



The mission of Team Kids is to empower our kids to change the world.

**Team Kids Challenge  
P.S. 149 Danny Kaye School  
Brooklyn, New York**

**Evaluation Report  
9.20.2018**

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## Executive Summary

In the spring of 2018, the Team Kids Challenge (TKC) program was delivered at P.S. 149 Danny Kaye Elementary School in Brooklyn, in partnership with the New York City Public Schools, City of New York Police Department (NYPD) and the New York City Fire Department (FDNY).

### **Results of the evaluation indicate that the TK Challenge**

- ✓ enhanced children's sense of self-efficacy in the community
- ✓ increased student-school connectedness
- ✓ created more positive perceptions of law enforcement among children
- ✓ resulted in a more positive view of children's capacity to be effective community resources within the school community and among public safety personnel

The P.S. 149 TKC evaluation collected quantitative and/or qualitative data from students, the principal, and public safety personnel. A pre- and post-program survey of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students found compelling evidence of effectiveness on short-term outcomes targeted by the Team Kids Challenge, including targeted developmental asset indicators.

### **Children who participated in the Team Kids Challenge had more positive views about their role in the community and school after the program, compared to before the program:**

- ✓ Ratings on "I can make a difference in my community" increased significantly, by 13%
- ✓ Ratings on "I help others in my community" increased significantly, by 19%
- ✓ Ratings on "I am an important part of my school" increased significantly, by 14%

### **Children who participated in the Team Kids Challenge had significantly more positive views about law enforcement.**

- ✓ Ratings on "Police officers believe in me" increased significantly, by 20.5%
- ✓ Ratings on "Police officers think I can make a difference in my community" increased significantly, by 18%
- ✓ Ratings on "Police officers think I am an important part of the community" increased significantly, by 21%

### **Leadership Team volunteers (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders who lead the program at P.S. 149) were extremely positive about the value of the Team Kids Challenge. Participants learned**

- ✓ The value and "how to" of helping others
- ✓ That they can have a measurable impact on the community
- ✓ How to work effectively in teams

### **The school principal reinforced findings from the student survey and LT reflections, and reported that the program had other positive effects on the school, including**

- ✓ Improvements in teachers' views of children's capacity as community assets
- ✓ Reinforcement of positive discipline messaging
- ✓ Increased attendance

**Public safety personnel reinforced findings from other data sources, and reported that the TK Challenge helped**

- ✓ Strengthen their view of children as community assets
- ✓ Build trusting relationships with children that would not have developed otherwise
- ✓ Improve community and public relations

**The evaluation demonstrates the Team Kids Challenge as an effective evidence-based model for**

- ✓ building and strengthening children's resiliency and positive beliefs about themselves
- ✓ strengthening adults' mindsets that children are valuable assets to a community
- ✓ solidifying mutual respect and trust between children in the community and public safety personnel

The outcomes are impressive, considering that the Team Kids Challenge delivers an average of just 7 hours of instruction (primarily during school lunch breaks) over a 5 week period. Because the program is implemented during children's elementary school years, the Team Kids Challenge represents a solid return on investment, potentially preventing the high cost to society of alcohol and other drug addiction, incarceration, and high levels of distrust between young community members and public safety personnel. At a time when distrust of law enforcement is high, and the walls between communities and law enforcement agencies may be going up in some jurisdictions, this evaluation provided promising evidence that the Team Kids Challenge offers a documented way to help break them down.

## Introduction

The Team Kids Challenge is a five-week, school-based service program, delivered during the school day, and rooted in the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets Framework. The Framework has shown that the more assets children acquire, the less likely they are to engage in high risk behaviors (e.g., alcohol and other drug use, crime), and the better their chances of positive outcomes like school success, good health, and positive life choices. Given the high cost to society of alcohol and other drug addiction, incarceration, and so on, effective interventions with children before they hit middle and high school amount to a substantial potential return on investment, particularly in communities where such risks are known to be high.

Effective programs that do more than prevention are obviously even better. If interventions can prevent high risk behaviors while building capable young people with the skills and resiliency to meet the challenges of their future, then there's an even more compelling case to establish and grow such programs.

