

Youth Health Service Corps Evaluation Report

June 2015



YHSC Evaluation Report

INTRODUCTION

Northwestern Connecticut Area Health Education Center (NWCTAHEC) conducted a comprehensive multi-site evaluation of the Youth Health Service Corps (YHSC). YHSC is a health career recruitment program that engages high school students in quality service learning projects that address pressing community health issues. Through service, YHSC members explore health careers while acquiring real life experience working with underserved populations in community settings. Successful YHSC members complete the following YHSC program components: five-module curriculum, CPR certification, and 20+ hours of service.

The evaluation was designed as an assessment of YHSC outcomes. It included two components: comparison of over-years YHSC program results including a retrospective and pre/post survey completed by currently participating YHSC members and a graduate follow-up study completed by past YHSC members who have graduated from high school.

Overall, evaluation results were positive. Results show that YHSC students are actively participating, although there is regional variation accomplishing desired outcomes. In the retrospective survey, most YHSC members indicate that they are planning on attending college (92%), planning on studying a health career (79%) and are getting better grades (61%) as a result of participating in the YHSC Program (Table 2a). Results also show that students who are most involved have better outcomes and that there are lasting outcomes for students (Table 4a). In the pre/post survey more than half of the students reported an increase in five of the six academic achievement indicators – 1) participated in activities that taught them about college (73%); 2) talked to an adult other than a parent or other family member about class work or college (58%); 3) completed service hours as part of a school or after school program (60%); 4) talked to an adult at your school about your personal life (50%); 5) have an adult at school who gives good suggestions about your problems or concerns(51%) (Table 5a). Most YHSC graduate follow-up survey respondents reported being in college or previously in college (92%) and more than half reported that their area of study is health care related (69%) (Table 7). Most graduates indicated that YHSC influenced their interest in a health care career (74%) (Table 8). Detailed findings follow.

I. YHSC RETROSPECTIVE SURVEY PROGRAM RESULTS 2014-15 and 2013-14

After one year of involvement with YHSC, participants are asked to assess their own learning and outcomes resulting from their involvement in the program. Results of participation and feedback from the 2014-15 and 2013-14 program years are summarized below and presented in the following tables.

- Results varied by region and to some degree by year.
- More students in the 2014-15 cohort participated in 20 or more hours of service than the 2013-14 cohort (50% for 2014-15 and 33% for 2013-14). This varied across regions (see Table 1a and Table 1b).
 - The average hours of service¹ were consistent between the two cohorts. YHSC students from 2014-15 spent about 27.7 hours on average, on community service, and 2% of them were involved for 50 or more hours (including 1% who logged ≥ 100 hours).

¹ Average hours of service was calculated for all students and for just those students whose records

- YHSC students from 2013-14 spent about 28.73 hours on average, on community service, and 5% of them were involved for 50 or more hours (including 1% who logged \geq 100 hours).
- Almost two-thirds of the participants in 2014-15 (n=375) and 2013-14 (n=395) completed a survey at the end of their program year. (see Appendix Tables 2a and 2b).
- The percent of students who agreed with having indicators of academic achievement as a result of participation in the program increased in nine of the 10 categories measured (except the measure about increased school attendance).
- In both years, one-half or more of survey respondents agreed they are getting better grades in school as a result of participating in the YHSC program (61% in 2014-15 and 59% in 2013-2014). (see Tables 2a and 2b)

On the 2014-15 survey

- 96% of students agreed that the ***YHSC Program taught them things they did not know about careers in health care.***
- 93% of students agreed that participating in the YHSC Program made them ***feel more responsible for helping others***; 88% reported they ***did things to make the community a better place.***
- 92% of students reported that they were ***planning to attend college after graduating high school***; 89% of students agreed that participating in the YHSC Program ***taught them what to do to prepare for college***; 79% ***plan on studying a health career in college*** as a result of participating in YHSC.
- **83%** report that ***they have at least 1 teacher or other adult who take their interests seriously*** as a result of participating in the YHSC Program
- 80% of students reported that participating in the YHSC Program made them ***want to work in a health care career.***
- More than half for the survey respondents reported ***achieving better grades (61%)*** and ***improved attendance (52%)*** as a result of participating in the YHSC Program.
- The vast majority of participants in both years reported they are succeeding in school (making good grades and attending regularly). A total of 80% of 2014-15 students and 84% of 2013-14 students reported they are making mostly “A’s and B’s.” A total of 55% of 2014-15 students and 54% of 2013-2014 students reported regular school attendance (i.e., they missed 5 or fewer days, see Tables 3a).
- In 2014-15 and 2013-14, there were substantial differences in reported outcomes for those students who logged the most service hours (see Tables 4a and 4b).

