Measuring the Hard to Measure:
From “Soft” Skills to Hard Data

Nicole Yohalem & Alicia Wilson-Ahlstrom
Forum for Youth Investment, April 18, 2012

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Youth Development Executives of King County

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United Way of Greater Cincinnati
Ready by 21

LEADERS
ACCOUNTABILITY

FAMILY, COMMUNITY & SCHOOL SUPPORTS

Partnerships
Goals
Data
Actions

Coordinated
Accessible
Well-Attended
High Quality

Developmentally On Track
Productive
Connected
Healthy & Safe

CHILDREN & YOUTH OUTCOMES

www.readyby21.org | Ready by 21 National Meeting | all youth ready for college work & life
Ready Children & Youth

PHYSICALLY & EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY & SAFE

SOCIALLY & CIVICALLY CONNECTED

ACADEMICALLY & VOCATIONALLY PRODUCTIVE

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Ready Children and Youth

• Brainstorm at tables: Outside of academic achievement and physical/behavioral health, what skills and attitudes are critical to success in college, work and life?
Broadening what we measure

Other Related Resources:
www.cyfernet.org
www.toolfind.org
www.paerweb.org/atis

Skill Areas Featured In this Report

Communication: Self-expression, listening, public speaking and recognizing non-verbal cues.

Relationships & Collaboration: Interpersonal skills, team work, flexibility and cultural competence.


Initiative & Self-direction: Self-awareness, setting and working toward goals, management, working independently, and guiding and leading others.
They matter for academic success

Social-Emotional Learning:
- Improves academic performance and educational outcomes
- Promotes deeper understanding of subject matter
- Helps students learn well with others
- Increases student engagement in school
- Decreases behaviors that interfere with learning

Research Brief Linking SEL and Academic Performance
CASEL, 2003
The matter for workplace success


• In Are they Really Ready to Work, employers identified collaboration, work ethic and communication as among the most important skills necessary to succeed in the workplace. http://p21.org/documents/key_findings_joint.pdf
Measuring Youth Program Quality and Outcomes

Program Quality

- Staff Practices
- Program Content
- Youth Engagement and Program Experiences

Program Outcomes

- Youth Skills & Dispositions such as:
  - Communication
  - Relationships & Collaboration
  - Critical thinking & decision making
  - Initiative & self-direction

Long-term Youth Outcomes

- Achievement
- Employability
- Healthy behavior

Family, community, societal influences

Measuring Youth Program Quality, 2007

Measuring Youth Program Outcomes, 2011

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Tools reviewed in the report:

California Healthy Kids Survey Resilience & Youth Development Module (RYDM)
Greg Austin and Mark Duerr, WestEd

Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)
Search Institute

Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)
Devereux Center for Resilient Children

San Francisco Beacons Survey
Public/Private Ventures (P/PV)

Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)
Frank Gresham and Stephen Elliott, Pearson

Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAYO)
Wendy Surr and Allison Tracy, National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST)

Youth Outcomes Battery
Jim Sibthorp and Dr. Gary Ellis, American Camp Association (ACA)

Youth Outcome Measures Online Toolbox
Deborah Lowe Vandell, Kim Pierce, Pilar O’Cadiz, Valerie Hall, Andrea Karsh, and Teresa Westover
Some other tools to know about

• **READY Tool**
  Measures: caring adult relationships; basic social skills; decision making; constructive use of leisure time
  [www.actforyouth.net/resources/pm/pm_readytool_0706.pdf](http://www.actforyouth.net/resources/pm/pm_readytool_0706.pdf)

• **Positive Youth Development Student Questionnaire**
  Measures: character, competence, caring, connection and confidence
  [https://cyfernetsearch.org/additional_eval_pyd](https://cyfernetsearch.org/additional_eval_pyd)