The Team Kids Challenge (TKC) is just that kind of asset-building program. The TKC has been implemented in select public schools for more than 17 years, and has been shown to strengthen and expand developmental assets. A 2004 study of the program in Irvine, CA showed promising evidence of effectiveness, and two more recent 2017 evaluations of five schools in Torrance, CA and Compton, CA have produced consistent positive results. The evaluation of the TKC at P.S. 149 reported here was designed to replicate those findings and explore the impact of the program on targeted outcomes in a new Team Kids school in New York City.

The program evaluation was undertaken in collaboration with P.S. 149 Danny Kaye Elementary School in Brooklyn, in partnership with New York City Public Schools (NYC Public Schools), the City of New York Police Department (NYPD) and the New York City Fire Department (FDNY). Quantitative and/or qualitative data were collected from students, the principal, and public safety officials. Pre-and post-program surveys were conducted with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Survey data focused on targeted developmental assets and perceptions of law enforcement. Students who participated in the Team Kids Leadership Team were also asked to complete a written reflection about what they learned, and how they plan to continue their service to the community. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the school principal and several public safety personnel to investigate their perceptions about children as community resources, and the effects of the program from their vantage point. This report includes all significant findings from the evaluation.

## Team Kids Challenge

The mission of Team Kids is "to empower our kids to change the world." The Team Kids Challenge is a 5-week program that mobilizes on-duty police officers and firefighter mentors, to work alongside Team Kids coaches in public elementary schools to engage all children in service to their community. The program begins with a school-wide assembly featuring public safety

role models. Students from all grades learn about critical issues in their community, and a weekly school-wide “Challenge” empowers them as powerful community advocates. The TK Leadership Team is comprised of upper-grade student volunteers who meet weekly at lunch to plan a school carnival, benefitting the charity of their choice and capping off a month of service. All (100%) kid-raised funds and in-kind materials are donated to 501(c)(3) organizations in or near their school community. Figure 1 depicts an overview of the program as it is delivered in schools, and more detail is provided below.

**KICK-OFF ASSEMBLY:** Police and firefighters add excitement to the kick-off assembly, which is centered on the critical message that children are powerful resources for meeting community needs. Adult leaders emphasize that the kids are in charge, and ask permission to be on their Team Kids team. A “Dream Peace” video is shown, and students are asked to share their dream to change the world. At the close, public safety mentors challenge the entire student body to join them to help others.

**THREE WEEKLY CHALLENGES:** For three weeks, the entire school participates in week-long Challenges for three local charities working around various issues like hunger, homelessness, animal welfare, etc. Challenges have quantifiable goals, and involve collecting or creating resources to address a variety of our communities’ most pressing needs (for example, 300 cans of food for a food pantry, 300 gently-used towels or blankets for an animal shelter, or 300 letters of support for active service members). Student and parent volunteers collect and organize items for pick up, and school announcements are made regularly to inform students of progress toward their Challenge goals.

**LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETINGS:** While all kids in the school participate in weekly Challenges, any and all upper grade students (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at P.S. 149) who want to serve are invited and encouraged to be on the TK Leadership Team (LT). LT volunteers meet during their lunch recess once a week to plan a school-wide TK Carnival. Kids enhance their leadership, collaboration, communication, and entrepreneurial skills by creating a booth for the carnival. LT kids engage in the process of creating a business, as they work as a group to determine their game or activity (the product), how many tickets the activity will be (the cost), and who on their team will fill which responsibilities (the jobs). LT brainstorms issues and collectively selects a charitable cause as the beneficiary of proceeds from the Carnival.

