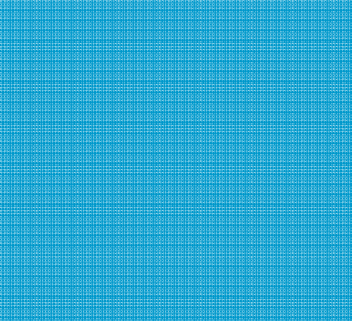


**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
THE CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT
QUESTIONNAIRE: 2001 ITEM FREQUENCIES, BETWEEN
SCHOOL ANALYSES, AND CHANGES FROM 1999-2001**



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children's institute
Strengthening social and emotional health

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report tabularly presents item frequencies, between group analyses, and across year (1999 vs. 2001) analyses from the Children's Institute Middle School Student Questionnaire, conducted this past Spring at the following CHANGE Middle School sites: Charlotte Middle School, Thomas Jefferson Middle School, James Madison School of Excellence, and the Dr. Freddie Thomas Learning Center. The responses are grouped under the broad headings of Basic Demographics, School Environment, Risky Behaviors, Developmental Assets/Adolescent Protective Factors, and Change from 1999 to 2001.

I. Basic Demographics: (See pages 2 - 5 for complete data)

There were a total of 2,715 students responding; 604 students from Charlotte Middle School (CMS), 680 from Thomas Jefferson Middle School (TJMS), 848 from James Madison School of Excellence (JMSE), and 583 from the Dr. Freddie Thomas Learning Center (DFTLC).

Gender:

- 47% of the respondents were males; 53% were females.

Ethnicity:

- 61% of the respondents were African-American; 16% Hispanic; 8% White; 3% Asian-American; and 12% Other; JMSE and DFTLC had proportionally more African-American students (87% and 62%, respectively) than the other sites.

Grade level:

- 28% of the students reported being 6th graders; 36% were 7th graders; 35% were 8th graders; and 2% were in other grades.

Female adults living in the home:

- Mother = 80%; Grandmother or other female adult relative = 9%; None = 4%; Stepmother = 3%; and Other female adult = 3%.

Highest level of schooling completed by female guardian:

- Completed grade school or less = 6%; Completed high school = 36%; Completed college = 24%; Completed graduate or professional school after college = 7%; Don't know or does not apply = 28%.



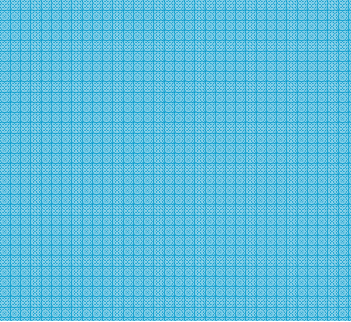
Male adults living in the home:

- Father = 36%; None = 30%; Stepfather = 18%; Grandfather or other male adult relative = 9%; Other male adult = 7%.



Highest level of schooling completed by male guardian:

- Completed grade school or less = 6%; Completed high school = 28%; Completed college = 17%; Completed graduate or professional school after college = 5%; Don't know or does not apply = 43%.

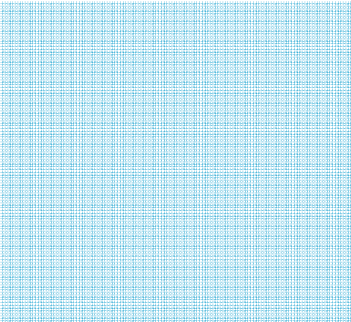


II. School Environment, including school connectedness, teaching quality, disruption and misbehavior, and school safety (See pages 6-13 for complete data)



School Connectedness:

- Students' connectedness to their school was mixed. For instance, while over 23% of the students surveyed strongly disagreed with the statement, "Students would rather attend this school than transfer to another," 13% strongly agreed with the statement.
- Similarly, over 23% strongly disagreed (and over 13% strongly agreed) with the statement, "Attendance is good; students stay away only for urgent and good reasons."



Teaching Quality:


- Most students either agreed or strongly agreed that the teaching at their school was of a high quality nature. For example, over 70% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Teachers in this school are 'out in front,' seeking better ways of teaching and learning."
- Over 25% of the students surveyed strongly agreed that "Teachers in this school are proud to be teachers," 10% strongly disagreed.

