



**Evaluation Findings from the After-School
Apprenticeship Programs in New York City,
Providence, and Boston**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for After-School Excellence (The Center), a division of The After-School Corporation (TASC), recently completed an evaluation of The After-School Apprenticeship Programs (ASAP) in New York City, Providence, and Boston for 2009. The purpose of this evaluation was to identify program successes and areas for improvement and to determine if the program delivered positive socio-emotional and professional benefits to the apprentices.

This evaluation included ASAP programs in New York City, Providence, and Boston. Using the successful After-School Matters program in Chicago as a model, ASAP program participants took part in eight weeks of apprenticeship training nine hours a week in either sports activities or in the arts. Then, ASAP participants instructed and coached groups of younger students during a paid summer internship applying the knowledge and skills that they developed during their apprenticeship. In New York, five of the program sites offered sports curriculum, while two others focused on arts. In Providence, The Providence After-School Alliance (PASA) partnered with Traveling Theatre to provide youth with arts apprenticeships, while in Boston, youth were trained to become baseball umpires. For this study, participants completed a program experiences survey that assessed their experiences in ASAP at the end of their internship periods (126 surveys). In addition, 91 participants completed a pre and post-program survey that assessed academic resilience, self-efficacy, and civic efficacy. To gain a deeper perspective on the program, nine focus groups were conducted with a subset of participants and staff members from each program. Narrative reports completed by program staff were also reviewed in depth.

Major Findings:

- ASAP participants were very positive about their experience in the program. Almost all participants reported developing better social skills, learning about how to better work in groups, and learning how to problem solve and manage their time efficiently. They also noted that their apprenticeships and internships helped them to think more about their own development and future goals. ASAP also had a substantial positive effect on the participants' health and physical activity levels, especially those programs that focused on sports.
- Boston participants were predominantly male (89%), while more females participated in New York and Providence (53% and 56%, respectively). While all participants rated highly on the skills mentioned above, a smaller percentage of Boston apprentices reported developing social, group processing, and problem solving skills, compared to participants in New York and Providence.

- Approximately three-quarters of participants (72%) across the three cities who completed the internship stated that they would like to participate in ASAP again next year. Even if they were not paid, 45% of participants reported that they would participate in the program.
- While several participants reported that their routine during the apprenticeship was difficult because of their school schedules and responsibilities, overall, they believed that the internship period was very successful and benefited both themselves and the younger children with whom they worked.
- A concern voiced by participants in New York and Providence was that the other apprentices at their sites sometimes created more work for them by not taking the job as seriously as they did. On surveys, 14% of participants from these cities stated that they had to do more than their fair share and reported feeling stressed at their internship.
- At the end of the program, participants in New York and Providence were most interested in careers in which they could help others and in professional positions. Boston participants were most interested in mechanical positions and careers in sports-related fields.
- Overall, staff members in each city viewed the program as a success and appreciated the extensive training that their apprentices received. Supervisors reported that the apprentices entered their internships well prepared as a result of what they learned and with the relationships developed during their apprenticeship. Both staff members and apprentices expressed a desire to extend the apprenticeship period over a larger interval of time (but with fewer hours per week) to enable them to ease their apprentices' schedule.

Recommendations

Based upon the major findings, the following actions are recommended:

- *Start the apprenticeship period earlier in the school year.* Extending the apprenticeship over a longer period of time will decrease the strain on the apprentices while school is still in session. Also, if funding is available, extend the amount of hours that sites can offer the internship.
- *Provide more opportunities for apprentices to capitalize on their enthusiasm for the program.* Program sites should be encouraged to provide apprentices with

opportunities to get coaching licenses, and CPR and first aid certification. Apprentices at art-specialized programs can benefit from exhibits to display their work and culminating events with their families.

- *Provide participants with a more interactive training experience.* Student focus group participants expressed a desire to have more leadership opportunities during their apprenticeships. Allowing them to lead more activities while training will help them to become better prepared at the start of their internships and will help engage them. Also, with such a large percentage of participants expressing a desire to return to the program next year, program sites should explore the possibility of allowing returning apprentices to mentor their less experienced peers.

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INTRODUCTION

The Center for After-School Excellence (The Center), a division of The After-School Corporation (TASC), recently completed an evaluation of The After-School Apprenticeship Programs (ASAP) in New York City, Providence, and Boston for 2009. ASAP is modeled after the successful After-School Matters (ASM) program in Chicago. ASM provides young people with opportunities to develop relationships with caring adults who are experts in their field in order to help them develop their work skills. In ASAP, like in ASM, high school students go through eight weeks of apprenticeship training where they are trained nine hours a week in either sports activities or in the arts. Then, ASAP participants instruct and coach groups of younger students during a paid summer internship applying the knowledge and skills that they develop during their apprenticeship. The apprenticeship training is designed to give the apprentices all the necessary tools that they need to do their internship well, and to foster positive youth development. It is also designed to provide students with skills needed to succeed in their future work.

This evaluation was multifaceted. The TASC research and evaluation team sought to identify program successes and areas in need of improvement. This study also assessed the degree to which the program delivered positive socio-emotional and professional benefits to the apprentices. To accomplish these goals, two types of surveys were administered. ASAP apprentices were surveyed about their *experiences* in the program at the end of both their apprenticeships and internships. They also filled out a pre-program survey at the beginning of their apprenticeships and a post-program survey at the end of their internships to assess change in *youth development outcomes* as a result of participation in the entire ASAP program (apprenticeship and internship). In addition, focus groups were conducted with students and staff members to gain insight into the program and narrative reports completed by ASAP site staff were reviewed. This report discusses the findings from these efforts and provides recommendations for future implementation of the program.

SITE DESCRIPTION

In New York, two of the seven sites, Kids Creative and Studio in a School, offered arts curriculum, while the other five, America SCORES, Asphalt Green, Henry Street Settlement, Sam Field Y, and Urban Dove, focused on sports. In Providence, The Providence After-School Alliance (PASA) partnered with Traveling Theatre to provide youth with arts apprenticeships, while in Boston, youth were trained to become baseball umpires. Each of the sites modified the ASAP model to fit the needs of their particular organization. Below is a detailed description of each program site.

New York

Kids Creative – Performing Arts

Kids Creative offers arts-based, peace education programs to pre-k to high school age students in after-school programs, workshops, and summer camps. The ASAP program at this site trained apprentices to teach children artistic methods and expression. Participants were primarily recruited through the Urban Assembly schools, teachers, and TASC referrals. Apprentices worked in after-school sites one to two days per week. On Saturdays, they participated in trainings that focused on artistic methods as well as topics such as behavior management and team building. When apprentices moved onto their internship, they worked as counselors in a summer camp, leading groups and working individually with children. Kids Creative staff felt that the participants' apprenticeship experience ensured that their camp was staffed with prepared summer counselors.

Studio in a School – Visual Fine Arts

Studio in a School is an organization that aims to foster the creative and intellectual development of young people through quality visual arts programs directed by professional artists, and collaborates with and enhances the capacity of those who provide and support arts programming for youth. Students from Urban Assembly and other local high schools applied to be apprentices. As part of the ASAP program, Studio in a School taught the apprentices about various mediums and how to convey what they have learned to groups of younger children. Participants also learned about group processes, communication skills, how to write and carry out lesson plans, and career development. Apprentices were encouraged to attend cultural institutions (museums and art galleries) and career fairs. During their internships, participants worked in teams to teach art to young children. The lessons they created included drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, and murals. Meeting weekly with an art instructor at the Queens Museum of Art helped to support their teaching strategies and solidify what they learned during their apprenticeships.

Urban Dove – Basketball and Soccer

Urban Dove recruited participants from their Urban Dove HiRisers program. Urban Dove is an organization that blends recreation with education in an effort to support at risk youth. Apprentices worked three days, two of which were onsite with young children. During their apprenticeship, participants gained public speaking, basketball and soccer skills while learning coaching techniques. By incorporating outside coaches who specialize in specific sports, Urban Dove demonstrated the "real world" teaching styles of coaches. They also organized retreats and outings for the youth to develop teamwork, leadership and communication skills. During the internship, participants worked five hours a day for four days per week. They were

responsible for sports-related activities, including playing games, setting up equipment, keeping score, and coaching. Urban Dove staff believed that the apprenticeship provided the youth with a toolkit to draw upon when designing and implementing activities. Plus, the apprenticeship was an opportunity for the youth to orient themselves with the schedule, facility, and staff prior to the summer internship.

Henry Street Settlement – Lifeguard Certification

Henry Street Settlement organized a lifeguarding apprenticeship and internship program based on a previous pilot. They recruited apprentices from their program and from their partnering organization, Central Queens Y. The apprenticeship training, which occurred two days per week, was a mix of teambuilding and job readiness with hands-on lifeguard instruction. For their internships, youth were placed at a private pool club, at Camp Henry, or at Central Queens Y. All were supervised by a certified Water Safety Instructor. The staff members were delighted to see an increase in youths' professionalism over the course of the internship, and more effective strategies to working well with children.

