



SAN MATEO COUNTY **PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

SUCCESS CENTERS
ANNUAL EVALUATION

2022-2023



ABOUT THE RESEARCHER

Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a nonprofit social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by collecting meaningful data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm was founded on the principle that community improvement, initiative sustainability, and program success are closely tied to assessment needs, evaluation of community goals, and development of appropriate responses.

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Program Description

The mission of Success Centers is to empower marginalized youths through education, employment, and art, so they may develop a positive self-image and a sense of hope and purpose for their futures. In fiscal year (FY) 2022-23, Success Centers received funding from San Mateo County Probation Department’s (Probation) Juvenile Probation Camp Funding (JPCF), Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG), and Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) for the programs described below.

JPCF funding supports Success Centers’ evidence-based, year-round program known as “Helping Instill Knowledge & Empowerment in You” (HI-KEY). The HI-KEY program provides basic, necessary life skills training and teaches how to obtain and create important documents, such as Social Security cards, driver’s licenses/state IDs, and resumes. Hi-Key’s JPCF-funded services were provided at their location in South San Francisco and include:

- **Case Management:** Youths are assigned a case manager to connect them to needed supports and to develop an individual “Steps to Success” plan detailing the youth’s goals, services needed, barriers, and concrete steps to progress toward goals. The case manager ensures the plans are realistic and meets regularly with each youth to ensure continued stability.
- **Job Readiness Training/Life Skills:** Success Centers Job Readiness Training (JRT) is a simple yet comprehensive curriculum that engages job seekers to become better at resume writing, interview skills, and searching for the right job using current technology. Class topics include self-awareness, career exploration, interview skills, resume writing, and a wrap-up session that allows students to discuss what they’ve learned and how to apply it to their lives. The Life Skills development section prepares young people for the transition to employment by helping them develop work maturity skills, including conflict resolution; dealing with punctuality, fraternization, or authority issues; stress management; and financial literacy, including reading a pay stub, understanding banking systems, etc.
- **Job Placement/Employer Spotlights:** Success Centers links participants to local job fairs and assists jobseekers by attending interviews at places of employment and by engaging potential employers to visit, conduct employer spotlights, and interview potential candidates onsite.

Additionally, YOBG funding from Probation supports Success Centers to do the following work in the Youth Services Center-Juvenile Hall:

- **Job Readiness Training/Life Skills:** See description above.
- **Visual Arts Program:** The Visual Arts Program engages youths in fine arts as a vehicle to build life skills that reduce the risk of recidivism. Each 90-minute session begins with an introduction to a life skill that explicitly builds the ability to counter the most common criminogenic factors that lead to repeat offenses (anti-social thinking, temperament, anger management, etc.) as well as building upon important noncognitive skills such as communication, decision-making, and empathy, all of which are necessary for success. The youths then engage in a corresponding fine arts project taught by community-based teaching artists who serve as strong role models and informal mentors. By

introducing art materials, techniques, and the creative process in a formal, large group setting, youths are exposed to positive methods for expression and communication and are inspired to discover their best selves. The 12-week “Arts for Transformation” Program provides instruction on expressive art, with an intention to show the youths that life is about realizing possibilities, is designed with a dynamic encounter with nature, perception, and challenges that lead towards a place of insight and learning.

- **Computer Literacy Class:** In FY 2022-23, Success Centers coordinated with the San Mateo County Office of Education’s Court Schools Program to pilot a Computer Literacy Class at the Youth Services Center-Juvenile Hall. The program offered basic computer literacy classes via Success Centers’ Microsoft Computer Literacy curriculum. Students learned the difference between hardware and software, inputs and outputs, operating systems, and more. They received Microsoft certificates upon completion.