Disruption and Misbehavior:

- Over 54% of the students surveyed strongly agreed with the statement "Other students often disrupt class" and over 45% strongly agreed that "Disruptions by other students get in the way of my learning."
- Over 20% of the students strongly agreed that "Misbehaving students often get away with it."

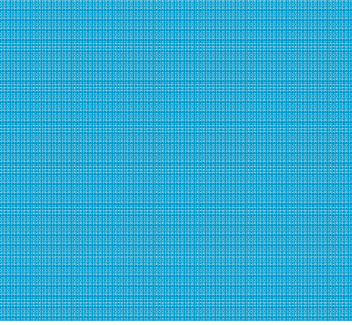
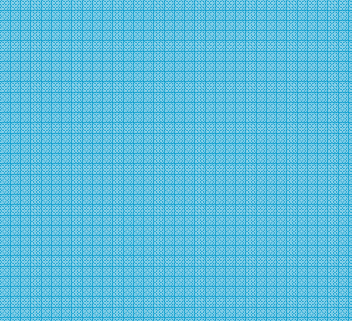
School Safety:

- Over 30% of the students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I don't feel safe at this school"

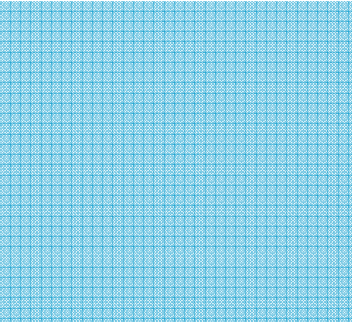
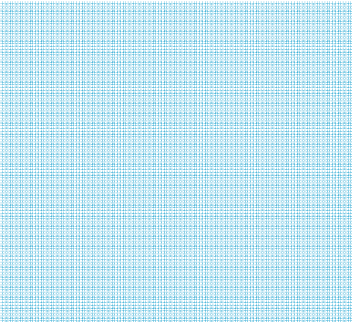
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- Over 10% of the students felt afraid of getting hurt by someone at their school at least "Most of the time."

II. Risky Behaviors, including negative affect, illicit substance use, and delinquent behaviors (see pages 14 - 25 for complete data)


Illicit Substance Use: Use of illicit substances increased from the younger to the older grades (i.e., less use amongst sixth graders, more use amongst seventh graders, and even more use amongst the eighth grade students.

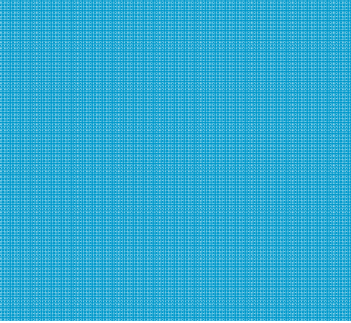
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- Overall, the use of illicit substances within these four schools declined from 1999 to 2001, particularly the use of illicit gateway substances.
 - 7%, or one out of fourteen, reported smoking cigarettes within the past 30 days, down from 11 % in 1999.
 - 11%, over one out of nine students, reported drinking alcohol within the past 30 days.
 - 10%, one out of ten, reported using marijuana within the past 30 days.
 - The use of cocaine, inhalants, and other illegal drugs was reported by the students as under 3% within the past 30 days. Despite this low incidence, this is an area that must be monitored closely from year to year.

Delinquent Behaviors: As is nearly always the case, more boys than girls reported participating in delinquent activities.

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- Overall, rates of delinquent behaviors declined from 1999 to 2001.
 - Over 15% reported carrying some sort of weapon in the past 30 days, down from over 20% in 1999.
 - Over 32% reported being in a physical fight within the past 30 days.
 - Over 11 % reported stealing from a store within the past 30 days.
 - Over 12% reported getting in trouble with the police within the past 30 days.
 - Nearly 15% reported having damaged property just for fun.

