

*THE BETHESDA MODEL:  
PROVIDING A NEW DAY FOR NORTH  
CAROLINA'S SUSPENDED YOUTH*

MARCH 20, 2007

*After being referred by her court counselor, a 15 year-old girl was admitted to A New Day, a juvenile day reporting center program in Durham, North Carolina. She often fought violently with the Vice Principal of the public middle school she attended, as well as engaged in other antisocial behaviors. Initially, this student was incredibly defiant after being admitted to the program even going so far as to be truant during her first week of counseling.*

*It was only after several sanctions and reports were filed with her court counselor that her weekly attendance noticeably improved. Her behavior, however, was an entirely different matter. For the next several weeks, she continued to act defiantly towards staff members even while receiving in-home counseling, in-group information, and individual sessions that sought to address why she was outwardly acting in such a hostile manner. Slowly, her behavior and attitude towards the program began to change and improve over time. The girl completed writing her autobiography and cried while reading it out loud to other students during a group counseling session. She also took on a peer leadership position within the program that substantially increased her self-confidence.*

*She completed the program at the end of the summer and has continued to do exceedingly well in her academic and extracurricular endeavors. While enrolled in the summer program at A New Day, the girl displayed considerable talent in the visual arts. The director and staff, having noticed these talents, recommended her to the See Saw Studio art and design program. She experienced tremendous success in her design project and continues to improve her behavior. She also seems to have established a clear set of professional goals. Moreover, her school attendance and grades have improved dramatically and, in fact, were all A's and B's at the end of her first mid-nine week grading period.*

**This is just an example of what can occur when a child is given a second opportunity. Without the intervention of A New Day it is unlikely that this child would have experienced such considerable success in such a relatively short period of time.**

## ***The Problem***

In an attempt to increase classroom safety, many schools have adopted policies that all too quickly slam doors in the faces of at-risk students. In North Carolina, one out of every ten students is suspended, a rate 45 percent higher than the national average (Action for Children North Carolina, 2006). To date, it appears that there has been no published research that leads one to believe that long-term suspensions actually improve behavior of the suspended student. In fact, students suspended from school are much more likely to demonstrate at-risk behaviors. According to a 1992 Centers for Disease Control report on health risks and adolescents, "out of school" youth are significantly more likely to become involved in physical fights, carry a weapon, smoke, drink alcohol and use marijuana than compared to "in school" youth (Schiraldi & Ziedenberg, 2001).

It is clear that zero tolerance policies within the school system are leading to more suspensions and expulsions of students than in the past. The "one strike you're out" policy is counterproductive as it simply removes the problem behavior from the school and places it back into the community. Zero tolerance policies have been viewed by many as a first step of what becomes a cumulative pattern of disparity in the treatment of minorities in the criminal justice system. Data have continuously shown that youth of color are more likely to be suspended and are more likely to be involved with the juvenile justice system. High suspension and expulsion rates of minority youth, in and of themselves, contribute to the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) challenges our state faces.

Suspensions and expulsions have been identified as a significant risk factor for dropping out of school. National studies have revealed that students who are suspended from school are three times more likely to drop out than their peers. Data have shown that dropouts are three and a half to eight times more likely to be incarcerated than high school graduates (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006). United States taxpayers spend more than \$22 billion annually to keep dropouts in state prisons (Communities in Schools National Office, 2005). Discouraging youth from dropping out could be one of the best solutions to slow down the skyrocketing prison population in our state. In 2004 alone, the Tarheel State spent nearly \$295 million to house inmates entering prisons who lacked a high school diploma or its equivalent (see endnote\* for explanation). This does not include the costs for those inmates who were already in the prison system, nor does it include those individuals who were under some form of community corrections.

***"Although removing a student from school may create a better learning environment for others whose education was being disrupted by that student's actions, the removed student does not typically benefit from removal, nor does simply removing the student from school address the cause of the student's misbehavior. The more time a student spends out of school, the more his/her academic progress will likely suffer. As students fall further behind in their academic progress, it becomes more likely that they will not catch up with their schoolwork, or worse, that they may never return to school...Significant remediation efforts need to take place to ensure that those students who are removed from school for purposes of ensuring safety and order get the help they need to return to the regular school environment and be successful, both behaviorally and academically."***

***~~Excerpt from the North Carolina Dept. of Public Instruction's 2004-2005 Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions***

### ***The Problem (continued)***

Based on suspension and expulsion data, a total of 3,135 long-term suspensions (11 days or more) were given to 1,547 North Carolina students resulting in a total of 232,791 “lost” school days during the 2004-05 academic year (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006). During the same academic year, 252,030 short-term suspensions were given to 128,996 students, for an average of approximately two short-term suspensions per suspended student. The Florida State Department of Education published a report in 2005 which it estimated that 5.4% of out-of-school suspended students were arrested for committing a crime while away from school. Using these same estimates for North Carolina, approximately 7,050 suspended students were arrested for crimes committed while out-of-school during the 2004-05 academic year. Numbers like these will continue to strain the already resource-limited juvenile justice system even further.