Lastly, JJCPA funding enables Success Centers to provide the following services to juvenile justice-involved youth:

- **Job Readiness Training/Life Skills:** See description above.
- **Youth Employment Program:** The program provides youth with further exposure to the workplace, work readiness and/or technical skills training, as well as enhance employability skills and career awareness while supporting youth’s overall development. It also provides support to individual youth’s career path for competitive occupation opportunities, providing Worksite Development/Placement case management, a career advisor and On-the-Job (OTJ) training. Success Centers will also assist with barriers such as housing, obtaining an ID, childcare, transportation, education, or personal/family challenges.
- **Worksite Development/Placement Services:** The Worksite Development/Placement staffer will develop the OTJ training opportunity for those youths who will be placed into worksites, typically community-based organizations and those businesses that are re-entry friendly, negotiate the opportunities, assist employers with integrating youths into the workplace, along with tracking and monitoring their collective experience.
- **Career Advisor/Job Track Services:** The Advisor will work with the youths referred by Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) for OTJ program and services. The Career Advisor will conduct an intake, assessment, and job readiness training for youth in preparation for placement into the OTJ experience. A Career Advisor will also support the program manager with reporting and tracking youth's experience.

Programmatic Challenges

Success Centers provided a summary of overall challenges over FY 2022-23. For JPCF-funded programs, establishing rapport with partners and participants was a challenge because Success Centers was tasked with replacing a long-term staff member after they transitioned to a different opportunity. Staff were new faces to partners and needed to re-build relationships across multiple programs.

For JJCPA funded programs, one key challenge faced was a low number of referrals from the DPOs. A key goal that Success Centers attempts to reach is to provide programs and services for all youth entering Probation through career advisors. Staff intend to meet quarterly with the county to connect with the supervising DPOs and enhance efforts in working with justice-involved youth.

Lastly, Success Centers did not report any challenges in FY 2022-23 for YOBG-funded services.

Evaluation Methods

Programs provided by Success Centers are supported by Probation’s JPCF, JJCPA, and YOBG funding streams. Success Centers reports client, service, and outcome data to Probation and its evaluator, Applied Survey Research (ASR). The methods and tools used to collect this data from funded programs include:

- **Participants and Services:** Funded programs collected demographic data (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, etc.) and service data (e.g., type of services, hours of services, etc.) for individual participants. Program staff entered these data elements into their own data systems prior to transferring the data to ASR for analysis.
- **Risk Factors:** Programs funded by JPCF and JJCPA used the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS) to provide a standard measure of risk for youths. This individualized assessment is a widely used criminogenic risk, strengths, and needs assessment tool that assists in the effective and efficient supervision of youths, both in institutional settings and in the community. It has been validated across ethnic and gender groups. The JAIS consists of a brief initial assessment followed by full assessment and reassessment components (JAIS Full Assessment and JAIS Reassessment). The JAIS assessment has two unique form options based on the youth’s gender. Probation has elected to administer the JAIS to all youths receiving services in community programs for at-risk and juvenile justice-involved youth. The JAIS Girls Risk consists of eight items, and the JAIS Boys Risk consists of ten items. Each assessment yields an overall risk level of ‘low,’ ‘moderate,’ or ‘high.’
- **Outcomes:** Success Centers collected six additional program-specific outcome measures to track progress toward improving their clients’ quality of life:
 - Percent of youths with improved soft/hard skills following participation;
 - Percent of youths who apply for employment and are hired;
 - Number of monthly employer spotlights;
 - Percent of youth that obtain on the job training opportunities;
 - Percent of youths who reported better engagement with academics;
 - Percent of youths who reported enhanced knowledge about job readiness and life skills; and
 - Percent of youths who reported enhanced appreciation for the arts.
- **Evidence-Based Practices:** JPCF, JJCPA, and YOBG-funded programs are encouraged to follow evidence-based practices. To augment Probation’s knowledge of which programs are being implemented by funded partners, each program has provided a catalog of its practices since the FY 2017-18 evaluation period. After receiving this information, ASR runs the cataloged practices reported through several clearinghouses to determine whether each practice is an¹:
 - Evidence-based theory or premise;

¹ For the full list of evidence-based practice clearinghouses used to evaluate programs, please see the JJCPA/JPCF Comprehensive Report for FY 2022-23.

- Evidence-based model, shown by multiple experimental or quasi-experimental studies to be effective;
- Evidence-based practice or modality shown to promote positive outcomes; and
- Evidence-based tool or instrument that has been validated (concurrent and predictive).

