

THE EFFECTS OF DAEPS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIFFERENT
TYPES OF STUDENTS IN FOUR DISCIPLINE ALTERNATIVE
EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN A LARGE
URBAN DISTRICT

by

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ABSTRACT

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This quasi-experimental design described the effects of the BTEM utilized in four DAEPs in a large urban school district based on student discipline incidents, academic achievements in core course, and attendance rates. Archival data was collected from the school district's database over a three year period. The population of interest included all students who attended one of four DAEPs during the 2005-06 school year. These DAEPs were designed for first time minor offenders. Student's behavioral, academic, and attendance outcomes were analyzed for the 2005-06 school year and one year before placement and one year following placement.

Descriptive, frequencies, ANOVA and repeated measures ANOVA were utilized in analyzing the six research questions. Data from the four DAEPs yielded 999 students who were included in this study. African American and Hispanic students accounted for the 92% percent of the population, Whites 7%, and Asian- Pacific Islander at 1%. Eight-one percent of the student population received free or reduced lunch assistance while only 17% received no

assistance. Student behavior incidence increased following placement in a DAEP. This is a negative result in the sense that students were hypothesized to have a decrease in incident referrals. Site A had the highest percentage of students in the four DAEP programs. Academic outcomes revealed that students maintained an average of 70 or better in core course grades after placement however, the averages decreased from pre to post placement by 2%. Attendance outcomes indicated that males had a lower rate of attendance before (90%) and after (84%) placement than females (91% before and (5% after).

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Gangs, school shootings, bullying, assaults, dropouts, classroom disruption, possession of weapons and drugs, and frustrated teachers have all been part of the most pressing issues surrounding traditional school settings today. Many of these issues have made the national news. Due to these issues and unsuccessful students in the traditional educational setting, 48 states have developed legislation and/or policies to address alternative schools and programs (Lehr, Lanners, & Lange, 2003).

Approximately 1.2 million students in the U.S who do not graduate, 7,000 drop out per day (Pinkus, 2006). In this era of No Child Left Behind, accountability, student outcomes, and achievements have placed a greater emphasis on educating all students including those considered disruptive and at-risk. These youth are performing below grade level and displaying disruptive behavior in school. The task of educating these students is difficult. Classifying, defining, and evaluating practices in these programs have become complicated. Educators, administrators, researchers, and policymakers across the nation do not agree on common program elements of alternative education (Lehr & Lange, 2003); however, the U.S. Department of Education defines it as:

“a public elementary/secondary school that addresses needs of students that typically cannot be met in a regular school, provides nontraditional education, serves as an adjunct to a regular school, or falls outside the categories of regular, special education or vocational education” (U.S. Department of Education, 2002 p. 55).”

Due to the different educational needs of students, alternative schools have taken on many types and categories (Raywid, 1994). The 74th Legislature passed the Safe Schools

Act of 1995, including Chapter 37 Texas Education Code, mandating all districts to develop Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) to address serious and persistent disruptive students (Texas Education Agency & Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, 2000).

1.2 Need for the Study

In mandating that all school districts develop alternative educational settings for disciplinary and behavioral management, Texas Education Code Chapter 37 allowed districts to develop their own student codes of conduct (Texas Education Agency & Texas Juvenile Probation Commission 2000). The student code of conduct policies are set forth by the Board of Trustees within each district. Student codes of conduct allow districts to personalize their programs, utilize their own discipline models and intervention strategies, and incorporate educational components that would best assist the needs of students within their particular district.

This policy and the establishment of discipline alternative education programs were designed to provide a temporary alternative setting in which students could receive personalized support in areas that may have a direct association with student discipline problems (Intercultural Development Research Association, 2004). Students are referred to a DAEP setting if they engage in conduct punishable or classified as a felony. Also, students are referred if they commit serious offenses on or off campus, while attending school function, or violate student codes of conduct. The 1995 Safe Schools Act passed by the Texas Legislature recognized the need for violent or persistently disruptive students to be removed from the classroom (Levin, 2006). In conjunction with students being safe, "No Child Left Behind" placed a greater emphasis on accountability of the districts to educate all students and increase student outcomes in terms of academic achievement (NCLB PL 107-110). This emphasis has not only focused on the traditional school setting but has been applied to charter schools and

DAEP's. State officials, policymakers, and school officials are more concerned now than ever with what works, what is effective, and what will enhance outcomes in student academics, behavior, and discipline.

1.3 Statement of Problem

During the 2003-04 school year the student population of DAEPs in Texas grew to over 103,000 students (Bernsen, 2005) an increase from 70,728 during the 1998-99 school (Levin, 2006). With Texas DAEPs consistently serving close to 100,000 students over the, 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years (Texas Education Association, 2006), many issues have developed. Some of the major concerns include: Are DAEPs assisting in promoting successful student achievements and/or outcomes? Are DAEPs decreasing student discipline referrals after placement? What factors contribute to successful student achievements? Are students returning to DAEPs after placement? Most importantly, what are student outcomes in the areas of academics, attendance, and discipline referrals? In Texas, little empirical evidence is available to describe student outcomes in DAEP settings (Levin, 2006) and to address whether or not these settings are effective according to the purposes of DAEPs.

The original intent of DAEPs centered on mandatory removal of students who committed criminal offenses resulting in a felony on or off campus (Levin, 2006; Safe Schools Act, 1995, § 37.006). According to the Texas Education Agency's 2006-07 Public Education Information Management System standards, mandatory offenses include: (1) offenses or conduct punishable as a felony, (2) possessed, sold, or used marijuana or other controlled substances and for under the influence, (3) possessed, sold, used, or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, (4) abuse of volatile chemical, (5) Public lewdness or indecent exposure, (6) Retaliation against a school employee, (7) conduct off campus resulting in a Title 5, Penal Code- TEC§ 37.006(c) and, (8) terrorist threat, (9) assault under Penal Code Section 22.01(a)(1) against a school district employee or volunteer, (10) assault under Penal Code Section 22.01(a)(1) against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer and,

(11) false alarm and/or false report (Safe School, 2004). Other offenses are considered discretionary.

In the 2005-06 school year, 136,938 students were placed in DAEP settings in Texas. Seventy-six percent of the students placed in DAEPs were a result of discretionary placements (Texas Education Association, 2007). Discretionary placements occur when a student is referred to a DAEP based on numerous disciplinary infractions or based on those offenses that are not mandatory. Discretionary hearings are a prominent source of student referrals to DAEP's and account for 76% of the student population. Since discretionary placements are the majority of student referrals to DAEP settings, identifying outcomes in terms of attendance, discipline, and academics is an important issue.

DAEPs provide students with academic and behavioral structure, social services, and social skills training. Of the total number of students placed in Texas DAEPs, 48% were Hispanic, 26% were African American, and 24% were White. The remaining 2% were Asian and Native American (Texas Education Association, 2007). Twenty-three percent of the students placed in DAEPs were a result of a mandatory placement. With 77% of the student population being referred to DAEPs for discretionary placement, the logical question is, "Are these programs having a positive effect on student outcomes?"

1.4 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of the Boys Town Educational Model (BTEM) utilized in four Tier I DAEPs (Type II category programs) in a Midwestern urban city and to identify variations in the "implementation effects" and how the BTEM affects different types of students. The evaluation of the BTEM was based on the changes identified in students' behavioral and academic outcomes from pre to post placement. The students of interest participated in the DAEP during the 2005-06 school year.

The study examined the BTEM as a behavioral intervention that is designed to prevent students from returning to another DAEP and added to the current knowledge of student outcomes.