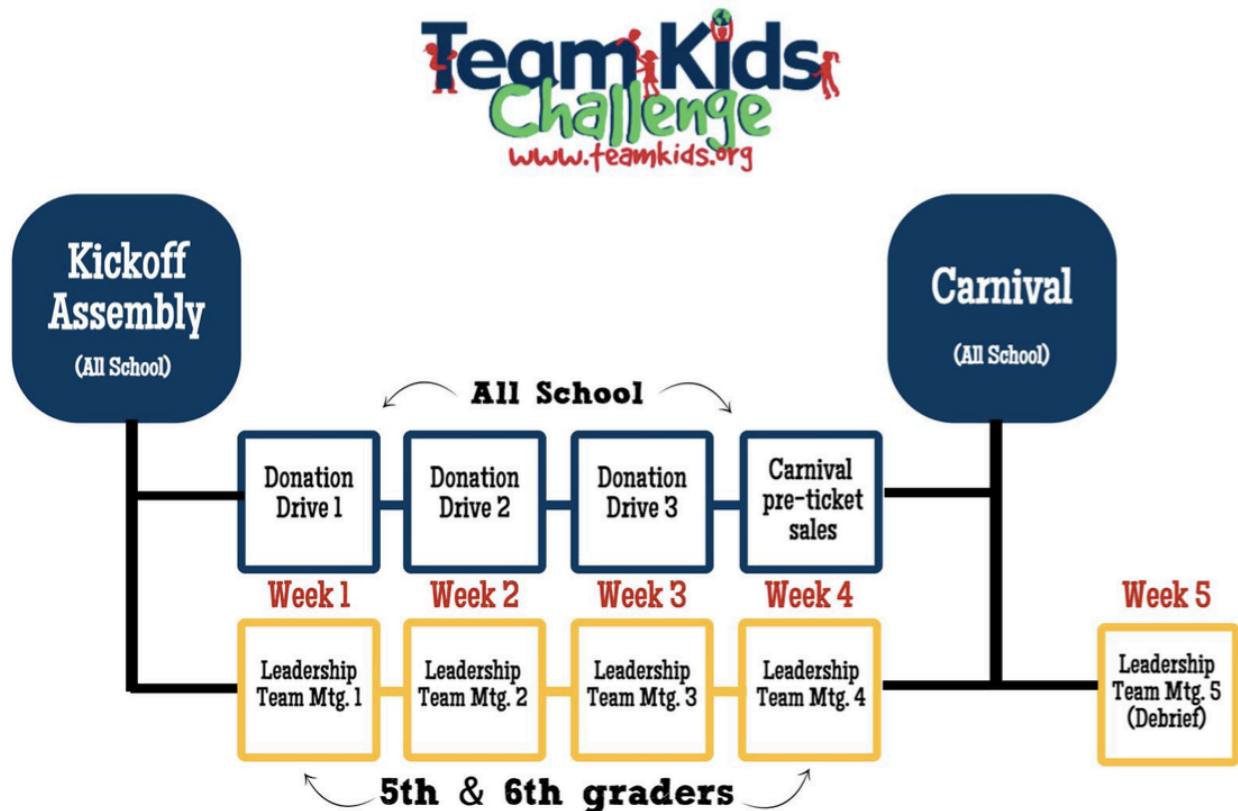
**CARNIVAL:** Leadership Team Kids run free or low-cost, home-made games for the school during extended lunch, and 100% of funds raised through ticket sales are donated to the nonprofit selected by the LT. Police and Fire representatives, along with other community or nonprofit leaders, attend the TK Carnival to support the efforts of the LT.

**CELEBRATION DEBRIEF:** Summary outcomes (e.g., 300 cans of food, \$435 for nonprofit X) are reviewed with Leadership Team, along with a slide show from the month of service, and a written reflection is conducted. The kids learn how much they raised at the Carnival, and present an over-sized check to the beneficiary charity. On average, one Challenge generates over \$6000 in value to four community-based nonprofits.

**PUBLIC SAFETY & EDUCATOR TRAINING:** Prior to program Kickoff, Team Kids staff conducted a

three-hour training in Developmental Assets and the Team Kids Challenge with personnel involved in program planning and delivery (as depicted in the logic model, Figure 2). Representatives from NYPD and FDNY attended, along with the director of school safety from NYC School of Education and P.S. 149's Principal, two Assistant Principals, and one teacher.