Evaluation Findings

FY 2022-23 HIGHLIGHTS

- During FY 2022-23, Success Centers served a total of 132 youths (97 JPCF, 3 JJCPA, and 32 YOBG), averaging 20.7 hours of service over 3.6 months.
- Success Centers served youths across the criminogenic risk spectrum in FY 2022-23. Almost all JPCF-funded youths scored “low” risk (89%) on the JAIS, with one youth who scored “moderate” (4%) and two youths who scored “high” risk (4%). JJCPA-funded youths’ scores were suppressed due to a small number of youths served.
- Success Centers achieved two of three JPCF performance goals (youths improving their soft/hard skills and the number of Employer Spotlights) and all three YOBG performance goals (percentage of youths who reported enhanced knowledge about job readiness and life skills and percent of youths who reported they learned a new skill). Success Centers did not meet their new JJCPA performance goal as no youth obtained OTJ training opportunities.

PROFILE OF YOUTHS SERVED

As mentioned above, during FY 2022-23, Success Centers served a total of 132 youths across three funding streams (Exhibit 1). Race/ethnicity data were available for 69% of the 132 youths (Exhibit 2).

- **JPCF:** The 97 youths served under JPCF received an average of 20.7 hours of service over a period of 3.6 months. About two-fifths (45%) of youths identified as multi-racial/ethnic, followed by 26% identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, 13% youths identified as Hispanic/Latino, 8% identified as White/Caucasian, 7% identified as Black/African American, and 1% identified as another race. Over half of youths identified as male (55%), and the average age was 16.9 years.
- **JJCPA:** The three youths served under JJCPA received an average of 309.2 hours of service over a period of 8.0 months. Ethnicity, gender, and age for JJCPA are unavailable due to fewer than five youths served. However, these youth characteristics are included in the total counts and percentages.
- **YOBG:** The 32 youths served under YOBG received an average of 17.7 hours of service over a period of 3.4 months. About two-fifths (38%) of youths identified as Black/African American, followed by 31% identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, 23% identified as multi-racial/ethnic, and 8% identified as White/Caucasian. Nine of every 10 youths identified as male (94%), and the average age was 17.3 years.

Exhibit 1. Success Centers Services Overall and by Funding Source

YOUTH SERVICES	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23
All Probation-Funded Youths Served			
Number of Youths Served	90	81	132
Average Number of Hours Served	13.2	27.2	20.7
Average Time in the Program (Months)	2.6	2.9	3.6

YOUTH SERVICES	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23
JPCF			
Number of Youths Served	61	63	97
Average Number of Hours Served	15.5	19.7	12.7
Average Time in the Program (Months)	2.7	2.9	3.5
JJCPA			
Number of Youths Served	-	-	3
Average Number of Hours Served	-	-	309.2
Average Time in the Program (Months)	-	-	8.0
YOBG			
Number of Youths Served	29	18	32
Average Number of Hours Served	8.3	53.5	17.7
Average Time in the Program (Months)	2.5	2.9	3.4

Note: All youths n=132, JPCF n=97, JJCPA = 3, YOBG n=32.

Exhibit 2. Success Centers Race/Ethnicity Profile, by Funding Source

PROGRAMS	HISPANIC/ LATINO	WHITE/ CAUCASIAN	BLACK/ AFRICAN AMERICAN	ASIAN/ PACIFIC ISLANDER	MULTI- RACIAL/ MULTI- ETHNIC	ANOTHER RACE
JPCF	13%	8%	7%	26%	45%	1%
JJCPA*						
YOBG	0%	8%	38%	31%	23%	0%
Total	11%	8%	12%	27%	41%	1%

Note: All youths n=92, JPCF n=76, JJCPA = 3, YOBG n=13. *JJCPA included in total percentage only due to n < 5.

RISK INDICATORS

Exhibit 3 shows that Success Centers served JPCF-funded youths across the risk spectrum in FY2022-23. Specifically, almost all youths funded by JPCF scored “low” risk (89%); with one youth who scored “moderate” and two youths who scored “high”. Due to the small sample size of fewer than five JJCPA-funded youth, criminogenic risk scores are not included below.