Indicated they had at least 10 hours of service. Both results are shown in Appendix Tables 1a and 1b.

Table 1a: Community Service Participation Distributions for 2014-15 YHSC Participants; by Region

	Central n= 127	Eastern n= 135	NW n= 66	SW n= 249	TOTAL n= 577
< 10 Hours	61%	33%	36%	7%	28%
10 – 19 Hours	16%	50%	23%	9%	22%
20 or More Hours	24%	16%	41%	84%	50%
<50 Hours	95%	100%	88%	99%	98%
50 – 99 Hours	1%	0%	8%	<1%	1%
100 or More Hours	4%	0%	5%	0%	1%

Table 1b: Community Service Participation Distributions for 2013-14 YHSC Participants; by Region

	Central n= 85	Eastern n= 157	NW n= 182	SW n= 217	TOTAL n= 641
< 10 Hours	47%	40%	52%	28%	40%
10 – 19 Hours	16%	38%	25%	24%	26%
20 or More Hours	36%	23%	22%	48%	33%
<50 Hours	95%	92%	92%	99%	95%
50 – 99 Hours	5%	3%	8%	1%	4%
100 or More Hours	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%

*Does not include participants with less than 1 hour of work

Table 2a: Percentage of 2014-15 Survey Respondents who Agreed* that Participating in YHSC led to Important Outcomes; by Region

	Central n=45	Eastern n=83	NW n=33	SW n=213	TOTAL n=374
As a YHSC member I did things to make the community a better place.	91%	83%	97%	87%	88%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I feel more responsible for helping others.	91%	94%	94%	93%	93%
Participating in the YHSC Program taught me things I did not know about careers in health care.	98%	93%	97%	97%	96%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I plan to attend college after I graduate high school.	96%	89%	91%	93%	92%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I have at least one teacher or other adult who takes my interests seriously.	76%	80%	85%	86%	83%
Participating in the YHSC Program taught me what to do to prepare for college.	80%	86%	91%	91%	89%
As a result of participating in the YHSC	69%	82%	79%	82%	80%

Program I want to work in a health care career.					
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I plan on studying a health career in college.	69%	81%	73%	81%	79%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I am getting better grades in school.	80%	55%	58%	59%	61%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program my school attendance has improved.	64%	52%	58%	48%	52%

* includes those who *agreed* and *strongly agreed*.

Table 3a: Percentage of 2013-14 YHSC Survey Respondents who Reported they Kept Their Grades Up and Attended School Regularly; by Region

	Central n=45	Eastern n=83	NW n=33	SW n=213	TOTAL n=374
Percent reporting they are making mostly A's and B's	80%	86%	100%	76%	80%
Percent reporting they missed 5 or fewer days during the school year	60%	67%	67%	46%	55%

Table 2b: Percentage of 2013-14 Survey Respondents who Agreed* that Participating in YHSC led to Important Outcomes; by Region

	Central n=46	Eastern n=133	NW n=62	SW n=154	TOTAL n=395
As a YHSC member I did things to make the community a better place.	98%	74%	76%	68%	75%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I feel more responsible for helping others.	91%	86%	87%	82%	85%
Participating in the YHSC Program taught me things I did not know about careers in health care.	96%	80%	97%	94%	90%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I plan to attend college after I graduate high school.	98%	80%	84%	91%	87%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I have at least one teacher or other adult who takes my interests seriously.	87%	76%	82%	86%	82%
Participating in the YHSC Program taught me what to do to prepare for college.	93%	76%	79%	84%	83%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I want to work in a health care career.	74%	66%	71%	84%	75%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I plan on studying a health career in college.	72%	66%	66%	87%	75%
As a result of participating in the YHSC	76%	54%	63%	57%	59%