1.5 Significance of Study

The large urban school district reviewed in this study has numerous DAEP campuses that provide discipline alternative education programs for students who are unsuccessful in the traditional school environment. The Safe Schools Act (1995, § 37.008) requires DAEPs to provide academic instruction to students in core subjects and to provide positive behavior skills training (Texas State University, 2007). The participating district divided its Type II DAEPs into three tiers in an attempt to separate minor offenders from the repeat offenders. Tier I programs were designed for students who for the first time in a school year commit non-violent, minor offenses including drug and alcohol offenses. Tier II programs were designed to accommodate those students who committed more serious offenses and for those students who repeated Tier I offenses. Tier III programs or Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) consisted of those students who commit violent crimes on or off campus and can be awaiting commitment to the Texas Youth Commission. With the lack of empirical research that focuses on the Tier I (Type II DAEPs) programs, identifying effective program components and interventions are important. Also, many researchers call for a more investigative look at the different components of alternative education programs (Atkins, Bullis, & Bonnie, 2005). Since the State of Texas requirement of discipline alternative education placements for disruptive students in 1995, little empirical evidence is available relating to DAEP's affects on student achievements and long term outcomes. The current research examined the implementation effects on students referred to the Tier I programs and to their outcomes following placement.

DAEPs are an important part of school social work. The settings of a DAEP provide students with the opportunity to develop new social skills, learn coping skills, and address social, emotional, and behavioral needs. Examining DAEPs is important to determine what

works and what does not. Many of the students who attend DAEPs have behavioral issues, and emotional concerns, and they are considered at risk for academic failure. These students lack the social behaviors required to interact with peers and adults in social situations which are vital for academic success (graduation) and maintaining employment. With the implementation of BTEM in DAEPs, social skill training has been effective in developing these job-related skills and improving academic success (Montague, 1988).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to review the current empirical and theoretical literature associated with alternative education programs. This review outlines the history of alternative education and provides descriptions of the types, settings, and effectiveness.

2.2 History

During the 1960's the educational movement spawned alternatives in public education that continue to exist today. The first known alternative schools emerged in the 60's in private education as a response to political and social conditions (Raywid, 1999). These alternative schools served middle and upper class children from mainly white ethnic backgrounds (Reimer & Cash, 2003). During this period blacks and whites could not drink out of the same water, utilize the same facilities or integrate. Due to segregation, the public education system was often criticized as being racist (Lange & Sletten, 2002). Critics of public education described this era as "cold, dehumanizing, irrelevant institution, largely indifferent to the humanity and the 'personhood' of those within them" (Raywid, 1981 p. 551). Young (1990) described education as successful in cognitive terms but at the expense of equity.

After the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson began to seek educational justice in terms of equality. In his efforts to change the public education system, President Johnson initiated the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which waged war on poverty. His efforts began with the public school system. President Johnson fought poverty and provided opportunity for those who lacked skills including those hardest hit by poverty. He created opportunities for completion of education regardless of the degree of poverty, developed work training and study programs like the job Corps, and ensured that

coordinated efforts would have leadership and direction (Washington: G.P.O., 1965). Success was based on the premise that all students regardless of race were entitled to an education. This paradigm shift transferred excellence at the expense of equity to the humanistic goal of equality (Young, 1990). Equality being the main priority, alternative schools within and outside the public school system began to emerge.

2.3 Emergence of Alternative Schools

As alternative schools emerged, the design and motives focused on meeting the needs of all students. Alternative schools for disruptive students began to emerge in concurrence with other types of alternative schools. For multiple reasons many students struggled in public school settings. Some had trouble with authority, some had problems attending, and others had problems with peers. Due to these problems, school officials across the nation had to respond to student disruptive behavior. In the 1993-94 school year, 2,606 public alternative schools existed compared to 3,850 public alternative schools in 1997-1998 (Hoffman, 2001). This increase of 1,244 schools over a four year period may be associated with the lack of student success in the public school setting.

The 1998-1999 school year, 3,532 students were expelled for bringing a firearm to school, and of those students, 44% were referred to alternative schools (Gray & Sinclair, 2000). According to the National Alternative High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Grunbaum et al., 1999) in 1998-99, 1,390 alternative high schools served approximately 280,000 students who were at risk for failure. This accounts for 2% of the all high school students on a national level.

A major problem with alternative schools is the limited enrollment capacity. Students are referred to alternative schools that were designed to accommodate only a small number of students. Often, these students are placed in portable buildings which have been converted

into classrooms. According to Kleiner, Porch, and Farris (2002), during the 1999-2000, school year about one-third of districts with alternative schools reported an inability to enroll new students (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002) due to staffing and space limitations. Forty-one percent of the districts increased their capacity to accommodate the rise in students by adding staff or space (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). Another twenty-six percent responded to the increased enrollment through homebound instruction. Other alternatives for some districts included referrals to other districts and private facilities.

The FRSS (Fast Response Survey System) is a national data system that collects and analyzes data across the nation about alternative schools (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). The FRSS and the District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs conducted a survey requesting information from school districts. These topics included availability and location of alternative schools and programs, grades for which programs are offered, enrollment, numbers of students enrolled in alternative programs, and how districts treat or respond to problems (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002).

The availability of public alternative school programs which are currently administered to serve students at risk of failure is staggering. In a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, (2002) 39% of public school districts administered at least one alternative program for students at risk. Urban districts were 66% more likely than suburban (41%) and rural (35%) to administer alternative schools (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). Larger districts with 10,000 or more students were more likely than moderate districts with 2,500 to 9,999 students to have alternative schools. Smaller districts were less likely than larger district to have alternative schools. Districts from different regions were also included in the number of alternative school programs. For example, Southeast regions were more likely than any other region to have alternative programs (80 percent) (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). Districts in the West region reported more alternative school programs than those regions in the Northeast and Central.

2.4 Enrollment

Minority enrollment and poverty concentration were also characteristics in the number of alternative programs offered by each of the districts (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). Districts with moderate to low minority and poverty concentrations had less alternative school programs than larger districts.

In the 2000-01 school year, 10,900 alternative school programs opened in the nation (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). Due to the various types of students, different types of schools were developed to meet students' needs. For example, many schools were not located on the regular campus or within the walls of a host school. Many students were referred to schools located off campus, juvenile detention centers, charter schools, or in community based schools within community agencies.

Students with special education needs are also being referred to alternative education programs. Fifty-nine percent of the 10,000 students from larger districts were placed in separate facilities away from their regular school campuses (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). Seventy thousand students with special education needs and IEP's (Individual Education Plans) were enrolled in public alternative school programs in the 2001 school year (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002).

Sixty-five percent of districts have more than one alternative school program. Urban districts (52%) were more likely to have three or more alternative school programs (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris, 2002). The districts with higher minority and large enrollments were more likely to have three or more alternative school programs.

Many advocates of alternative schools have reported success with high risk students; however, considerable inconsistencies exist. At the heart of the inconsistencies is a lack of understanding of alternative education effectiveness (Lange & Sletten, 2002). Researchers have attempted to classify characteristics of successful alternative programs. They found eight common characteristics: (1) a maximum of 1:10 teacher student ratio, (2) small student

populations of no more than 250, (3) clearly stated missions and discipline codes, (4) caring faculty with continual staff development, (5) school staff having high expectations for student achievement, (6) programs specific to student's learning styles and expectations, (7) flexible school schedules with community involvement and support, and (8) total commitment to student success (Schargel & Smink, 2001).

The State of North Carolina conducted a longitudinal study to determine effective characteristics of alternative school programs (Public Schools of North Carolina, 2001). Schools with the following characteristics were most successful: A strong sense of purpose and mission, caring and committed staff, leadership, collegiality with faculty and students, family-like atmosphere of respect, low teacher student ratio, hands-on learning, personalized learning, emotional, physical, and academic needs being addressed, flexibility, academic standards, creative strategies, parent involvement, and community connections (Public Schools of North Carolina, 2001). These studies have paved the way for school districts to develop effective alternative school programs that not only provide students with an alternative, but also provide strategies for at-risk students to become successful in obtaining an education.

2.5 Levels of Alternative Schools

Many schools employ a multiple level system (Raywid, 1994) and labeled as Type I, Type II, and Type III (See Table 1). Lange and Sletten (1995) included a fourth type which was a combination of the three original type's alternative education programs. According to the theory of Multiple Intelligence which is the basis of Type I programs, people use at least seven intellectual capacities for problem-solving and creativity (Gardner, 1983). These seven capacities are linguistic, intrapersonal intelligences, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and interpersonal. They interact with people's personality, and depending upon each person's personality, determine how they problem solve and think creatively.