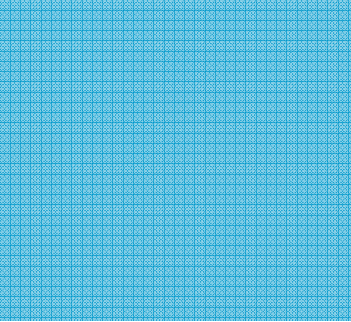
Negative Affect: While not a depression scale, per se, there is substantial evidence that many students suffer from negative affect, depression, lack of good feeling regarding self, and the like. Girls reported more negative affect than did the boys; younger grade students reported more negative affect than did students in the older grades.

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- Close to 30%, nearly one of three, of the students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "Sometimes I feel like my life has no purpose."
 - Nearly 30% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I am often disappointed with myself."
 - There were no significant differences in the rates of negative affect between 1999 and 2001.

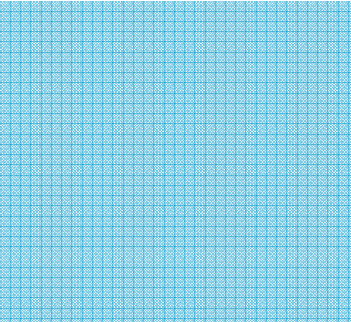


III. Developmental Assets/Adolescent Protective Factors, including self-worth, social competence, individual strengths, attitudes towards schooling, school behaviors, pro-social behaviors/activities, parental support, parental advice, parental monitoring, teacher support, teacher advice, adults in the neighborhood support (See pages 26 - 52 for complete data)

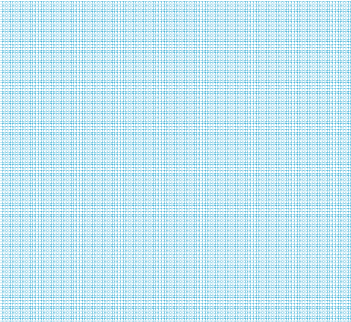
Self-Worth:

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- A fairly consistent 85% of the students reported feeling a high degree of self-worth.
 - Despite this, rates of self-worth declined significantly from 1999 to 2001.
 - There were no gender or grade level effects.

Social Competence:


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- The majority of students (72% to 82%) reported high levels in their being socially accepted, in their ability to make friends, being popular with other students, and having a lot of friends.
 - Similar to self-worth, however, overall rates of social competence declined from 1999 to 2001.
 - Older grade students reported being more socially competent than did the younger grade students.

Individual Strengths (i.e., working through problems, not giving up when things get hard, knowing how to say "no," staying away from people who might get me into trouble, planning ahead):

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- Again, rates of individual strengths declined from 1999 to 2001.
 - Despite this, rates of individual strengths remained moderately high, with 62% to 79% agreeing that they possess the construct of interest.
 - Girls reported more individual strengths than did the boys.

Attitudes Towards Schooling:

- A majority of students reported positive attitudes towards



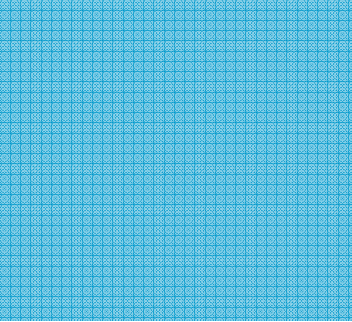
schooling. For example, over 96% agree that it is important to do the best one can in school and over 96% agree that finishing high school is important to them.

- Despite this, positive attitudes towards schooling declined from 1999 to 2001.
- 12% of the students either agree or strongly agree with the statement, "I would like to quit school as soon as I can."
- Girls had significantly more positive attitudes towards schooling than did the boys.
- Younger grade students felt more positive towards their schooling than did the older grade students.



School Behaviors:

- Students reported a broad range of positive and negative school behaviors; see page 35 for the full reporting.

