

SAFE HAVEN PROGRAM EVALUATION (1997-98)

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Madison and the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) operate Safe Haven after-school programs in Glendale, Lowell, and Mendota Schools. The programs were developed so that beneficial after-school experiences could be provided to children who are at risk for academic and social difficulties. Specific objectives of the programs include enhancing children's cognitive skills, teaching conflict resolution strategies to children, and helping children learn how to interact positively and effectively in groups. The programs are targeted to children living in the Broadway-Simpson, Glendale Townhouse, Darbo-Worthington, and Vera Court neighborhoods.

Kim Pierce and Deborah Lowe Vandell, Co-Principal Investigators, were asked by the City and MMSD to evaluate the Safe Haven programs during the 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97, and 1997-98 academic years. During the 1997-98 year, the focal year of this report, the evaluation had several components:

1. A determination of a demographic profile of children who attended the Safe Haven programs. Children who attended the programs were contrasted with other children in their schools. The purpose of these comparisons was to ascertain if the Safe Haven programs were successful in identifying and serving children who were at risk for academic and social problems. We also examined changes in the demographic characteristics of program participants across the four years of program operation.
2. An examination of program enrollment across years. Program involvement for the cohort of children who were in third grade during the 1995-96 school year was examined for evidence of stability through the 1996-97 and 1997-98 school years.
3. A limited examination of children's Safe Haven experiences. This included a determination of how often the children actually attended the programs and how the children perceived the programs.
4. Tests of program effects on children's development. Five aspects of child adjustment were investigated: academic grades, conduct grades, school absences, misconduct, and conflict resolution strategies. We sought to determine if program attendance was associated with changes in these adjustment indices at the end of the 1997-98 school year.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Children in Grades 3-5 at Glendale, Lowell, and Mendota Schools participated in the study.¹ Demographic characteristics of the 588 children who participated during 1997-98,

¹ The Safe Haven programs serve children in Grades 1-5 at each of the schools. Younger children in Grades 1 and 2 were not included in this evaluation because of the difficulties inherent in group administration of measures with children of this age.

provided by MMSD, are summarized in the first column of Table 1. As the table shows, children were about evenly distributed across the three grades. Similar percentages of boys and girls were assessed. The majority of the children in the schools were White, although a substantial proportion were of minority race (American Indian, Asian, Black, and Hispanic). About half of the children received free or reduced-price school lunch, and more than a third of the children lived in single-parent families.

As shown on Table 1, 204 third, fourth, and fifth graders (35% of the sample) lived in the target neighborhoods, as reported by MMSD (86 in Broadway-Simpson, 30 in Glendale Townhouses, 48 in Darbo-Worthington, and 40 in Vera Court). Large proportions of these children were of minority race and received a school lunch subsidy. About half of the target neighborhood children resided in a single-parent home.

Demographic Characteristics of Safe Haven Program Participants

A total of 152 third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade children were enrolled in Safe Haven: 48 at Glendale, 41 at Lowell, 47 at Mendota, and 16 at the program operated by the Atwood Community Center for Lowell children. Chi-square (χ) analyses were conducted to determine if there were demographic differences between these program children and other children in the target schools. These analyses examined proportions of children within demographic categories to determine if differences were statistically significant.²

Children who were enrolled in the Safe Haven programs in 1997-98, compared to other children in their schools who were not enrolled, were more likely to be of minority race (71% vs. 34%; $\chi_1 = 62.9, p < .001$), to receive a lunch subsidy (77% vs. 44%; $\chi_1 = 50.4, p < .001$), and to live in a single-parent home (49% vs. 33%; $\chi_1 = 11.4, p < .001$). There was no difference in the proportions of boys and girls who were enrolled in the programs or not. The results of the Chi-square analyses show that the Safe Haven programs were successful in enrolling children who were at risk for academic and social difficulties.