• **Gallup Student Poll**
  Measures hope, engagement, wellbeing
  [www.gallupstudentpoll.com](http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com)
## What is measured?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Relationships &amp; Collaboration</th>
<th>Critical Thinking &amp; Decision-making</th>
<th>Initiative &amp; Self-Direction</th>
<th>What Else Does it Measure?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California Healthy Kids Survey Resilience &amp; Youth Development Module (RYDM)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Caring Relationships¹; High Expectations; Meaningful Participation; Goals and Aspirations; School Connectedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Support; Empowerment; Boundaries and Expectations; Constructive Use of Time; Positive Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Optimistic Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Beacons Survey</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passive Reaction to Social Challenge; Non-Familial Support; Peer Support; Adult Support at the Beacons; Variety of Interesting Activities offered at the Beacons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperation; Responsibility; Competing Problem Behaviors; Academic Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAYO)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engagement in Learning; Homework; Academic Performance; Program Experiences; Environment; Sense of Competence as a Learner²; Future Planning and Expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outcomes Battery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Family Citizenship; Perceived Competence: Affinity for Nature; Spiritual Well-being; Camp Connectedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outcome Measures Online Toolbox</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aggressive Behavior with Peers; Academic Performance; Misconduct; Reading/English Efficacy; Math Efficacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: An X in a box means the instrument includes a scale where more than half of the scale’s items map directly onto the construct in question.

¹ Caring Relationships, High Expectations, and Meaningful Participation each contain items that measure these in school, community, home and/or peer support contexts.

² Measure includes a sense of competence in reading, writing, math and science.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Target Age/Grades</th>
<th>Settings Tool has Been Tested In</th>
<th>Availability of Normative Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California Healthy Kids Survey Resilience &amp; Youth Development Module (RYDM)</td>
<td>Middle &amp; High School</td>
<td>Primarily Schools</td>
<td>Data collected and analyzed on large numbers of California youth who have taken the Resiliency &amp; Youth Development Module. Reports summarizing these data and descriptive information about the state-level sample are available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)</td>
<td>Middle &amp; High School</td>
<td>OST programs; Schools; therapeutic settings</td>
<td>Normative data designed to facilitate comparison of youth in a given program to a larger population are not available at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)</td>
<td>K – 8</td>
<td>Schools; Residential programs; Clinical settings</td>
<td>Normative data are available for each scale of the DESSA; based on a standardization sample consisting of nearly 2,500 children that sample is reported to closely approximate the K-8 population of the U.S. with respect to age, gender, geographic region of residence, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status based on data published in 2008 by the U.S. Census Bureau. Norm reference cards are available for purchase and are included in the DESSA kit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Beacons Survey</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>Beacons afterschool programs</td>
<td>Normative data designed to facilitate comparison of youth in a given program to a larger population are not available at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)</td>
<td>Elementary – High School</td>
<td>Primarily schools; Clinical settings</td>
<td>Tested on a normative sample of 4,700 youth ages 3-18. In addition, 385 teachers and 2,800 parents provided ratings. Sampling was conducted on a national standardization sample aligned with the demographic results of the 2006 U.S. Census. Sampling was conducted on a national standardization sample aligned with the demographic data published by the 2006 U.S. Census Bureau. Information about using norms is included in kits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAVO)</td>
<td>4th - 8th - 12th (SAVO 1)</td>
<td>OST programs/Afterschool programs</td>
<td>Normative data designed to facilitate comparison of youth in a given program to a larger population are not available at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outcomes Battery</td>
<td>Middle &amp; High School</td>
<td>Primarily camps (both day and residential)</td>
<td>ACA recently began collecting normative data on the Basic version of the Youth Outcomes Battery. These data are intended to allow individual camps to compare their scores with representative scores from typical ACA camps. (Data offer limited comparison value for non-residential camp programs because 75% were collected on residential camps.) Details related to gender, age, race/ethnicity and day/resident programming are forthcoming. Guidance on how to use norms for comparison purposes is available at <a href="http://www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/youth-outcomes-resources/norms">www.acacamps.org/research/enhance/youth-outcomes-resources/norms</a>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outcome Measures Online Toolbox</td>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>Middle school OST programs</td>
<td>Normative data designed to facilitate comparison of youth in a given program to a larger population are not available at this time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| California Healthy Kids Survey Resilience & Youth Development Module (RYDM) | ~40 minutes              | Free                          | Upon request       | Part of the California School Climate, Health and Learning survey tools. Includes a School Climate survey and Parent survey | - Interested programs should contact the California DOE for permission to use  
- Guidebook available online  
- Modifications needed to use for individual program evaluation purposes  
- Survey can be customized; a database of sample questions is available |
| Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)                   | ~20 minutes²             | $195 for 50 surveys/scoring sheets | No                 | Developmental Assets Community Mobilization ("40 Assets") survey                   | - Survey available online or paper copy  
- User’s guide included  
- Programs seeking more information prior to purchase may read an introduction to the tool  
- Fee based in service training available but not required  
- Free video and audio presentations also available |
| Davesraus Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)       | N/A                      | $115.95 for standard kit, including user manual and forms. $39.95 for 25 additional forms | Yes                | DESSA Mini                                                                            |                                                                                                 |
| San Francisco Beacons Survey                         | ~35 minutes              | Free                          | No                 | Youth Feedback Form (on program experiences)                                        | - Interested programs should contact the developer for access to and guidance on the survey |
| Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)              | ~25 minutes              | $248.45 for starter kit, including rating. scales and manual ($517.35 for computer-scored kit), $43.05 for 25 hand-scored surveys; $33.60 for 25 computer-entry surveys | No                 | Part of the Social Skills Improvement System which includes guides for Performance Screening and Improvement Planning | - ASSIST software provides computer scoring and reporting, including individual, progress and multirater reports  
- Online direct links to suggested interventions with the SSIS Intervention Guide  
- Available in Spanish |
| Survey of AfterSchool Youth Outcomes (SAYO)          | ~20 minutes              | $250 for unlimited one year site license | Yes                | Part of the ASYS assessment system which includes an observational tool for assessing quality | - Youth surveys available online only  
- Training available in-person or online  
- Survey may be customized |
| Youth Outcomes Battery                               | N/A                      | $5 (members) or $15 (nonmembers) per scale | No                 | Can be used in tandem with an 8-step program evaluation process                      | - Designed with camps in mind, though "camp" language can be replaced with "program"  
- Guidelines available online |
| Youth Outcome Measures Online Toolbox                 | ~25 minutes              | Varies based on number of sites, number of students per site, and level of analyses | Upon request       | Teacher Student Report, Program Staff Student Report, Program Observation tool and elementary level survey | - Interested programs should contact the developer for access and guidance on the survey |