Table 1 Types of Alternative Education Programs

Types	Descriptions	Student Population	Theory/Models
*Type I	Schools of choice, Magnet type, Innovative Programs, Based on themes.	Student match with program, high achieving student	Multiple Intelligence Theory
*Type II	Last Chance before expulsion	Disruptive student, punitive without choice	Behavioral Modification
*Type III	Remedial Focus, Academic social, emotional issues	At-risk for failure, may have special education label, attend this type of school within the school	Behavioral modification Therapeutic Model, school Community Partnership
*Type IV	Schools of Choice, Remediation, Second Chance	Combination of schools of choice, remediation, innovation, second chance	All Theories and Models Eclectic

*Lange, C, & Sletten, S. (1995). Characteristics of Alternative Schools and Programs Serving At-Risk Students Research Report No. 16. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Enrollment Options for Students with Disabilities Project.

Type II alternative programs are considered last chance schools and based on the theoretical foundation of behavior modification. This type of alternative education program is concerned with changing the behavior of those students who are considered disruptive. For various reasons, these students are not following school rules, may engage in assault behaviors, continually disrupt the learning environment, and are referred for punitive actions without choice. One widely known behavior modification program in many alternative education programs is the Boys Town Education Model (BTEM).

Type III programs include remedial academics, and student's social, emotional and behavior issues. This type would be called inclusive today. Type III program would utilize behavior modification, therapeutic models and would partner with community organizations. The main themes of this type would be special education and inclusion.

Type IV according to Lange & Sletten (1995), is a hybrid type that incorporates the above three types. This type can be called schools of choice, remediation, and second chance schools. Today, Type IV would be considered Charter schools, because they serve students

who may be at-risk to dropout, be removed from traditional settings, may have refused to attend a discipline alternative program, or may be at-risk of failure. No one type of alternative education program is all inclusive and fits the needs of all student populations.

2.6 Boys Town Education Model

The Boys Town Education Model was first developed as a social intervention for youth in family-type homes (residential and foster home) (Phillips, Phillips, Fixsen, & Wolf, 1973) and was called the Teaching Family Model. BTEM progressed from family-style homes to middle schools and high schools after being developed for a residential school in Montana (Downs, Kutsick, & Black, 1985). With the integration of this model into the public school system, a connection was established between the school system and parents. In a longitudinal, comparative study (Thompson et al. 1996), Boys Town found positive short and long-term educational outcomes in residential style homes and specialized school programs that emphasized academic performance compared to community based service programs. The study included a sample size of 993 students in residential, specialized, and community based educational programs. The study conducted follow-ups on student performances over a four year period after placement and focused on academic improvements. Unfortunately, this study did not identify what the specific treatment was that produced the academic achievements.

BTEM provides teachers, student support staff, and administrators with a structured approach to intervention which encourages positive behaviors and consequences. Before teachers are able to implement the model, a three to five day intense training must be attended that consists of videotapes, lectures, and behavioral modeling. This training also includes ongoing consultation and program evaluation forms that assist in the evaluation of effective model implementation. During this training, teachers are taught the proper utilization of social skills daily sheets, building teacher-student relationships, reinforcing appropriate behaviors, and the principle of modeling social skills behavior based on social learning theory. Also, teachers

are taught the importance of student-teacher relationships, consistency, and the proper utilization of consequences and reinforcements.

A basic tenet of social learning theory emphasizes vicarious learning through modeling behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1977) stated: "Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action (p.22)." Social learning theory also considers human behavior to be explained by the constant interaction between the cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences.

BTEM has four components that are rooted in the principle theories of applied behavioral analysis and social learning (Dowd, et al., 1993). These include: Social Skills Curriculum, Teaching Interactions, Administrative Interventions, and the Motivation System. The first component is the Social Skills Curriculum comprised of 16 social skills. The skills are categorized into basic, intermediate, and advanced skills (Father Flanagan, 1993). The skills consist of (1) Following Instructions, (2) Accepting Criticism or Consequence, (3) Accepting "No" For an Answer, (4) Greet Others, (5) Get Teacher's Attention, (6) Make a Request, (7) Disagreeing Appropriately, (8) Give Negative Feedback, (9) Resist Peer Pressure, (10) Apologize, (11) Engaging in a Conversation, (12) Give a Compliment (13) Accept a Compliment, (14) Volunteer, (15) Report Peer Behavior, and (16) Introduce Yourself. These social skills curriculum can be modified by assessing the needs of individual students (Dowd, et al., 1993). The research district has modified the social skill curriculum based on assessing the needs of students and the length of stay being a minimum of thirty days. The BTEM encourages constant assessment of student needs when instructing skills to ensure identified and important skills are being taught (Dowd, et al., 1993).

Administrative Interventions allow school administrators to incorporate school discipline in a supportive manner based on the BTEM components (Dowd, et al., 1993). Administrators become effective change personnel for school discipline through a series of steps. These steps include: (1) obtaining partial compliance, (2) checking with referring teacher, (3) intensive teaching, (4) teaching interaction, (5) preparing and practice apology, (6) checking with the teacher, and (7) student apology delivered. These interventions are aimed at returning students to the academic classroom instead of referring them to in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. With the exception of them causing harm to self or others, suspension is not the first option.

Students have an increased chance of improving academic performance while remaining in the classroom. If students' needs are being met in the classroom and learning is taking place, academic outcomes are improved. Also, when students receive instruction in social skills, and these social skills are utilized correctly, positive peer acceptance, judgment from adults and academic success occurs (Terracina, 1996).

The component of the BTEM is the Motivation System. This system applies immediate consequences to increase or decrease appropriate or inappropriate social behaviors. The Motivation Systems provides a framework for applying principles of learning that maximize behavior change for students (Downs, Bastein, Brown, & Wells, 1987). The purpose of this component is to motivate students via external measures that hopefully lead to the development of internal desire to learn (O'Leary & Drabman, 1971). The token economy aspect of the motivational system utilizes a point system that allows students to gain or lose points to access reinforcers. These reinforcers include playing flag football, gel pens, computer time, and browsing the internet. For example, students are asked what types of items (incentives) they would consider purchasing with points from the incentive store. Once students provide a list of incentives, these items are purchased and placed in a locked closet until the appropriate time in which students may purchase them. During this aspect of the model, teachers document

students' progress on a daily skill sheet. These skill sheets are added up at the end of the day for students and teachers to record the amount of positive and negative points. The daily skill sheets provide teachers, parents, and administrators with documentation of student behavior and successes of the day. When students receive negative point reductions or a discipline referral, they are documented on the skill sheet and parents are notified.

The next aspect of the BTEM is called Teaching Interactions. Trained personnel utilize a nine step process to address inappropriate behavior (Father Flanagan, 1993). This nine step process also allows for teachers to teach prosocial alternatives to the inappropriate behaviors. These include: (1) initial praise or empathy, (2) description of inappropriate behavior, (3) Consequence (positive correction statement), (4) description of appropriate behavior, (5) rationale, (6) request for acknowledgement, (7) practice, (8) feedback (positive consequence), and (9) general praise. Personnel can use three different approaches which include proactive teaching, corrective teaching, and crisis teaching to accomplish these nine processes. Proactive teaching is used as a prevention technique to prevent students from engaging in specific behavior. In utilizing these approaches and processes, personnel engaged in the teaching interaction must be aware of their own behavior when approaching a student. Verbal and nonverbal communication, personal distance, facial expressions, and voice tone are important in teaching appropriate student behavior without students losing dignity and they provide a greater opportunity that the student will accept the feedback (Dowd, et al., 1993). These nine components are also valuable to the teacher student relationship that will increase the student's chances for success.