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of Safe Haven participants in each of the four years the programs have been in operation. As can be seen on the table, the proportions of program enrollees who were of minority race, received a lunch subsidy, and/or lived in a single-parent home declined in both the 1996-97 and 1997-98 school years. These declines were seen in target neighborhood demographics also, as shown in Table 3, so they were expectable.

Table 2 also shows that during the 1997-98 school year, relative to previous years, a larger proportion of program children was in third grade (48%), whereas smaller proportions

² Statistical significance is defined by p values. p is the probability that a difference in scores (or proportions, in the case of Chi-square) occurred by chance. A p value of .05 means that there is a 5% chance that a difference is random or due to measurement error; a value of .01 reflects a 1% chance, and a value of .001 reflects a 0.1% chance. Therefore, the smaller the p value, the greater the confidence that differences are real and not due to chance. A value of .05 is the commonly accepted marker of statistical significance.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Study Children in the 1997-98 School Year

	Target schools <i>N</i> = 588	Target neighborhoods <i>N</i> = 204	Safe Haven programs <i>N</i> = 152 ^a
GRADE			
Third	38%	37%	48%
Fourth	31%	33%	29%
Fifth	31%	30%	23%
SEX			
Boys	52%	52%	47%
Girls	48%	48%	53%
RACE/ETHNICITY			
White	57%	30%	29%
Minority	43%	70%	71%
LUNCH SUBSIDY			
Yes	52%	77%	77%
No	48%	23%	23%
FAMILY STRUCTURE			
Two parents	63%	49%	51%
One parent	37%	51%	49%

Note. *N* refers to sample size, or the number of study participants.

^a 59 children enrolled in the programs did not appear to reside in the target neighborhoods. However, residence data were obtained at only one time point in the school year and did not reflect changes in address during the year.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Safe Haven Participants in Four School Years

	1997-98 <i>N</i> = 152	1996-97 <i>N</i> = 144	1995-96 <i>N</i> = 171	1994-95 <i>N</i> = 219
GRADE				
Third	48%	34%	38%	38%
Fourth	29%	35%	35%	33%
Fifth	23%	31%	27%	29%
SEX				
Boys	47%	44%	49%	49%
Girls	53%	56%	51%	51%
RACE/ETHNICITY				
White	29%	22%	13%	19%
Minority	71%	78%	87%	81%
LUNCH SUBSIDY				
Yes	77%	87%	92%	84%
No	23%	13%	8%	16%
FAMILY STRUCTURE				
Two parents	51%	43%	37%	34%
One parent	49%	57%	63%	66%

Note. *N* refers to sample size, or the number of study participants.

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of Target Neighborhood Children in Four School Years

	1997-98 <i>N</i> = 204	1996-97 <i>N</i> = 206	1995-96 <i>N</i> = 214	1994-95 <i>N</i> = 220
GRADE				
Third	37%	33%	34%	39%
Fourth	33%	33%	37%	32%
Fifth	30%	34%	29%	29%
SEX				
Boys	52%	45%	49%	47%
Girls	48%	55%	51%	53%
RACE/ETHNICITY				
White	30%	26%	22%	23%
Minority	70%	74%	78%	77%
LUNCH SUBSIDY				
Yes	77%	85%	89%	89%
No	23%	15%	11%	11%
FAMILY STRUCTURE				
Two parents	49%	37%	35%	30%
One parent	51%	63%	65%	70%

Note. *N* refers to sample size, or the number of study participants.

were in fourth and fifth grades (29% and 23%, respectively). These proportions were different from what would be expected given the grade distribution of children who resided in the target neighborhoods during that year, as shown on Table 3: 37% in third grade, 33% in fourth grade, and 30% in fifth grade. However, the declines in program enrollment for older children are consistent with national trends (Hofferth, Brayfield, Deich, & Holcomb, 1991).