Asphalt Green – Sports

For the second year, Asphalt Green participated in TASC's ASAP programming, providing youth with the opportunity to coach and lead children in sports activities. Asphalt Green recruited apprentices primarily from Urban Assembly schools. During their apprenticeships, youth met at Asphalt Green for four hours during the week and for three hours on Saturdays. Apprentices were trained on coaching, job readiness, and basketball skills. The internship schedule was generally 9am – 4pm Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Most were junior camp counselors and some were junior activity specialists in soccer, basketball, and baseball. Staff at Asphalt Green were enthusiastic about the apprenticeship training. In addition to gaining skills for working with children, they believed that the training gave youth opportunities to meet the peers with whom they spent their internships, become familiar with the facility, and become acquainted with the staff.

America SCORES – Soccer

America SCORES worked alongside the Downtown United Soccer Club to offer youth apprenticeships and internships. America SCORES also recruited apprentices primarily through Urban Assembly schools. The apprenticeship consisted of three days of training per week. Apprentices attended a session at an after-school soccer program once per week, and an evening session was devoted to training in health, sports, instruction, and public speaking. On the weekend, the apprentices attended a training with Downtown United Soccer Club, where they worked with master coaches to assist with soccer practices. The internship was based at the Downtown United Soccer Club, where participants worked half days throughout the

summer with young children practicing soccer skills. Staff felt that the participants' apprenticeship was instrumental in giving them an understanding of how to prepare activities and deliver them successfully to children.

Samuel Field Y – Sports

As a second year participant, Samuel Field Y offered youth apprenticeships and internships in coaching younger children in a variety of sports. The organization recruited its apprentices from their own after-school programs. The apprenticeship consisted of job-related seminars once per week, learning how to create and implement sports lesson plans once per week, and a weekend day shadowing a coach at one of Samuel Field Y's Beacon programs that offered softball, soccer, and basketball to young children. During their internship participants served as junior coaches and sports activity specialists at Samuel Field Y's day camp programs.

Providence

The Providence After-School Alliance (PASA) works to expand and improve after-school opportunities for youth by building a system of after-school supports. Partnering with Travelling Theatre, a local arts-enrichment organization, PASA provided students with arts apprenticeships in performance theater, drawing, jewelry making, ceramics, and film production. PASA recruited youth from its network of summer counselors-in-training and from referrals from high school guidance counselors. During the apprenticeship, participants served as "master students" in after-school arts programs for elementary and middle school students, where they learned their art skills, and met twice a day with instructors to discuss teaching strategies. They also met on Saturdays to learn about team-building, communication, behavior management, and professionalism, and engaged in a shadow study where each apprentice shadowed and interviewed a younger child over a period of time. Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship, ASAP participants worked as counselors in PASA and Travelling Theatre's summer camps for elementary and middle school students. In addition, ASAP participants received BEST Certificate Training, where they learned the principles of youth development and gained information on how to work with younger students.

Boston

Boston After School & Beyond is a public-private partnership that seeks to support, strengthen, and expand Boston's out-of-school time system. Their Youth Sports Initiative worked with Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF) to provide youth with apprenticeships in baseball umpiring. Boston Beyond recruited from a variety of venues, including community center sites and school guidance counselor offices, and by weekly e-mail newsletters from Boston Public Schools, the Mayor, and the Boston Youth Fund. During the apprenticeship, a professional

umpire provided apprentices with their training. As a complement to this training, the apprenticeship was co-taught by a youth development expert who provided diversity awareness and conflict resolution trainings. Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship, participants served as umpires for the newly created Boston city-wide summer little league. A minimum of two interns worked each game, and all of the games were held on one ballpark, to ensure supervision and assistance for each apprentice.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Overall, 153 participants completed both the spring apprenticeship and the summer internship across the three cities (see Table 1). There were slightly more female than male participants in New York and Providence, and more males (89%) in Boston. In New York and Providence, the majority of apprentices were either Hispanic/Latino or African American/Black, while in Boston, the majority were either African American/Black (39%) or White (33%).

Table 1: Demographics of Participants

	New York Participants (N=119)		Providence Participants (N = 16)		Boston Participants (N = 18)	
Gender	#	%	#	%	#	%
Female	63	53%	9	56%	2	11%
Male	55	47%	7	44%	16	89%
Missing	1		0		0	
Grade Level	#	%	#	%	#	%
9th	14	12%	2	13%	4	22%
10th	43	37%	3	19%	8	44%
11th	44	38%	6	38%	4	22%
12th	16	14%	5	31%	2	11%
Missing	2		0		0	0
Ethnicity	#	%	#	%	#	%
African American/Black	36	32%	6	38%	7	39%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	3%	0	0%	1	6%
Hispanic/Latino	42	37%	7	44%	3	17%
Native American	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
White	23	20%	0	0%	6	33%
Other	9	8%	3	19%	1	6%
Missing	5		0		0	0

New York Site List	#	%
America SCORES	14	12%
Asphalt Green	17	14%
Henry Street Settlement	18	15%
Kids Creative	15	13%
Sam Field Y	22	18%
Studio in a School	15	13%
Urban Dove	18	15%

Measures

Youth Experiences Survey

The Youth Experiences Survey 2.0 (YES) is an instrument designed to gauge high-school aged students' developmental learning experiences in organized activities (Hansen, 2005). The questions were developed by a team of researchers who distilled various types of experiences that young people report when they participate in youth programs. The YES was administered to ASAP apprentices at the end of their internship to learn what kinds of experiences (rather than outcomes assessed on the pre- and post-survey described below) that they reported during the program. In addition to questions on the measures (see appendix for details), participants were also asked about how the program influenced their health habits, exercise routines, and future plans.

One-hundred twenty-six surveys were collected at the end of the internship across the three cities; 103 in New York, 15 in Providence, and 8 in Boston.

Pre-program survey and Post-program survey

Participants were given a pre-survey at the beginning of their apprenticeship, and a post-survey at the end of their internship, in order to assess change in academic resilience, self-efficacy, and civic efficacy throughout the program. In addition to questions on these domains (see appendix), questions were asked about participants' career expectations. At the beginning of the apprenticeship, 146 surveys were collected. At the end of the internship, 126 surveys were collected. Ninety-one¹ participants filled out both the pre- and post-program surveys; 76 from New York, 11 from Providence, and four from Boston.

¹ Twenty-eight apprentices in New York City either left, were replaced or were terminated, and students at Urban Dove did not complete the pre-survey. In addition, only four Boston apprentices completed both the pre- and post-program survey.

Focus Groups

Nine focus groups were conducted with ASAP participants and staff members to gain an in-depth understanding of the program. In New York, both apprentice and staff focus groups featured a mix of participants from the different sites throughout the city. The number of participants for all focus groups ranged from three to eleven.

Procedures

ASAP participants were surveyed at the beginning of the apprenticeship, and at the end of the internship. For the pre-survey, staff members at each site were responsible for the distribution, collection, and return of the surveys to the TASC research team. This same procedure was used for the post-survey and Youth Experiences Survey in Providence and Boston, while in New York, TASC Field Specialists were responsible for these tasks.

Apprentice focus groups were conducted separately from those convened with staff. In New York, two apprentices from each site were randomly selected to participate by the TASC research team. Staff focus group members were not randomly selected due to availability; however, each site was asked to send one person who worked directly with the apprentices and one CBO supervisor. In Boston and Providence, both staff and students were not randomly selected due to availability. In Providence, three focus groups were held; one with students, one with staff members who worked directly with the apprentices, and one with administrative staff members, while in Boston, one was held with staff and one was held with students. All focus groups were conducted at the end of the internship to gain feedback on all aspects of the program.

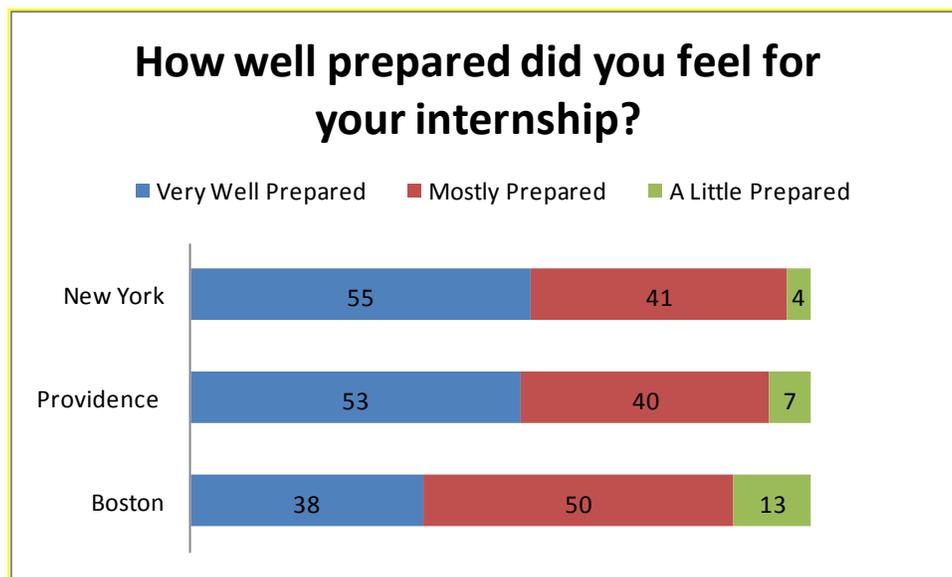
RESULTS

Participant Experiences and Benefits

Participant Experiences in Apprenticeship

ASAP apprenticeships were held after school during the spring semester of 2009. Apprentices completed approximately nine hours of training per week, and training was usually conducted in three three-hour blocks over the course of the school week. In all three cities, the majority of apprentices felt prepared for their internship after their training period (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Training



While participants felt prepared for their internship, some believed that the apprenticeship period could be improved. One New York apprentice said that “the apprenticeship was too long. And on top of that, we didn’t get to interact with the kids.” In Providence, one participant said “we got enough training, but I think we should have spent more time in the class because teaching the theories on how to teach, you can teach anyone that, but actually putting it into practice is the hard part.” In Boston, where a smaller percentage of participants felt prepared for their internship (see Figure 1), one participant said “you can’t teach things like judgment. The teacher tried the best he could to teach us the strike zone, but more on-field training would help.”