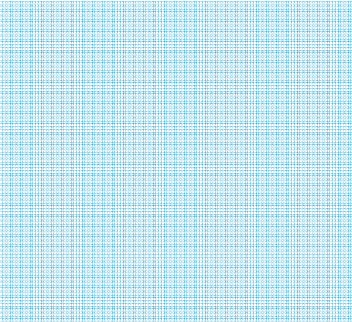



Pro-Social Behaviors/Activities:

- A majority of students reported minimum involvement in sports activities, clubs, reading for fun, attending church services, helping others, participating in music or art activities, or working for pay (results from this last item may be expected from a school population this young). Nearly 3% did not participate in any of these activities and over 60% only participated in structured activities for 1 or 2 hours per week.
- Only 4% of the students participate in structured activities for more than 6 hours per week.
- The amount of participation in pro-social behaviors/activities declined from 1999 to 2001.
- More students participate in clubs and organizations outside of the school than inside the school.



Parental Support and Advice:

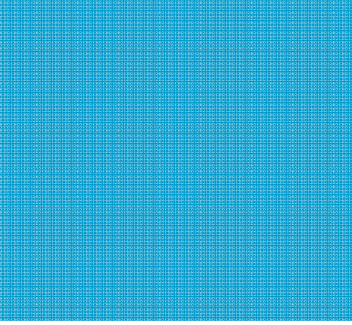
- A majority of students report their parents as being generally supportive of them. However, a persistent 15%-nearly one out of seven-report little or no parental support.
 - Over 65% reported that they would, or probably would, go to their parents about advice regarding important topics such as drugs, alcohol, sex, or other concerns.
 - Males reported higher parental support scores than did the females. There were no gender differences in willingness to seek out parents for advice.
 - Younger grade students reported more parental support
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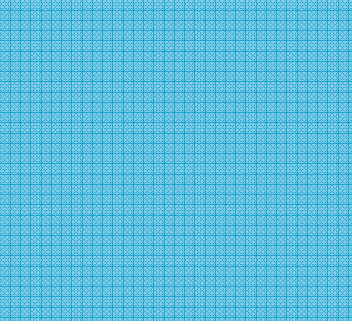
than did the older grade students and younger grade students were more willing to seek out parents for advice.

- While rates of parental support declined somewhat from 1999 to 2001, rates of willingness to seek out parents for advice improved from 1999 to 2001.

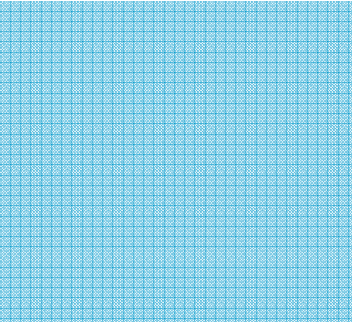
Parental Monitoring:

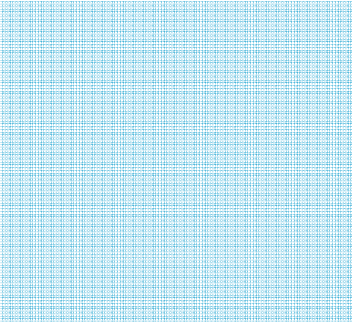
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- Over 66% of the students reported that their parents ask where they are going, with whom they will be, and where they go at night either all or most of the time.
 - There were no differences in the rates of parental monitoring between 1999 and 2001.
 - Girls reported more parental monitoring than did the boys. There were no grade level differences in rates reported.

Teacher Support and Teacher Advice:

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- The amount of perceived teacher support declined from 1999 to 2001, although there were no differences in students' willingness to seek out teachers for advice.
 - Students generally felt positive about their teachers' support or advice. For instance, 69% of the students reported that they feel their teachers care about them (nevertheless, 31% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that their teachers really cared about them).
 - Girls reported more teacher support than did the boys.
 - Younger grade students reported more teacher support and more of a willingness to seek out teachers for advice than did the older grade students.

Adults in the Neighborhood Support:

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- Students were divided in their reporting on this issue—close to 50% were positive; close to 50% were negative.
 - Rates from 1999 to 2001 were essentially unchanged.
 - Younger grade students perceived more adult support than did the older grade students. There were no gender differences.



We feel that this data provides important insights into these schools and can potentially aid in a number of ways, including needs analysis, identifying potential areas of strengths and concerns of students, planning, and in providing longitudinal information regarding a number of risk and protective factors important for healthy adolescent development.

Note: Reference T01-007

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