STABILITY OF SAFE HAVEN ENROLLMENT

The next issue we examined was the stability of individual children's involvement in the Safe Haven programs. We scrutinized the program and school enrollment histories of the cohort of 191 children who were in third grade during the 1995-96 school year. These children were in fourth grade during 1996-97, and fifth grade during 1997-98. A total of 74 children in the cohort (39%) were enrolled in the Safe Haven programs at some point during third, fourth, and fifth grades.

During the 1995-96 school year, 63 third graders were enrolled in the Safe Haven programs. In the next school year, when the children were in fourth grade:

- 29 children continued to participate in the programs
- 9 children discontinued their participation in the programs
- 11 children who did not participate during third grade enrolled in the programs
- 25 children were no longer enrolled at the target schools

In 1997-98, when the cohort was in fifth grade:

- 15 children who were enrolled in the programs during both third grade and fourth grade continued their participation
- 4 children who participated in the programs during both third and fourth grades discontinued their participation
- 3 children who first enrolled in the programs during fourth grade continued to participate
- 8 children who first enrolled in the programs during fourth grade discontinued their participation
- 4 children who participated in the programs during third grade but not fourth grade resumed their participation
- 3 children who left the programs after third grade continued to not participate

- 12 children were no longer enrolled at the target schools: 10 who had participated in the programs during both third and fourth grades, and 2 who had participated in third grade only

These numbers document considerable movement of children in and out of the Safe Haven programs. Only 20% of the 74 program children maintained their participation in the programs through three school years. Two-year participation in consecutive years was evident for 23% of the children; 6% of the children participated during two nonconsecutive years. Finally, 51% of the program children participated in the programs for only one year.

The program children's school enrollment histories illustrate one potential reason for the instability of program enrollment. Of the 63 children who participated in the programs during third grade, 40% were not enrolled in the target schools during the next school year. By fifth grade, 56% of the third-grade program participants were no longer enrolled in the target schools.

Further illustration of children's movement in and out of the programs (and the schools themselves) is provided by consideration of children who first enrolled in the target schools when the cohort was in fourth grade. There were 41 children who were newly enrolled as fourth graders in the target schools during 1996-97. Of these 41 children, 8 participated in the Safe Haven programs. Two of the 8 participants continued their program participation through fifth grade; the remaining 6 were no longer enrolled in the target schools after fourth grade.

When the cohort was in fifth grade, during the 1997-98 school year, 31 children joined the cohort through enrollment in the target schools. Five of these children participated in a Safe Haven program during that year.

Implications of the instability of program enrollment from year to year include greater difficulty in providing consistent programming to this population and greater difficulty in finding significant effects of program participation on children's development.

CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES IN THE SAFE HAVEN PROGRAMS

Children's experiences in the Safe Haven programs were examined in terms of the frequency with which children attended the programs and children's perceptions of the psychosocial climate in the programs.

Child Participation

Safe Haven staff provided reports of the number of days that children attended the programs. Table 4 shows the means, standard deviations, ranges, and medians for attendance days. There was substantial variability in how often children participated in the Safe Haven programs during the 1997-98 school year, both overall and between programs. Attendance varied from a single day to 163 days.

Differences in attendance at the programs were examined statistically with analysis of

Table 4

Number of Days that Children Attended Safe Haven Programs

	1997-98			1996-97		
	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range	Median ¹	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range	Median ¹
Overall	89 (48)	1-163	92	85 (48)	1-148	94
Program 1	111 (43) _a	9-144	130	117 (24) _a	64-145	125
Program 2	60 (42) _b	1-141	45	71 (51) _b	1-146	69
Program 3	95 (47) _a	4-163	85.5	66 (48) _b	2-148	52
Program 4	103 (43) _a	10-146	120	97 (42)	7-141	119
	1995-96			1994-95		
	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range	Median ¹	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Range	Median ¹
Overall	67 (43)	1-159	63	28 (25)	1-91	20
Program 1	93 (45) _a	6-154	106	56 (26) _a	15-83	69
Program 2	58 (42) _b	1-159	53	27 (23) _b	1-91	20
Program 3	61 (43) _b	1-128	59	14 (12) _c	1-42	8
Program 4	65 (23) _b	4-85	72	15 (5) _c	11-20	15

Note. Different subscripts denote statistically significant differences ($p < .05$ or better) in mean number of attendance days within columns (within years).