Based on 2005 risk and needs assessment data, 59% of juveniles had serious problems in school during the previous 12 months and 28% of juveniles had regular associations with delinquent peers (North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2006). Alarming, the same data shows that 39% of parents were either unwilling or unable to supervise the juvenile and that 63% of court-involved juveniles’ parents had marginal parental skills. Since zero tolerance policies will likely remain unchanged and it looks like the majority of at-risk students are not getting the help at home that they need, intervention programs must be established to divert suspended youth from following the “school-to-prison pipeline”.

### ***A Cost-Effective Solution***

*A New Day* is a North Carolina Governor’s Crime Commission sponsored program for at-risk children between the ages of 12 and 16. The program mainly serves Level 2 at-risk youth (i.e., those who have been adjudicated delinquent), however the program does serve at-risk youth who have not been involved with the court system. The majority of program referrals come from the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (DJJDP). Many of the referred youth have been suspended from public school, are or have been involved with the court system, are active members in neighborhood gangs, regularly use drugs and alcohol, have witnessed or been the recipient of domestic violence, abuse or neglect, and have committed one or more crimes in the past.

In order to successfully counsel these youth towards permanent behavioral change, *A New Day* program employs the nationally recognized *Bethesda* therapeutic model which utilizes intensive therapy to help at-risk youth work through their unresolved latent emotions. These feelings are often caused by feelings of abandonment or other traumatic life events that have left emotional scars. In addition to therapy, strict classroom codes and principles are used to promote discipline, as well as develop leadership abilities. Many of the classroom codes are enforced through a supplementary system of peer governance in which the students themselves directly monitor behavior of their peers.

This therapy and training is supplemented with additional academic programs including a summer school and a Saturday program that requires the children to be involved with community service and life-skills counseling which addresses topics like safe sex, domestic violence and the harmful effects of alcohol and drug use. The program is staffed by a combination of 15 paid and unpaid employees including student volunteers from neighboring universities such as Duke University, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina State University and UNC-Chapel Hill.

### ***A Cost-Effective Solution (continued)***

This program has experienced success under the leadership of its director, Dr. Amy Elliott. She has exercised considerable talent at using limited resources to guide the program from helping merely a handful of youth to now having provided counseling services for well over 100 at-risk adolescents in the last several years. Of the students who have graduated from this program, an overwhelming number of them have shown a significant decline in troubling behaviors like violence and drug abuse, increased school attendance and greater academic performance.

The *A New Day* program presently operates out of the Criminal Justice Resource Center located in downtown Durham, North Carolina. Clients meet with program staff four days every week in addition to participating service learning activities each Saturday.



*A New Day* staff provides therapy to Durham's at-risk youth when suspended or expelled from school (Photo courtesy of Dr. Amy Elliott).

### ***The Bethesda Therapeutic Model***

This model is primarily devoted to counseling at-risk youth identified as “at-risk” because of their prior history of criminal offenses, school suspensions, and other negative behaviors. In order to accomplish this task and facilitate permanent behavioral change within these adolescents, a nationally recognized therapeutic system is employed. The successful and cost-effective *Bethesda* therapeutic model is based on psychological research by B. Z. Friedlander that identified personal history of victimization and poor behavior models as two primary risk factors for future violent behavior (see endnote ~ for more information).

In addition, this model presupposes that the cause behind much of the violent behavior elicited by these children results from the emotional pain of broken relationships between themselves and their caregivers. Relational breakdown often occurs when an individual experiences some form of betrayal through abuse, neglect, abandonment or other affliction caused by caregivers such as parents, siblings, or other family members. One of the primary goals of the *Bethesda* therapeutic model is to confront, repair, and heal relational breakdowns. This model accomplishes this feat through the use of two interrelated methods, a relational healing systems process and the

### ***The Bethesda Therapeutic Model (continued)***

use of a peer governance model.

The relational healing systems process is comprised of four steps which have been found to facilitate emotional healing. These steps include the following four successive stages:

**Admissions and grieving** – The healing process is initiated by the victim admitting to feelings of sadness that resulted from a broken relationship and then grieving over these hurt feelings. The victim can confront his or her painful past and the offenders who contributed to it.

**Confrontation and disclosure** – A series of assignments which are composed in letter form by the victim and written to his or her parents or other offenders begins the second stage. These written memories allow the victim to fully face his or her troubled past while also including the person or persons that contributed to their emotional pain. The final part of this stage requires the victim to take responsibility for the offenses he or she has committed in retaliation to the hurtful feelings they have experienced.

**Forgiveness and reconciliation** – The third stage requires the victim to relinquish the bitterness and rage caused by those who hurt him or her. The choice to forgive is often a difficult one to make, however, only it will bring genuine emotional healing to the victim.

**Restoration and healing** – Finally, the victim must make a contractual commitment to let go of the past and move forward with their life. This final stage also entails the building of healthy and long-lasting relationships which acts to finalize the healing process.

In addition, a peer governance model is utilized to create an environment that is physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually safe for its members. It is exactly this type of setting that is necessary to facilitate the relational healing systems process described above. Research has shown that victims who do not feel safe and secure will not disclose the painful memories. A positive environment, like the one created by the peer governance model, establishes the safety and security necessary to help young people work towards emotional and relational healing. These two systems are designed to operate together as one singular, cohesive unit where they act to influence permanent positive change within the behavior of the victim.