Participant Experiences in Internship

ASAP internships were held during the summer of 2009. Each site specialized in an activity that was either sports or arts-related, and was geared toward advancing younger children’s proficiency in that area. In New York and Providence, ASAP participants were responsible for teaching the specialty to younger children. In both cities, the majority of the focus group participants mentioned that their favorite part of the program was their interaction with the younger students at the internship. One New York participant said, “the best part is seeing a kid learn something that you taught them, and use the words that you taught them, and you kind of feel like you’ve changed somebody’s life, because you taught them something new, and that’s just an awesome feeling.” A Providence participant said “All the times were happy...if [the younger children are] happy, [then] I’m happy.”

In Boston, where ASAP apprentices served as umpires for youth league ballgames, interaction with the younger children (who were playing in these games) was minimal. The focus group participants enjoyed when they were able to call a good game, and when either the coaches or parents complimented them on their effort. The timing of the games was not ideal for them, since they generally started at 6:00 pm. This was a problem, according to one apprentice, because “most of our friends are working when we’re not working, and are off when we’re working.” All of the focus group participants preferred to start earlier in the day, but, despite this, enjoyed participating in the program.

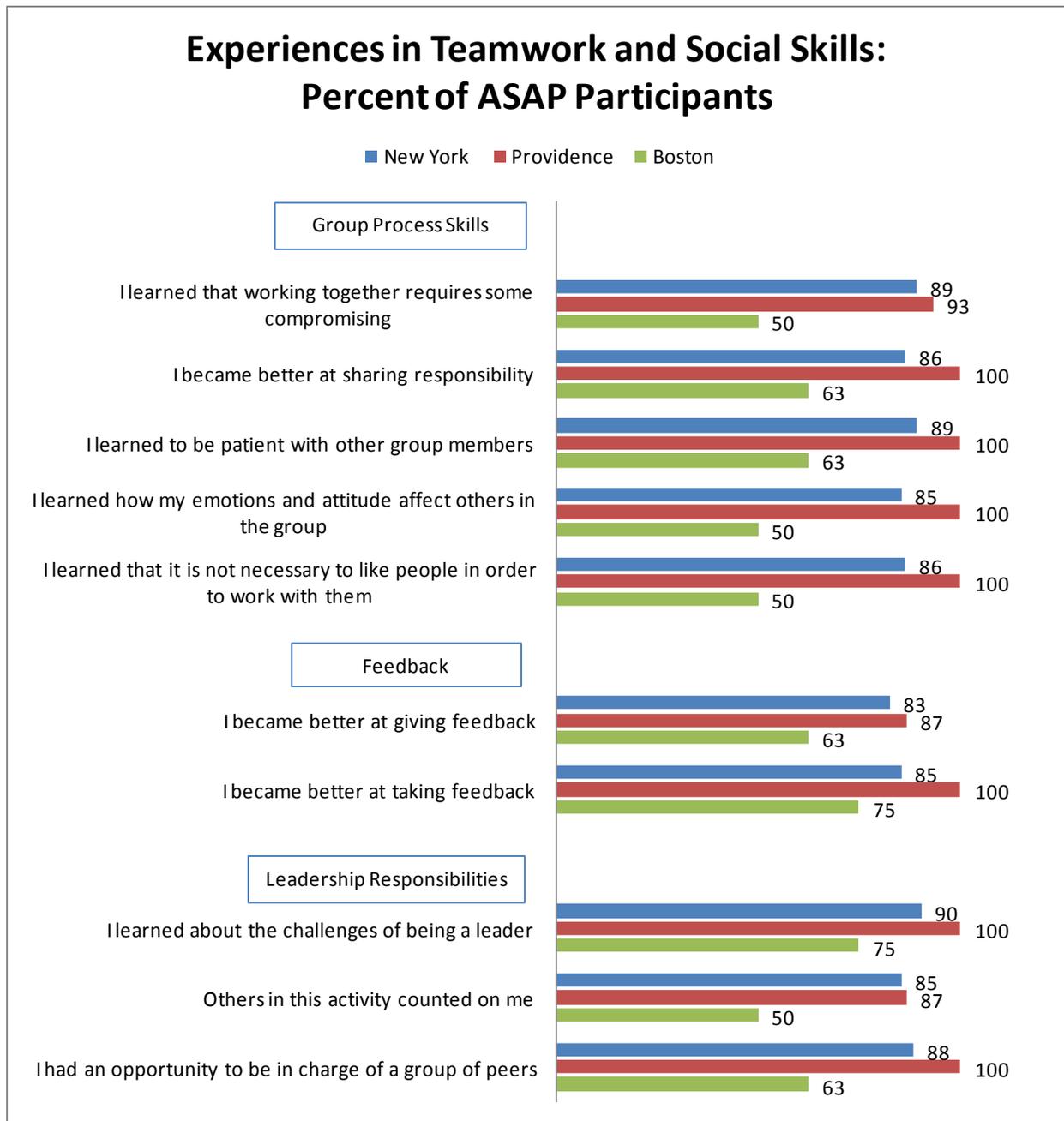
Learning Experiences

Within each figure that follows is a list of questions from the Youth Experiences Survey administered to participants at the end of their internships to assess the apprentices’ developmental experiences in ASAP. Participants reported whether they “definitely” experienced each type of learning, experienced it “quite a bit”, experienced it “a little”, or did not experience it in the program. The percentages that are displayed summarize the proportion of participants who reported that they experienced each one “*quite a bit*” or “*definitely*.” Overall, participants were very positive about their experiences in the program.

Teamwork and Social Skills

On the Youth Experiences Survey, ASAP participants reported on their experiences in developing teamwork and social skills. Teamwork and social skills included group process skills, feedback, and leadership responsibilities. At each site, 50% or more of the ASAP participants rated highly on each of the measures of these three skills, and in New York and Providence, this number rose to 85% (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Group Process Skills, Feedback, and Leadership Responsibilities

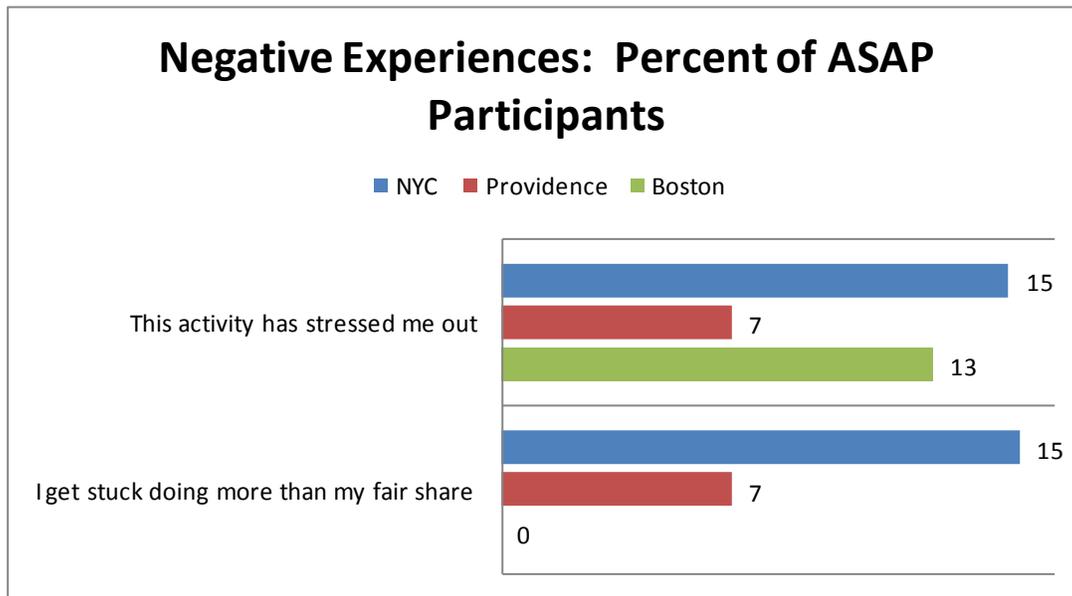


During the internship, Boston ASAP participants did not have many opportunities to interact with their peers. One participant mentioned “we have the time from when we arrive on the field to when the game starts to actually interact, but other than that, there’s not a lot of interaction.” This was different in New York and Providence, where the topic of teamwork became an important theme in the focus groups conducted in these cities. Most of the

participants in these two cities mentioned that they have developed friendships through the program, and that they spend some of their free time with the other apprentices.