¹ Half the children attended the programs fewer days than the median number, and half attended more days.

variance (ANOVA; F). In an ANOVA, it is determined if group averages (or means) are significantly different across three or more groups. When an overall difference is detected, Scheffe analyses are then conducted to determine if differences in pairs of means are significant. We found the ANOVA examining the overall difference in the number of attendance days between the four programs in the 1997-98 school year to be significant ($F_{3, 151} = 11.02, p < .001$). Scheffe analyses indicated that attendance was significantly poorer at Program 2 than at Programs 1, 3, and 4.

Figures are shown on Table 4 for the previous three school years also. There was a steady increase in attendance at Programs 3 and 4 across the years. Program 1 attendance figures increased through 1996-97 and were maintained during 1997-98. There was a large decline in the number of days that children attended Program 2 during 1997-98 compared to the previous year, particularly in the median number of days.

Psychosocial Climate

Several aspects of the psychosocial climate in the Safe Haven programs were measured with the After-School Environment Scale (ASES; Rosenthal & Vandell, 1996; see the appendix). Children reported their enjoyment of the programs, the supportiveness of Safe Haven staff, whether they perceived staff as overcontrolling or intrusive, and opportunities for peer affiliation on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 = never to 4 = almost always. An overall psychosocial climate score (for which staff control was reverse coded) was computed also.

The ASES was administered during May 1998 to a total of 68 children (29 enrolled in Program 1, 8 in Program 2, 22 in Program 3, and 9 in Program 4), representing 45% of the Safe Haven enrollees. Two administrations were conducted at Program 2 and at Program 3; all children present at the programs on the administration days completed the measure. Children who attended Programs 1 and 4 completed the measure at school outside of the classroom. Table 5 shows mean scores for the overall May 1998 sample and for each program. Overall, the children rated the Safe Haven programs as enjoyable close to "most of the time," the program staff as supportive "most of the time," and the staff as overcontrolling and intrusive "some of the time." The children also reported that they experienced positive peer affiliation in the programs "most of the time." However, it should be noted that the ASES was administered at the end of the school year. It is possible that children who viewed the programs less positively had discontinued their participation in the programs prior to that time and therefore did not complete the ASES.

Differences in mean scores between programs in May 1998 were analyzed statistically with ANOVA. None of the ANOVAs were significant, indicating that there were no differences between the four programs on the ASES scores.

Because attendance at Program 2 during the 1997-98 school year was significantly poorer compared to the other programs and had declined from the previous school year, we next compared Program 2 ASES scores from May 1998 to those of Program 3, where attendance had improved considerably from the previous year. These analyses involved t -tests, which are similar to ANOVA but compare differences in mean scores between two groups rather than three or

Table 5

Psychosocial Climate in the Safe Haven Programs

	May 1998					Overall program scores	
	Overall	Program				May 1997	May 1996
		1	2	3	4		
Overall climate	2.7 (0.3)	2.7 (0.3)	2.6 (0.3)	2.7 (0.3)	2.9 (0.2)	2.8 (0.3)	2.8 (0.5)
Program enjoyment	2.7 (0.8)	2.8 (0.8)	2.4 (0.8)	2.7 (0.7)	3.0 (0.6)	2.9 (0.7)	3.0 (0.6)
Staff supportiveness	3.0 (0.8)	2.9 (0.8)	2.6 (1.0)	3.1 (0.6)	3.4 (0.5)	3.0 (0.8)	3.0 (0.8)
Staff control ¹	2.5 (0.6)	2.5 (0.7)	2.7 (0.6)	2.3 (0.3)	2.5 (0.6)	2.4 (0.5)	2.6 (0.5)
Peer affiliation	3.0 (0.7)	3.0 (0.7)	2.6 (0.7)	3.1 (0.7)	3.4 (0.6)	3.0 (0.6)	3.2 (0.7)

Notes. (1) Numbers shown are means and standard deviations (in parentheses). (2) Scores could range from 1 to 4. (3) $N = 68$ in May 1998, $N = 80$ in May 1997, $N = 56$ in May 1996.