### ***Impact on the Individual***

It is obvious that *A New Day*, along with the *Bethesda* therapeutic model component, has a positive impact on the majority of youth who go through the program. After conversations with youth participants, the general consensus among participants is that the staff of *A New Day* care about the youth that they serve. According to one of the youth participants, “The staff always has your back. They can help you get a job, also.” The Durham program incorporates a family-oriented approach in which youth participants have trust and feel comfortable around program staff and their peers. Again, this is very important if youth are to express their inner feelings and past histories during the *Bethesda* model’s relational healing process. Research shows that youth often engage in gang-related activities due to the safety and identity provided, in addition to other social and economic benefits and opportunities. In many communities, these gangs tend to be the only alternative for seeking out these benefits when there is an absence of positive family relationships in the home. However, Durham youth have a positive alternative with *A New Day* in which they can discuss and work on their problems that they have both at home and in school. At the program,

### ***Impact on the Individual (continued)***

individuals who have been suspended from school are provided with the opportunity to learn in an alternative environment. By not falling further behind in school, the negative implications of academic failure are lessened. The environment created at *A New Day* helps students to realize their strengths and reinforces the positives of a good education. This reinforcement is crucial in keeping youth engaged in school activities. Youth often do not realize that over the course of a lifetime, a high school graduate will earn \$300,000 more than his or her counterpart who did not complete school (Communities in Schools National Office, 2005). In 2005, people who finished high school earned almost \$175 more per week compared to those who dropped out (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). The link between higher education attainment and higher lifetime earnings cannot be stressed enough.

By providing a positive environment, youth participants are able to deal with their negative emotions stemming from past histories while simultaneously realizing their potential for future success. The previously mentioned youth participant above was asked how the program had helped him improve his daily life. Summing up the program's impact on this individual, he simply stated, "I've gotten rid of old, bad habits."

***"In five years, this program will be seen as a lifesaver for Durham."***

***~~Jerome Allen, Case Manager at A New Day***

### ***Impact on the Community***

*A New Day* in Durham has been an effective program with a successful track record that builds on the strengths of each individual youth. A key to its effective performance has been the stable leadership offered by the program. Durham District Court Judge Marcia Morey, of District 14, feels that the stable leadership is one of the keys to success as she stated in a telephone interview, "Kids don't perform well under adult leadership that changes constantly."

One of the largest impacts the program makes on the community is that *A New Day* provides Durham's at-risk youth with a place to go when unsupervised. Across the state, too often suspended at-risk youth are simply left unsupervised during their time away from school. Oftentimes this idle time equates to more opportunity to be involved in illegal and undesirable activities. *A New Day* addresses this major loophole of the public school system by ensuring that these at-risk youth have the opportunity to turn prior negative actions into something positive, while at the same time preventing these youth from falling further behind academically. As Jerome Allen, Case Manager at *A New Day* put it, "In five years, this program will be seen as a lifesaver for Durham."

The program provides at-risk youth with adult interaction, which in-turn should lessen juvenile delinquency amongst these youth. Many of the youth participants in *A New Day* are in great need of adult supervision outside of the classroom environment. The majority of students in the Durham program are from a single parent household. Often these single parents are not present to supervise their children when youth are home from school. In many of these single-parent homes, youth participants do not have contact with their father while some of the at-risk participants have never met their father. Notably, male staff of the program provide youth participants with positive adult male relationships, some of which have never had a positive male role model in their lives.

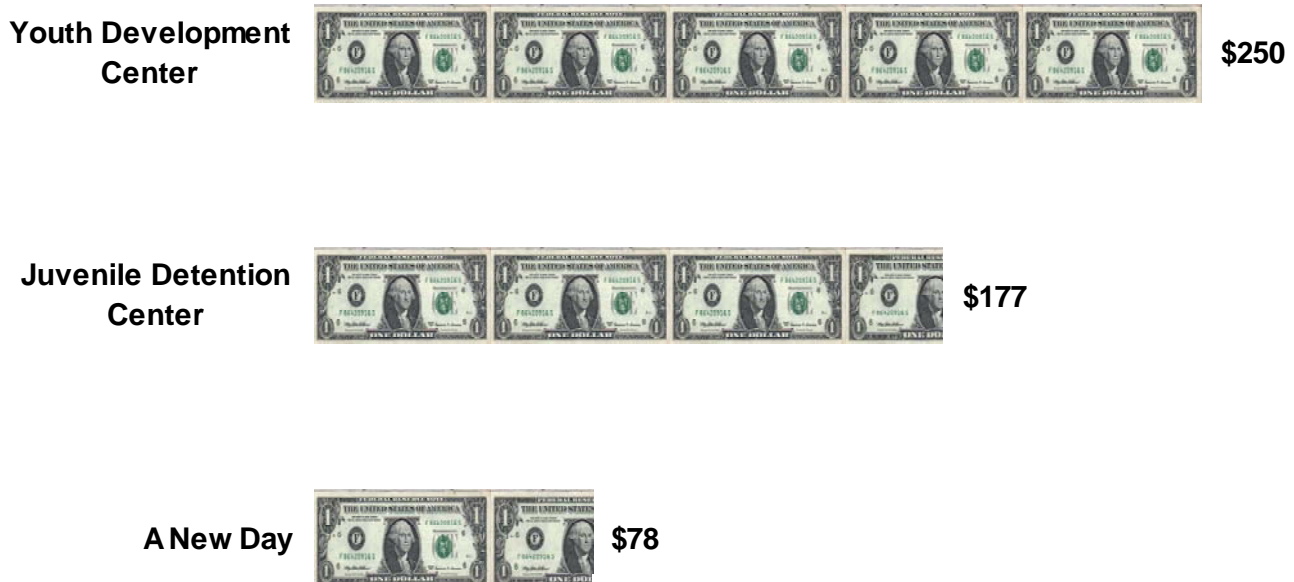
**Program Statistics**

As you can see, the *A New Day* program has demonstrated considerable success over the last few years.

