

Madera County Probation Department

Stop Truancy Opportunity Program (STOP)

Annual Performance Report 07/01/02 – 06/30/03

The Stop Truancy Opportunity Program (STOP) completed its second year of operation from July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003. Eight schools in the Madera County participated in the STOP: Dairyland, Enterprise Secondary, Liberty High, Martin Luther King Middle, North Fork, Oak Creek Intermediate, Thomas Jefferson, and Wilson Middle.

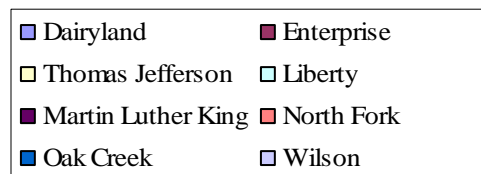
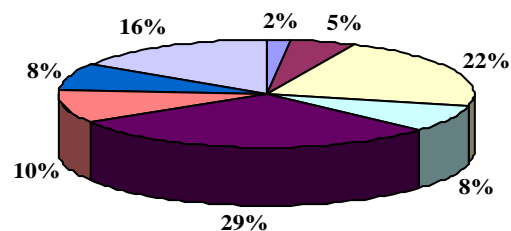
I. Participant Demographics

In the mid-year report, the total population of students reported was 221. By the end of the school year, the total student population tracked by STOP had increased to 277. Students from Martin Luther King and Thomas Jefferson make up almost half of the STOP population while smaller schools such as Dairyland and Enterprise account for less than 10% of the population.

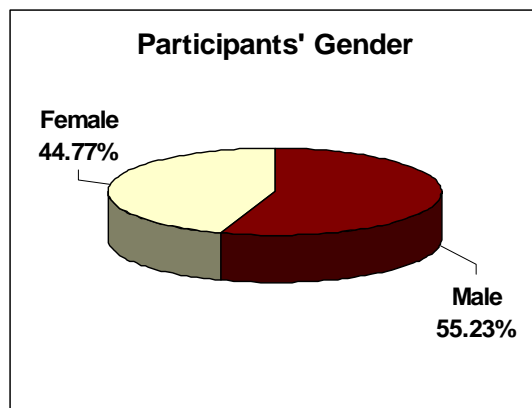
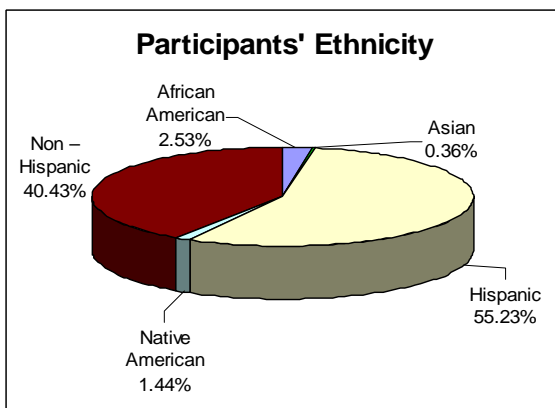
Total number of STOP participants for this performance period is 277. Participants in the program are primarily Non-Hispanic Whites (40%) and Hispanics (55%). Of the 277 participants, Fifty-five percent of participants are males and forty-five percent are females.

Participating Schools	Number of participants reported during:	
	Mid-year	Year-end
Dairyland Elementary	3	6
Enterprise Secondary	8	14
Liberty High	21	21
Martin Luther King Middle	58	81
North Fork Elementary	28	28
Oak Creek Intermediate	23	23
Thomas Jefferson	52	61
Wilson Middle	28	43
Total	221	277

Participants by School
(Annual Statistics)



Ethnicity						
Participating Schools	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Native American	Non – Hispanic	Total
Dairyland	0	0	4	0	2	6
Enterprise	0	0	12	0	2	14
Liberty	0	0	5	0	16	21
Martin Luther King Middle	3	0	64	0	14	81
North Fork	0	0	4	4	20	28
Oak Creek	0	1	1	0	21	23
Thomas Jefferson	2	0	46	0	13	61
Wilson	2	0	17	0	24	43
Total	7	1	153	4	112	277



Gender			
Participating Schools	Male	Female	Total
Dairyland	3	3	6
Enterprise	8	6	14
Liberty	15	6	21
Martin Luther King Middle	43	38	81
North Fork	16	12	28
Oak Creek	13	10	23
Thomas Jefferson	34	27	61
Wilson	21	22	43
Total	153	124	277

II. Program Statistics

Looking at the annual statistics, the program had placed six participants on probation for truancy offense. The six participants make up 2.17% of the total participant population (N=277). Of the six participants, one participant (0.36% of 277) violated the terms of probation.

