

**NEW YORK CITY ASSET LAB  
EVALUATION SUMMARY**

**BASELINE INFORMATION AND  
FIRST YEAR RESULTS**

**DRAFT REPORT**

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This report summarizes the key findings of the outcome evaluation conducted between September 2004 and July 2005. The report was prepared by Ian Beckford, Sarah Zeller-Berkman, Helène Clark and Jody Imbimbo.

We want to thank the staff at the sites, the Asset Lab staff at the YMCA and the YMCA youth interns that assisted in providing and organizing the information over the last year.

## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the key findings of the New York City Asset Lab outcome evaluation conducted between September 2004 and July 2005. It represents the first year of a two year evaluation, and primarily reflects collection of baseline data. However, seven of the twelve sites were implementing their Asset Lab to a sufficient degree to assess preliminary outcomes in Year One.

The research methodology employed, which is described in more detail later, consisted of administration of a youth survey at eleven of the twelve Asset Labs<sup>1</sup>, administration of a teacher survey, and interviews at each site. We also obtained program information from sites about the start date of their programs and the average number of hours per week a youth attends. Academic information from the Department of Education on reading and math test scores will be obtained for both years.

The findings presented in this report reflect the information from the youth and adult surveys. We do not attempt to interpret the findings at this time, pending more information about the implementation at each site.

## YOUTH SURVEYS – THE DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS PROFILE

The youth survey used was the Developmental Assets Profile, created and validated by the Search Institute to measure a youth's level of assets in their lives. It provides scores at several different levels ranging from the most global summary of total reported assets to broad external and internal assets scales, to more circumscribed asset category and context area scales, all the way down to individual items<sup>2</sup>.

The Developmental Assets Profile consists of the following asset categories<sup>3</sup>:

**Support-** This Asset category measures diverse asset-based strengths involving parent-adolescent communication, family support, as well as caring, encouragement and support extending outside the family to the neighborhood, school and community.

**Empowerment-** This Asset category measures the extent to which an adolescent feels safe across many contexts and valued and respected by others.

**Boundaries and Expectations-** This Asset category measures the extent to which a respondent reports that rules are consistently clear and that there are rules and consequences at home, school and in the neighborhood, plus positive role models among friends, family, and outside the family.

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<sup>1</sup> PAL did not provide youth surveys despite many conversations about their submission, and offers to assist in administration and pick up surveys in person. Therefore, that site is not included in the evaluation.

<sup>2</sup> This description is taken directly from the Developmental Assets Profile: Preliminary User Manual, January 2004, page 18

<sup>3</sup> These descriptions obtained from the Developmental Assets Profile Preliminary User Manual, January 2004 pages 21-24

**Constructive Use of Time-** This Asset category measures the extent to which the respondent indicates a high degree of reported extra-curricular involvement in four areas: (1) religious or spiritual activity, (2) a sport, club, or other group, (3) creative activities, and (4) family life.

**Commitment To Learning-** This Asset category measures the respondent's motivation and rewards related to learning and active engagement.

**Positive Values-** This Asset category measures the respondent's answers to questions related to personal virtues such as honesty, integrity, responsibility, restraint as well as caring about others and working for equality and social justice.

**Social Competencies-** This Asset category measures assets related to planning and decision making, cultural competence, and social skills involving the ability to build friendships, resist negative peer pressure, and resolve conflicts peacefully.

**Positive Identities-** This Asset category reflects several strengths in an adolescent's emerging identity, including self-esteem, internal locus of control, optimism, and a growing sense of purpose of life.

#### Calculation of Internal Assets, External Assets, and Total Assets

**Internal Assets-** This score was calculated by summing the scale scores from Commitment To Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identities and dividing by four.

**External Assets-** This score was calculated by summing the scale scores from Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, and Constructive Use of Time and dividing by four.

**Total Assets-** This score was calculated by summing the scale scores for the Internal and External Assets.

#### How the DAP was Used

All twelve sites administered the DAP at least once in June 2005. Two sites had also administered it on their own in the fall of 2004, and six sites administered it in March 2005. One site, PAL, reported that they administered the youth survey, but failed after repeated attempts (including many offers to pick them up in person at their convenience) to submit them.

At all eight sites which administered the DAP twice, there was enough level of program implementation to test for improvements, even over a short period of time. According to the Search Institute, the creators of the DAP, three months is the shortest time period for which the DAP might pick up changes. Since at six of our eight sites the DAP was administered only 3 months apart, we may not expect changes to show up, even if youth

were in fact beginning to gain assets. However, in this study, changes were evident and are described below.