The Durham Juvenile Day Reporting Center was awarded just over \$54,000 by the Governor's Crime Commission for the two-year span from July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2006. This grant helped staff to become certified in the *Bethesda* Model's two-system approach using relational healing and peer governance. Approximately 85% of the award was used for contractual services offered by the Bethesda Family Services Foundation that related to the training of *A New Day* staff. The following are a sampling of statistics that quantitatively express the accomplishments and benefits of this unique program:

- ♦ From July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 to June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006, there were 119 new admissions to *A New Day*. Of these 119 students, 53 graduated from the *A New Day* program yielding a 44.5% completion rate.
- ♦ Roughly 73% of students enrolled in *A New Day* between July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005 and June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006 successfully completed the *Bethesda* model.
- ♦ 72% of the target population who graduated from the program in June of 2005 did not re-offend over the course of a year after completing the therapeutic course at *A New Day*.
- ♦ In fiscal year 2004-2005, it costs approximately \$78 per day for an at-risk youth participant to attend *A New Day* program. It costs approximately \$177 per day to house a juvenile at a state operated Juvenile Detention Center and approximately \$250 per day for each individual committed to a state operated Youth Development Center (S. Clarkson, personal communication, August 2, 2006) [See endnote ‡ ].

**Average Cost per Youth per Day**



### ***Behavioral Assessment Data***

To measure behavioral modification, the Bethesda Frequency and Intensity Behavioral (BFIB) Scale was used to measure the increase or reduction of negative behavior on the basis of how often and how intense it is exhibited in each of the four "life domains" (home, school, community and program).

To assist in measuring the success of the program, Bethesda Family Services Foundation developed the BFIB to be administered to all new clients upon intake, at midpoint and at discharge. The direct impact of the Relational Healing and Peer Governance Models can be measured and applied to behavioral patterns of youth. As each client begins the program, the case manager to whom the client is assigned conducts a comprehensive individual and family assessment during which the frequency and intensity of the client's original offending behaviors are recorded.

The following charts provide an overview of the frequency and intensity of negative behaviors based on data collected on the program during the summer of 2005. The findings clearly show that negative behaviors decreased among youth participants while involved in the program. Frequency is an objective measurement of the number of times the negative behavior occurs (e.g., daily, three times per week, twice a month, etc.). Intensity is a subjective measurement, which reflects the level of severity of the negative behavior(s) (e.g., threats, assaults on one another, destruction of property, running away, etc.).

At midpoint and at discharge, case managers reassess the frequency and intensity of the negative behavior(s), which oftentimes shows an astonishing decrease in the pattern of the offense. The following are brief descriptions of the negative behaviors assessed:

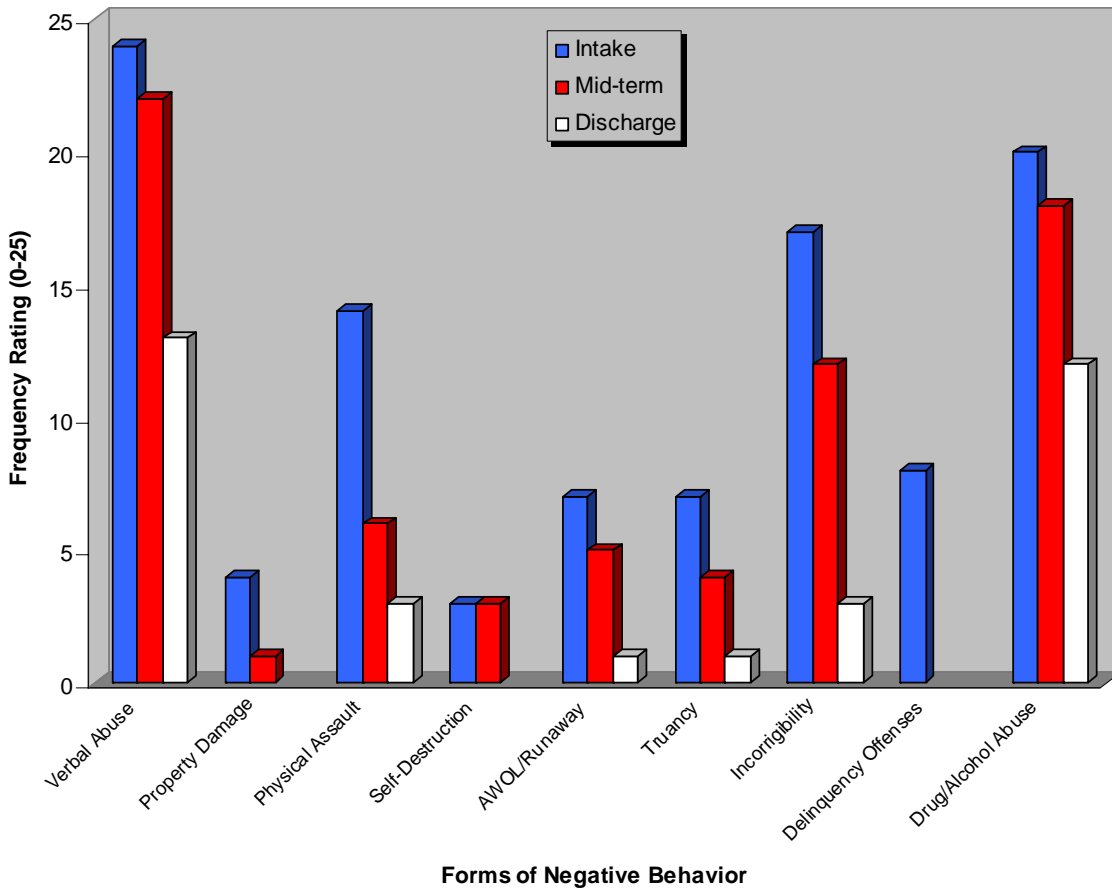
- ♦ **Verbal Abuse:** A statement or comment made with the intention to inflict emotional pain or embarrassment, or to provoke feelings of worthlessness, or to motivate a person to perform or conform out of fear or threat of harm; the use of harsh, insulting language.
- ♦ **Property Destruction:** The action or process of destroying something or the attempt or threat of destroying an object such that the youth needs to be stopped or restrained from carrying out the destructive act.
- ♦ **Physical Assault:** The act of inflicting physical contact or bodily harm on a person; or a threat, such as lifting a fist or kicking feet in an intentional manner that puts a person in immediate danger, such that the inflicting person would have to be stopped or restrained; or the act of battering or beating; or to seize and take away by force. Also includes spitting, throwing of objects (such as a book), and kicking.
- ♦ **Self-destruction:** Acting to harm oneself, such as marking one's own skin with an eraser or ink pen/creating a non-professional tattoo, cutting one's own skin; or an attempt or successful overdose on prescription or non-prescription drugs or alcohol; or the act of attempting suicide by any means.
- ♦ **Runaway/AWOL:** The act of leaving home without permission; or fleeing/attempting to escape; or absent without notice or permission.
- ♦ **Truancy:** Not attending school, includes missing school because of an enabling parent who grants permission, and when students lie to their parents or manipulate their parents in order to not attend or get out of school early.
- ♦ **Incorrigibility:** Difficult or impossible to control. Students who are "hard headed," think they are adults, do not follow the rules, argue with staff, have difficulty with structure, or maintain negative behaviors. Defiance towards competent authority.



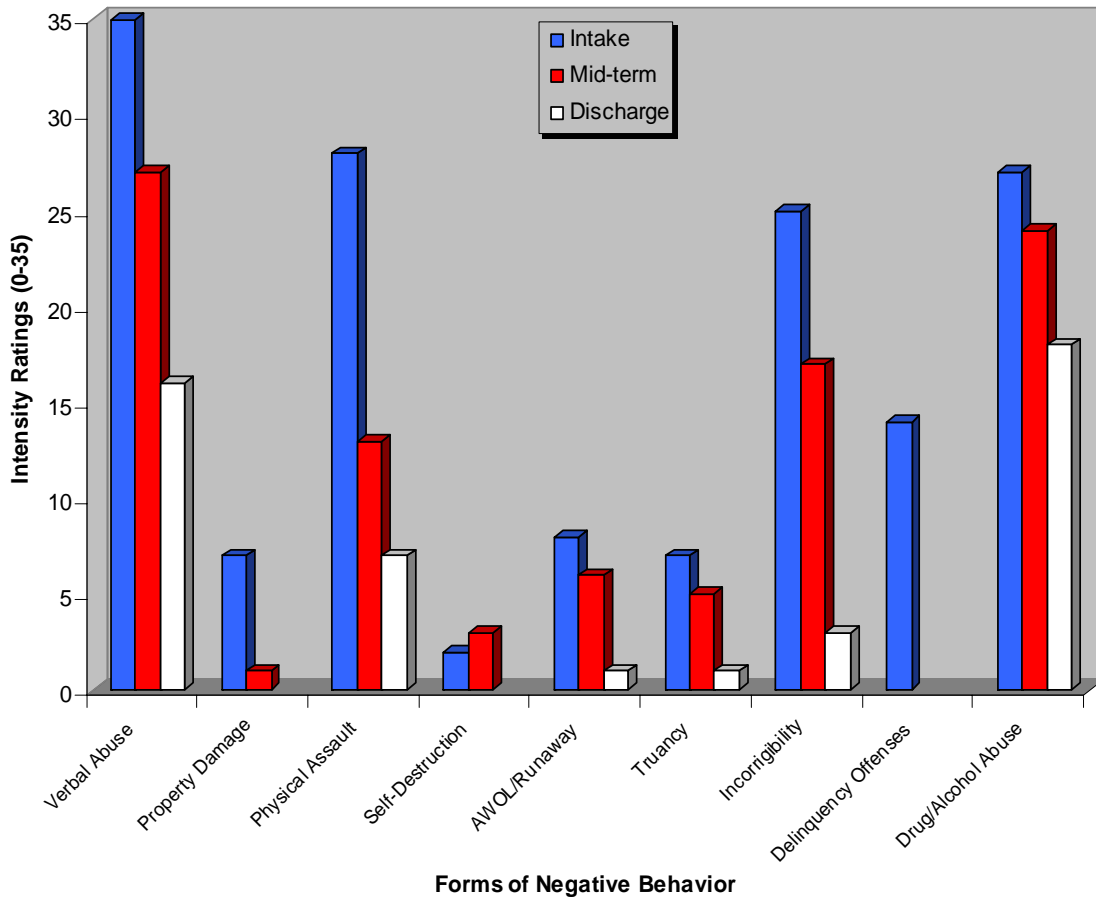
**Behavioral Assessment Data (continued)**