Figure 1: Team Kids Challenge Program Diagram



### About the School

The Team Kids Challenge was implemented in P.S. 149, aka the Danny Kaye School, in Brooklyn, NY, in April, May and June, 2018. The school is in the New York City Public Schools, District 19 and serves children in pre-kindergarten through grade 5.

According to the New York City Department of Education's 2016-17 [School Quality Snapshot](#), enrollment in P.S. 149 Elementary School is approximately 700 students. Approximately 63% of students are African American, making up the largest segment of the student body, followed by Hispanic, who comprise 33%. Additionally, 8% of students are English Learners, 17% are students with special needs. School attendance is 90%, and 40% of students are chronically absent. In 2016-17, 22% of 5th grade students met state standards for English, and 24% met state standards for math. Approximately 88% of students participate in the National School Lunch Program ([National Center for Education Statistics](#), searched 8/23/2018).



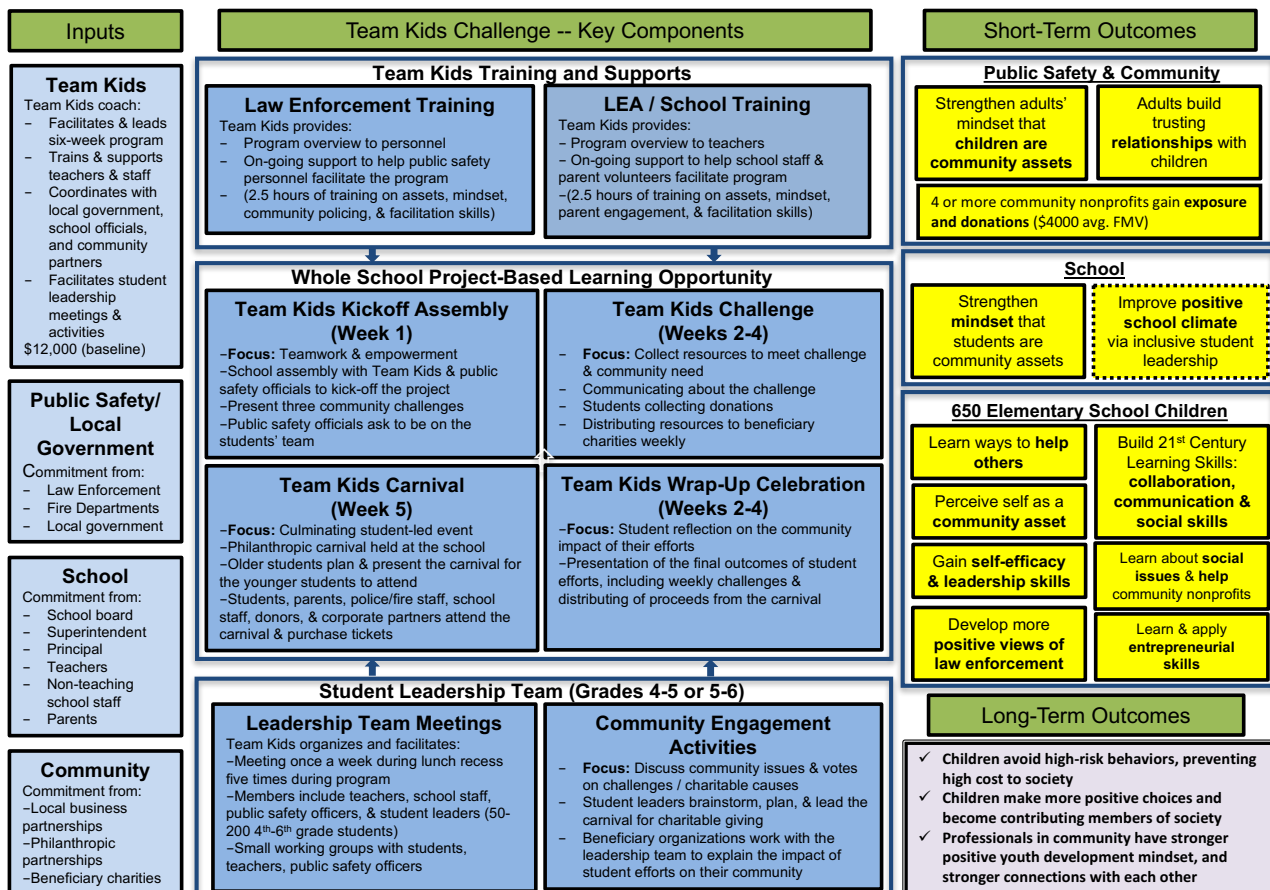
Eighty percent of teachers at P.S. 149 have 3 or more years of experience, and 92% of teachers say that “teachers at this school work together to design instructional programs.” Ninety-seven percent of parents say they “are satisfied with the education their child received this year,” and 94% say that “the principal works to create a sense of community in the school” (School Quality Snapshot). According to the principal, about a third of the school’s children live in temporary housing or shelters. According to [School Book](#), attendance and safety ratings for the school are in the bottom 15% of similar schools.

