Evidence-based practices

Community building

March 2011

Prepared for the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood
Solution Action Groups by:

Wilder Research
451 Lexington Parkway North
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-280-2700
www.wilderresearch.org
This packet lists “evidence-based practices” for consideration by Solution Action Groups as we develop recommendations for the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood. It also includes some local programs which have not yet been nationally identified as “evidence-based practices,” but which do have research to support their effectiveness and which appeared in Saint Paul’s Promise Neighborhood proposal.

**What are evidence-based practices?**

Evidence-based practices are programs which research has shown to be effective with children and young people. No program can ever be perfect, but evidence-based practices have research to show that they have the greatest chance of success with the largest number of children. (Other programs might be effective, but they don’t have research evidence.)

**Why are evidence-based practices important for the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood?**

Evidence-based practices are important for two reasons.

First, we want to make the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood as effective as possible for as many children as possible. The more that we can include evidence-based practices in our plans, the greater the chances that we can support all of the neighborhood’s children.

Second, the federal government and other funders favor the use of evidence-based practices. The more evidence-based practices that we include in our design of the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood, the better our chances of receiving the investments we need to succeed.

**How should we include evidence-based practices in our planning?**

Each Solution Action Group will identify solutions for a specific age range of children in the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood. These solutions will support children to succeed in school and in life. We want to pick solutions which will help children at their present age – and which will have positive effects on them for the rest of their lives.

In each of our groups, we should select solutions which we consider most likely to have positive impacts on children. Over the next 10 years or more, the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood will measure those impacts with “indicators.” That is, we will measure indicators such as the percentage of five year olds who are ready to attend kindergarten, or the proportion of students who attend school regularly, or the proportion of children who graduate from high school.
In our groups, we want to select solutions which will move the indicators in a positive direction. For example, this means:

- If the indicator we want to move in a positive direction is the percentage of third graders who read at their grade level, we need to ask: What solutions will increase reading achievement for 3rd graders from the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood?
- If the indicator we want to move in a positive direction is the percentage of students with a caring adult in their home, school or community, we need to ask: What solutions will increase the number of students from the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood who have a caring adult?

**Will all of our solutions be evidence-based practices?**

Not all, but hopefully, as many as possible. Solutions can include:

- Services or programs (new or improved) that will be available to children and their families (e.g., after school tutoring for students; parent education for pregnant women and their partners; health screening for preschool children; etc.)
- Reorganization of current efforts in the neighborhood – getting people to work in different ways (e.g., parents, teachers, police, librarians, etc.)
- Activities by neighborhood residents to support young people or to make the neighborhood better for all (volunteer mentoring of young people; block clubs; etc.).
- New locations for services (e.g., making services available in several schools, community centers, or other places)
- Resources (e.g., a new playground, a traffic light at a dangerous intersection, etc.)

Researchers have not developed evidence-based practices for everything we need to do. We should use evidence-based practices when they fit, but we must also do our best to develop other solutions suited to the unique situation of children in the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood – that is, solutions suited to the geography of the neighborhood, the diverse cultures who live here, and other factors. The plan for the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood will include a mixture of evidence-based practices and other solutions, crafted to fit the neighborhood.

**Format:** Evidence-based practices, and the other local, research-based practices from our Promise Neighborhood proposal, appear in the following format:

**Result:** The outcome we are trying to achieve, e.g., “children enter kindergarten ready to learn,” or “children have access to 21st century learning tools.”
**Indicator:** The measure which tells us if we have achieved a result, e.g., “students who are physically active,” or “high school graduates get a post-secondary degree.” (Note: These are just some of the indicators which we have identified in the Solution Action Groups. The longer lists which we developed appear in a separate document.)

**Program/practice:** The name of the program, a brief description, and a local provider (if there is one).

**Target group:** The group for whom the program/practice is appropriate.

**Impact:** The results which research shows the program/practice can achieve.

At the end of the packet, we have identified research sources.
| Result: | STUDENTS ARE HEALTHY |
| Indicator: | Children are physically active and regularly eat fruits and vegetables |
| Program/practice | Target group | Impact |
| **Center for Disease Control's key strategies for schools to prevent obesity** - Local provider: Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) implemented nutrition and physical activity policies/procedures; City of St. Paul, SPPS, and YWCA offer extended day physical recreation/nutrition opportunities | School-age | Well-designed, well-implemented school programs can effectively promote physical activity and healthy eating. |