- ♦ **Delinquency Offense:** A serious offense punishable by the law of the state.
- ♦ **Drug/Alcohol Abuse:** Misuse or overuse of a drug for a non-therapeutic or non-medical effect. Some of the most commonly abused drugs include: cannabis, alcohol, amphetamines, barbiturates, cocaine and opium. Use of the drugs may lead to criminal penalty in addition to physical, social and psychological harm.

**A New Day, Durham County, NC  
Summer 2005 Behavioral Frequency Assessment Findings**



**A New Day, Durham County, NC  
Summer 2005 Behavioral Intensity Assessment Findings**



## Lessons Learned

Throughout the life of this program, several important lessons have been learned from a mix of a trial-and-error approach, the successes it has garnered, and the failures it has incurred along the way. These lessons have served to strengthen the program and its commitment to helping the at-risk youth of Durham County.

A common, reoccurring theme when talking to the director and the staff is the great importance of the *Bethesda* model and how they wish it could have been implemented earlier in the program's lifecycle. In response to being asked what would be done differently if starting the program over again, Dr. Amy Elliott responded confidently with the statement, "...Use the *Bethesda* model from the very beginning." She expressed how the therapeutic model works to get at the very heart of the issues troubling the youth enrolled in this program, while also providing a positive outlet to intimately express their pain and grief. This is a crucial step for youth to take in order to successfully heal and move on with their lives. Jerome Allen, case manager at the program, described how important the therapeutic exercise of youth writing and reading their autobiographies to their peers has been for their mental and emotion well-being, as well for promoting the healing process. As he put it, "Autobiographies help the most...they allow emotions to flood out, people listen, and it makes the kids feel like someone cares."

In addition to the therapeutic model, the staff at *A New Day* has found it imperative for the kids to engage in what they have dubbed the 'creative experience'. This experience involves active involvement with the liberal and visual arts—for example, writing, painting and acting—which helps to foster a richer environment beyond what is typically offered by public schools, who often approach learning as nothing more than the teaching of reading, writing and arithmetic. "The arts," as one staff member described them, "offer an inexpensive way to help the kids appreciate themselves, gain confidence, and discover who they are." Moreover, the arts allow many of the kids, who have often been neglected and abused by their caregivers, to finally live out their childhoods that have been stolen from them.

Finally, one of the biggest hurdles the program has had to tackle has been getting the parents of these at-risk youth proactive in the healing process. Many of these caregivers are also engaged in illicit activities and, in fact, are experiencing some of the same difficulties their children are struggling with including aggression, drug and alcohol abuse and violence. Parent-child relationships are often strained by past abuse and abandonment. However, it is essential that parents of youth participants lend their support to their children because it shows that they care.



"The arts offer an inexpensive way to help the kids appreciate themselves, gain confidence, and discover who they are."

(Photo courtesy of Dr. Amy Elliott)

### ***Partnerships and Sustainability***

Forming strong partnerships with community leaders, parents and members of the community are imperative to the long-life and sustainability of any program. While it requires hard work and dedication to properly nurture these relationships, the benefits that partnerships bring to a program can be crucial to the program's long-term survival. The impact that *A New Day* has had on the community has helped to foster a strong partnership between the program and local government. Through the positive results of *A New Day*, local officials have realized the benefits of investing in these at-risk youth programs and have continued to fund program initiatives.

*A New Day* has been innovative and fruitful in its pursuit towards building sustainability so that it can continue to operate after grant funding has ended. Its success at counseling at-risk youth was captured early in the program's lifecycle and has been chronicled in a host of articles from several different media outlets including *The News & Observer*, *The Herald Sun* and the *Independent Weekly*. A video documentary entitled "Choices and Change" was created to highlight the purpose, goals and achievements of *A New Day*. This documentary has received a wide assortment of positive feedback since its completion.

The positive public exposure generated from both the newspaper articles and video documentary has since resulted in this program receiving continued funding from Durham County administration, as well as persuaded other community groups like the *Durham Giving Project* to donate additional fiscal support so the program can continue to operate in its present capacity.

A strong partnership with the school system has helped to bring in much needed resources. The school system provides the program with books, food and teachers. Since schools often refer suspended youth to the program, strong communication between the schools and the program is crucial to the success of the program's academic component.