Program I am getting better grades in school.					
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program my school attendance has improved.	74%	47%	61%	51%	54%

* includes those who *agreed* and *strongly agreed*. **Here, n = number of participants who completed survey

Table 3b: Percentage of 2013-14 YHSC Survey Respondents who Reported they Kept Their Grades Up and Attended School Regularly; by Region

	Central n=46	Eastern n=133	NW n=62	SW n=154	TOTAL n=395
Percent reporting they are making mostly A's and B's	74%	81%	90%	86%	84%
Percent reporting they missed 5 or fewer days during the school year	57%	55%	64%	49%	54%

**Here, n = number of participants who completed survey

Table 4a: Percentage of 2014-15 Survey Respondents who Agreed* that Participating in YHSC Led to Important Outcomes; by Level of Volunteer Participation (20 or more hours)

	<20 hours n=110	20 or more hrs n=264	Difference
As a YHSC member I did things to make the community a better place.	82%	90%	8%
As a result of participating in the YHSC program I am getting better grades in school.	60%	68%	8%
As a result of participating in the YHSC program I have at least one teacher or other adult who takes my interests seriously.	78%	85%	7%
Participating in the YHSC Program taught me what to do to prepare for college.	84%	91%	7%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I feel more responsible for helping others.	89%	95%	6%
Participating in the YHSC Program taught me things I did not know about careers in health care	92%	98%	6%

Table 4b: Percentage of 2013-14 Survey Respondents who Agreed* that Participating in YHSC Led to Important Outcomes; by Level of Volunteer Participation (20 or more hours)

	<20 hours n=245	20 or more hrs n=150	Difference
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As a YHSC member I did things to make the community a better place.	68%	85%	17%
As a result of participating in the YHSC program I have at least one teacher or other adult who takes my interests seriously.	79%	88%	9%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I plan to attend college after I graduate high school.	84%	91%	7%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program I plan on studying a health career in college.	73%	79%	6%
As a result of participating in the YHSC Program my school attendance has improved.	56%	51%	-5%

* includes those who *agreed* and *strongly agreed*.

II. YHSC PRE/POST SURVEY PROGRAM RESULTS 2014-15

YHSC members are asked to respond to a pre/post survey measuring academic engagement indicators including educational aspiration, interest in school and attachment to school. The pre survey is administered prior to participation in the YHSC Program and the post survey is administered at the end of the school year in May/June.

- 212 YHSC members (36%) completed both the pre and post survey in 2014-15 compared to 39% in 2013-14
- Over half of the students reported an increase five of the six academic achievement indicators measured. This is an increase from four of the six academic achievement indicators in 2013-14.
- 99% of survey respondents reported an increase in at least one of the six academic achievement indicators compared to 98% in 2013-14

Table 5a: Percentage of 2014-15 Pre/Post Survey Respondents who reported an increase in the academic engagement indicator

	% of students reporting an increase
In the last 6 months how many times did <i>you participate in activities that taught you about college</i>	73%
In the last 6 months how often have you <i>talked to an adult other than your parents or other family member about class work or college</i>	58%
In the last 6 months you <i>completed service hours as part of a school or after school program</i>	60%
In the last 6 months how often have you <i>talked to an adult at your school about your personal life</i>	50%
Right now <i>you know an adult at your school who gives you good</i>	51%

<i>suggestions or advice about your problems</i>	
<i>How interested are you in your classes now</i>	32%

Table 5b: Percentage of 2013-14 Pre/Post Survey Respondents who reported an increase in the academic engagement indicator

	% of students reporting an increase
In the last 6 months how many times did <i>you participate in activities that taught you about college</i>	75%
In the last 6 months how often have you <i>talked to an adult other than your parents or other family member about class work or college</i>	55%
In the last 6 months you <i>completed service hours as part of a school or after school program</i>	65%
In the last 6 months how often have you <i>talked to an adult at your school about your personal life</i>	46%
Right now <i>you know an adult at your school who gives you good suggestions or advice about your problems</i>	59%
<i>How interested are you in your classes now</i>	37%

III. FOLLOW-UP RESULTS: YHSC GRADUATES

Once a YHSC program participant graduates from high school they are categorized as “YHSC graduates” and are contacted using available contact information including phone numbers, email addresses, and Facebook accounts and asked to complete a YHSC Graduate survey. Out of 344 YHSC graduates who were identified through the AHEC Nation database, a total of 113 YHSC graduates (33%) responded to the follow-up survey. Overall, contact was made with 150 YHSC program graduates from the four AHEC sites in Connecticut. Of these 150, 113 answered the survey fully.