However, some apprentices complained about the distribution of the work at their internships. Three New York focus group participants believed that this was a problem, with one saying “I have people at my site who are only there to get paid.” A Providence focus group member also broached this subject, saying this about a co-worker who was not enrolled in ASAP: “one part that I didn’t like was that there was some staff that weren’t as trained as us, so when it was their time to take over the kids, the kids would be out of control, so we would have to step in and take over because they really wouldn’t know how to handle it.” Overall, 15% of New York apprentices and seven percent of Providence participants believed that they got “stuck with more than their fair share of work” during ASAP (see Figure 3).

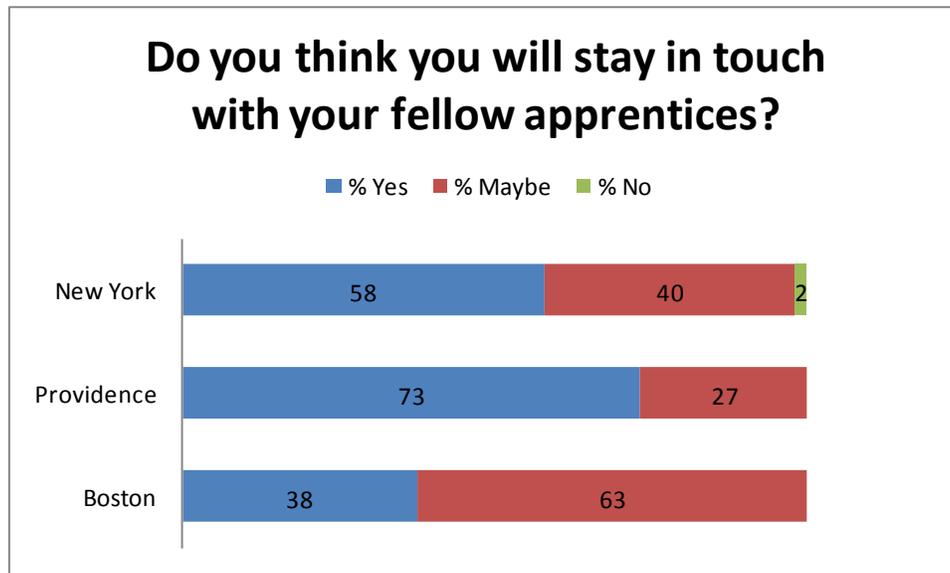
Figure 3: Negative Experiences



Despite these challenges, most participants believed that they would stay in touch with their fellow apprentices (see Figure 4). Across the three cities, Providence had the highest percentage of participants who believed so (73%). One focus group participant explained why: “I think they made it easier for us to be friends, because at first we got a contact sheet with everybody’s number in case something went wrong, but we never used it for that. We’d call people up and go to the mall. All the time we spent together, it would be impossible for us to not be as close as we are.” Boston had the smallest percentage of participants who believed they would keep in touch with one another, which is not surprising considering the small amount of time that they had to interact with one another. One apprentice remarked, “It’s really hard because we’re all from different parts of the city, and we’re all from different

schools and grades. I wish I [could] keep in contact with the people in the program, but I don't know if that's possible."

Figure 4: Apprentice Relations

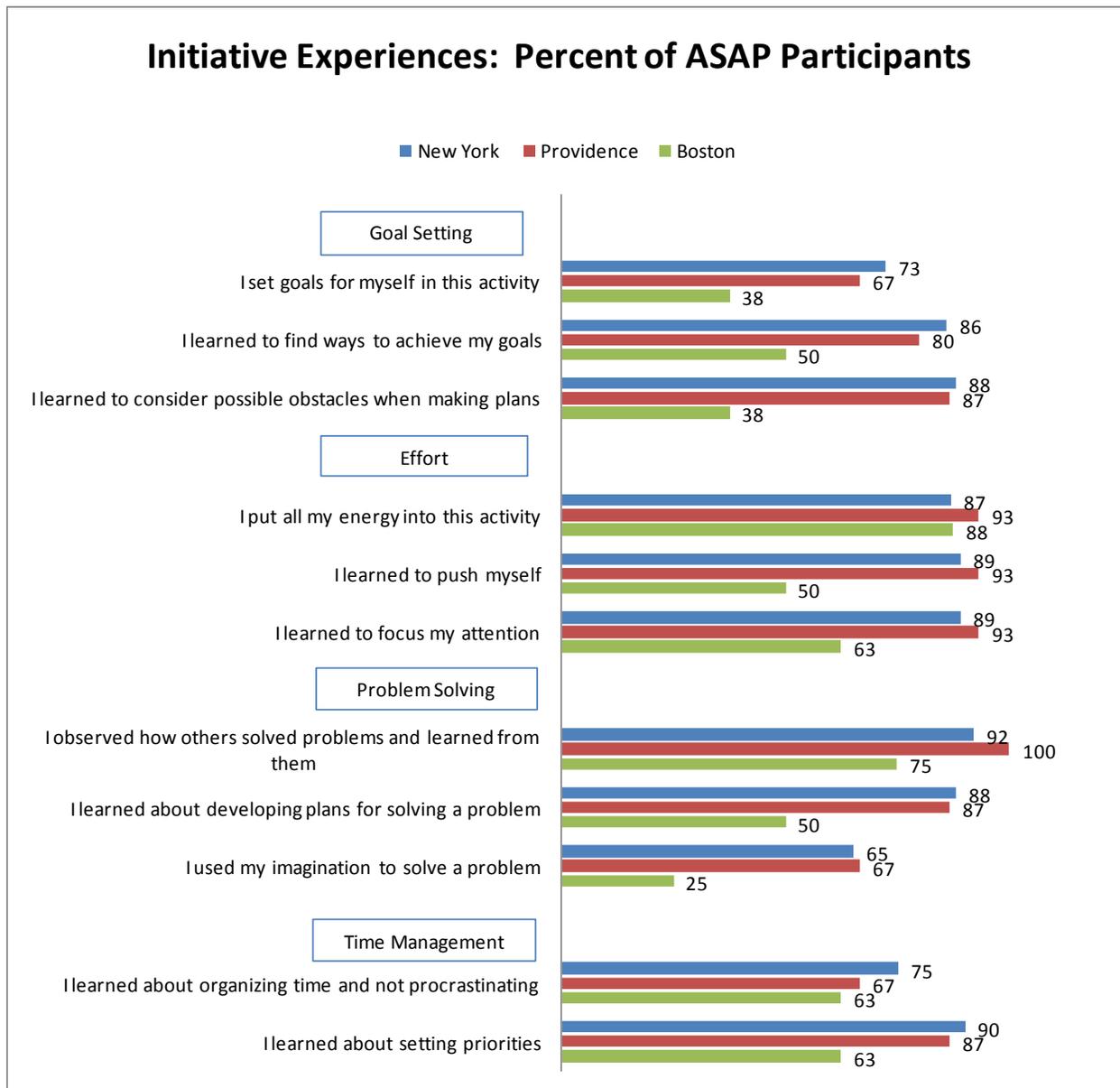


Initiative Experiences

ASAP apprentices reported positive initiative-taking experiences at the end of their internships. Initiative is a mix of youth exerting effort towards a goal, managing time efficiently, and using effective problem solving skills. All are important skills for the development of job readiness and school success. All participants reported that they put a lot of effort into the program (50% or more of participants in all cities rated highly on each measure of effort) and learned how to manage their time (greater than 60% of participants in all cities) (see Figure 5).

Participants in New York and Providence rated very highly on goal setting and problem solving as well. These numbers were lower for the Boston participants, which might be attributed to the nature of their apprenticeship. When solving problems, umpires are required to strictly adhere to the rules rather than develop creative solutions with their imagination, which is the question that they rated lowest on in this measure. For goal setting, it is possible that some Boston apprentices were not as challenged by their activity as their peers, as one focus group participant said, "I'd recommend it, because it's not that much of a hard job." Staff focus group participants believed that the apprentices who were well-versed in baseball before the program started had an easier time than those who did not know the rules beforehand.

