



YouthBuild Retrospective Survey Results

2019-2020

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Background and Methods

Researchers from the Center for Urban Population Health and Milwaukee Christian Center (MCC) YouthBuild staff identified expected psycho-social outcomes of individuals participating in the program, which engages adult “Opportunity Youth” who are not currently employed or enrolled in post-secondary education in on-site construction skills-building and mentoring with skilled tradespeople. In addition to outcomes already captured by MCC related to building affordable homes for Milwaukee families and construction-related credentialing for participants, identified participant outcomes included 21st Century skills, such as civic engagement, career readiness, resiliency, and conflict resolution skills; as well as self-confidence in engaging post-secondary educational opportunities.

YouthBuild participants completed a self-report questionnaire related to the identified outcomes. Scales were based on existing, validated instruments, including the Civic Engagement Scale (Doolittle & Faul, 2013), Career Engagement Scale (Hirschi, Freund, & Herrmann, 2013), Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (Connor & Davidson, 2003), and the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (Astin & Astin, 2000). Additional questions related to seeking more education were included, as were demographic variables. The full questionnaire can be found in the appendix.

Studies indicate that people can have difficulty accurately self-assessing their skill levels when they have little experience with the task, sometimes known as the Dunning-Kruger Effect. This can lead to artificially inflating traditional pre-test scores in relation to post-test scores, whereas the post-test self-assessments can be more accurate due to learning more about the topic (Klatt & Taylor-Powell, 2006). To account for this phenomenon, a retrospective pre-test was administered concurrent with the post-test survey. Only participants who had completed a majority of the YouthBuild program were invited to complete the survey. Prior to engaging with the substantive questions, participants were presented with human subjects study information and gave consent to participate in the study. Surveys were administered electronically online via Qualtrics. Results for the 2019-2020 program year are presented below.

Results

Demographics

A total of 30 YouthBuild participants completed the questionnaire. Survey respondent demographic information is presented on the table that follows.

Table 1: Demographics		
	N=	30
	N	(%)
Sex		
Female	6	20.0
Male	22	73.3
Missing	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0
Race		
White	3	10.0
Black or African American	22	73.3
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	3.3
Asian	0	0.0
Hispanic/Latino	3	10.0
Two or More Races Indicated	1	3.3

	Mean (SD)
Age (in years)	21.2 (1.82)

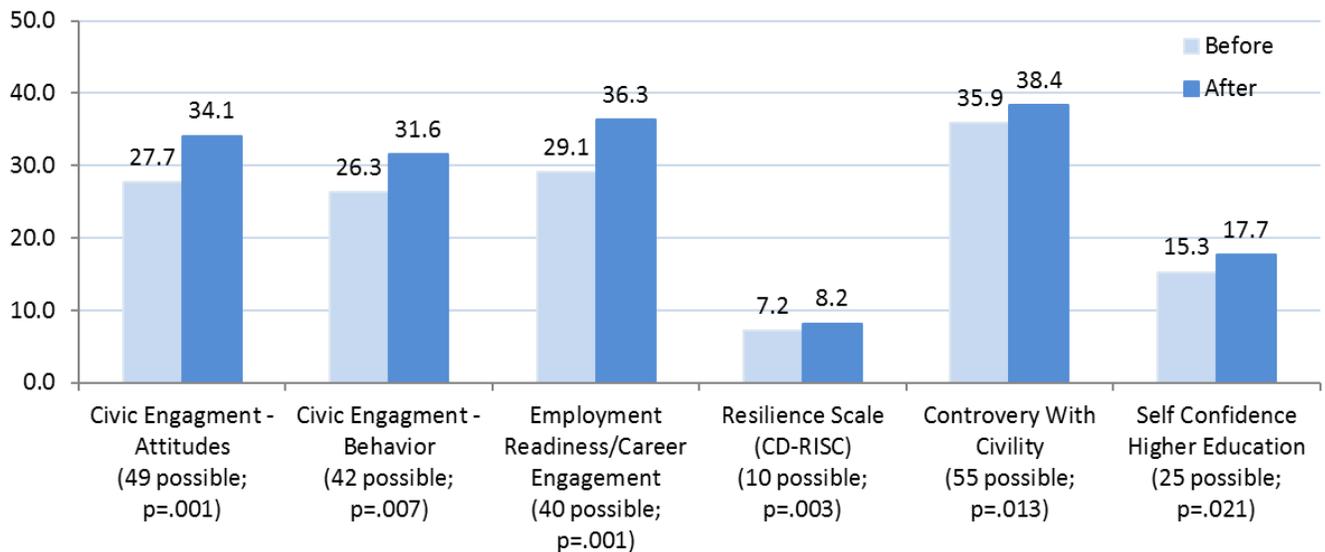
The average (mean) age of survey respondents was 21.2 years. A majority (73.3%) identified as male, and a majority identified as African-American (73.3%).