¹A lower score on Staff Control represents a more positive perception.

more groups. The sample size for the Program 2 group was very small ($N = 8$), making statistical significance difficult to obtain. Nonetheless, one significant result was found: Children at Program 2, compared to children at Program 3, reported that program staff were more overcontrolling and intrusive ($t_{28} = 2.31, p < .05$). One other comparison approached significance: Children at Program 2, compared to children at Program 3, reported that program staff were less supportive ($t_{28} = 1.74, p < .10$).

Overall ASES scores for the programs during May 1997 and May 1996 also are shown on Table 5. (The ASES was not administered to children during the 1994-95 school year.) ASES scores were stable across years, reflecting little change in how participants viewed the programs.

SAFE HAVEN PROGRAM EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

Five types of adjustment outcomes were examined to determine if there were effects of participation in the Safe Haven programs on children's development. The adjustment indicators included academic grades, conduct grades, school absences, misconduct, and conflict resolution strategies. These data were collected during November 1997 from all third graders in the target schools and their teachers, and during May 1998 from all children in the target schools (third, fourth, and fifth graders) and teachers. Data from fourth and fifth graders (and teachers) also were available from May 1997.

Measures

Academic grades. Classroom teachers completed a "mock" report card (see the appendix) on which they provided children's academic grades. Each child's reading, oral language, written language, and math performance was evaluated using 5-point ratings (1 = failing, 5 = excellent). A composite score was created that combined grades in the four subject areas. The mean academic grade in May 1998 was 3.59 (standard deviation = 0.95); the attained range was 1.25 to 5. Some children exhibited academic problems and other children had strong academic records as measured by teacher report.

Conduct grades. The mock report card also included teacher ratings of children's work habits and ability to work well with others in the classroom. These conduct marks were made using the same 5-point ratings that were used for academic grades. In May 1998, the mean work habits rating was 3.67 (standard deviation = 1.07), and the mean rating of ability to work well with others was 3.78 (standard deviation = 1.05). Both ratings had an attained range of 1 to 5. There was considerable variability, with some children reported by their teachers to have conduct problems and other children reported to exhibit good conduct in the classroom.

School absences. MMSD reported the number of school absences during the 1997-98 school year for each study child. The range of absences was 0 to 132 half days (mean = 18.24, standard deviation = 14.65). This indicates that some children were absent from school as many as 66 full days during the school year. The average number of absences was about 9 full days.

Misconduct. Children reported how often during the past month they engaged in each of

11 problem behaviors, ranging from 1 = never to 5 = almost every day (see the appendix). The measure was adapted from Brown, Clasen, and Eicher's (1986) Self-Reported Behavior Index. Example behaviors are "Broke something on purpose," "Got into a fight at school," and "Did something your parents told you not to." The measure was administered to the children in their school classrooms. As a group, the children reported engaging in little misconduct; the mean item score of 1.53 (standard deviation = 0.49) was between "never" and "1-2 times". The attained range for these scores in May 1998 was 1 to 3.7, indicating that some children reported that they had not engaged in any misconduct during the prior month, whereas other children reported that they had frequently engaged in many of the measured behaviors.

Conflict resolution strategies. Conflict resolution strategies were assessed with School Stories, a paper-and-pencil measure on which children reported how they would respond to four hypothetical peer conflict situations that can occur at school (see the appendix). This measure has been used in published studies of elementary school children's conflict resolution skills (e.g., Crick & Dodge, 1996).