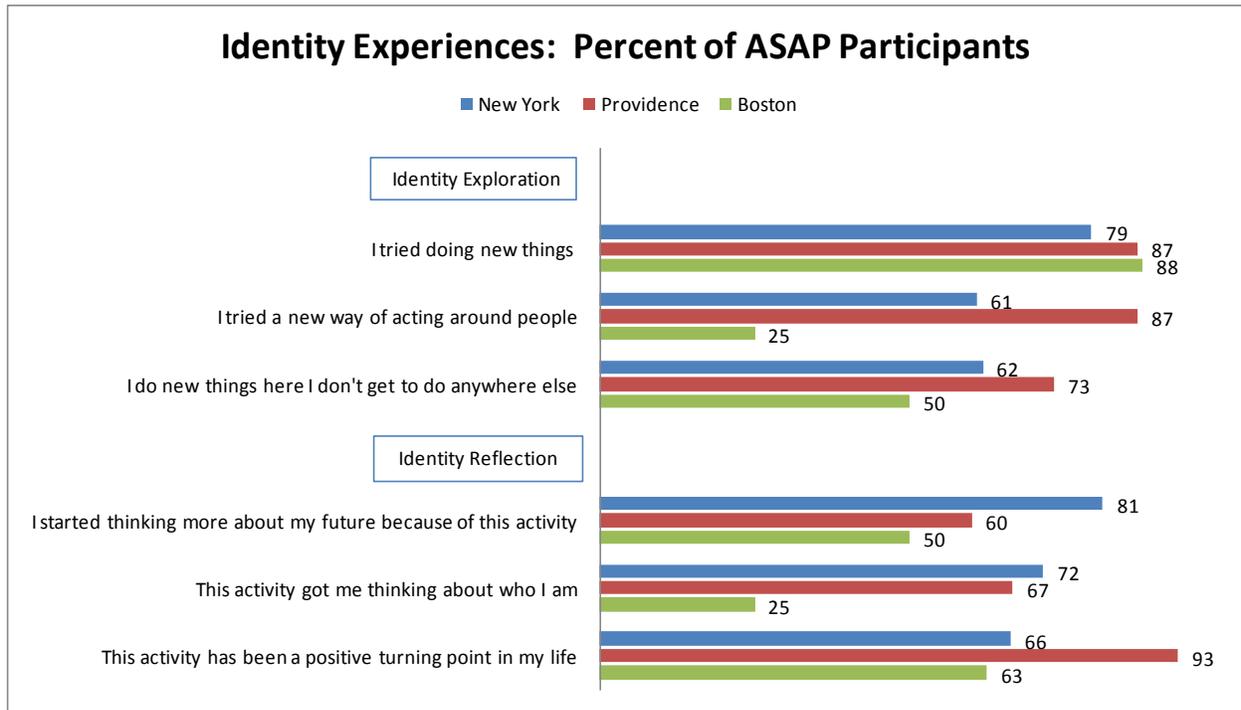
Figure 5: Initiative Experiences



Identity Experiences

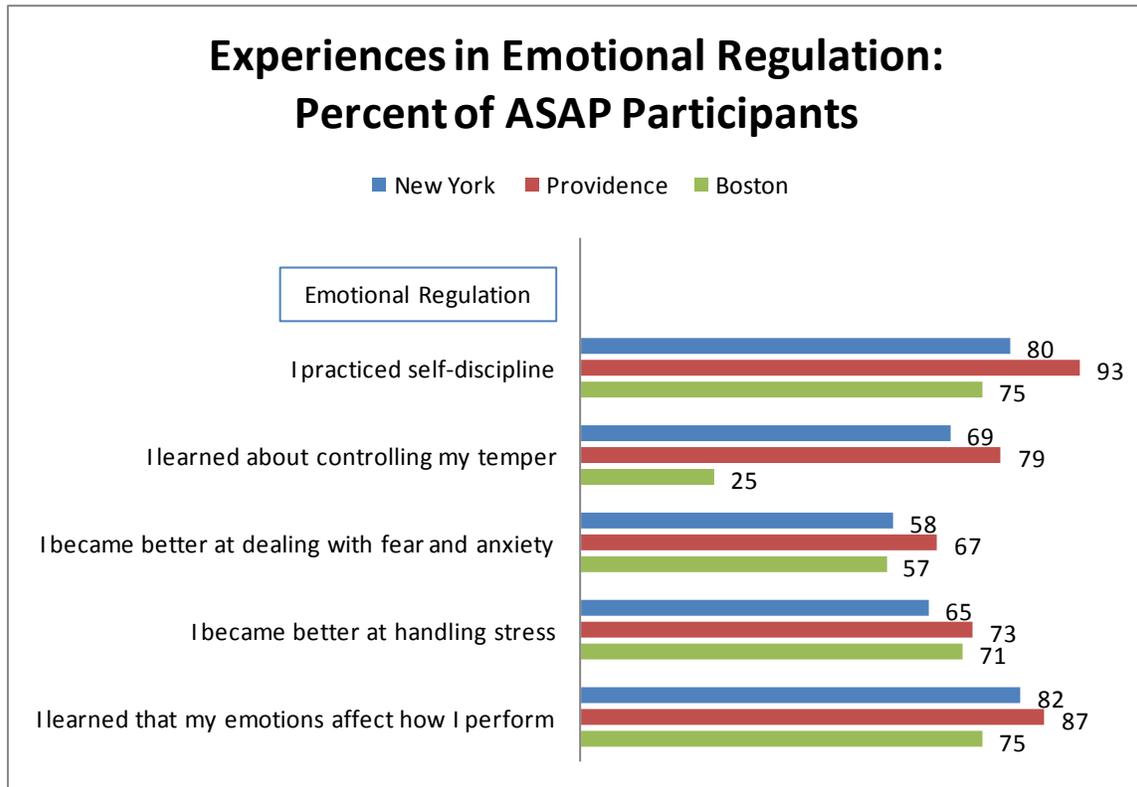
Participants were also asked about exploring and reflecting upon the development of their identity. Overall, the majority of apprentices (50% or greater) rated highly on most measures (see Figure 6). Some interesting findings were that 93% of Providence participants believed that this activity was a turning point in their lives, 88% of Boston apprentices tried doing new things in the activity, and 81% of New York participants started thinking more about their future as a result of this activity.

Figure 6: Identity Experiences



ASAP apprentices were also asked about their experiences regulating their emotions. Overall, more than half the participants reported having many experiences related to learning to control their emotions (see Figure 7). Among emotional experiences, the highest percentage of participants reported practicing self-discipline and learning that their emotions affect how they perform. One Providence focus group participant knew that she had to control her emotions in front of her students, saying “you have to be positive, you can’t show that you don’t want to be there.” One New York apprentice stated that the biggest skill that he gained from the program was the ability to control his temper, which emerged from his interaction with the younger students.

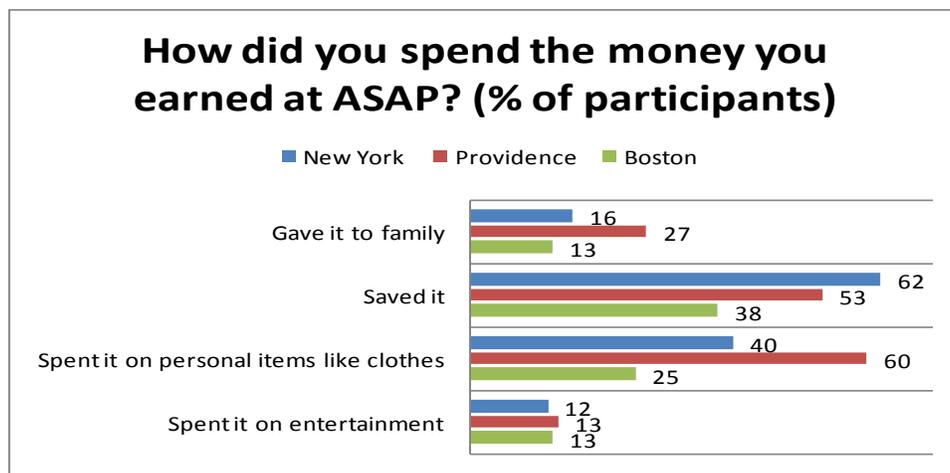
Figure 7: Experiences in Emotional Regulation



Personal Benefits

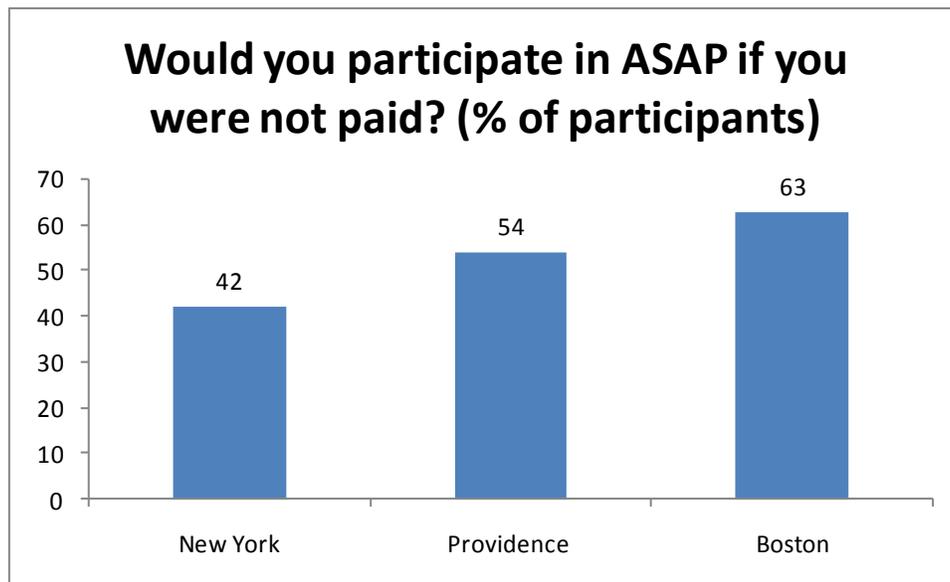
There were several personal benefits that emerged for the apprentices as a result of their participation in ASAP. One was the monetary benefit they gained. The majority of apprentices either saved the money they earned from this program or spent it on personal items. A significant percentage of participants also gave the money to their families, as seen in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Monetary Use



