



ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Yoga In Schools (YIS) provided services to Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) at the Helen S. Faison (HSF) and Dilworth Academy (DA) locations during the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school year, respectively. Each site incorporated approximately 12 weeks of YIS programming into existing Physical Education classes.* YIS *YogaEd*® trained instructors, with the assistance of regular PhysEd teachers, led students through the YIS curriculum for 1 period per week per class. *Tools for Teachers*® instruction was made available to all educators during in-service and special sessions throughout the programming year. A summary list of YIS programming made possible by foundation funding includes:

- YIS “Tools for Teachers”: Yoga tools taught to all classroom teachers at both schools during an in-service day. Tools are for use in every classroom, every day, beyond program duration.
- Approximately 600 children, grades k-6, received YIS instruction;
- Employment of YIS teaching assistants, improving the instructor-student ratio for all children;
- Employment of additional YIS instructors, distributing teaching responsibilities; and
- Created inroads for yoga programming throughout the Pittsburgh Public School District.

Financial support of YIS during this period made it possible to achieve four organizational aims: (1) Provide teachers with classroom and self-help tools to assist in the management of emotional and physical stress throughout the school day; (2) Positively affect children’s social and psychological development and sense of place in academic settings as indicated in pre- and post self-report assessments; and (4) increase children’s developmentally appropriate flexibility, balance and relaxation skills.

Evaluation and assessment of YIS impact during this period were predicated on the population profile of the HSF site and YIS resources.† ‡ Measurement selection reflects sensitivity to ease and timeliness of administration, a wide variance in student reading levels, awareness of age/developmental appropriateness, and measure validity. Measurement selection also reflects an interest in capturing children’s perception of self in school, with teachers, and with or among peers. The Kinetic School Drawing technique (KSD) met all of these needs.

Kinetic School Drawings were administered during the first and last yoga class of each 12 week period. Instruction and material were uniform across classes, as was time allotted for drawing. Once collected, drawings were evaluated individually for the presence of pre-identified global features such as positive self-concept; activity of child, teacher, and peers; placement of self (in or out of school) and academic behavior. All global concepts were scored for their presence or absence in each drawing.

* Dates of Service: HSF: January – May, 2008; DA: September – December, 2008

† Original planning called for one year of YIS programming at HSF, commencing with the financial award (January, 2008). Following the completion of programming for the 2007-2008 school year but just prior to commencement of the 2008-2009 year, YIS made a decision to expand exposure to YIS programming throughout PPS and specifically to Dilworth Academy.

‡ Teachers, YIS Instructors and school staff and administration are excluded from assessment.

Initial analyses[§] of the drawings suggest a positive impact of YIS programming after 12 weeks, particularly in areas suggesting connectedness to the school environment and social interactions. Tables 1-6 reflect the captured changes across timepoints.

Table 1: *Presence of Structure:*

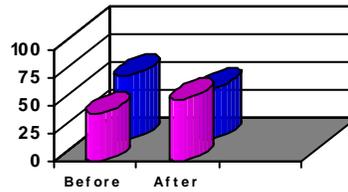


Table 2: *Placement of Self (in or out of school);*

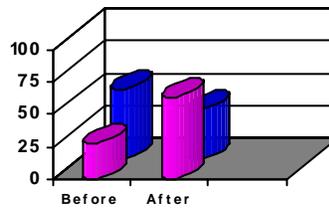


Table 3: *Engagement in Academic Behavior;*

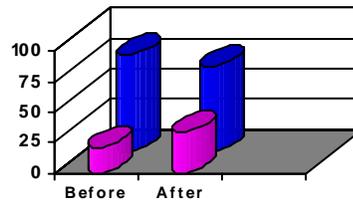
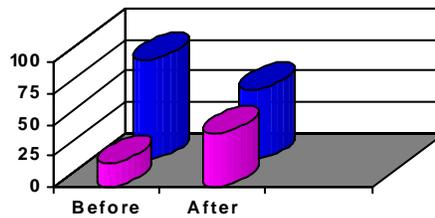


Table 4: *Positive Teacher Activity*



[§]Data are unpublished and not finalized.