The hypothetical vignettes were administered to children in their school classrooms. The vignettes were read aloud to children as they followed along with a written copy. Evaluation staff members were present during each administration to circulate the classroom and ensure that children were on the correct page of the protocol, and to answer questions that the children may have had.

In the hypothetical stories, children were presented with four difficult situations: (1) the child is ignored by other children at the lunch table, (2) another child cuts in line in front of the child, (3) another child takes the child's seat at lunch, and (4) the child overhears other children making fun of him/her. For each story, four kinds of conflict management strategies were assessed: assertive friendliness (e.g., "I would go up to the two kids and say, 'Please be quiet, I don't like it when people talk about me like that'"), overt aggression (e.g., "I would walk up to the two kids and push them down"), relational aggression (e.g., "I would say mean things about the two kids back in class"), and avoidance (e.g., "I wouldn't do anything, I'd just walk away"). Children were asked which of the four strategies they would use if the situation presented in the story happened to them (response decision, yes or no for each strategy), how often they would use each of the four strategies if the situation happened frequently (strategy use, 5-point scale ranging from "never" to "all the time"), and how good or bad it is to use each strategy (strategy evaluation, 4-point scale ranging from "bad" to "good").

In May 1998, children were more likely to respond to each vignette with assertive friendliness or avoidance than with overt aggression or relational aggression. Children also indicated that they would use assertive friendliness and avoidance more often than overt and relational aggression if peer conflicts occurred frequently, and they evaluated assertive friendliness and avoidance more positively than the two types of aggression. There was, however, considerable variation in children's responses. The full range of possible scores was attained, meaning that each of the strategies was chosen exclusively by some children.

Composite scores were created for each conflict resolution strategy by standardizing the response decision, strategy use, and strategy evaluation scores and averaging them. This resulted

in a single score for each strategy. The standardized scores were assigned a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1.

Effects of Safe Haven Attendance Days on Child Adjustment

There was substantial variation in children's Safe Haven program participation (see Table 4). Our substantive analyses focused on the effects of these attendance variations on children's adjustment. Partial Pearson product-moment correlations were computed between the number of days that children attended the programs during the 1997-98 school year and adjustment scores in May 1998. A partial correlation measures the strength of the relationship between two variables after controlling statistically for the effect of another variable. We examined the relationship between program attendance and adjustment after controlling for the association between adjustment scores obtained prior to significant program participation during 1997-98 (from the May 1997 assessment for the fourth and fifth graders, and from the November 1997 assessment for the third graders) and the number of program attendance days, and the association between prior adjustment and adjustment in May 1998. Controlling for prior adjustment allowed us to examine changes in adjustment as a consequence of program participation.

Of the 152 program children, 53 were identified by the school district or by their classroom teachers as having exceptional educational needs (EEN): 25 learning disabled, 7 cognitively disabled, 5 with speech/language difficulties, 9 for whom English is their second language (ESL), and 7 with emotional disabilities. Many classroom teachers indicated that it was difficult to rate the EEN children academically, and we had concerns that these children may not have understood the conflict resolution and misconduct measures. Therefore, the partial correlations were computed separately for EEN and non-EEN children.

Table 6 shows the results of the partial correlation analyses for the 1997-98 school year, for both EEN and non-EEN children. In these analyses, a negative correlation indicates that the more days that children attended the programs, the lower the score on the adjustment measure. A positive correlation means that a greater number of attendance days was associated with higher scores. Sample sizes were smaller than would be expected given the number of program children because prior adjustment data were not available for all children. As can be seen on the table, the more days that non-EEN children attended the Safe Haven programs during 1997-98:

- the fewer days they were absent from school
- the better their work habits at school in May 1998, as rated by teachers
- the less likely the children were to endorse relational aggression as a conflict resolution strategy in May 1998

There also was a statistical trend for non-EEN program children who attended the programs more days to receive higher teacher ratings of ability to work well with others in May 1998.