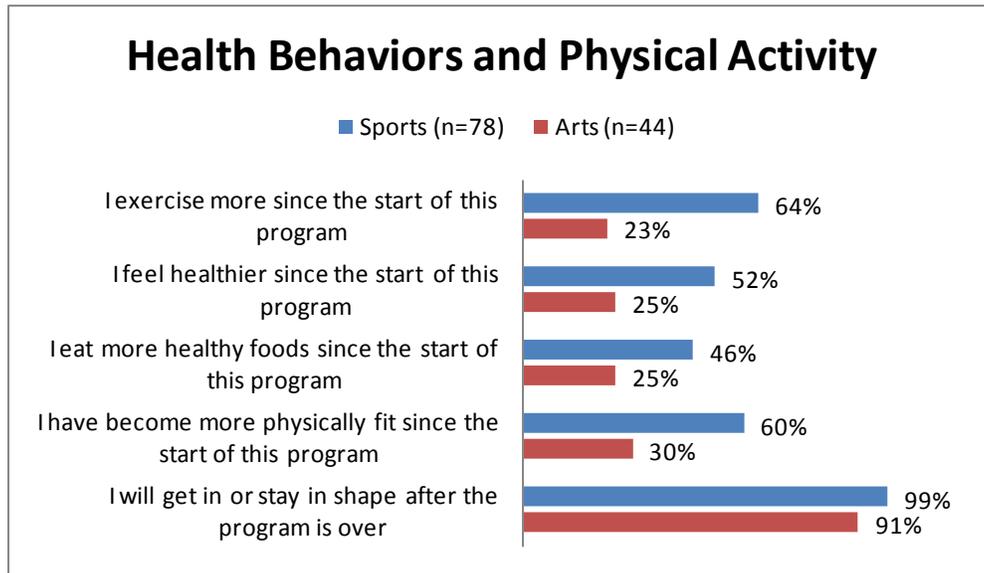
It is important to note that a large percentage of apprentices in each city said they would participate in the program even if they were not getting paid (see Figure 9). It appears that the participants gained something greater and more substantial than a paycheck from the program, and each program site offered a unique benefit to its participants. In New York, one focus group participant from Urban Dove believed that the program had a positive impact on her schoolwork, because the program’s staff members checked on her grades, and helped her with SAT preparation and college applications. In Providence, one participant proclaimed “it’s broadened my horizons so much...it can open [people’s] eyes to a number of different organizations and professions.” In Boston, one participant said “I think confidence on the field, like standing your ground, being confident in the call you made, not questioning it, and being loud and confident. I think that this program definitely helps with that. People were a lot [quieter] in the beginning, and now I hear them from two fields away.”

Figure 9: Percentage Who Would Participate Without Pay



ASAP also had a positive effect on the health behaviors of the apprentices. More than 90% of participants reported that they will get in or stay in shape once the program is over. Across the three cities, sites that specialized in sports had a stronger influence on participants’ health behaviors than sites that specialized in arts, as seen in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Health Behaviors and Physical Activity



Results of Pre-program survey and Post-program survey

ASAP apprentices completed a pre-survey at the beginning of their apprenticeship, and a post-survey at the end of their internship, to assess change in three areas: their ability to overcome obstacles academically (academic resilience), their belief in their ability to succeed (self-efficacy), and their belief in their ability to effect change in their community (civic efficacy) (see appendix for more detail). Overall, participants reported above average ratings on all three measures both before and after the program; however, there were no significant differences in the participants' scores from before to after the program. The average site score for each scale is listed in Table 2, along with the standard deviation (SD), which indicates how close all of the scores are to the overall mean (the higher the standard deviation, the greater amount of variability exists between the scores). Nearly all of the participants in each city reported high levels of all three outcomes.

Table 2: Post-Survey Results

	Academic Resilience Score		Self-Efficacy Score		Civic Efficacy Score	
	Scale Score	SD	Scale Score	SD	Scale Score	SD
New York Total (n = 100)	3.47	0.32	3.53	0.39	2.83	0.67
America Scores	3.54	0.32	3.54	0.50	2.95	0.82
Asphalt Green	3.54	0.26	3.62	0.30	2.64	0.45
Henry Street Settlement	3.53	0.24	3.25	0.53	2.43	0.50
Kids Creative	3.48	0.38	3.58	0.28	2.92	0.50
Sam Field Y	3.29	0.27	3.45	0.41	2.73	0.73
Studio in a School	3.56	0.35	3.58	0.44	3.32	0.51
Urban Dove	3.50	0.33	3.62	0.28	2.89	0.74
Boston Total (n = 8)	3.52	0.40	3.58	0.42	2.94	0.65
Providence Total (n = 15)	3.46	0.29	3.45	0.38	2.97	0.42
Scores ranged from 1 to 4; 1 = strongly disagree and 4 = strongly agree						

Although there were no statistically significant differences between the students' scores at the beginning of the apprenticeship and at the end of the internship, several trends did emerge in the data. In New York, when looking at the individual questions within the scales, apprentices had modest gains on three self-efficacy items, and one item that addressed academic resilience (see Table 3).

Table 3: New York Individual Items on Pre-Post Scales

Question	Beginning of Program	End of Program	Change
I feel good about myself (self-efficacy)	3.69	3.79	0.10
I do not have enough control over the direction my life is taking (self-efficacy)	0.75	0.65	-0.10
When I make plans, I am almost certain I can make them work (self-efficacy)	3.40	3.49	0.09
I am a self-reliant person (academic resilience)	3.30	3.38	0.08

In Providence, ASAP participants experienced large increases in items that addressed both self-efficacy and academic resilience. Change scores were not calculated for participants in Boston because there were too few students with both pre-program and post-program results.

Table 4: Providence Individual Items on Pre-Post Scales

Question	Beginning of Program	End of Program	Change
I am able to do things as well as most other people (self-efficacy)	3.30	3.80	0.50
If I see someone I'd like to meet, I go to that person instead of waiting for him/her to come to me (academic resilience)	2.91	3.27	0.36
I feel useless at times (self-efficacy)	0.70	0.40	-0.30
I am a smart person (academic resilience)	3.55	3.82	0.27

Future Plans of Participants

Figures 11, 12, and 13 show the interest level of apprentices in several career paths. Both New York and Boston participants expressed highest levels of interest in careers in which they could help others (69% of New York participants and 67% of Boston participants reported being very interested) and professional positions (53% and 67%, respectively). Boston participants were very interested in mechanical positions (63%) and careers in sports-related fields (50%).