Table 1 lists the number of youth surveys collected at each site, when they were collected, and the number of surveys collected for the same youth at both administrations. In most cases, the sample size was large enough to test for statistical significance. At PAL, as mentioned no surveys were turned in, at Uth turn the numbers of youth participating are too low to provide a separate analysis for their site, and the Flushing Beacon YMCA submitted only 20 surveys in June, which will make analysis next year problematic. Following the findings in this report, there is a summary of site participation in the evaluation.

**Table 1**  
**Sample Size by Site**

<b>SITE</b>	<b>Fall 2004</b>	<b>March 05</b>	<b>June 05</b>	<b>Same youth, both administrations</b>	<b>Adult Ratings of Youth</b>
<b>Flushing YMCA Beacon Center</b>			20		3
<b>ETS</b>		73	68	57	64
<b>HEAF</b>	106		77	75	94
<b>Highbridge</b>			45		45
<b>IS 131</b>		33	31	25	No data
<b>IS 174</b>		83	57	45	No data
<b>Millennium</b>	129		112	106	47
<b>PAL</b>			No data		No data
<b>Uth Turn</b>		11	12		11
<b>Mickey Mantle</b>		26	26	23	26
<b>School for Global Citizenship</b>			43		41
<b>EBC Bushwick</b>		247	57	47	97
<b>TOTAL SAMPLE</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>428</b>

## KEY FINDINGS

Although the time period was short between youth survey administrations at five of the seven sites included in the analysis, and although the Asset Labs were evolving during the 2004 – 2005 year, we found some real progress. Here are the highlights:

- There was significant improvement<sup>4</sup> on six of the fifteen Asset Categories across these sites. The DAP Asset Categories which demonstrated significant improvement across all seven sites were: empowerment, constructive use of time, positive values, and social competencies.
- Youth at **each** of the seven sites showed improvement in some of the sub-categories of assets described above (see Table 2).
- Educational Talent Search significantly increased its total internal asset score as well its total asset score (summation of the total internal and external asset score)
- IS 174 significantly increased its total internal asset scores.
- Total internal, external and overall assets scores significantly decreased for Millenium High School from the first administration of the DAP to the second administration, however youth at Millenium improved in one asset category – “empowerment”.
- Adult ratings of youth did not correlate with the youth’s own ratings, but were generally higher than youth’s own ratings of themselves.

Two things should be noted when interpreting this data. In all cases, the mean scores for the total internal and external scales were in the 20s while the overall asset score was in the 40s. According to the SEARCH Institute these scores would be considered good. Scores in this range correspond on average to a mixture of 2’s and 3’s but mostly 2’s. In other words, many assets are rated “Extremely or Almost Always” true, but most are rated “Very or Often” true. Scores in this range are still in the upper half of the distribution of raw scores. Most assets would be fairly strong or frequent in the adolescent’s life, but there is room for improvement.<sup>5</sup>

## Site Results

Eight sites provided data for two DAP administrations. These administrations were at least three months apart. Using the data from seven of the eight<sup>6</sup> sites, we looked at only

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<sup>4</sup> When we use the term significant improvement we are referring to the degree to which a value is greater or smaller than would be expected by chance. Typically, a relationship is considered statistically significant when the probability of obtaining that result by chance is less than 5% if there were, in fact, no relationship in the population.

<sup>5</sup> Taken directly from the Developmental Assets Profile: Preliminary User Manual, January 2004, page 17.

<sup>6</sup> Uth term had too few youth to analyze their site individually. However, their surveys are included in the total sample.

the data for students that took the DAP at both administrations (N=378). The data at the site level demonstrates significant improvement in one or more sites on all of the DAP Asset Categories (see Table 2).

We found the following improvements:

**ETS:** Youth showed significant improvement in support, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, positive values, social competencies, positive identity, internal assets, and external assets.

**HEAF:** Youth showed significant improvement in boundaries and expectations, positive values, positive identity, and internal assets.

**I.S. 131** Youth showed significant improvement in boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity, and internal assets.

**I.S. 174:** Youth showed significant improvement in support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity, internal assets, and external assets.

**Millenium:** Youth showed significant improvement in empowerment.

**Mickey Mantle:** Youth showed significant improvement in support, empowerment, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity, and internal assets.

**EBC Bushwick:** Youth showed significant improvement in support, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, positive identity, internal assets, and external assets.