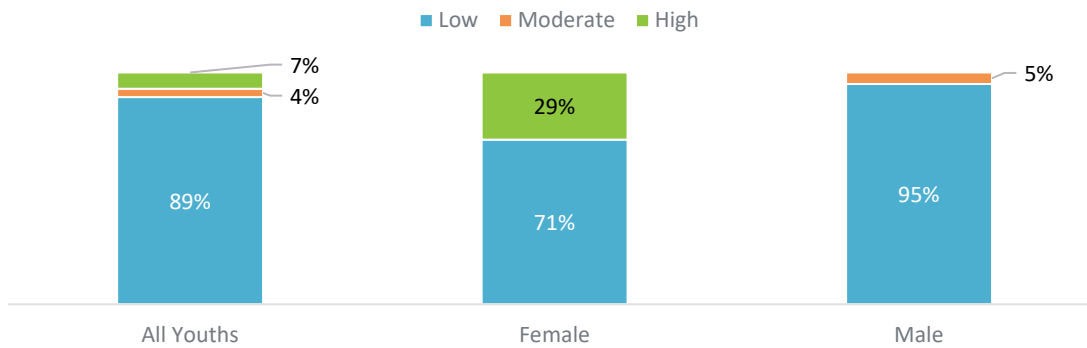
Exhibit 3. JAIS Risk Levels (JPCF only)

JAIS RISK LEVELS	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23
Low	20%	19%	89%
Moderate	53%	29%	4%
High	27%	52%	7%

Note: FY 2022-23 JPCF n=27. Risk scores for JJCPA not shown due to n<5. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

When disaggregated by gender, the largest portion of both self-identified female and male youths funded by JPCF scored as “low” risk (71% and 95%, respectively). One male scored “moderate” (5%), and two females scored “high” (29%) risk (Exhibit 4).

Exhibit 4. Criminogenic Risk Level by Gender (JPCF only)



Note: All JPCF Youths n=27, Female n=7, Male n=20. Risk scores for JJCPA not shown due to n<5. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

Success Centers and Probation developed seven additional measures specific to Success Centers activities, three for JPCF, one for JJCPA and three for YOBG funded activities, to further understand outcomes of the youths receiving services (see Exhibits 5, 6, & 7). Success Centers met five of their seven performance goals. Regarding JPCF-funded Job Readiness Training, 90% of the youths improved soft/hard skills. Success Centers also achieved the second JPCF performance measure, monthly employer spotlights, by hosting 27 spotlights over the year. They did not meet the third measure of youths hired, as none of the youths obtained jobs.

For Success Centers newly JJCPA-funded programs, they had an additional goal of 50% of youth obtaining on the job (OTJ) training opportunities. They did not meet that goal as no youth were placed in OTJ training.

For the YOBG performance measures, Success Centers exceeded all of their performance goals - 90% of youths reported better engagement with academics, 90% of youths reported enhanced job readiness and life skills, and 90% of youths reported that they learned a new skill and that they felt confident enough to use the new skills they learned in real life situations.

Exhibit 5. Performance Measures – JPCF

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23 TARGET	FY 22-23 RESULTS
Job Readiness Training: Percent of youth with improved soft/hard skills following participation	Goal met for 2 of the 3 quarters from which data were available	95%	80%	90%
Job Placement: Employer Spotlights to be held monthly	100%	100%	100%	100%
Job Placement: Percent of youth hired who apply for employment	13%	0%	50%	0%

Exhibit 6. Performance Measure – JJCPA

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23 TARGET	FY 22-23 RESULTS
Youth Employment Program: Percent of youth that obtain OTJ training opportunities	N/A*	N/A*	50%	0%

Note: *New measure for FY 22-23. Success Centers did not track job readiness training performance measure for quarter one of FY 2020-21.

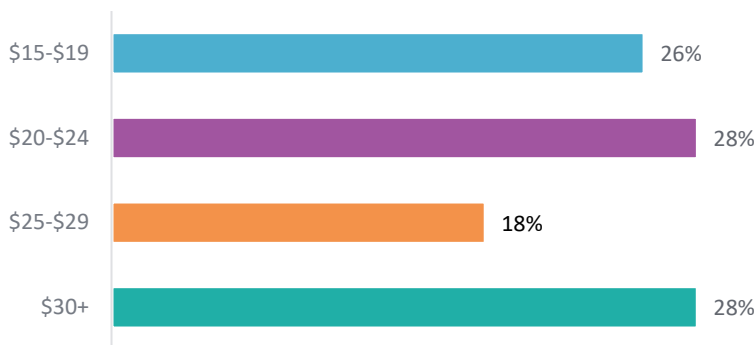
Exhibit 7. Performance Measures – YOBG

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 20-21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23 TARGET	FY 22-23 RESULTS
Participants will report better engagement with academics	N/A	N/A	80%	90%
Participants will report enhanced knowledge about job readiness and life skills	88%	87%	80%	90%
Participants will report enhanced appreciation for the arts	N/A	100%	80%	90%