The quality of the teacher-student relationship is critical in the success of student's academic, behavior, and attendance outcomes. Students learn more effectively in settings that meet their psychological needs (Jones & Jones, 1990). With positive relationship with teachers, students are more likely to demonstrate motivation, take on academic risks such as asking questions, and have a commitment to learn (Dowd, et al., 1993) and improve. Evidence

suggests that teacher-student relationship influence the academic achievement and student positive response to school (Aspy & Roebuck, 1977). Aspy & Roebuck's findings (1977) support the importance of social learning theory to show how students learn vicariously through the emulation of behaviors of those they perceive as role models (Bandura, 1969, 1977).

2.7 Theory Principles and Outcomes

The highest level of observational learning in social learning theory is achieved by first organizing and rehearsing the modeled behavior symbolically (social skills in this study) and then enacting them overtly (Bandura, 1977). The observational learning occurs in the students' natural setting which is the DAEP classroom and in the presence their peers. Secondly, coding occurs and the modeled behavior is transformed into words, labels, or images which result in better retention (Bandura, 1977). According to this principle, when students see other students modeling behaviors, they examine that particular behavior, gather ideas about the observed behavior, and assess whether or not the behavior was followed by positive or negative outcomes. If that behavior is followed or reinforced with positive outcomes, the principal of expectancy of reinforcement raises the possibility that the behavior will be repeated. Students are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior that results in outcomes they value. For example, one of the desired outcomes of the BTEM is to increase students' ability to follow instructions. According to these principles, if students observe another student following instructions and the teacher gives a positive point amount on the students' daily skill sheet, the observer will likely do the same if the observer finds value in increasing their point value.

Student-teacher relationships are a valuable aspect of the BTEM and grounded in social learning theory. Students are more likely to adopt a modeled behavior if the model is similar to the observer, is admired, and the behavior has functional value. For example, if a student observes a teacher teaching the social skills and that student observes the teacher not following the administrator's instructions of disagreeing appropriately with other teachers, then

the student (observer) will not find value in modeling the skill taught by the teacher. On the other hand, if the student observes the teacher modeling the social skills that are taught, that student will find value in utilizing the social skills observed.

In summary, the social skills are taught by teachers and students observe, model, and rehearse the behavior to learn the new skills. The students also watch to see if teachers use the skills throughout the day to validate the skills. Behavior improvement should occur by utilizing the skills that are observed, rehearsed, and enacted. As a result of modeling and the BTEM process, the desired outcomes are increased attendance, learned new social skills, and increased academic performances.

2.8 Research Support

BTEM has been implemented in large public urban and suburban schools, special education programs, and psycho-educational and residential treatment centers throughout the country. This model has proven effectiveness with elementary, middle, and high school students (O'Neill et al., 2007). After being implemented in these large urban schools, students had a 52% decrease in school suspensions, 60% decrease in verbal aggression, 80% of students were reported on task and participating in academic instruction (Thompson et al., 1999). In another study addressing the implementation of the BTEM in an urban school decreased in school suspensions by 67 %, and a 43% decrease in out of school suspension (O'Neill et al. (2007), 5% increase in the statewide reading test, and a 6% increase on the state standardized writing test (O'Neill et al. 2007). Students, when positively praised at a ratio of 4:1 (high fidelity) versus a ratio of 1:2 (low fidelity) positives to negatives, experienced a 5.5 times higher rate of displaying on-task behaviors than students who experienced a low rate of positive verbal reinforcements (Burke et al., 2007) . Also, low fidelity teachers experienced twice the amount of out-of-school suspensions (Burke et al., 2007).

This model has also been effectively implemented in the Georgia Psychoeducational Network that provides services for severely emotionally disturbed, behaviorally disordered

students (Thompson, Penney, Cathy, & Andrea, 1998). The population included 189 students, 128 were adolescents, and 61 were elementary students (85 % male, 15% female). The ethnicity included 53% African American, 46% Caucasian, and 1% other (Thompson, Penney, Cathy, & Andrea, 1998). The results showed improvements in students' adjustment and interpersonal social competence. The elementary students had an increase of six percentage points from pre to post and five percent points for adolescents.

Miller (2005) conducted a dissertation study that evaluated a DAEP after its first year of implementation. This study evaluated students with behavioral problems and incorporated the perceptions of the students, parents, teachers, and the administration. The study was to examine the extent of decrease in student discipline referrals after participation in DAEP. The results of this study showed a significant statistical decrease in student discipline referrals after student participation (Miller, 2005). This study did not include student attendance or academic evidence of improvement. Also, this study utilized a sample size of 69 students, prominently Hispanic. Most importantly, since the study rested on the perceptions of teachers, students, parents, and administrators, self-report measures could have resulted in bias results.

Reeder (2005) examined a small sample size of 86 7th to 11th graders; it combined Type I (Magnet) and Type II (remedial focus) programs, and examined students over a course of two years. He examined student outcomes (attendance, passing core courses, behavioral achievement, standardized test score achievement, recidivism, and dropout) based on the independent variables of gender, ethnicity, grade level, socioeconomic status, and disciplinary offense. The results of this study indicated a decline in all dependent variable means across time.

A study conducted by Texas State University entitled, "Best Practices in Texas Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs" in August, 2007, described effective characteristics of DAEPs (Toohey, Martinez, & Dempsey, 2007). The purpose of this research was to document best practices in DAEPs in Texas and focus discipline management and

academic instruction practices. The best practices were categorized as behavioral, instructional, transition, and staffing (see Table 2).

Table 2 Best Practices in Texas

Type of Best Practices	
Behavioral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on Improving Behavior, not punishing Formal Intake Process Level or Point System with Opportunity to Advance Firm, Well-Communicated Behavior Expectations
Instructional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Teacher Ration 12/1 Academic Assessment Textbooks Available for All Subjects Consistent Curriculum with Referring School High Expectations for Learning Staff Plan Together
Transitional Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication with Home School and DAEP DAEP Staff Involvement After Placement
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counselor, Social Worker on DAEP Campuses Teacher/ Staff with Specialized Training

Toohy, C., Martinez, K., & Dempsey, T., (2007, August). Best practices in Texas discipline alternative education programs. San Marcos: Texas School Safety Center for Safe Communities and Schools, Texas State University

The table identifies the best practices in each category. These practices are not aimed at punishing the student but rather encouraging behavior, academic, and school success. When students return to their home schools, transitional services are provided to ensure success for the student and the home school staff. Home school staff are provided the opportunity to speak with the DAEP teachers and administration, and obtain information on student improvements, what interventions were effective, and the future expectations.

A similar list of best practices was found in the Schargel & Smink (2001), North Carolina (2001), and De Jong (20005) studies. These similarities included low student/teacher ratio, clear mission and well communicated behavioral expectations, caring faculty and staff desiring to work in a DAEP by choice and not reprimanded into a DAEP setting(a demotion or

punishment for low student TASK scores), academic assessment and individualized learning programs, and academic standards and high expectations for students. These similarities are not only consistent in Texas and North Carolina but also Australia. Also, the Australian study emphasized clear mission, caring faculty, individualized learning plans, and academic standards.

2.9 Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe, explore, and compare the effects of the behavioral management program (BTEM) on students' behavioral, academic, and attendance outcomes in four Tier I DAEPs in a large urban school district. Also, this study identified changes in student data before and after DAEP treatment. The research questions are as follows:

1. Did the students have a decrease in discipline incidences from pre to post placement?
2. Did students have an increase in attendance from pre to post placement?
3. Did students have an increase in academic grade averages in core courses from pre to post placement?
4. Did successful students compared to unsuccessful students have higher academic grades averages in core courses from pre to post placement?
5. Did successful students compared to unsuccessful students have fewer discipline referrals from pre to post placement?

2.10 Research Hypothesis

The research questions in the above section provide for a directional hypothesis in terms of increase in grades, attendance, and a decrease in discipline referrals.

1. Student's discipline referrals will decrease after the placement in a DAEP from pre to post placement.
2. Student's attendance will increase after DAEP placement.
3. Students will have an increase in core subjects (English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Reading) from pre to post placement.
4. Successful students will have academic grade averages in core courses in from pre to post placement than unsuccessful students.
5. Successful students compared to unsuccessful students will have fewer discipline referrals from pre to post DAEP placement.

