.