Participants' Probation Status	1 st Semester		2 nd Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Placed on probation for truancy offense	1	0.45%	5	1.81%	6	2.17%
Violated terms of current probation	0	0	1	0.36%	1	0.36%
Completed probation	0	0	1	0.36%	1	0.36%

Under restitution and community service, four participants were given court ordered community service. One participant successfully completed the court ordered community service. No participants were given court-ordered restitutions for this reporting period.

Restitution and Community Service	1 st Semester		2 nd Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Given court ordered community service	1	0.45%	3	1.08%	4	1.44%
Successfully completed court ordered community service	0	0	1	0.36%	1	0.36%

Participants who did not proceed with the program left due to reasons shown below:

Reasons for Leaving Program	1 st Semester	2 nd Semester	Annual
Moved to another city or state	2	2	4
Transferred to another school	6	1	7
602 W & I, wards	11	5	16
Other	4	0	4
Total	23	8	31

In last year's report, participants' year-end arrest, incarceration and probation violation rates were collected. This year, the program not only tracked participants' arrest, incarceration, and probation violation rates, the program specifically identified whether a participant's arrests, incarcerations, or probation violation occurred before or after referrals to the STOP. The two tables below show the participants' first semester, second semester and annual arrest and incarceration rates.

Results from the two tables show an increase in arrests and incarcerations after referrals to the program. This increase can be attributed to the increased and intensified supervision of the participants by program officers. The arrest and incarceration rates are low in comparison to rates at the County level. The increase in these rates for post referral STOP participants can be viewed as positive intervention and prevention services being administered to deter further truancy and crime among this group of juveniles.

Participants' Arrest Rates	1 st Semester		2 nd Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Arrested prior to STOP referral						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	2	0.90%	0	0%	2	0.72%
Misdemeanor offense	1	0.45%	1	0.36%	2	0.72%
Total	3	1.36%	1	0.36%	4	1.44%
Arrested after STOP referral						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	1	0.45%	8	2.89%	9	3.25%
Misdemeanor offense	4	1.81%	9	3.25%	13	4.69%
Total	5	2.26%	17	6.14%	22	7.94%

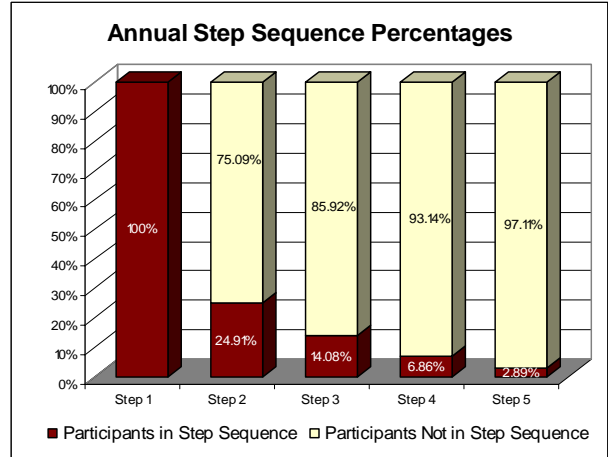
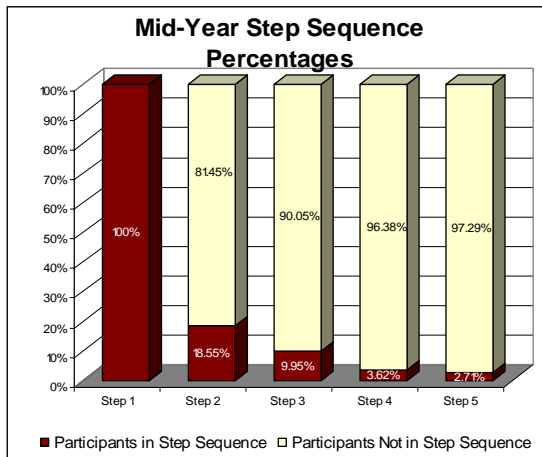
Participants' Incarceration Rates	1 st Semester		2 nd Semester		Annual	
	Number	Rate	Number	Number	Rate	Number
Arrested prior to STOP referral						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	2	0.90%	0	0%	2	0.72%
Misdemeanor offense	1	0.45%	1	0.36%	2	0.72%
Total	3	1.36%	1	0.36%	4	1.44%
Arrested after STOP referral						
Status offense	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Felony offense	1	0.45%	8	2.89%	9	3.25%
Misdemeanor offense	4	1.81%	9	3.25%	13	4.69%
Total	5	2.26%	17	6.14%	22	7.94%