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodology

The four Type II DAEPs in a large urban city were examined utilizing a quantitative methodology which included a secondary analysis and a quasi-experimental design aimed at exploring and comparing the implementation effects of the Boys Town Educational Model with different types of students. This project was unique in that the focus was on Type II DAEPs (see Table 1). These programs have an underlying social learning theoretical framework and are considered last chance and behavior modification types. The four DAEPs were compared for different structural components to determine the effects on student's discipline, academic, and attendance outcomes. This approach was used to measure DAEP outcomes (grades, attendance, and discipline incidences) over six- six week cycles before and after placement (Rubin & Babbie, 2001).

The researcher utilized a quasi- experimental design in this study. Students were referred to DAEPs for punitive reasons and participation in the program was mandatory therefore, random assignment was not possible. This aspect consisted of six baseline measurements, an intervention (intervention of BTEM), and six baseline measurements. The student baselines were measured over a one year pre-placement (six week cycles of time) and one year post placement (six week cycles of time). Since students come into DAEPs at different times during the academic year, each student's grades were individually based on the average grade for the 6 six-week grades before placement and the 6 six-week grades after placement. In the case of students who have an additional referral(s) to a DAEP after the first placement, their grades were calculated on the 6 six week cycles following the last placement.

3.2 Participants

The researcher explored secondary data of 999 students who attended four Type II DAEPs during the 2005-06 school years. This academic year is the most recent data that allows a year pre and post placement analysis. Student population consisted of sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students both male and female. The student population was African American, White, and Hispanic and classified by economically disadvantaged and limited English proficiency (LEP). Students are referred to a DAEP for violating the Student Code of Conduct. These violations are classified as discretionary and mandatory offenses depending upon the severity of the offense. Students can be removed from the regular school setting and placed in a DAEP if they violate the Student Code of Conduct within 300 feet on or off the school campus during a school related activity. DAEPs have specific rules, dress code requirements, expected behaviors and conduct while in placement. DAEPs follow specific discipline policies to insure access to student support services and health services, transportation services, and food services.

3.3 Settings of the Study

The research district has four Type II DAEP middle schools. These sites are strategically placed in the North, South, East, and West quadrants of the district. Each site serves the middle school population of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. The number of students referred to these sites in the 2005-06 school year was 999. This is an average of 223 students per site during the research year.

DAEPs have three main goals in assisting students with success in school and in the community. The goals include helping students improve and gain control of their behavior, remediate or enhance students' academic abilities, and help families learn ways to obtain information and resources to become more effective parents (Staff Handbook, 2007). Students are often returned to their home school after main criteria are addressed: (1) passing all

courses, (2) making continual progress toward exhibiting self- discipline, and (3) maintaining a 90% attendance rate.

The four sites incorporated the Boys Town Education Model (BTEM) as the foundation of behavioral intervention. The four components of this model are Social Skills Curriculum, Teaching Interactions, Administrative Interventions, and the Motivation System. These components are implemented in each setting. With the sites located in different quadrants of the county, slight but important modifications have been implemented to the program to accommodate the four groups of student.

The similarities in the programs are implementing the BTEM, incorporating a Level System, requiring parental corporation, students cannot earn negative marks (No) on their level skill sheets, and having incentives on Fridays. The differences are as follows: (1) the number of days students progress from one level the next to, and (3) students earning negative marks and returning to the lowest level, and (4) different programs allow students to earn more than one negative mark before returning to the lowest level. The four sites were labeled A, B, C, and D (see Table 3).

Throughout the four programs, students progressed from Level I to Level III (see table 4). The progress is based on whether or not students earn a negative mark on their skill sheets. Incentives are earned and bought on Fridays depending upon the number of points earned. These earned points are accumulated from the total number of "Y's" (Yes) accumulated during the week leading to incentive Friday. For example, students can earn ten "Y's" per day and that would equal 20 points. If students earns five 'No's', then that student would lose ten points. For five "W's" the students would lose five points. Therefore, if a student earns all "Y's", then a total of 100 points could be earned per week.

Another aspect of the DAEPs includes the structure of incentives. These incentives are incorporated into the three levels of the programs.

Table 3 Similarities and Differences in Program Levels at Different Locations
Similarities and Differences

Tier I Schools: Level System	“A”	“B”	“C”	“D”
Level I	30 minute lunch (10 to eat, 20 to write social skills from curriculum) No talking	30 minute lunch, no talking students walk with hands behind back when going to and from classes	30 minute lunch, no talking	30 minute lunch, no talking, write social skills 2x each, assigned seating, no classroom privileges
Level II	Talking ok, Eat with other students, move around classroom	Talking, eat with other students, permission to leave desk	Talking ok, read, work puzzle with other	Talk during lunch, read, draw, puzzle, work together, permission to move around classroom, helper, classroom privileges, Thursday drawing for extra incentives
Level III	Play games during lunch and Friday activity Help teachers, use points for incentives	Play games, go outside during Friday activities, use points for incentives	Go outside, play games	Teacher assistant, cafeteria helper, games, earn bonus coupons, 1st in line for lunch, all level II privileges
Gold Card	NO CARD	NO CARD	NO CARD	Do not carry level sheet, level II and III privileges, office assistant, teacher assistant

Level I differences include both DAEPs “A” and “D” requiring students to write social skills during the lunch period. These punitive implementations at these two sites are designed to deter students from remaining on the lower level and writing the social skills. Once students

reach Level III in both 'B' and 'C' program, students are allowed to go outside and participate in physical or social activities. Finally, program "D" is the only one of the four that allows students to reach "Gold Card" status. On this level, students are allowed to work in the office, not carry a level sheet, and obtain other level privileges. Students must progress through the level system to complete the placement. If students do not progress and remain on Level I, they may remain in the program longer than the initial days placed. Students' placement lengthens an initial week until they progress to Level II.

3.4 Philosophy of Programs

The philosophy of Type II DAEPs in this large urban school district was teamwork, instructional remediation, behavioral modification, and individual assessments designed to address the individual needs. The expectations of this learning environment are to promote the development of independence, responsibility, and making contributions to society (Parent-Student Handbook, 2001).

3.5 Instrumentation

The researcher used the School Administrative Student Information (SASI) data before and after the 2005-06 school year. The researcher explored student data one year pre placement and one year post placement. The data included grade level, academic grades, gender, LEP, economic disadvantage status, attendance, enter and leave date, reason form referral, and number of infractions.

3.6 Reliability

The SASI database is a reliable source of data which is required throughout the State of Texas as a means of providing educational information about students. Administrative personnel and data clerks are required to input and update student records daily. The data are then uploaded to the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) which is regulated by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Reliability of this data is a concern because data is collected and inputted by different personnel sources. Different people are responsible

for inputting data into the SASI database, the potential for error is possible; however, in this large urban school district, data input is monitored by the Information and Technology Department for accuracy before submitting items to Texas Education Agency's PEIMS. To ensure accuracy of this data from school districts, TEA implemented a set of standards, definitions, codes, formats, editing procedures, a required database design, a procedure for uploading data to TEA's database, and documentation describing numeric values for data (PEIMS, 2007).

3.7 Validity

External validity refers to the extent of generalizing results of a study to different populations and settings (Rubin & Babbie, 2001). The results of this study will only be generalized to these four DAEPs participating in the study.

In a quasi-experimental design, some confounding variables may threaten internal validity. These threats include history, maturation, statistical regression, selection, experimental mortality, testing, instrumentation, and design contamination.

This design fares quite well when evaluated on its ability to control threats to internal validity. With the exception of history, the other threats are controlled by the presence of the series of premeasures. Maturation, testing, instrumentation, regression, and attrition produce gradual changes that would be operating between all measures. Because this design does not have a control group, the issue of selection is not a factor. Thus, history is the only potential threat to internal validity (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2002, p.76).