YOUTH SALARY SURVEY

Success Centers set an additional goal this year of implementing a youth salary survey. This stemmed from anecdotal evidence that youths were not obtaining jobs because they had unrealistic salary expectations. Success Centers implemented a 14-question survey to 11 youths in December 2022 and another 28 youths in May 2023. Nineteen (19) of the youths attended Gateway Center School and 20 attended Thornton High School. Of the youths who completed the survey, 28% expected to make \$30 or more per hour. The current minimum wage in San Mateo County is \$16.50. See Exhibit 8 for details.

Exhibit 8. Youths’ Current Hourly Wage Expectations



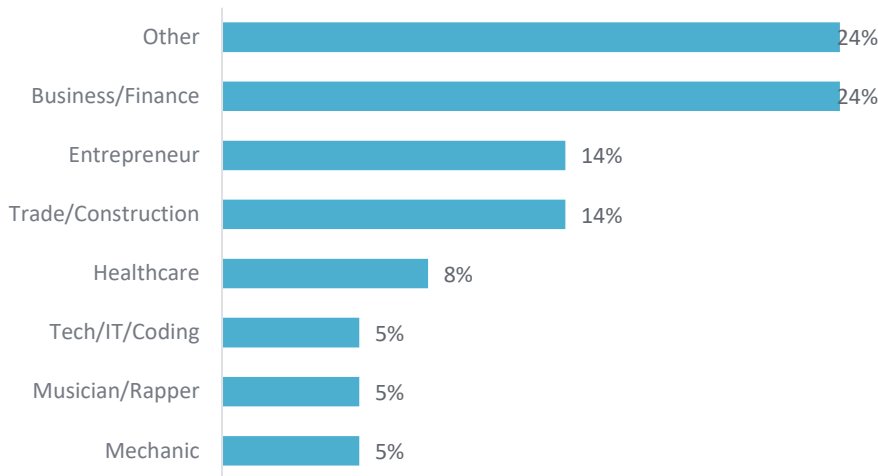
Note: n=39.

Youths expressed interest in jobs across many different industries: 17% wanted a job in retail/sales/marketing, 11% were interested in business/finance, and another 11% were interested in hospitality/hotel/restaurant. The

remaining youths’ interests varied from manual labor (e.g., construction and mechanic) to relatively newer job categories (e.g., social influencer and rapper).

When asked about the salaries and job types they would like in 10 years, 69% plan to make \$40 or more per hour and the top job fields were business/finance, entrepreneur, and trade/construction. Responses to other future job aspirations included culinary arts, hotel/hospitality/restaurant, film and fashion, retail/marketing, office administration, professional sports, private defense industry contracting, and other well-paid career (Exhibit 9). Regarding their educational plans, 52% of the youths plan to attain a high school degree or GED, and 13% plan to attain a doctorate or master’s degree.

Exhibit 9. Youths’ 10-year Career Goals



EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

In FY 2022-23, JPCF, JJCPA and YOBG-funded programs were asked to provide the models, curricula, or practices employed in their programs. ASR then evaluated the given information to determine whether they were evidence-based or promising practices by running the items through evidence-based practice clearinghouses including SAMHSA Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide. Exhibit 10 details the practices that Success Centers reported for their JPCF, JJCPA and YOBG-funded programs and the evidence base for each.

Exhibit 10. Evidence-Based Practices

PRACTICE	IMPLEMENTATION	RATING
Case Management	Individual meetings with clients; Face-to-face meetings, phone calls, text messages. The curriculum is only implemented under the JPCF programming.	Not rated. Informed by tools that are research-based or promising.
Digital Literacy Class	Group meetings	Not yet rated.