The staff of the program has also worked hard to forge alliances and partnerships with other community support initiatives and local faith-based groups, such as the *Religious Coalition* and *Monument of Faith*, an all men's group from the Monument of Faith Church which now provides mentoring support for many of the male children enrolled in the program.

New volunteers and staff are continually being brought onboard to assist the program in completing the goals and objectives it has established. A student from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill donated his time to create an informative and attractive website for the program which establishes an Internet presence. Interns from Duke University have also volunteered with the program contributing approximately 160 hours of classroom time to provide individual tutoring services to many of the enrolled students who were having difficulties with their academic studies.

With the assistance of Bethesda's national headquarters, more and more volunteer counselors of the program are receiving their certification in the relational healing therapeutic system and peer governance model. This has allowed the program to provide more children with therapy.

### ***Discussion and Recommendations***

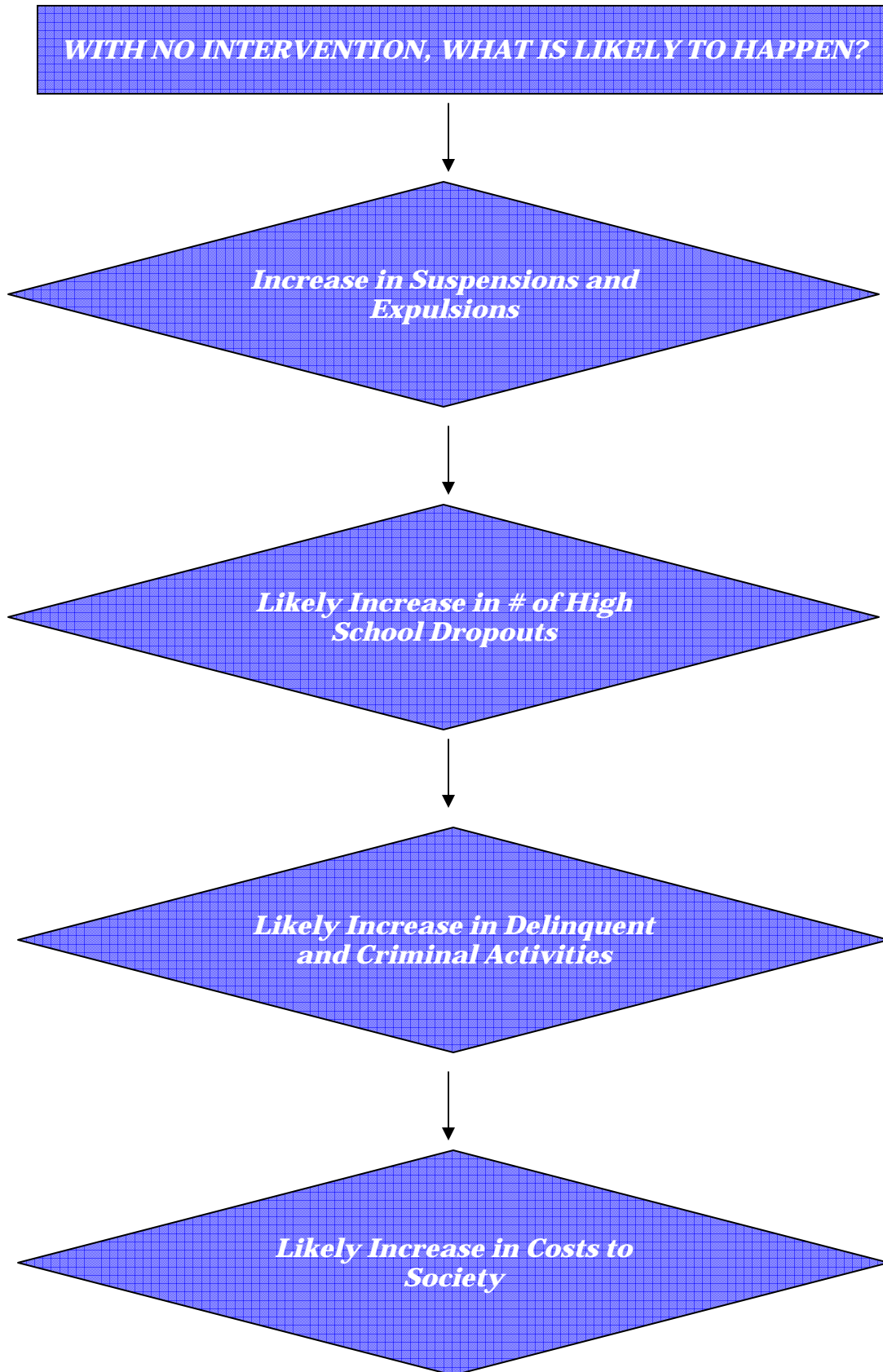
Unlike counseling, which many juvenile programs throughout the nation offer, therapy gets to the heart of hurt and angry feelings from family conflict and maltreatment. Counseling programs are often inconsistent for the most part due to programs being only as good as the last person hired.

### ***Discussion and Recommendations***

Comprehensive staff training on the *Bethesda* therapeutic model at community-based programs will help to ensure that all staff are working as one cohesive unit.