3.8 Data Collection

The researcher was the only person with knowledge of data stored on scan disc. The researcher obtained permission from the Research and Evaluation Department of the participating district. The researcher submitted an external research application to the Research and Evaluation Department. Before the approval was granted by the school district, the

Research and Evaluation Department requested the approval from the University of Texas at Arlington's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A). Once permission was obtained by the IRB, the Research and Evaluation Committee released the data.

3.9 Data Analysis

The dependent variables are (1) discipline, (2) attendance, and (3) core course grade averages. Discipline was measured by the number of discipline referrals before and after treatment. Attendance is the number of days attended in school one year before and one year following DAEP placement. Academic core course grades were studied for six, six week periods before and after placement. This study also consists of covariate variables that will remain constant through the experiment. These include (1) grade level at time of entry, (2) ethnicity, (3) discipline referral offense, (4) socioeconomic status/economically disadvantaged, (5) Limited English Proficiency (LEP), (6) gender, and (7) DAEP location. Socioeconomic status was defined as:

- a student's eligibility for free or reduced lunch under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program;
- having a family annual income below the Federal poverty line;
- eligibility for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and other public assistance;
- received need-based financial assistance;
- eligible from assistance under Title II, Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and/or
- received benefits under the Food Stamps Act of 1977 (Texas Education Agency, 2005-06)

Descriptive, frequencies, ANOVA and repeated measures ANOVA were utilized in assessing six research questions.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of the Boys Town Educational Model (BTEM) utilized in four DAEPs in a Midwestern urban city and to identify variations in the “implementation effects” and how the BTEM affects different types of students. The effects of the BTEM were evaluated on the changes identified in students’ behavioral and academic outcomes from pre to post placement. There were 999 students who were placed in the four DAEPs during the 2005-06 school year. The length of placements for these four DAEPs was 30 days with the exception of the placement appeal process. For example, if a particular student was referred for 30 days and that student profess innocence and obtained an attorney then that student could appeal the original placement of 30 days. If that appeal was upheld, the placement could be reduced to 15 days. Students were referred to a DAEP for discretionary or mandatory placements. Discretionary offenses include (1) violations of the student code of conduct, (2) serious or persistent misconduct violating the student code of conduct while placed in a DAEP, and (3) fighting/ mutual (both students engage in assaulting each other) combat. Mandatory placement included (1) felony controlled substance violation, (2) aggravated assault under penal code against someone other than school district employee or volunteer, (3) conduct punishable as a felony, and (4) assault under penal code.

Table 5 shows descriptive data for gender, ethnicity, grade, economic disadvantage, students, and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) percentages. During the intervention school year, 70% of the student populations referred to one of the four DAEPs were males. African American (46%), Hispanics (46%) accounted for 92% of the population. Ethnic minority

students are more likely to be expelled; therefore, these students have an increased likelihood of being referred to alternative program (Gregg, 1999). One percent of the population consisted of Native American and Asian American. The larger groups of students were 7th and 8th graders at 39%.

Table 4 Student Demographics of Population of DAEPs during the 2005-06 School Year

<i>Demographic Characteristics</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	70%
Female	30%
<i>Ethnicity</i>	
African American	46%
Hispanic	46%
White	7%
Native and Asian American	1%
<i>Grade</i>	
6	22%
7	39%
8	39%
<i>Economic Disadvantage</i>	
No Assistance	19%
Assistance	84%

Of the total number of students classified as economically disadvantaged, 84% of the student were economically disadvantaged. Finally, 13% were classified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP). One hundred percent of the LEP populations were Hispanic students.

Table 5 Ethnicity By DAEP Location

DAEP Location	Percent	A.A	Hispanic	White
A	32%	79%	18%	3%
B	22%	12%	83%	4%
C	21%	40%	41%	19%
D	25%	43%	50%	7%
LEP Status	13%			

4.2 Results of Research Questions

The researcher focused on six specific research questions:

1. Did the students have a decrease in discipline incidences from pre to post placement?
2. Did students have an increase in attendance from pre to post placement?
3. Did students have an increase in academic core grades from pre to post placement?
4. Did successful students compared to unsuccessful students have higher academic core grades averages from pre to post placement?
5. Did successful student compared to unsuccessful student have a fewer discipline referrals from pre to post placement?

Research Question 1: Did the students have a decrease in discipline incidences after placement. The level of acceptable significance for this study is .05. As shown in Table 6, students during the post placement measure had an increase in the amount of discipline incidents. Site D had the highest increase (3.48) in behavior incidences after placement. A paired samples t-test calculated the before and after placement mean for number of incident referrals of students and found a significant increase in referrals after placement, ($t(892) = -4.90, p < .00$). The hypothesis of a decrease in discipline incidents after placement was not accepted.

Table 6 Number of Discipline Incidents Before and After Placement By DAEP Location

Placement	N	\bar{x}	DAEP Location			
			A	B	C	D
			\bar{x}	\bar{x}	\bar{x}	•
Pre-placement	893	5.03	4.84	4.54	4.05	4.43
Post-placement	893	6.13	7.14	6.42	6.13	7.91

Student incidents were determined by six week cycles to fulfill the quasi experimental time series design aspect of this study. A repeated measures ANOVA compared the average number of discipline incidents during each six week cycles to determine if there was a significant difference found during each of the cycles and no significant difference was found ($F(5, 5446) = 2.08, p > .05$). During cycle one, students averaged 14 incidents (SD= 30.52). The number of incidents increased to 16 during cycle two (SD= 32.65), 17 during cycle three (SD=32.92), and four (SD= 33.43). During cycle five, the mean average of incidents was 16, a one average decline (SD= 31.10). The mean average of incidents increased during cycle six to 19 (SD= 33.84). The total number of incidents during the post placement year was 5442; average incidents were 16.89 (SD= 32.43).

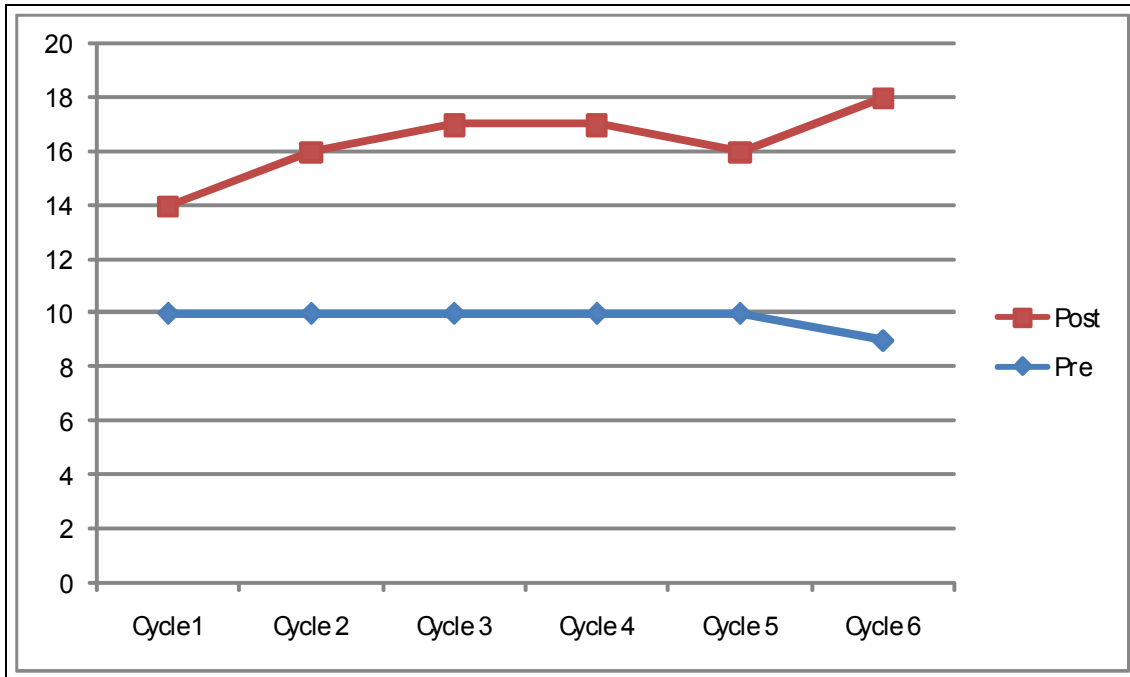


Figure 1 Number of Discipline Incidents by Cycle Before and After Placement

Research Question 2: Did students have an increase in attendance from pre to post placement? As shown in Table 7, overall students' attendance decreased from pre-placement to post-placement. A paired samples t-test revealed a significant difference in attendance before and after placement, ($t(746) = 18.07, p < .00$). The mean attendance before placement was 91.60 (SD = 7.33), and the mean average after placement was 84.37 (SD = 13.13). The hypothesis that students would have an increase in attendance after placement was not accepted. Students' attendance rate of 84% fell below the rate of attendance 90% for the DAEPs program goals.