² Time based on recommended survey length of no more than 50 questions selected from a menu of scales.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Title</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
<th>Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California Healthy Kids Survey Resilience &amp; Youth Development Module (RYDM)</td>
<td>Yes, Moderate-to-Substantial</td>
<td>Students in grades 7, 9 and 11; male and female youth; youth belonging to different racial/ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)</td>
<td>Yes, Substantial</td>
<td>Middle and high school students; male and female youth; youth from different racial/ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)</td>
<td>Yes, Moderate</td>
<td>Elementary school students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Beacons Survey</td>
<td>Yes, Limited-to-Moderate</td>
<td>Primarily for middle school aged youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills Improvement System (SSIS)</td>
<td>Yes, Moderate-to-Substantial</td>
<td>Male and female youth ages 12 and under and ages 13-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Afterschool Youth Outcomes (SAYO)</td>
<td>Yes, Substantial</td>
<td>Elementary/middle and high school students; male and female youth; youth from different racial/ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outcomes Battery</td>
<td>Yes, Limited</td>
<td>Reliability findings have not been reported for specific groups of youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Outcome Measures Online Toolbox</td>
<td>Yes, Substantial</td>
<td>Elementary and middle school students; male and female youth; English Language Learner youth; youth from different racial/ethnic groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: For detailed explanation of our rating scale for reliability and validity evidence and how we arrived at ratings for Tables 6 - 10, see Framework and Criteria for Ratings of Reliability and Validity Evidence on p. 62. The range of rating levels include None, Limited, Moderate, Substantial, and Extensive.
Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC)

OUR MISSION:
To build and organize the youth development field in King County.