About the Graduate Follow-up Survey

The YHSC Graduate Follow-up Survey was designed to obtain status updates and to collect retrospective program perceptions since graduation for the former participants. Call logs were provided to each of the four AHEC sites to track the number and types of attempts made to contact each YHSC graduate. Copies of these call logs were provided for this report from the four AHEC sites. Data gathered from these records showed that AHEC worked hard to try and contact as many YHSC graduates as possible through repeated attempts using available phone numbers, email addresses, and sometimes via Facebook, although many attempts were unsuccessful (see Table 6).

Table 6: Follow-up Survey Completion for YHSC Graduates; by Region

	2013-14 n=344	2012-13 n = 215	2011-12 n = 196

Completed a survey		113 33%	56 26%	47 24%
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- Out of 344 YHSC graduates who were initially identified on the call log, 231 did not complete the survey. 194 respondents or 67% were unable to be reached after 3 attempts and 37 respondents or 11% were reached but refused to take the survey.

2014-15 Graduate Follow-up Survey Findings

- Of the 104 respondents who were currently or had previously been enrolled in college, 69% reported that their major or area of study was health care-related.

Table 7: College Enrollment Status of YHSC Graduates

	TOTAL 2013-14 N=113	TOTAL 2012-13 n=56	TOTAL 2011-12 n=47
Currently in college	88%	82%	85%
Previously in college but not now	4%	5%	4%
Never in college	8%	9%	11%
No response	0	4%	0
Current/Former College Student	n-104	n=46	n=41
Area of study or major is health care-related	69%	63%	73%
4-year college	70%	63%	56%
2-year college/program	25%	33%	39%
Vocational school	3%	4%	5%

- Most YHSC graduate follow-up survey respondents reported being currently employed (59%), and more than half said they were interested in a career in health care (67%) and for a substantial majority YHSC influenced their interest in a health care career (74%). However, only 38% report being interested in a career in primary health care.
- A total of 9% of the 67 respondents who were currently employed were working in a health care-related job, including positions including EMT, RN, Physician Assistant.

Table 8: Current and Projected Employment for YHSC Graduates

<i>Percentage who . . .</i>	TOTAL 2013-14 n=113	TOTAL 2012-13 n=56	TOTAL 2011-12 n=47
Were currently working	59%	69%	74%
In a health care related job	9%	15%	22%
Are interested in a health care career	67%	76%	76%
Are interested in a career in primary care	38%	66%	61%
Reported YHSC influenced their interest in a	74%	69%	76%

health care career			
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YHSC graduate survey respondents were asked about other factors that could be related to their interest in a health care career, including whether or not their family members or guardians were employed in the health care field or whether they had been encouraged to pursue one. Most respondents indicated they had a “B” average or better in high school and had encouragement from their families to pursue a career in health care (see Table 9 below).

Table 9: Other Factors Related to Health care Career Interest; by Region

<i>Percentage who had . . .</i>	TOTAL 2013-14 N=113	TOTAL* 2012-13 n=56	TOTAL 2011-12 N=47
One or more family members work in a health care profession	35%	68%	64%
Parents encouraged them to pursue a career in health care	50%	52%	78%
A “B” average or better in high school	84%	80%	89%

Respondents were also asked about other aspects of their lives related to civic engagement in the community. 41% were registered to vote and 12% of the respondents indicated that they voted in the last election. There were some (49%) who were engaged in volunteering or community service work and 23% were mentors. Three respondents indicated having military service (see Table 10 below).

Table 10: Other Civic Outcomes

<i>Percentage who . . .</i>	TOTAL 2013-14 N=113	TOTAL* 2012-13 n=56	TOTAL 2011-12 n=47
Were in the military	3%	2%	0
Volunteered or did community service	49%	48%	43%
Were mentors	23%	2%	11%
Registered to vote	41%	55%	71%
Voted in the last election	12%	32%	55%

In conclusion, respondents were given an opportunity to provide any last feedback about the YHSC program.