Attendance means were also calculated for the covariates variables of gender, ethnicity, grade, LEP, economically disadvantaged, and grade before and after placement. For all students and for all sites, females had the highest increase in average attendance before and after placement than males (Table 7). Hispanic students had the highest rate of attendance for groups with more than four students.

Table 7 Attendance by Gender, Ethnicity, LEP, Economic Disadvantage, Grade, Location

Characteristics	Pre \bar{x}	N	Post \bar{x}	N
Gender				
<i>M</i>	90%	624	84%	559
<i>F</i>	91%	273	85%	231
Ethnicity				
<i>Afr. American</i>	90%	395	85%	353
<i>Hispanic</i>	92%	413	84%	347
<i>White Non –His</i>	89%	63	83%	49
LEP	92%	117	85%	100
Economic Disad.				
<i>Free Lunch</i>	90%	647	84%	548
<i>Reduced Lunch</i>	94%	56	88%	55
Grade				
<i>6th</i>	93%	199	85%	172
<i>7th</i>	90%	353	86%	317
<i>8th</i>	89%	363	82%	301
Location				
<i>A</i>	90%	281	84%	253
<i>B</i>	91%	206	84%	164
<i>C</i>	90%	200	84%	172
<i>D</i>	92%	228	85%	201
Overall	91%	747	84%	747

Research Question 3: Did students have an increase in academic core course grades from pre to post placement? Core courses consisted of Math, English, Science, Social Studies. A paired sample t-test revealed a significant difference between students' core course from pre to post ($t(422) = 53.68, p < .00$). Overall students' grades decreased from pre to post regardless of group.

In terms of gender, males had an overall grade average during the pre placement of 73 that declined to 72 after placement. Females had 77 pre placement average and 76 post placement average. While female's grade averaged five points higher than males, both gender groups declined one point after placement.

Whites had the highest average from pre to post placement for academic grades (77 pre and 75 post) out African American, Hispanics, and Whites. Native Americans and Pacific Islanders accounted for less than 1% of the DAEP population and averages were not

considered. African Americans had a pre placement average of 75 and 74 post placement. Hispanics had 74 pre and 73 post placement average.

LEP (Limited English Proficiency) student had a decline in academic core course averages from pre to post placement as well. Pre placement average was 73 and 72 post placement. All students considered LEP were Hispanic. Students considered economically disadvantaged received free or reduce lunches. These students declined 1 point from pre to post 74 to 73.

Site 'A' had the highest pre placement grade averages (75) out of the four DAEPs and the highest decline (75 to 73) from pre to post placement. Site 'C' had identical averages of 74 from pre to placement. Each of the four sites was within two average points from pre to post placement. Regardless of gender, ethnicity, LEP, economic disadvantaged or location, every group declined one point after placement.

Table 8 Grades by Gender, Ethnicity, LEP, Economic Disadvantage and Location

Grades	Pre \bar{x}	Post \bar{x}	N
Overall	73	72	579
Gender			
M	73	72	507
F	77	76	209
Ethnicity			
African American	75	74	307
Hispanic	74	73	317
White	77	75	56
LEP	73	72	93
Economically Dis.	75	74	538
Location			
A	75	73	219
B	73	72	203
C	74	74	154
D	74	73	181

Research Question 4: Did successful students compared to unsuccessful students have higher academic grades from pre to post placement? Successful students are considered those students who did not return to another DAEP after placement. These students may have had

behavior incidences (behavioral referrals) after placement but did not return to another DAEP. Those students considered unsuccessful committed behavioral incidences that lead them to another DAEP. Behavioral incidences are considered infractions, behavioral referrals, or discipline referrals that would require a student being referred to the principal's office. An ANOVA revealed significant differences between successful and unsuccessful students' grades before placement and after placement. Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted ($F(1,570) = 6.69, p < .00$).

Table 9 Successful and Unsuccessful Student Grades Before and After Placement

Students	Pre \bar{x}	N	SD	Post \bar{x}	SD
Successful	74	362	7.89	73	9.62
Unsuccessful	73	333	8.33	71	11.20

Research Question 5: Did successful student compared to unsuccessful students have a decrease in discipline referrals from pre to post placement? Successful and unsuccessful may have both received behavior incidences however; the difference is that successful students did not commit an offense that resulted in being placed in another DAEP. The average number of incident referrals for successful students before placement ($\bar{x} = 4.45, SD = 3.86$) and after placement ($\bar{x}=5.98, SD=5.62$) were different than unsuccessful students before placement ($\bar{x} = 9.99, SD = 4.77$) and after placement ($\bar{x} = 7.34$), ($SD = 6.28$). The research hypothesis that successful students would have a higher decrease in discipline incidences from pre to post DAEP placement was not accepted. An independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference in incident referrals between successful and unsuccessful students before and after placement ($t(415) = -2.81, p < .000$). The average number of incidents increased for successful and decreased for unsuccessful students after placement.

Table 10 Successful and Unsuccessful Student Discipline Incidents Before and After Placement

Placement	Students	N	\bar{X}	Std. Deviation
Pre-Placement	Successful	487	4.45	3.86
	Unsuccessful	233	9.99	4.77
Post Placement	Successful	487	5.98	5.62
	Unsuccessful	233	7.34	6.28

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK

5.1 Summary

This study analyzed the effects of the Boys Town Education Model utilized in four DAEPs to identify changes and variations in student's academic and behavioral outcomes and the implementation effects of each of the four DAEPs. The student population consisted of 999 6th, 7th, and 8th graders placed in a DAEP during the 2005-06 school year. The variables compared consisted of the dependent variables of behavioral incidents, academic grades, attendance and the independent variable of BTEM.

5.2 Summary of Research Questions

The first research question predicted a decrease in behavior incidences from pre placement year to the post placement year; however student discipline referrals increased after placement. Site "D" had the highest increase in behavior incidences after placement. This increase could be explained by three assumptions. First, students who attend a DAEP receive a structured environment, low teacher student ratio, and participate in the BTEM. Second, when students return to their home school they return to the same teachers, administrators, larger classroom, and negative stereotypes of being placed in a DAEP. Also, these students may engage in negative behaviors in an attempt to be referred to other DAEPs to have smaller classrooms and a structured environment. Finally, this increase could be explained by the similarities and differences of the implementation of the BTEM at different sites (see Table 3). For example, (1) the number of days students progress from one level the next to, and (3) students earning negative marks and returning to the lowest level, and (4) different programs allow students to earn more than one negative mark before returning to the lowest level.

Question two predicted that students would have an increase in attendance from pre to post placement. The overall student attendance average declined 7% after placement. The ethnic minority students who had the greatest decrease in attendance were Hispanics at 8% followed by African Americans at 5%. LEP students had a decrease in attendance by 7%. In terms of grade level, sixth grade students had the highest average decrease in attendance at 8%.

Question three predicted that students would have an increase in academic grades from pre to post placement. Students did not have an increase in academic grade averages from pre to post placement. This is assumed that the BTEM was not successful in terms of improving students' academic outcomes.