Suspensions and expulsions are no longer issues that concern only the education system. The justice system, along with other agencies, must begin to focus on the potential negative impacts of suspensions and expulsions. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, our state could add nearly \$233 million back into the economy by increasing male high school graduation rates by a only five percent (2006). Enrico Moretti, Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at the University of California, Berkeley, noted in 2005 that a 10% increase in male graduation would reduce murder and assault arrest rates by about 20%, motor vehicle theft by 13%, and arson by 8% (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2006). Looking at the bigger picture, the overall monetary value of saving a high-risk youth is quite astounding. Criminologist Mark Cohen (2005) estimated the overall monetary value of saving a high-risk youth is between \$1.7 and \$2.3 million when factoring in victim costs, criminal justice-related costs, and offender productivity lost.

Because North Carolina lacks the application of therapeutic models in many of its juvenile community-based intervention programs and school systems, it is recommended that **North Carolina should apply the *Bethesda* therapeutic model more often throughout the state. Key stakeholders and leaders, such as Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils, members of the Governor's Crime Commission, members of the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group, and other state and local officials should heavily consider funding additional pilot initiatives for the *Bethesda* therapeutic model to be placed in both urban and rural programs throughout the state, particularly Juvenile Structured Day Programs.** A movement toward funding these initiatives could position North Carolina as a national leader in providing therapy to at-risk youth in a cost-effective manner. Doing so will result not only in tax dollars saved, but in lives salvaged and victimization reduced. The fundamental question is: do we invest a relatively small amount now in these at-risk youth, or do we spend much more on these individuals as adults through incarceration costs, government assistance, and healthcare. It makes sense financially for our state to equip more juvenile programs with the proven, cost-effective *Bethesda* therapeutic model.



Authored by:  
Justin Davis, Social Research Associate,  
North Carolina Criminal Justice Analysis Center  
and  
Kevin Dowd, Youth Advocacy and Involvement Office Summer Intern,  
Appalachian State University

For more information on *A New Day* and the *Bethesda* Model:

Juvenile Day Reporting Center: *A New Day*

[http://www.durhamcountync.gov/departments/cjrc/A\\_New\\_Day.html](http://www.durhamcountync.gov/departments/cjrc/A_New_Day.html)

*Bethesda* Therapeutic Model (Bethesda Family Services Foundation)

<http://www.bfsf.org/main.html>

Choice and Change: A Documentary Film by Kenny Dalsheimer – Website

[www.choicesandchange.com](http://www.choicesandchange.com)

### Endnotes

\* 47.4% of inmates entering North Carolina's prisons in 2004 claimed to have had an education below a high school diploma or equivalent (NC Department of Correction, 2005). In 2004, the average annual costs to house each inmate were approximately \$24,016. During 2004, there were 25,906 admissions to North Carolina prisons.

~ Source: Friedlander, B.Z. (1993) Community Violence, children's development, and mass media: In pursuit of new insights, goals, and new strategies. *Psychiatry* 56, 66-80.

‡ Source: North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Juvenile Detention Center average daily costs are based on average daily population for Fiscal Year 2004-05. Youth Development Center average daily costs are based on average daily population for Fiscal Year 2004-05.

## References

- Action for Children North Carolina. *2006 North Carolina Children's Index*. Raleigh, NC 2006. Available online at: [www.ncchild.org](http://www.ncchild.org).
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2006, August). *Saving Futures, Saving Dollars: The Impact of Education on Crime Reduction and Earnings*. Retrieved January 23, 2007, from <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/SavingFutures.pdf>
- Cohen, Mark A. (1998). The Monetary Value of Saving a High-Risk Youth. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 14(1), 5-33. Retrieved January 30, 2007, from Academic Search Premier database.
- Communities in Schools National Office. (2005). *Annual Report: Connecting Kids with Community Resources*. Alexandria, VA: Author. Retrieved January 22, 2007, from [www.cisnet.org/library/download.asp?file=05\\_annual\\_rpt.pdf](http://www.cisnet.org/library/download.asp?file=05_annual_rpt.pdf)
- Florida State Department of Education. (1995, January). *Florida School Discipline Study: 1994 Juvenile Justice Reform Act*. Tallahassee, FL: A Report to the Florida Legislature. (ERIC Reproduction Service Document No. ED384981).
- North Carolina Department of Correction, Office of Research and Planning. (2005, July). *Educational Attainment of Inmates Entering North Carolina's Prisons*. Raleigh, NC: Research Brief. Prepared by David Edwards. Available online at: <http://crrp41.doc.state.nc.us/docs/pubdocs/0006517.PDF>
- North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2006). *2005 Annual Report: Creating Success for Youth, Families, and Communities*. Raleigh, NC: Author. Available online at: <http://www.djjdp.org/statistics/reports/ar2005/resources/report.pdf>
- North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2006, March). *Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions, 2004-05*. Raleigh, NC: Author. Available online at: [http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe\\_meetings/0603/0603\\_HSP9\\_rev.pdf](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0603/0603_HSP9_rev.pdf)
- Schiraldi, Vincent, and Ziedenberg, Jason. (2001, September 1). *Schools and Suspensions: Self-Reported Crime and the Growing Use of Suspensions*. Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute Policy Brief. (ERIC Reproduction Service Document No. ED460233).
- U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2006, Fall). Education and income: More learning is key to higher earnings. *Occupational Outlook Quarterly (online)*. Retrieved January 10, 2007, from <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ooq/oochart.htm>