The STOP uses a step sequence to determine students' level of truancy. Step 1 is when the student has 1 to 3 unexcused absences and a letter has been sent to the parents notifying them of the student's truant behavior. Step 2 is when the student incurs a fourth unexcused absence at which time another notification is mailed to the parents. A meeting between the probation officer, the parents, and a school official will soon follow. Step 3 is when a fifth unexcused absence occurs, the District Attorney mails a third notification to parents, and a required Truancy Mediation Team Meeting is requested for students and parents to attend. Step 4 is when a 6th unexcused absence occurs and a SARB meeting is held. The last step is Step 5, when the 7th unexcused absence occurs. The student is referred to court as a habitual truant and formal probation is requested.

The table below shows the number of participants in each step sequence during the mid-year and year-end. Due to the fact that all the participants in the STOP were enrolled because of truancy, all participants are Step 1 participants.

Step Sequence

Charts



Step	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	221	100%	277	100%
2	41	18.55%	69	24.90%
3	22	9.95%	40	14.44%
4	8	3.62%	20	7.22%
5	6	2.71%	8	2.89%

III. School Statistics

For this annual report, 277 participants are on file, however, only 222 participants' academic data and attendance data were available for this report. School attendance rates for Fall 2002 were at 91.08% while Spring 2003 showed attendance rates improving to 95.31%. Fall 2002 average GPA for the STOP participants was 1.94 while Spring 2003 average GPA was 1.99, a 0.05 improvement.

Participants' Attendance and GPA		Mean GPA			Attendance Rates		
		Mid-Year	Year-End	+/-	Mid-Year	Year-End	+/-
Dairyland	(N=5)	1.00	1.82	+0.82	85.71%	93.80%	+8.09
Enterprise	(N=8)	2.73	2.39	-0.34	88.53%	90.23%	+1.70
Liberty	(N=14)	2.48	2.33	-0.15	92.79%	97.40%	+4.61
Martin Luther King	(N=81)	1.90	2.09	+0.19	93.10%	96.26%	+3.16
North Fork	(N=22)	2.65	2.66	+0.01	96.41%	97.69%	+1.28
Oak Creek	(N=20)	2.47	2.30	-0.17	89.47%	94.06%	+4.59
Thomas Jefferson	(N=36)	1.41	1.42	+0.01	91.33%	96.18%	+4.85
Wilson	(N=36)	1.21	1.99	+0.78	90.95%	94.29%	+3.34
Total	(N=222)	1.94	1.99	+0.05	91.08%	95.31%	+4.23

To measure STOP participants' behavior, the program tracked the number of students suspended and the total days of suspensions during Fall 2002 and Spring 2003. A total of 56 students were suspended in Fall 2002 with the majority of those students from Thomas Jefferson (32%) and Martin Luther King (18%). Total days of suspension for Fall were 315 days, therefore the average length of suspension per suspended participant was 5.63 days. In Spring 2003, a total of 69 students were suspended with 384 days of suspensions, averaging 5.57 days of suspension per suspended participant. The majority of suspended participants for Spring were from Martin Luther King (39%) and Wilson (25%).

Total days of suspension for Thomas Jefferson was 153 days with only 8 participants suspended. This averages to 19 days of suspension per suspended students. To investigate why students at Thomas Jefferson were receiving so many days of suspension, each suspended students' files were brought up and the school's administrators were consulted. The students who had high number of days suspended were students whom the school administration had deemed ready for

school expulsion and were no longer tolerated on school grounds. Expulsion of a student could only be approved by the school board. Since the school board only convened periodically, the student was placed on continued suspension and remained at home until expulsion procedures were completed.

Participating Schools	Number of Students Suspended		Total Days of Suspension	
	Fall 2002	Spring 2003	Fall 2002	Spring 2003
Dairyland	1	2	2	3
Enterprise	3	5	5	6
Liberty	8	3	36	12
Martin Luther King	10	27	40	98
North Fork	7	5	33	19
Oak Creek	4	2	14	3
Thomas Jefferson	18	8	123	153
Wilson	8	17	67	90
Total	56	69	315	384

IV. Participants' Background

Family dynamics can be an important factor in a student's behavior. Therefore, the program attempts to understand some of these truant students' behavior at a deeper level by developing a better picture of each individual student's home environment. However, this information is provided by students at their discretion and because it is based solely on students' statements, this information may not be 100% reliable.