Research Question four predicted that successful students would have a higher academic averaged from pre to post placement than unsuccessful students. Successful student had a higher academic average in pre (74) and post placement (73) than unsuccessful students (73) pre and 71 post. Successful and unsuccessful student had a decline in academics from pre to post placement. This decrease suggests that the BTEM was not successful in improving students' academic outcomes.

Research Question 5 predicted that successful students compared to unsuccessful students would have a greater decrease in behavior incidences from pre to post placement. Successful student had the lowest number of incidents ($\bar{x}= 4.45$) before placement as compared to unsuccessful ($\bar{x}=9.99$). That number for successful students increased to ($\bar{x}=5.98$) and decreased for unsuccessful ($\bar{x}=7.34$) from pre to post placement. Unsuccessful students averaged (9.99) incidences before placement and ($\bar{x}=7.34$) after placement. The decrease in the average number of incidents for unsuccessful student could be assumed that unsuccessful students committed more serious incidents to return to another DAEP. Also,

unsuccessful students have been to more than one DAEP and have learned what behavioral incidences to commit to return to other DAEPs. Also, unsuccessful students had lower grades and being unsuccessful in the traditional classroom may lead to more disruptive behaviors. Another assumption that can be explained in relations to successful students' incidences increasing during post placement is vicarious learning.

5.3 Discussion

“In Texas and nationally, zero tolerance policies are referring thousands of juveniles, including large numbers of minority and special education students, to in-school and out-of-school suspension (ISS and OSS) and Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) (Hugo, 2007, p.12).” The numbers of minority students are staggering for both Texas and the research district. Minority students (Hispanic and African American) assigned to DAEPs in Texas account for 84% of the student population during the 2005-06 school year (Hugo, 2007, p.12) and 92% for the research district. Students in Texas who were assigned to a DAEP and considered economically disadvantaged accounted for 62% of the student population. Many of these students were males 74% in Texas and 70% for the research district.

Student outcomes were negative at best. Student incidences increased by 1.10 from pre to post placement, academic grades decline by 1% from pre to post, and student attendance declined by 7% from pre to post placement. These outcomes suggest that the BTEM was not effective or home school was not conducive of the development of positive student outcomes from pre to post placement. Although these statistics seem to be negative, as a researcher employed by one of the four DAEPs, these outcomes seem promising.

Many students and parents who spoke to the researcher expressed a desire for students to remain in the DAEP longer than the original assignment. For example, parents have

requested that their child stay for longer periods of time due to what they perceived as positive outcomes. Some parents have mentioned that their children have come home with positive marks on their skills sheets and cannot wait to return to school. Also, parents have mentioned the change in their child attitude toward school and their teachers. These perceptions should be included in a qualitative study but for this project they were excluded and were not in this study due to the research district requirement for interviewing students and parents.

5.4 Recommendations

Chapter 37 mandates that all districts have a DAEP setting on or off the main school campus Texas Education Agency & Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (2000). With this mandate, other school districts should conduct a study that measures student outcomes and assess the effectiveness of their behavior modification system. These studies would provide insight and comparisons of what works different settings. Studies of this type would also provide other school districts with examples of effective behavioral intervention that have proven effective in DAEPs.

Another recommendation for research would be to have studies conducted that measure the effectiveness of student transitional services. Transitional services can be critical in student achievement once a student's returns to his or her home school. The district in this study did not have consistent transitional services due to the limitations of staff responsibilities and when the student population increased, more incidents on campus required immediate attention. This attention required staff to remain on campus to assist in crisis intervention. Therefore, a recommendation to compare student populations who receive transitional services to those who do not after returning to their home school after placement would provide empirical evidence the effectiveness of transitional services and not merely stating that it is a best practice with significance as in the article presented by Toohey, Martinez, & Dempsey (2007, August).

As stated in Chapter 1, limited studies have been conducted to examine student outcomes in DAEP settings across Texas. Longitudinal studies should be conducted to examine student outcomes over a period of five or more years. These studies should also include social services that students receive while attending a DAEP.

5.5 Implications

The BTEM was not successful; therefore, additional services should be developed and assessed. Implications for school social work within the DAEP settings include:

- greater importance placed on the disproportionate number of African American and Hispanic students referred to DAEPs.
- reevaluate the BTEM and incorporate a model that would address the disproportionate number of minority students.
- qualitative study analyzing student and parent perceptions of effective DAEPs
- immediate access to a licensed social worker in each DAEP setting to provide social services, crisis management,
- increased requirement for students who are referred to DAEPs to attend more than 30 days
- require more family involvement that may include weekly campus visits, and family parenting classes to increase parent knowledge,
- incorporate a trade school aspect to DAEPs in which students can begin to learn a trade that would give them direction and an alternative to college.
- allow for administrators, social workers, and teachers volunteer to work in DAEP setting

Not all students have the desire to attend college. Providing students with interesting options to capture that are of interest could assist in preventing disruptive behaviors.

5.6 Limitations

This research study posed different limitations. The setting of the student consisted of four DAEPs in different areas in the research district. These settings were unique in the sense that each student was referred to a DAEP for punitive reasons. While in attendance each student participated in the BTEM component of the program. Because each student had to participate in this component of the program, control groups and random assignments were not possible and thus prevented the researcher from conducting a true experimental design and also eliminated the option to generalize to other settings.

5.7 Conclusion

During the 2005-06 school years, 999 students attended four DAEPs in the large urban school district. While enrolled in these programs, students participated in BTEM to improve social skills, increase academic performance, and decrease behavioral incidence. Miller (2005) evaluated a DAEP after its first year of implementation. His results found a decrease in student discipline referrals after participation in DAEP. Contrary to Miller's findings, the current data showed that students had an increase in discipline referrals after placement and academic core course grades decreased no matter what group. Also, successful student had an increase in discipline incidents while unsuccessful students had a decrease in incidents after placement.

The quality of the teacher-student relationship is also critical in the success of student's academic, behavior, and attendance outcomes. Students learn more effectively in settings that meet their psychological needs (Jones & Jones, 1990) and with the positive relationship with the teacher, students are more likely to demonstrate motivation, take on tasks to improve academic performance, and a commitment to learn (Dowd, et al., 1993). This positive student teacher relationship could account for the negative student outcomes presented in this study. For

example, if students admired and like the teachers in the DAEPs and were returned to their home school to which they were unsuccessful, they may engage in negative behaviors in an attempt to return to a DAEP.

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER



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February 8, 2008

Edward Randle
Norman Cobb, Ph.D.
Social Work
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TITLE: *The Effects of DAEPs on the Development of Different Types of Students in Four Discipline Alternative Education programs in a Large Urban School District*

Re: Exempt Approval Letter

IRB No.: 2008.212e

The UTA Institutional Review Board (UTA IRB) Chair (or designee) has reviewed the above-referenced study and found that it qualified as exempt from coverage under the federal guidelines for the protection of human subjects as referenced at Title 45--Part 46.101(b)(4). You are therefore authorized to begin the research as of February 8, 2008.

Please be advised that as the principal investigator, you are required to report local adverse (unanticipated) events to this office within 24 hours. In addition, pursuant to Title 45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)(iii), investigators are required to, "promptly report to the IRB any proposed changes in the research activity, and to ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, are **not initiated without IRB review and approval** except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject."

All investigators and key personnel identified in the protocol must have documented *CITI Training* on file with this office. The UTA Office of Research Administration Regulatory Services appreciates your continuing commitment to the protection of human research subjects. Should you have questions or require further assistance, please contact Jan Parker by calling (817) 272-0867.

Yours sincerely,

Patricia Turpin, PhD, RN, CNA, BC
Associate Clinical Professor
UTA IRB Chair

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Edward Randle started his academic career at the Cisco Junior College in 1990. After a semester, he relocated to Arlington where he attended Tarrant County College. Edward only attended TCC for a short time only to relocate to Howard Payne University in 1993. After graduating from HPU in 1997, Edward attended grad school at the University of Texas @ Arlington in 1999. During the spring of 2001, Edward graduated with a Master's degree in Social Work. He later enrolled in the PHD program at the University of Texas @ Arlington where he graduated August, 2008