- The college tours are great
- The program is great, keep up the great work! I especially loved volunteering at Bunker Hill Elementary School
- Great program, opened doors to a number of health careers
- I was really happy to be a part of it

IV. Conclusions and Issues for Further Consideration

As stated in the introduction, YHSC results were positive. The evaluation showed that participants were involved in community service and that involvement made a difference in terms of key project outcomes. Proportionately more of the most involved students reported achieving outcomes as compared to their somewhat less involved peers. Program graduates confirmed that they are continuing their post-secondary education and many plan to work in health care careers. On both the annual surveys and the graduate follow-up survey participants and graduates indicated they attribute their interest in health care careers to participation in YHSC.

Overall, these results show both annual and longer-term benefits for students who participate in YHSC. They also highlight a few challenges that AHEC may want to address.

- Both community service participation and participant outcomes varied by region. AHEC leadership is encouraged to determine if these differences are indicative of deeper program challenges such as inconsistent program implementation, or if they are simply a reflection of expected community variation.
- Survey compliance and community service volunteer time record keeping are also both variable by region. AHEC stakeholders are encouraged to devise additional strategies to ensure that community service participation and survey responses for all students are recorded.
- Follow-up data are particularly important for understanding YHSC outcomes, but despite valiant efforts, contact with former participants was incomplete. AHEC officials are encouraged to advise students that follow-up studies will be conducted and to ensure that multiple reliable contact references are obtained from participants.
- Though not considerable, there were differences by year in the percentage of participants who reported achieving AHEC outcomes. AHEC leadership is also encouraged to determine if these differences are indicative of a downward trend suggesting needed program modifications, or just acceptable variation. AHEC leadership is also strongly encouraged to set targets for all its outcomes measures to ensure that programs in all regions are achieving desired results.
- AHEC should also continue building on its programming successes and continue to offer YHSC to Connecticut students and to involve AmeriCorps members in the effort.

Appendix Table 1a: Average Hours of Community Service for 2014-15 YHSC Participants*; by Region

	Central n=127	Eastern n=135	NW n=66	SW n=249	TOTAL n= 577
All Participants					
Mean Hours	15.4	11.5	23.1	28.1	20.8
Minimum	0.8	10.0	1.0	1.0	0.8
Maximum	156.0	29.8	143.0	61.5	156.0
	Central n=48	Eastern n=90	NW n=42	SW n=230	TOTAL n=410
Participants with at least 10 hours					
Mean Hours	33.2	15.6	34.6	30.0	27.7
Minimum	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Maximum	156.0	29.8	143.0	61.5	156.0

*Does not include participants with less than 1 hour of service

Appendix Table 1b: Average Hours of Community Service for 2013-14 YHSC Participants*; by Region

	Central n=85	Eastern n=157	NW n=182	SW n=217	TOTAL n=641
All Participants					
Mean Hours	16.9	22.0	15.73	26.6	20.6
Minimum	1.0	4.0	0.5	1.0	1.67
Maximum	90.5	162.0	97.5	128.0	59.42
	Central n=45	Eastern n=94	NW n=87	SW n=157	TOTAL n=383
Participants with at least 10 hours					
Mean Hours	29.53	33.35	28.03	36.12	28.73
Minimum	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	10.0
Maximum	90.5	162.0	97.5	59.42	162.0

*Does not include participants with less than 1 hour of service

Appendix Table 2a: Survey Completion for 2014-15 YHSC Participants; by Region

	Central n=127	Eastern n=135	NW n=66	SW n=249	TOTAL n=577
Completed a Survey	35%	61%	50%	86%	65%
Did not Complete a Survey	65%	39%	50%	18%	35%

Appendix Table 2b: Survey Completion for 2013-14 YHSC Participants; by Region

	Central	Eastern	NW	SW	TOTAL
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	n= 85	n= 157	n= 182	n=217	n=641
Completed a Survey	54%	85%	34%	71%	61%
Did not Complete a Survey	46%	15%	66%	29%	39%