There were no significant effects of program participation for the EEN children, as seen on Table 6. However, had the sample size been larger, it is likely that the association between

Table 6

Partial Correlations of Number of Safe Haven Attendance Days and Child Adjustment

	EEN children	Non-EEN children
Academic grades	-.11 (41)	.20 (59)
Work habits	-.03 (41)	.27 [*] (59)
Works well with others	-.01 (42)	.23 ⁺ (59)
School absences	.22 (26)	-.34 [*] (40)
Misconduct	-.19 (27)	.10 (78)
Conflict resolution		
Assertive friendliness	.02 (27)	.07 (79)
Avoidance	-.29 (27)	.11 (79)
Overt aggression	.09 (27)	.00 (79)
Relational aggression	.16 (27)	-.25 [*] (79)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are the numbers of children for whom data were available to compute the correlations, or sample sizes.

⁺ $p < .08$ ^{*} $p < .05$

more attendance days and less endorsement of the avoidance strategy for resolving conflicts would have been significant. It is unclear whether the lack of effects was due to our methods in measuring EEN children's adjustment, or whether participation in the Safe Haven programs does not have significant effects for children with special needs.

Individual Program Effects on Child Adjustment

The partial correlation analyses examined attendance at the four Safe Haven programs combined in relation to children's adjustment. The final issue we examined was whether the individual programs had differential effects on child adjustment. To test this question, we conducted hierarchical multiple regressions. A regression is an analysis of the relationship between one variable (the outcome) and a set of other variables (the predictors). In a hierarchical regression, predictor variables are added to the analysis in steps, either one at a time or in groups (blocks). The change in the proportion of variance of the outcome variable that can be explained by the predictors is tested for statistical significance. When this change is significant, the relationship between the outcome variable and each predictor variable included in the step is tested for statistical significance.

Separate hierarchical regression equations were conducted for each child adjustment outcome measured in May 1998 (academic and conduct grades, school absences, self-reported misconduct, and conflict resolution strategies). In the first step of each regression, the prior adjustment score was entered into the equation to control statistically for the relationship between prior adjustment and outcome adjustment. In the second step, dummy variables to represent the individual Safe Haven programs were entered as a block. Each of the dummy variables allowed us to contrast mean scores at one program with mean scores for all the programs combined. Because we controlled for prior adjustment in Step 1, any significant program effects would be related to changes in adjustment across the school year as a consequence of enrollment in particular programs.

The program variables added a significant increment to explained variance for three outcomes, all conflict resolution strategies: assertive friendliness, overt aggression, and relational aggression. The results of the regressions on these variables are shown in Table 7. A negative beta indicates that the program was associated with lower scores on the adjustment measure, compared to the other programs. A positive beta means that, in comparison to the other programs, the program was associated with higher scores. As shown on the table, Program 2 was associated with negative changes in adjustment during the 1997-98 school year. Specifically, as a result of participation in Program 2 compared to participation in the other Safe Haven programs, children:

- were less likely to endorse assertive friendliness as a conflict resolution strategy
- were more likely to endorse overt aggression
- were more likely to endorse relational aggression

Table 7

Hierarchical Regressions Examining Program Effects on Child Adjustment

	Conflict resolution strategies		
	Assertive friendliness	Overt aggression	Relational aggression
Step 1	$R^2 = .11^{**}$	$R^2 = .16^{***}$	$R^2 = .26^{***}$
Prior adjustment	.31 ^{**}	.48 ^{***}	.54 ^{***}
Step 2	$R^2 = .27^{***}$	$R^2 = .28^{***}$	$R^2 = .40^{***}$
Change in R^2	.16	.12	.14
	$F_{3,74} = 5.41^{**}$	$F_{3,74} = 4.19^{**}$	$F_{3,74} = 5.40^{**}$
Program 1	.10	.19	.07
Program 2	-.55 ^{***}	.53 ^{**}	.56 ^{***}
Program 3	.11	-.20	-.08
Program 4	.34	-.53 ⁺	-.56 [*]

Notes. (1) R^2 is the proportion of variance in the outcome score that is explained by the regression model. The R^2 for Step 1 is the proportion of variance explained by prior adjustment. The R^2 for Step 2 is the proportion of variance explained by prior adjustment and the block of program variables. (2) The numbers shown for the individual predictor variables are beta coefficients. (3) $N = 79$ for these analyses.