OUR VISION:
Every young person has the opportunity to learn, lead, work, thrive, contribute and connect with active support from organized, networked and unified youth development efforts in King County.

WHO WE ARE:
We are Executive Directors, CEOs and other key leaders of non-profit organizations directly serving youth ages 5 through young adulthood within King County.
Youth Development for Education Results Workgroup

Formal collaboration between:

- Youth Development Executives of King County (YDEKC)
- The Roadmap Project for Education Results (focused on South Seattle & South King County – 7 high need school districts)

“How we assess students has enormous implications for what we teach and how effectively we teach it.”

- Dr. Brigid Barron & Dr. Linda Darling-Hammond
The Road Map for Education Results

Our goal is to double the number of students in South King County and South Seattle who are on track to graduate from college or earn a career credential by 2020. We are committed to nothing less than closing the unacceptable achievement gaps for low income students and children of color, and increasing achievement for all students from cradle to college and career.

- **Healthy and ready for Kindergarten**
- **Supported and successful in school**
- **Graduate from high school -- college and career-ready**
- **Earn a college degree or career credential**

We will set 2014, 2017 and 2020 targets for the following on-track indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readiness</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Attainment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy and ready for Kindergarten</td>
<td>Supported and successful in school</td>
<td>Graduate from high school -- college and career-ready</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- % of children meeting kindergarten readiness standards
- Pre-K indicator TBD

- % of students proficient in:
  - 3rd grade reading
  - 4th grade math
  - 5th grade science
  - 6th grade reading
  - 7th grade math
  - 8th grade science

- % of 9th graders who pass end of course algebra exam
- % of students triggering Early Warning Indicator #1
- % of students triggering Early Warning Indicator #2

- % of students graduating high school meeting HEC minimum entrance requirements
- % of high school graduates who completed a career/technical education program
- % of students graduating from high school on time
- % of high school graduates who take developmental education courses in college
- % of students who earn a postsecondary credential by age 26
- % of students who enroll in postsecondary education
- % of students who persist year to year
Key Indicators in the Road Map that Youth Development Organizations can define &/or impact

• **Early Warning Indicators:**
  – % of students triggering Early Warning Indicator #1 (students with 6 or more absences and at least one course failure in the 9th grade)
  – % of students triggering Early Warning Indicator #2 (students with a Suspension and/or Expulsion in the 9th grade)

• % students triggering less than 6 of 13 physical/mental health and safety items on the WA Healthy Youth Survey

• % students motivated and engaged to succeed in school
• % students exhibiting ‘21st century’ skills
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATION RESULTS WORKGROUP

**DEFINE**

- Define & Prioritize YD Indicators that matter for youth success in school

**MEASURE**

- Identify or Create New Measurement Tools that capture prioritized indicators
- Recommend Data Sharing MOUs, Consider Joint Data Systems

**MOVE**

- Identify Strategies or Practices that can help improve the YD Indicators.
- Use data to inform practice and ensure young people get the supports they need
Criteria for Vetting Indicators

Each indicator explored in this paper has been (or is currently being) vetted using the following criteria:

• **Communication Power:** Do the general public, educators and youth development professionals agree that the skill or disposition is important to youth success?

• **Proxy Power:** Does research validate that the skill or disposition has a strong linkage to success in school (K-12 and/or Higher Ed) and/or in the workforce?

• **Data Power:** Can growth in the skill or disposition be measured? Do tools exist to measure it?

• **Practice Power:** Are there strategies, practices or interventions that can be widely implemented to increase attainment of the skill or belief?
Key Researchers and Reports

• Redefining College Readiness (David T. Conley, EPIC, 2007)
• Habits of Mind, Kosta and Kallick
• Partnership for 21st Century Skills
• Angela Duckworth: Grit
• Carol Dweck: Growth Mindset
• Albert Bandura: Self-Efficacy
• C.R. Snyder: Hope
MOTIVATION & ENGAGEMENT

- Future Orientation
- Self-Management
- Self-Efficacy & Positive Mindsets
- Sense of Belonging

21st CENTURY SKILLS = NEEDED WORKFORCE SKILLS

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity
- Critical Thinking
NOW: IDENTIFYING MEASUREMENT TOOLS