While we are not attempting in this summary report to explain why some assets improved at certain sites more than at others, one important note should be made. A few sites had already been running a very good assets-based program before the first round of youth surveys. Therefore, the “baseline” data for youth from those sites may be already raised due to their participation. Millenium High School for example, showed an overall decrease in assets and an increase in only one area, but their students may have shown increases BEFORE the first survey.

**Table 2**  
**Asset Categories Which Showed Improvement by Site**

<b>Asset Category</b>	<b>Across Sites</b>	<b>ETS</b>	<b>HEAF</b>	<b>I.S. 131</b>	<b>I.S. 174</b>	<b>Millenium</b>	<b>Mickey Mantle</b>	<b>EBC</b>
<b>Support</b>		✓			✓		✓	✓
<b>Empowerment</b>	✓				✓	✓	✓	
<b>Boundaries and Expectations</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓			
<b>Constructive Use of time</b>	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
<b>Commitment to Learning</b>				✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Positive Values</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Social Competencies</b>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Positive Identity</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Internal Assets</b>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>External Assets</b>		✓			✓			✓

*\*the sites included in this table conducted two DAP administrations at least three months apart in the year 04-05.*



## **SITE PARTICIPATION IN EVALUATION 2004-2005**

(This section is for internal use only, taken from Sarah's direct experience at the sites.)

### **Flushing Y Beacon Center**

This site was very difficult to work with. They left their administration until the last minute, would not take help that was offered and ended up doing a substandard administration. They have been unresponsive to calls and have consistently had a negative attitude about the utility and necessity of the evaluation. They submitted only 20 youth surveys, and only 12 of those are usable (the rest are missing names). They submitted only three adult-youth rating scales for youth who took the DAP. This site was the most difficult to work with on evaluation.

### **ETS**

This site was wonderfully cooperative. They are timely with all evaluation materials and give great feedback about what improvements need to be made to our design. They submitted 73 DAPS for the first administration, 68 DAPS for the second administration and 64 adult-youth. They have given us all the information we need for our evaluation.

### **HEAF**

This site was very cooperative, but a bit overwhelmed by the evaluation requirements. They submitted 106 DAPS for the first administration, 94, adult-youth rating scale, and 77 DAPS for the second administration.

### **IS 131**

This site does not have much buy in for this project. The asset champion seems very overwhelmed in her role as school counselor and does not have much time to put into assets. She feels unsupported by John Catto and does not feel like there is much happening in terms of assets at the site. They had a hard time with the first administration in March and only got back 33 DAPS when they thought they would get back over 100. The only class that administered the DAPS was the one that Emilie Cava conducted. I went in to do the second administration and it went smoothly and Emilie was quite cooperative. Even though we were able to conduct the administration in a timely manner, I still got a sense that she was extremely overwhelmed. She stated that she needs TA to have assets structured into the school in a way that does not rely on John Catto. They did not get us any adult-youth checklists because they felt the teachers would not do them. They completed 33 DAPS in the first administration, 31 for second administration and no adult-youth rating scales.

### **IS 174**

When meeting with the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers at this school it was evident that they didn't have any idea what the developmental assets program was. It was therefore somewhat difficult to present the idea of filling out the adult-youth checklist or any of the administration requirements that required extra effort and time on their part. Anthony

Pullozi, was very helpful and easy to work with. However, I think he too is waiting for John Catto to meet with teachers or bring people on board for the assets initiative and it may be better for the consultants to work with him that helps increase his self-sufficiency. They had a harder time with the second administration than the first and were almost not included in the sample because they did not get their DAPS in until the day we were supposed to begin running analysis. They did not get us any adult-youth checklists because they felt the teachers would not do them. They completed 83 DAPS first administration DAPS, no adult-youth rating scales, and 57 DAPS for the second administration .

### **Millennium**

Millennium uses the DAP as a part of their internal assessment, so this year we simply coordinated efforts. They were a little difficult to meet with about the administration in June because they felt they already do the work, however, they ended up giving us all the needed requirements on time. Millennium completed 129 daps first administration, 47 adult youth rating scales, and 112 second administration.

**PAL** did not participate so we have no data for this site.

### **Uth turn**

Uth turn has been very eager and willing to participate in the evaluation. Given the nature of the work they do, the population they serve, and the number of people they serve, it is difficult for them to give us DAPS that follow the same people over the course of a year. They gave us 11DAPS for the first administration and 12 DAPS for the second administration and only two young people took the DAP at both administrations. They also gave us 12 adult youth rating scales.