Growth Mindset	Individual meetings with clients; Group meetings as part of Job Readiness and Life Skills training	Research-based practice based on empirical evidence. ²
Job Readiness Training	Group meetings	Not yet rated. Informed by employment and training-related programs that are research-based or promising.
Life Skills Training	Group meetings	Not yet rated. Informed by skill-building training and curricula that are research-based or promising.
Motivational Interviewing	Individual meetings with clients	Evidence-based practice according to the Center for Evidence-Based Practices. ³ Elsewhere rated as research-based for children in mental health treatment, ⁴ but the Office of Justice Programs rates the use of motivational interviewing for juvenile substance abuse as having “no effect” for clients age 14-19. ⁵

CLIENT STORY

Staff at Success Centers provided client stories to help illustrate the effect of services on their clients during FY 2022-23. Client stories for JPCF and YOBG-funded programs are featured below. A client story for JJCPA-funded programs is not featured in this report due to a small number of youths served.

Exhibit 11. JPCF Client Story

Name of client	Vanessa (pseudonym)
Age and gender	Female, age 18
Reason for referral	Client was a student at Gateway Alternative High School. She participated in Job Readiness Trainings and Life Skills Classes and joined to strengthen her employment skills. She continued to meet with the career advisors to receive case management services and invited Success Centers staff to her High School graduation, which occurred in June of 2023.
Client’s behavior, affect, and appearance when they first started in the program	Client was initially shy and reluctant to actively participate during sessions, but over time trust was developed and she became more open.

² Mueller, C. M., & Dweck, C. S. (1998). Praise for intelligence can undermine children's motivation and performance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75(1), 33-52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.75.1.33>

³ Center for Evidence-Based Practices (2018). *Motivational Interviewing*. Case Western Reserve University. <https://www.centerforebp.case.edu/practices/mi>

⁴ Washington State Institute for Public Policy. (2020). *Updated Inventory of Evidence-Based, Research-Based, and Promising Practices: For Prevention and Intervention Services for Children and Juveniles in the Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, and Mental Health Systems*. http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1727/Wsipp_Updated-Inventory-of-Evidence-Based-Research-Based-and-Promising-Practices-For-Prevention-and-Intervention-Services-for-Children-and-Juveniles-in-the-Child-Welfare-Juvenile-Justice-and-Mental-Health-Systems_Report.pdf

⁵ OJJDP Model Program Guide. (2011). *Practice Profile: Motivational Interviewing (MI) for Substance Abuse Issues of Juveniles in a State Facility* <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=180>

Activity engagement and consistency	Client engaged in the trainings offer during program hours. Training topics ranged from Growth vs. Fixed Mindsets to Financial Literacy. Over time their comfort level increased and they engaged more and more.
Client’s behavior, affect, and appearance toward the end of the program	Client was more confident than at the beginning of the initial encounter in the program. She was more expressive and open about matters that challenged her and looked for support.
What the client learned as a result of the program	Client learned about the importance of having an ID, such as for securing employment, and learned the process for how to obtain one.
What the client is doing differently in their life now as a result of the program	Acting independently and ensuring she is taking the steps to remove barriers to employment and success.
The value of the program in the client’s words	"Thanks to Success Centers for taking me to the DMV to get my ID! I'll need it for employment and more! I would not have understood this if it weren't for their Job Readiness classes."

Exhibit 12. YOBG Client Story

Name of client	Benjamin (pseudonym)
Age and gender	Male, age 15
Reason for referral	Client joined the program as part of his elective class in the school inside Juvenile Hall. It was a part of his catalog of classes for school instruction.
Client’s behavior, affect, and appearance when they first started in the program	Client initially behaved in a disruptive manner to the class. He enjoyed making his peers laugh and appeared uninterested in the material being taught.
Activity engagement and consistency	Client was virtually always in attendance for digital literacy class but did not fully engage until the end of the program.
Client’s behavior, affect, and appearance toward the end of the program	Client’s behavior changed toward the end of the classes. Once he understood more about the material being taught, which enabled him to become curious, he became more engaged.
What the client learned as a result of the program	Client learned about the different functions of operating a computer. Topics such as hard drives, software vs hardware, and more were discussed and taught.
What the client is doing differently in their life now as a result of the program	Client is able to explain basic functions of computers to his peers or others. He is more confident in his understanding of computers which he knows will help him in the job market.
The value of the program in the client’s words	"Thank you to Success Centers for showing more about how to operate a computer, and learning about the types of software we use everyday!"