Psycho-social Outcomes

Respondents rated themselves on a series of scales related to 21st Century skills and related outcomes (see the appendix for the full questionnaire). In a retrospective pre-post design, respondents first rated themselves as they were at the time of completing the

questionnaire, and then were invited to rate themselves as they were just prior to engaging in YouthBuild. The figure below summarizes the average (mean) scores by domain for both points in time. Below each domain, the total possible points are presented, along with the significance of paired *t*-tests to determine whether differences were statistically significant. All differences were statistically significant at least at the $p < .05$ level; several differences were significant at the $p < .01$ or $p < .001$ levels (significance of paired *t*-test for each domain is noted in the figure).

Figure 1: YouthBuild Psycho-social Outcomes



Civic Engagement - Attitudes

Overall as a group, respondents scored themselves at 34.1 out of a possible 49 points after engaging in the program, while they perceived themselves to be at a lower level (27.7) prior to starting YouthBuild.

Civic Engagement - Behavior

Overall, respondents rated themselves 5.3 points higher after participating in the program (31.6 out of 42 possible points) compared to just prior (26.3).

Employment Readiness/Career Engagement

As a group, respondents reported greater employment readiness and career engagement after participating in YouthBuild (36.3 out of a possible 40 points) compared to prior (29.1).

Resilience Scale

Out of 10 possible points, respondents rated themselves as more resilient (8.2 out of 10 possible points) after their participation in YouthBuild compared to how resilient they perceived themselves to be prior (7.2).

Controversy with Civility

Out of 55 possible points, respondents reported gaining on average (mean) 2.5 points, rating themselves 38.4 at the end of YouthBuild compared with 35.9 prior to engaging in the program.

Self-Confidence related to Higher Education

On average, respondents rated themselves more confident in relation to engaging in higher education (17.7 out of 25 possible points) at the end of the program compared with their self-perception prior to participating in YouthBuild (15.3).

Education Aspirations

Finally, respondents were presented with a couple of questions related to their current educational goals. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 2: Educational Aspirations		
<i>Are you interested in further education, including technical certifications or attending college?</i>		
No, I don't plan on pursuing more education	1	3.7%
Yes, but not within the next year	8	29.6%
Yes, within the next year	11	40.7%
Yes, within 6 months	7	25.9%
Total	27	100.0%
<i>What type of degree were you planning on obtaining?</i>		
Technical/Professional Certifications	9	36.0%
Vocational/Technical Degree	3	12.0%
2-year College Degree	8	32.0%
4-year College Degree	2	8.0%
Graduate School Degree	3	12.0%
Total	25	100.0%

The vast majority of respondents reported interest in furthering their education (92.3%), with most indicating they would like to do so within a year (66.6%). Of those interested in further education, specific certification/degree interest varies, with about one-third interested in technical/professional certifications or two-year degrees each, 12.0%

interested in a vocational/technical degree or graduate school degree, and the remaining 8.0% interested in a four-year degree.

Summary

Overall, survey results indicate that YouthBuild program participants experience greater levels of 21st Century Skills and self-confidence related to engaging in higher education at the end of their program experience compared to just prior to engaging in the program. Furthermore, participants overwhelmingly report interest in furthering their education. While these results reflect just two years of programming, they indicate that YouthBuild holds promise for positively impacting key skills and attitudes of Opportunity Youth related to civic engagement, resilience, ability to engage with controversy with civility, employment readiness, self-confidence related to higher education, and educational aspirations.

Appendix

The complete questionnaire follows.

Default Question Block

The first two questions should be completed by the MCC YouthBuild staff member.

Participant ID

Attendance in YouthBuild (number of Americorps hours)

MCC YouthBuild Survey

Background

This survey is part of a larger evaluation of the Milwaukee Christian Center's YouthBuild program that is being conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee's Center for Urban Population Health (UWM/CUPH). As an MCC YouthBuild participant your insights and opinions are extremely important! As the program's external evaluators, please be assured that protecting your privacy is our highest priority at CUPH and we promise to maintain confidentiality for you at all times.

At no time will we reveal your participation or personally identify you in any oral or written reports. We will be providing a final report of the evaluation findings but will report answers only in aggregate, as a group and individual responses will not be identifiable. This survey should take about 10-15 minutes of your time to complete and your participation is voluntary, of course, and you may stop taking the survey at any time. However, your insights and opinions are extremely important, so thank you for agreeing to help with this important survey!

Instructions

For each set of questions you are asked to respond to questions about how you think and act NOW, and then you'll be asked the same questions about how you were BEFORE the program.