### **Mickey Mantle**

Mickey Mantle was very eager to participate in the evaluation and organized a lot of support within the school during the administrations. Even with all the support, the administration of the DAP at this school is difficult and requires many staff. During the administration of the DAP young people expressed active mistrust of the DAP, there were frequent outbursts or disruptions by the youth, and comprehension was difficult for many of the young people. They returned 26 DAPS for the first administration, 26 staff rating scales and 26 DAPS for the second administration.

### **EBC**

This school is a pleasure to work with on the evaluation. There is buy-in at many levels and there is a level of organization by the asset champions that is impressive. They managed to get 247 DAPS for the first administration and were timely in returning their materials. Despite a very hectic schedule Nina Dibner organized adults to do the adult-youth rating checklist and even sent in adult youth ratings for youth that hadn't taken the DAP. They completed 247 DAPS in the first administration, 97 adult youth rating scales and 57 DAPS in the second administration.

**High School for Global Citizenship**

This school was easy to work with on the administration and organized about getting the materials back to ActKnowledge. The number of DAPS administered was lower than expected by the asset champion and we may be able to improve administration next year. They had 43 baseline DAPS for the administration in June and 41 adult youth rating scales.

**Highbridge**

After some initial confusion as to the way in which the evaluation was communicated to them, this site was very responsive to completing the evaluation. They are finding it difficult to get DOE numbers for the youth being a CBO, however they have completed all other requirements. They submitted 45 DAPs in June and 45 Adult-youth surveys.

## Appendix METHODS

### Overview

There were two administrations of the DAP and one administration of the adult-youth rating scale over the course of the 2004-2005 year. The DAP was conducted with sites that had a population of young people between the ages of 11-18. The adult-youth rating scale was given to teachers and/or CBO staff at all sites. Six Asset Labs that were initiating their assets programming between March and June administered the DAP in March 2005. Those sites were ETS, I.S. 131, I.S. 174, Uth Turn, EBC and Mickey Mantle (N=473). All sites were given instructions for administering the DAP as well as offered help with administration. In addition, we collected data from HEAF and Millennium who had administered DAPS in the Fall of 2004 as a component of their own internal evaluations (N=235).

In May of 2005, all sites received an “administration manual” that outlined in detail both the procedures and the administration of both instruments, the reasons behind the selection of these measures, and the complete list of evaluation requirements. In June of 2006, we conducted a second administration of the DAP at all sites. For some sites such as High School for Global Citizenship, Highbridge and the Flushing Beacon this administration provided baseline data. For ETS, I.S. 131, I.S. 174, Uth Turn, EBC and Mickey Mantle the June administration provided a second data point from which to measure change of assets over time. Seven of the eight sites who had two DAP administrations had enough data to conduct an analysis of significant change in assets over time.

### Participants

Data was collected with a subset of youth at eleven Asset Lab sites (one site, PAL, was excluded from the evaluation because they did not provide any data). Six of the sites were schools (middle and high schools) and five of the sites were community based organizations. Young people were selected by the sites for participation in the evaluation using a variety of criteria. Some sites used only the fifth graders in order to see change over the course of the three-year pilot initiative (I.S. 174 and I.S. 131). One school used only 8<sup>th</sup> graders (Mickey Mantle). One high school was only in its first year of existence and therefore only sampled 9<sup>th</sup> graders (HSGC). EBC Bushwick sampled students in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Most of the CBOs did convenience sampling of young people who were present the day of the administration across programming. The sample of young people reflected in the data from the two DAP administrations was 54.9% female (N=650) and 45.1% male (N=533). The young people self-identified as 43.8% Hispanic or Latino/Latina (N=539), 36.9% Black or African American (N=454), 7.1% Asian (N=87), 8.1% White (N=100), .4% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 1.5% American Indian/Alaska Native (N=19) and 8.5% other (N=46). The average age of the sample was 13.34 years of age.

### Procedure

The DAP was administered with two adults in the room (the number of adults present was dependent on the needs of the site). The students were offered help reading the items and negotiating any difficulty with vocabulary. The students were reminded to work independently as we were interested in their own thought and feelings on the questions. The DAP takes approximately 20 minutes to complete and young people handed them when they were ready. The adult-youth rating scale was given to the site where they enlisted teachers or staff to complete the brief 29 item checklist. All administrations were sent to ActKnowledge for analysis.