The table below shows the number of participants' family members that were incarcerated, on parole, and on probation. Sixty-six participants (23.8%) showed they had family members who entered the criminal justice system.

Participating Schools	Family member incarcerated	Family member on parole	Family member on probation	Annual Total
Dairyland	0	1	1	2
Enterprise	1	1	1	3
Liberty	0	0	0	0
Martin Luther King Middle	5	6	7	18
North Fork	3	3	2	8
Oak Creek	2	1	3	6
Thomas Jefferson	0	1	3	4
Wilson	5	6	14	25
Total	16	19	31	66
Percent	5.78%	6.86%	11.19%	23.83%

The following table shows STOP participants' involvement with other programs and services. One hundred and eighty-nine (68% of 277) participants are eligible for free and reduced lunches, while one hundred and forty-one (51% of 277) of the students' families have been involved with the Child Protective Services due to complaints or interventions. Only one student was involved with Cal-Learn in this reporting period.

Other Programs and Services										
Participating Schools	Dairyland	Enterprise	Jefferson	Liberty	MLK	North Fork	Oak Creek	Wilson	Total	Percent
Eligible for Free/ Reduced Lunch	6	12	45	2	66	4	15	39	189	68.23%
Cal-Learn	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.36%
ESL	3	4	0	0	24	0	1	8	40	14.44%
Previous therapy	0	7	6	3	15	3	6	12	52	18.77%
Referred to New Hope Clinicians	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	10	3.61%
Referred to Madera Co. Clinicians	1	8	8	3	12	0	2	4	38	13.72%
Referred to STOP Tutoring	0	0	8	0	15	21	16	3	63	22.74%
Referred to CPS	4	11	32	8	38	11	9	28	141	50.90%
Referred to B & G Club	0	0	3	0	0	0	23	0	26	9.39%

V. Conclusion

A comparison of statistics from the mid-year report to the end year report, allows the effectiveness of the program to be assessed. Highlights for this year include the participants' school attendance improving by 4.23% and the overall GPA improving by 0.05. Attendance rates for all schools improved when compared with attendance rates from the mid-year report. Based on the attendance and grades data, it is clear that the interventions via intensive monitoring by probation officers, tutoring and mental health counseling, proved to be effective in improving grades and preventing further juvenile truancy.

In addition, the STOP program is effective in early intervention and prevention by limiting the number of participants being referred for court action. The participant's remained primarily in the first two steps which would indicate the probation officers and mental health clinicians are providing effective services at these levels thus ceasing the escalation from the initial steps to the final court action step.

A review of the data in this report renders a statistically based analysis of the program. However, the tangible impact can only be demonstrated by the changes seen in the lives of the children serviced by the STOP Program.

The following are only a few examples of the positive effect the STOP program probation officers and mental health clinicians have had on program participants:

Richelle R. was a habitual truant and was referred to the STOP program in August of 2001. She also has a mental health condition and refused to take her medication. She was ultimately placed on formal probation due to her failure to comply with the program requirements. The probation officer dedicated a lot of time, attention, and resources to help this minor and her family.

Richelle eventually resumed attending school and successfully completed the 8th grade. She is now on medication and her mental state has improved.

Megan K. was referred to the STOP program in March 2002. The STOP probation officer and clinician made several attempt to help the minor. The following school year the minor was referred again as she continued to have repeated truancy issues and her mental status had deteriorated. She was linked with mentors from a local church and the STOP officer and

clinician invested a tremendous amount of time to get this young girl the assistance and guidance she needed. The minor's attendance improved dramatically and her GPA improved from 1.0 to 3.18. She also received a Student of the Month Award. Megan has since graduated from Junior High and is excited about attending high school. The mental health clinician continues to work with Megan and her family. Currently, this young lady talks about giving back to her community by volunteering to speak for the STOP program with the desire to reach at-risk youth.

Christina U. was referred to the STOP program in September 2001. She participated in STOP in her 7th grade year and was a carry over for the 2002-03 school year. Christina was constantly absent from school and was at risk of not graduating. She continued to have truancy problems and was ultimately made a ward of the juvenile court and placed on formal probation. The court action had a life changing impact on her. Christina finally began attending school regularly and started turning things around. Her grades gradually improved and she was able to re-connect with school. On May 22, 2003, Christina walked across the stage and received her diploma. She is now attending Madera High School.

In conclusion, the primary goal of the program is to see greater improvements in attendance and grades. The program continues to strive for juvenile truancy prevention and in the process help the participants and their families to succeed. The program is viewed as a positive form of intervention in which the participant may take advantage of the services and assistance provided.