Need multiple forms of measurement:
- Youth Self-Assessment
  - School Behavior & Climate Surveys
  - Online Surveys by CBOs
- Teacher or Youth Worker Assessments
- Parent Surveys
- Demonstration of Skills

Measurement tool depends on WHAT is being assessed and how old the student is
NEXT: MOVE THE INDICATORS

- Scale up strategies that work to improve indicators
  - Practices (like having high expectations for youth)
  - Strategies (like project based learning)
  - Systems (like the Youth Program Quality Intervention)
Leigh Ann Luttrell
Manager of Education Initiatives and Investments
United Way of Greater Cincinnati
History & Milestones over the Last Decade
It didn’t happen overnight

- 2000 – United Way of Greater Cincinnati embraced the concept of community impact
- 2005 – Agenda for Community Impact developed, Youth Achieve Success is “priority 3”
- 2006 – Strive Roadmap released
- 2007-2010 – Multiple efforts to identify which non-academic supports are most important for K-12 success
- 2009 – Focus on “collective impact,” UWGC drives development of common databases for early childhood in Ohio and Kentucky
- 2010-2011 – Development of Bold Goals for Our Region implementation of common databases for employment and basic needs
- 2011 - UWGC Youth Achieve agencies “ready” for common measures
- 2012 – Planned pilots using common tools for social-emotional competencies & youth program quality
Agenda for Community Impact

Ultimate Outcome: Children Grow Into Successful Adults

**#1. Children prepared for kindergarten**

**Bold Goal:** By 2020, at least 85% of children are prepared for kindergarten

- Key Strategies:
  - Best practice home visitation
  - Quality early care and education

- Supporting Strategies: social, emotional and physical health; parenting education

**#3. Children/Youth achieve success in school and life**

**Bold Goal:** By 2020, at least 85% of youth will graduate from high school (prepared for life, college and career)

- Key Strategies:
  - Early grade reading proficiency
  - Quality out of school time

- Supporting Strategies: social, emotional and physical health; parenting education; family involvement in schools

Ultimate Outcome: Families and Individuals Achieve Financial Stability

**#2. Families/Individuals achieve sustained employment**

**Bold Goal:** By 2020, at least 90% of the labor force will be gainfully employed

- Key Strategies:
  - Family & work supports
  - Ready for work
  - Secure & maintain employment
  - Advance in career

- Supporting Strategies: housing; financial education

**EDUCATION**

**INCOME**

**HEALTH**

Individuals live healthy lives and achieve maximum independence

**Bold Goals:**
- By 2020, at least 70% of the community will report having excellent or very good health
- By 2020, at least 95% of the community will report having a usual place to go for medical care

- Key Strategies:
  - Prevention & wellness activities
  - Access to quality care
  - Chronic disease management

- Supporting Strategies: child abuse, domestic violence, substance abuse prevention and treatment

Neighborhoods are Vibrant Places to Live
Common Measurement
Creating the Case

Benefits to Providers

• Communication of the program’s value
• A way to fit into the bigger picture of impact
• Leads to continuous learning and improvement

• Benefits to Children and Families
• More effective and impactful programs
• Ability to advocate for “more” based on “what works”

• Benefits to Funders
• Confidence in investments
• Potential for alignment on outcome reporting
• Strengthens our ability to tell the story to our donors
Common Measurement
Creating the Case for Social-Emotional Competencies

Why Social and Emotional?

• Research shows social-emotional competencies are predictive of academic success
• More than 80% of Youth Achieve programs are working on social-emotional competencies
• Learning Partner Dashboard at Cincinnati Public Schools offers opportunity to look at academic data in relationship to out-of-school time data

Why The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment?

• Builds on the DECA which is used by many early childhood providers
• Measures children K-8
• Valid and reliable tool; the scales grounded in research
• User friendly
• Reasonable cost
Contact Information

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- Jessica Werner - jwerner@youthdevelopmentexecs.org
- Leigh Ann Luttrell - leighann.luttrell@uwgc.org