Figure 11: New York Participants' Career Interests

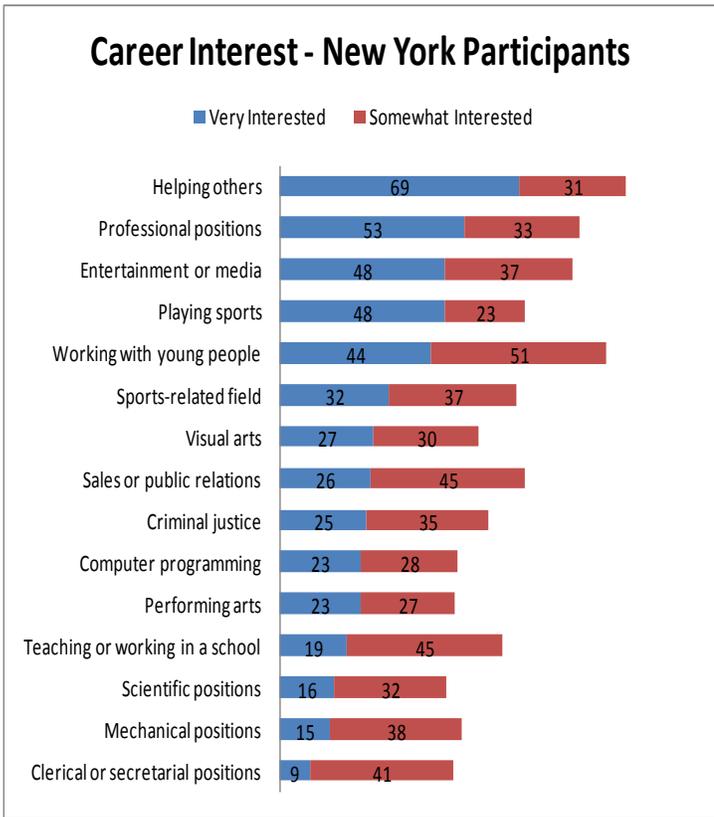


Figure 12: Providence Participants' Career Interests

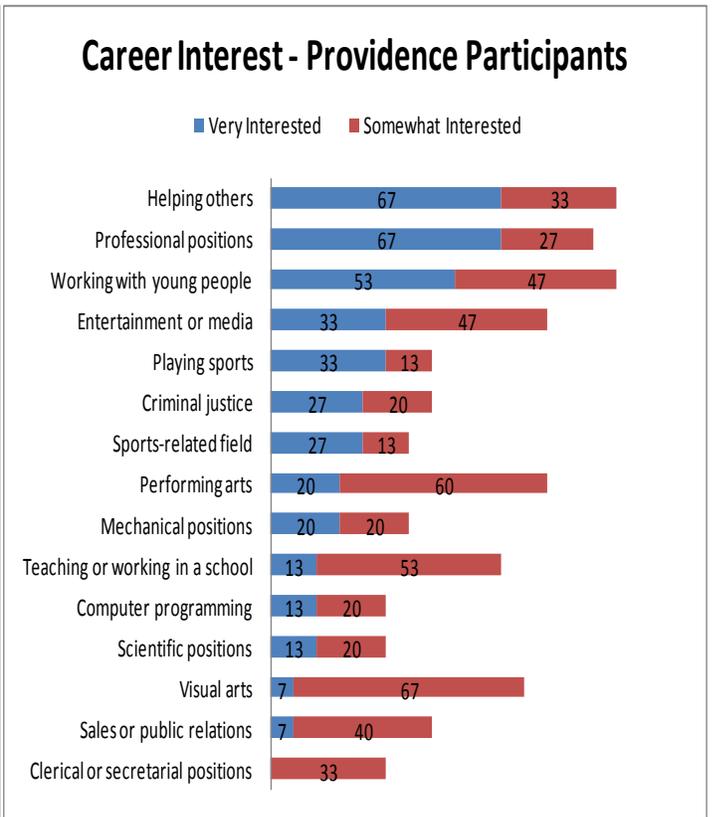
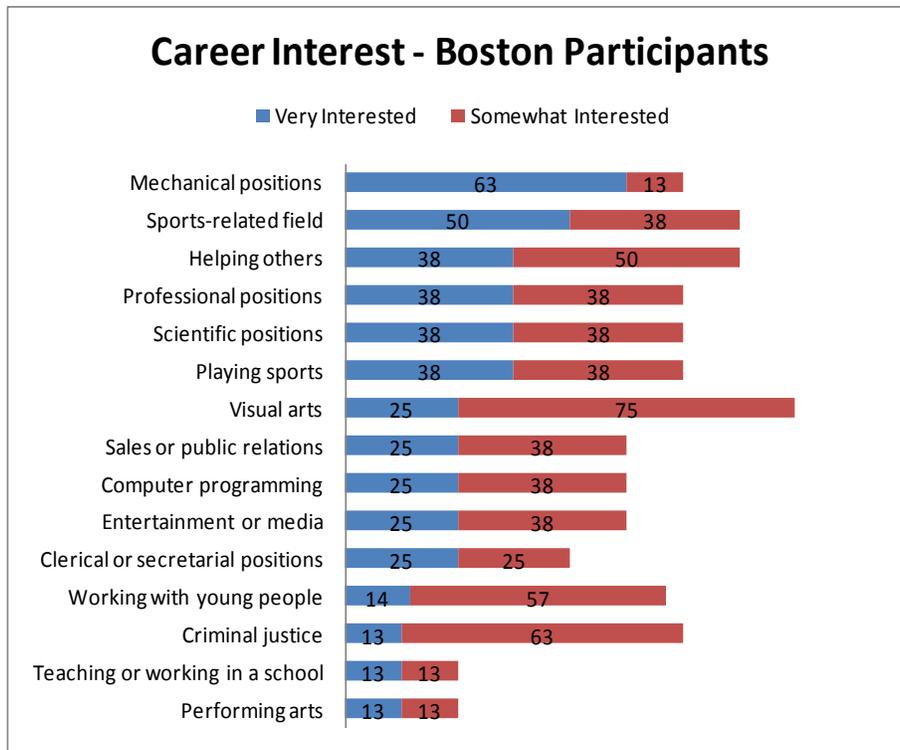


Figure 13: Boston Participants' Career Interests

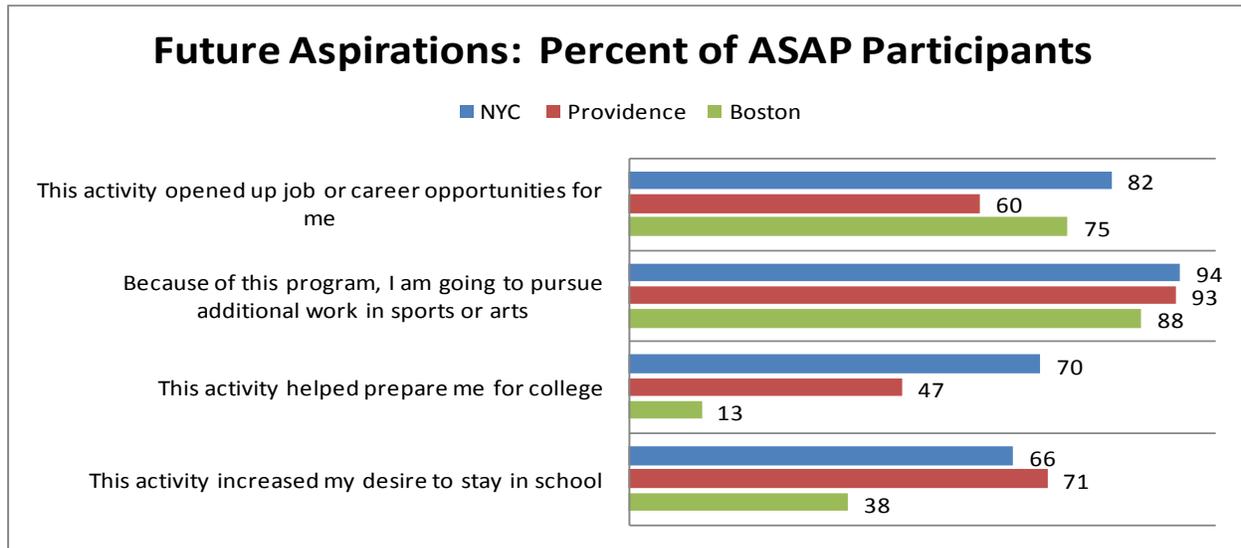


Of the 14 apprentices who participated in the New York focus group, seven were thinking about working in a youth-development field after their internship. These apprentices did not originally want to work in youth development, but changed their opinion after participating in ASAP. One apprentice passionately described the program's effect on her future, saying "it's definitely changed what I want to do, because I used to want to be a lawyer, and have my own studio on the side, and that was what I wanted and nobody could change my mind. And now I want to be a teacher. I want to inspire kids, and I want to teach them. Because when you're younger, those are really important ages, where you learn right from wrong, you learn morals and values, and you learn things that stick with you until the day you die. This is what I want to do; it's not about money for me at all, it's about being happy."

In Providence, three of the four focus group participants wanted to work with children after participating in ASAP. One participant said, "I wanted to be a lawyer. I'm not so sure anymore....I really discovered that I really like kids...I might be a teacher." In Boston, focus group participants did not want to go into youth development fields, possibly because of their lack of regular interaction with children throughout their internship. Their career interests varied, with one wanting to be an engineer, another wanting to go into criminal justice, and others unsure of their interests. These participants believed that the program would have a bigger impact on their immediate future, since they could umpire in the next few years as a part-time job.

Figure 14 details the future aspirations of the ASAP apprentices. Overall, 60% or more of participants in all three cities felt that the program opened up job or career opportunities for them. In addition, more than 85% of participants planned on pursuing additional work in sports or arts after the program is over. New York had the highest percentage of participants who reported that ASAP helped them prepare for college (70%), while Providence had the highest percentage reporting that ASAP increased their desire to stay in school (71%).

Figure 14: Future Aspirations



Staff Experiences

Highlights

Overall, all the staff members who participated in the focus groups believed that the ASAP program was successful at their site. They all believed that they accomplished their program goals, and would likely participate again next year.

In New York, staff members tried to enhance the apprentices’ skill set throughout the program. One site supervisor said, “We had a great session on leaving phone messages and writing e-mails because we got a lot of phone messages that were unintelligible or that wouldn’t work if our kids were calling a bank.” Professionalism was a major point of emphasis across these program sites. Two staff members believed that the apprentices enjoyed the formal structure of the program. Sites also provided the youth with career training and designed activities to strengthen their job readiness skills. Over time, many saw a greater commitment to the young peoples’ professionalism as participants began to put these new skills to use. For instance, consistent with participants’ self reports, staff reported that the youth paid closer attention to timeliness, to communicating effectively with peers and adults, and to acting appropriately as role models for the children they worked with.

In Providence, several staff members found ASAP participants better prepared and more invested than youth who participated in other programs that they operate. They also believed that the younger children developed great bonds with the ASAP participants, which the youth confirmed in their focus groups. One staff member raved about his master-students’ work ethic, telling this story in the focus group: “One of the youth had his appendix burst the second

to last week of my program. He actually called me and asked if he should go to class today, two days [after] he had his appendix out – he was that dedicated. He forwarded the other ASAP intern all the information for that class so that he could cover for him. That was really, really cool; they were just really prepared.”

In Boston, staff members believed that the program helped apprentices develop their assertiveness and conflict resolution skills. One focus group participant said that their program model allows youth to be put in a position of authority in relation to adults for the first time in their lives, which helps them develop these traits. Another participant summed up the benefits of the program, saying “[umpiring] builds a tremendous amount of confidence, it builds your integrity, it builds your honesty in things. It makes you see things much more objectively than you might in a lot of other things.”