| Result: | STUDENTS LIVE IN STABLE COMMUNITIES |
| Indicator: | Students live in the same place/experience a low mobility rate |
| Program/practice | Target group | Impact |
| **Housing support programs*** - housing and services focused on the unique needs of people exiting homelessness Local initiatives: Wilder’s ROOF and QUEST; YWCA programs | Homeless families | Significant increase in housing stability |
| **Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Program*** - provided a variety of services to homeowners faced with foreclosure, including negotiations with lenders, budget and mortgage counseling, and referrals to social services Local initiative: Program sites included Minneapolis and St. Paul. | Homeowners faced with foreclosure | The program successfully prevented foreclosures for up to 42%-62% of homeowners in program (depends on individual program). |

| Result: | STUDENTS FEEL SAFE AT SCHOOL AND IN THEIR COMMUNITY |
| Indicator: | Students feel safe at school and while traveling to and from school |
| Program/practice | Target group | Impact |
| **Ramsey County Wakanheza Project** - a community-wide effort that provides tools and strategies for creating welcoming environments for children, youth and families. | School-age children and their families | Findings show several elements that correlate with evidence-based practice methods found in the literature, indicating positive benefits to implementing the project. |

*Evidence-based practice*
## Evidence-based practices: Community building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Result:</th>
<th>STUDENTS ARE PROFICIENT IN CORE SUBJECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indicator:</td>
<td>Students perform at or above grade level according to state language arts and mathematics assessments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/practice</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boys &amp; Girls Club of Philadelphia, Inc.</strong></td>
<td>Middle and high school students</td>
<td>Improved verbal and writing skills and school engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Evidence-based practice*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/practice</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fast Track Prevention Project</strong></td>
<td>1st-10th grade</td>
<td>Positive impacts on social, academic, and behavioral outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Evidence-based practice*
### Result: STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL

**Indicator:** Students have a high rate of graduation from high school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/practice</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Job Corps** - education and job training program, includes remedial education, GED preparation, vocational training, and job placement assistance  
*Local provider in St. Paul* | Economically disadvantaged youth                  | Potentially positive impacts on school completion.       |
| **JOBSTART** - education and training program, includes GED preparation, occupational skills training, job placement assistance, and training-related supports | Disadvantaged high school dropouts                  | Positive impacts on GED or high school diploma receipt. |

---

### Result: STUDENTS ARE HEALTHY

**Indicator:** Children are physically active and regularly eat fruits and vegetables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/practice</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHAPEDOWN</strong> - fitness and diet program; regular meetings with a weigh-in, group interaction, and exercise</td>
<td>Middle school and high school students</td>
<td>Significant improvement on relative weight, weight-related behavior, and weight management knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Result: FAMILIES/COMMUNITY MEMBERS SUPPORT LEARNING

**Indicator:** Students have a caring adult in their home, school or community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/practice</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS)** - intensive mentoring program pairing at-risk participants with community volunteers  
*Local provider: In St. Paul* | Ages 10-16                                       | Improved relationships with parents and peers.           |

---

### Result: STUDENTS SUCCEED

**Indicator:** High school graduates get a postsecondary degree, certification or credential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/practice</th>
<th>Target group</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Corps</strong> - full-time, temporary paid work program accompanied by academic and life skills training, job search help, GED courses</td>
<td>Young adults out of school (18-25 years)</td>
<td>In some populations, greater number of associate’s degrees earned; increased desire to graduate from college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Evidence-based practice*
Sources

Center for Disease Control's key strategies for schools to prevent obesity


Saint Paul Public Schools Nutrition Services: http://ns.spps.org/About_Us.html

Housing support programs


Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Program


Ramsey County Wakanheza Project


Web site: http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph/cp/wakanheza.htm

Families and Schools Together


Strengthening Multi-Ethnic Families and Communities

**Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)**


**Boys & Girls Clubs of Philadelphia, Inc.**


**Fast Track Prevention Project**


**Job Corps**


JOBSTART


JOBSTART review from What Works Clearinghouse: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/reports/dropout/jobstart/

SHAPEDOWN


SHAPEDOWN program web site: http://www.shapedown.com/index.htm
**Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS)**


Big Brothers Big Sisters web site:  
[http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.9iILI3NGKhK6F/b.5962335/k.BE16/Home.htm](http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.9iILI3NGKhK6F/b.5962335/k.BE16/Home.htm)

**Youth Corps (American Conservation and Youth Service Corps)**


Youth Corps web site: [http://www.youthcorps.net/](http://www.youthcorps.net/)