⁺ $p < .07$ ^{**} $p < .01$ ^{***} $p < .001$

Program 4 was associated with significantly less endorsement of relational aggression compared to the other programs. There also was a statistical trend linking participation in Program 4 with less endorsement of overt aggression. This association would have been significant had the sample size for Program 4 been larger.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. Safe Haven (a joint effort of the City of Madison and the Madison Metropolitan School District) successfully targeted children who were at risk for academic and social difficulties. Recruitment strategies resulted in the programs enrolling primarily low-income minority children who lived in single-parent homes. The majority of the children who were enrolled appeared to be at high risk for academic and social difficulties.
2. Changes in the demographic characteristics of the children who participated in the Safe Haven programs during the first four years of operation indicate that the programs are beginning to attract more younger children and fewer older children. Although this is consistent with national patterns of after-school program enrollment in the elementary school years, the goals of Safe Haven are in part remedial and the older children can benefit from the services provided. Safe Haven staff should consider how to make the programs more attractive to fourth and fifth graders so that these children will participate in higher numbers.
3. The program enrollment of individual children was unstable across the first four years of operation. The proportion of program children who discontinue their enrollment in the program schools is high. Among children who continue their enrollment in the program schools, there is considerable movement in and out of the programs, with relatively few children evidencing consistent participation from year to year. This instability lends itself to greater difficulty in providing consistent programming to individual children and lessens the likelihood that program participation will have a positive influence on children's development.
4. Children who participated in the Safe Haven programs rated them as enjoyable most of the time. The children believed the staff to be mostly supportive, and they reported that the programs provided positive affiliation with peers most of the time. The children also, however, believed the staff to be somewhat controlling and intrusive. Because these perceptions were measured at the end of the school year, when the children who still attended the programs likely were those whose perceptions were more positive compared to children who had discontinued their participation earlier in the school year, these may be overestimates of the positivity of the psychosocial climate in the programs. This is underscored by the children's reports of staff being more controlling and intrusive (and less supportive) at Program 2, where attendance frequency declined considerably in 1997-98 relative to previous years, than the staff at Program 3, where attendance frequency was greatly improved.
5. Safe Haven program participation varied, with some children attending only a few days

throughout the 1997-98 school year and others attending nearly every day. These variations were associated with changes in children's adjustment from the previous school year for fourth and fifth graders, and from Fall 1997 for third graders. Children who attended the programs more days were rated by their teachers as having better work habits at school compared to children who attended the programs fewer days. Children who attended the programs more days were less likely to endorse relational aggression as a conflict resolution strategy than children who attended fewer days. A greater number of program attendance days also was associated with fewer absences from school. Staff efforts to encourage children to attend the programs more frequently should continue.

The positive effects of attendance at the programs were found only for children who did not have exceptional educational needs. The lack of effects for children with these needs may be due to measurement issues. Alternatively, the programs may not be able to meet these children's needs in terms of academic and social skill enhancement during the limited hours of program operation.

6. There were statistically significant differences in the effects of individual Safe Haven programs on children's adjustment. Program 4 was associated in 1997-98 with less endorsement of negative conflict resolution strategies compared to the other programs. Program 2 was associated with children giving greater endorsement to negative conflict resolution strategies and lesser endorsement to positive strategies. We suggest close monitoring of Program 2 to determine what may contribute to the link between children's attendance at this program and poorer adjustment. Staff should pay close attention to the possible reinforcement of negative behaviors generally and in peer conflict situations, and work on more effective ways of teaching and modeling "good" behavior. Staff at Program 2 also should revise their approach to program implementation so that children will view them as less controlling and more supportive.

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