Table 5: *Positive Activity between Teachers and student(s)*

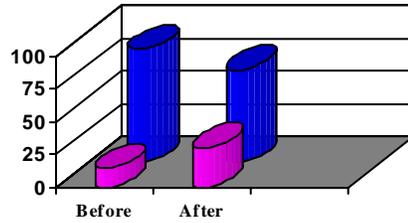
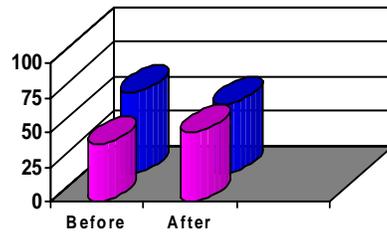


Table 6: *Engagement in Positive Activity;*



Few changes were noted in areas assumed to be more deeply entrenched in the student's sense of self:

Table 7: *Positive self-concept*

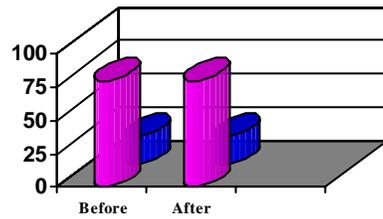


Table 8: *Desirable Self-behavior*

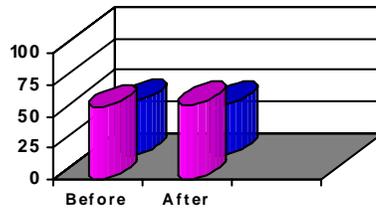


Table 9: *Positive Self/Peer Activity*

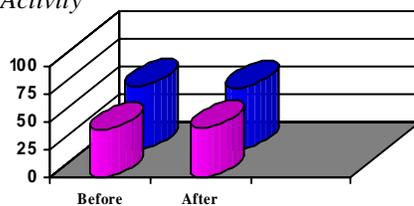
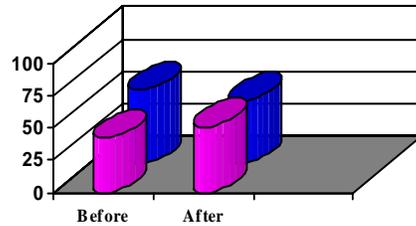


Table 10: *Action* (physical activity).



Financial support of YIS during this period created opportunities to recruit a core team of instructors specifically trained in the YogaEd© curriculum. Where previously YIS relied on “insourcing” dedicated individuals committed to building the YIS organization, instructors during this funding period completed either a 5 or 7 day YogaEd© curriculum certification before beginning classroom instruction. Pre-term, mid-term and final-debriefing meetings were held and provided an opportunity to share experiences, resources and tips. Financial support during this period translated into a professional integration of the yoga curriculum in the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

The cumulative impact of external support of YIS is perhaps best seen in YIS’ impact in the education community. Throughout programming, YIS found strength in its reliability and instructor adaptability, presenting the program where and when scheduled, with necessary staff, equipment and creativity. YIS instructors found personal flexibility key in adapting to the nuances of each school, overcoming unexpected room changes, combined classes, lack of teacher support and other miscellaneous outbursts and scheduling conflicts at all levels.

In pursuing these objectives we learned numerous things that will shape our future efforts:

- Enthusiastic principals, teachers and parents impact the success of implementing a new curriculum. YIS appreciates the constraints and limitations found within all of these groups and remain committed to creating programming that responds to expressed needs. We continue our work in the development of support materials for teachers to ease the link between YIS exercises with classroom opportunities.
- Sources for teacher self-care are part of this effort:
 - Provide teachers with a written list of expectations:
 - Getting children to class on time;
 - The need for teachers to participate in the YIS period with their class;
 - Managing the personal needs of students ahead of the YIS period;
 - Provide teachers with electronic support by way of e-mails offering tips and ideas to support regular use of YIS techniques in the classroom;
 - Attend regular (monthly) teachers’ meetings:
 - Facilitate efficient and effective communication of both YIS efforts and institutional events
 - Increase YIS professional visibility and contributions to education curriculum; integrates YIS into the school’s culture.
- Positively promoting children’s self esteem and body awareness can be done in an inclusive setting.

Reflecting upon the overall experience in YIS’ utilization of Award Monies, there is a high degree of satisfaction with the projected and actual use of the allocated award.

The primary lessons learned by YIS from this pilot endeavor is the need to invest in the adults tied to YIS programming as carefully as investing in YIS curriculum mastery and classroom techniques. Teachers, school administrators and YIS staff are key to the successful integration of YIS. By keeping YIS programming manageable and leveraging YIS staff talent and skills for optimal contributions, the communication, support and troubleshooting imperatives YIS can be met and schools not be burdened unnecessarily.

YIS continues its pursuit of financial and institutional support for programming specific to the PPS. Alternative funding from the education and health sectors are being explored, with inquiries of interest and site visits requested. We continue to work towards becoming a sustainable non-profit, which may require schools to contribute to the cost of programming.