By clicking the "next" arrow below, you are consenting to taking this survey. Thank you!

	1 Disagree	2	3	3	4	5	6	7 Agree
4. I stay informed of events in my community.	<input type="radio"/>							
5. I participate in discussions that raise issues of social responsibility.	<input type="radio"/>							
6. I contribute to charitable organizations within the community.	<input type="radio"/>							

Employment Readiness

Career Engagement Scale (Modified)

Part 3: Thinking of your **current** situation, how much confidence do you have that you could accomplish the following tasks?

Please indicate your level of confidence on a scale from “No Confidence at all” to “Complete Confidence.”

What best describes you?

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
1. Actively seek to design your professional future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Undertake things to achieve your career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Care for the development of your career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Develop plans and goals for your future career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Sincerely think about personal values, interests, abilities, and weaknesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
6. Collect information about employers, professional development opportunities, or the job market in your desired area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Establish or maintain contacts with people who can help you professionally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Voluntarily participate in further education, training, or other events to support your career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Assume duties or positions that will help you progress professionally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21st Century Skills

Part 4: Please read each statement carefully and choose the response that best fits you.

Resilience Scale

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I am able to adapt to change.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I tend to bounce back after I've experienced a hardship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Controversy with Civility

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I am open to others' ideas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
2. Creativity can come from conflict.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I value differences in others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Hearing differences in opinions enriches my thinking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I struggle when group members have ideas that are different from mine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Greater harmony can come out of disagreement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I respect opinions other than my own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I am uncomfortable when someone disagrees with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. When there is a conflict between two people, one will win and the other will lose.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I am comfortable with conflict.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I share my ideas with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Interest in Higher Education

Part 5: Please read each statement carefully and choose the response that best fits you.

How confident are you in your ability to...

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
...collect information about colleges or other educational opportunities that are available beyond high school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
...talk to a school counselor and/or other mentors about educational options beyond high school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...request information (financial aid, admission requirements, and deadlines, etc) and/or applications for admission to college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...develop plans and goals for your educational future?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...research academic majors that might be a good fit with your interests and goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Are you interested in further education, including technical certifications or attending college?

- No, I don't plan on pursuing more education
- No, I already have a college degree
- Yes, but not within the next year
- Yes, within the next year
- Yes, within 6 months

What type of education are you interested in obtaining?

- Technical/Professional Certifications
- Vocational/Technical Degree
- 2- year College Degree
- 4-year College Degree
- Graduate School Degree

Great! We're almost done.

	1 Disagree	2	3	3	4	5	6	7 Agree
2. When working with others, I made positive changes in the community.	<input type="radio"/>							
3. I helped members of my community.	<input type="radio"/>							
4. I stayed informed of events in my community.	<input type="radio"/>							
5. I participated in discussions that raise issues of social responsibility.	<input type="radio"/>							
6. I contributed to charitable organizations within the community.	<input type="radio"/>							

Please indicate your level of confidence on a scale from “No Confidence at all” to “Complete Confidence.”

What best describes your confidence level before YouthBuild?

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
1. Actively sought to design your professional future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Undertook things to achieve your career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Cared for the development of your career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Developed plans and goals for your future career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Sincerely thought about personal values, interests, abilities, and weaknesses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
6. Collected information about employers, professional development opportunities, or the job market in your desired area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Established or maintained contacts with people who can help you professionally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Voluntarily participated in further education, training, or other events to support your career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Assumed duties or positions that will help you progress professionally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Resilience Scale

Before YouthBuild, what best described you?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I was able to adapt to change.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I tended to bounce back after I've experienced a hardship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Controversy with Civility

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I was open to others' ideas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I believed creativity can come from conflict.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
3. I valued differences in others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Hearing differences in opinions enriched my thinking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I struggled when group members have ideas that are different from mine.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I believed greater harmony can come out of disagreement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I respected opinions other than my own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I was uncomfortable when someone disagreed with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I believed when there is a conflict between two people, one will win and the other will lose.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I was comfortable with conflict.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I shared my ideas with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please read each statement carefully and choose the response that best fits you.

BEFORE YouthBuild, how confident were you in your ability to...

	No confidence at all	Very little confidence	Moderate confidence	Much confidence	Complete confidence
...collect information about colleges or other educational opportunities that are available beyond high school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

No confidence at all Very little confidence Moderate confidence Much confidence Complete confidence

...talk to a school counselor and/or other mentors about educational options beyond high school.

...request information (financial aid, admission requirements, and deadlines, etc) and/or applications for admission to college.

...develop plans and goals for your educational future?

...research academic majors that might be a good fit with your interests and goals.