Challenges

While staff focus group members in each city believed that ASAP was successful at their sites, they did have some challenges in implementing the program. In each city, program start-up proved to be a challenge. Many staff members believed that the process was too rushed, and that the program should start earlier in the future. In New York, some sites chose their apprentices from an existing pool of applicants who were already affiliated with their programs, while others filled slots with applicants who were not previously affiliated with their organization. During the staff focus groups, two staff members discussed the difficulty of the start-up phase of the program, due to their sites not having an existing pool of youth. They also mentioned that time was an issue when recruiting and training participants. Many suggested that the apprenticeship recruiting period should start around January or February, which would allow more time for recruitment, and would stretch the length of time for the apprenticeship period. Because some youth had trouble with the intensive commitment of the apprenticeship week to week, this may allow sites to conduct the apprenticeship in fewer hours per week, but for a greater number of weeks. A Providence focus group participant agreed with this assessment, saying “if we had more time, it would have been even more successful.” Providence staff members believed that the program should be implemented year-round, and youth focus group participants expressed the same desire. In Boston, the umpire instructor said that a few more hours of training would be helpful for his apprentices, since, ideally, he would get the opportunity to observe each student umpire twice before sending them off to work real games. Currently, he gets to observe some, but not all apprentices once before they start their internships.

Funding was another challenge for the New York and Providence sites. In New York, an apprentice supervisor mentioned that more equipment and space for training his apprentices

would have been helpful. In Providence, there were several challenges that related to funding. First, taxes such as FICA and Medicare were not accounted for in the initial allotment of funds, and thus, with the master-students' hourly rates already established, the ASAP program had to incur this cost. Also, feeding the master-students was an issue, as many staff members had to pay for food out-of-pocket. In addition, Providence staff could not afford to bring in outside facilitators to conduct trainings, so they "borrowed, bothered, begged, [and] pleaded" according to one staff member. Finally, one staff member believed that the stipend of \$35 a week given to the master-students during training was inadequate. She stated that "for the amount of time and effort that they were putting into the program that we had designed, I don't think that \$35 a week was enough for the kids in this demographic. Many of the kids that we encounter come from impoverished families, so those paychecks, they only got them twice in training, probably bought groceries or something that was needed for the family." In Boston, budgeting was not considered to be an issue, though one staff member did request that food be provided for the training period, because of the long hours that the apprentices endure.

DISCUSSION

This study sought to identify and describe program successes, areas for improvement, and the experiences of ASAP participants. In surveys and focus groups, ASAP apprentices were very positive about the program. Participants reported that they benefited from the program in numerous ways, including learning the value of teamwork, developing positive social skills, taking initiative, reflecting on their self-identity, and learning to control their emotions. In addition, many apprentices, especially those that were enrolled in sports-based programs, expressed improved health as a result of participating in the program.

In each city, more than 40% of participants who completed the program stated that they would participate in ASAP even if they were not paid. While compensation is definitely an incentive for youth to take part in programs like this, it is clearly not the only (or main) draw for participation.

Staff reports were in line with the data collected from the participants themselves. They described participants' development of professional skills and behaviors over the course of the program. Interns became timelier and took on the role of mentor to youth more effectively over the course of the summer. While site staff expressed some areas of the program that challenged them, overall, they were happy with the experience and hope to continue to participate in the future. Youth also hoped to continue to participate in ASAP next year. Overall, 72% of participants stated that they would like to remain part of the program.

Recommendations

For All Cities

- *Start the apprenticeship earlier in the school year.* Both ASAP staff members and apprentices offered this recommendation because of the difficulties of completing 72 training hours in eight weeks. In New York, this would aid staff who worked at sites that did not have an existing pool of applicants to recruit from during the program start-up period. In Providence, this would allow participants to develop better relations with providers and give them more experience in the classroom. In Boston, an extended apprenticeship period could allow the professional umpire instructor to adequately observe each student on the field before sending them off to work games.
- *Provide participants with a more interactive training experience.* Several student focus group participants expressed a desire to have more leadership opportunities during their apprenticeships. One New York participant said, “when I get to lead the group...I feel very proud. Because usually there’s times when I’m doing things, but I’m just helping them, I’m not leading the group.” Participants in Providence and Boston expressed a similar desire, and felt that more hands-on experience in the apprenticeship would help them during their internships. In Boston, specifically, students believed that getting more on-field experience would help them call games better, especially at the beginning of the internship.
- *Provide mentoring opportunities for returning apprentices.* Since a large percentage of apprentices (72%) want to return to the program next year, allowing them opportunities to help their peers during training would be an effective way to capitalize on the youth’s enthusiasm for the program, while providing leadership opportunities during the apprenticeship. During the Boston staff focus group, the umpire instructor made this suggestion, for both returning apprentices and those that excel at umpiring.

For New York and Providence:

- *Provide opportunities for licensing or crediting apprentices.* During the New York staff focus groups, one administrative staff member mentioned that apprentices would benefit from getting a coaching license after all of their training. TASC might encourage sites to provide opportunities like this, as well as CPR and first aid certification. For New York sites, TASC could also consider enrolling ASAP participants in courses offered by The Center, leading them towards earning a certificate or earning actual college course credits. In addition, sites that specialize in art could benefit from an end-of-the-year art exhibit or culminating event to display their work.

For Boston:

- *Provide the professional umpire instructor with an opportunity to observe the youth during their internships.* Once the apprenticeship period was over, participants did not have many interactions with the instructor that they learned from during their apprenticeship. Giving him an opportunity to observe their games and provide feedback will help to strengthen their skills going forward.

Appendix

The Youth Experiences Survey included the following measures:

1. Identity Work, which includes both identity exploration and identity reflection. Some examples of questions include 'I do things here I don't get to do anywhere else' and 'This activity got me thinking about who I am.'
2. Initiative, which includes goal setting, effort, problem solving, and time management. Some examples of questions include 'I set goals for myself in this activity' and 'I learned to push myself.'
3. Basic Skills, which includes emotional regulation, cognitive skills, and physical skills. Some examples of questions include 'I became better at handling stress' and 'In this activity, I have improved my athletic or physical skills.'
4. Teamwork and Social Skills, which includes group process skills, feedback, leadership and responsibility. Some examples of questions include 'I learned to be patient with other group members' and 'Others in this activity counted on me.'
5. Positive Relationships, which includes prosocial norms and diverse peer relationships. Some examples of questions include 'I was able to change my school or community for the better' and 'I got to know someone from a different ethnic group.'
6. Adult Networks and Social Capital, which includes integration with family, linkages to community, and linkages to work and college. Some examples of questions include 'I had good conversations with my parents/guardians because of this activity' and 'This activity opened up job or career opportunities for me.'
7. Negative Experiences, which includes stress, negative influences, social exclusion, and negative group dynamics. Some examples of questions include 'I felt pressured by peers to do something I didn't want to do' and 'I felt like I didn't belong in this activity.'

The pre-post measure included the following scales:

1. Academic Resilience, which refers to a student's capacity to overcome adversities in educational processes (Martin, 2009). Some examples of questions include 'I am very determined to reach my goals' and 'I can handle difficult situations at school.'
2. Civic Efficacy, which refers to one's belief in his or her ability to effect change in the community. Some examples of questions include 'I participate in political or social causes to improve the community' and 'I feel I have the power to make a difference in the community.'
3. Self-efficacy, which refers to one's belief in his or her ability to succeed in specific situations (Bandura, 1994). Some examples of questions include 'I feel I am a person of worth, the equal of other people' and 'I feel good about myself.'

Student Focus Group Questions

1. Routine – students were asked about their daily routine, their motivation to join the program, and what they would be doing if they were not enrolled in the program.
2. Positive Experiences and Learning – students were asked about the fun moments they had, what their least favorite activities were, what they learned, and new experiences that came from participating in the program.
3. Relationships – students were asked about their relationships with the people they learned from during their apprenticeship, the other apprentices in the program, and the children they teach at their program.
4. School – students were asked whether ASAP impacted their work or attendance at school.
5. Career/Workforce Development – students were asked whether ASAP changed what they wanted to do in the future, and whether they wanted to work in a youth development field.
6. Recommendations – students were asked whether they would recommend the program to a friend, whether they would participate in ASAP again, and if they had any recommendations for program improvement.

Staff Focus Group Questions:

1. General Program Start-Up – All staff members were asked about how ASAP compared with other programs that they have participated in, what their goals were for the program, and how the After-School Matters visit impacted their program. Direct service providers were asked about the journaling activity at their site, and whether they had adequate resources to perform their job effectively. Administrative staff members were asked about their program model, whether they had adequate resources for their program, and whether there were unexpected costs to keep in mind for future planning.
2. Apprentice Work – Staff members were asked about the preparation of the apprentices, their comfort level at their site and with other apprentices, and the practicality of the program's schedule for these students.
3. End of the Year Reflection – Staff members were asked about whether the program succeeded or failed, whether there are any aspects that can be improved, and whether they will participate in ASAP in the future.