## Evaluation Framework

The evaluation goals and the findings in this report are aligned with specific outcomes in the Team Kids Conceptual Framework presented in Figure 2 below. This “Logic Model” summarizes all Team Kids Challenge programmatic elements, and their logical links to inputs and outcomes. This report is structured around children’s outcomes first, followed by school-level effects, public safety outcomes, and community outcomes.

Figure 2: Team Kids Challenge Logic Model

### Team Kids Challenge Conceptual Framework



### Developmental Assets

The Team Kids Challenge is rooted in the Positive Youth Development (PYD) literature, specifically, the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets framework. The developmental assets approach is among the most influential and widely-used frameworks for understanding and promoting positive youth development. "Data collected from Search Institute surveys of more than 5 million children and youth from all backgrounds and situations has consistently demonstrated that the more Developmental Assets young people acquire, the better their chances of succeeding in school and becoming happy, healthy, and contributing members of their communities and society" (SearchInstitute.org).

A pre- and post-program Student Survey was conducted to address whether participants in the Team Kids Challenge experience improvements in the following developmental areas:

- students' desire to help others
- students' perception of themselves as community assets
- students' sense of self-efficacy
- students' perceived presence of caring adults

### Perceptions of Police

Since Team Kids engages public safety personnel in program delivery, the evaluation sought to capture some changes in participants' perceptions of law enforcement. The pre- and post-program Student Survey included questions to assess the extent to which participants in the Team Kids Challenge Leadership Team experience increased positive attitudes about the police. Specifically, students were asked about the role of police in the community, how much they agreed that police officers care about or support them, and how much they think police see kids as effective and important community assets.

The evidence on community oriented policing indicates that building trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve is an effective strategy for crime reduction. In light of recent tensions between law enforcement and minority communities across the country, building that trust has become a national priority (see President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing, 2016). The literature also indicates that children's early interactions with the police have a significant effect on their attitudes and perceptions about police.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Skills & Other Educational Outcomes

Through the Team Kids Challenge, Leadership Team (LT) volunteers lead the school in meeting weekly charitable goals, and work in small groups to create carnival games. The skills that students build may be directly related to some 21<sup>st</sup> century learning goals: collaboration, communication, creativity, and social competencies. LT students completed a brief written reflection at the end of the program, and a content analysis of those qualitative data was conducted manually to investigate the extent to which those soft skills and others were perceived to be learned.

### School Effects

A telephone interview conducted with the principal provided additional evidence on student skills acquired, as well as the principal's perception of the most potent features and outcomes

of the Team Kids Challenge at her school. Changes in the school community's mindset about children as community assets and effects on school climate were explored.

### Public Safety Perceptions

As stated above, personnel from the City of New York Police Department (NYPD) and the New York City Fire Department (FDNY) participated in a brief training about Developmental Assets and the Team Kids Challenge prior to the programs kicking off. Public safety personnel participated in the TK Challenge Kickoff Assemblies, the TK Carnival, and every Leadership Team meeting over the course of the five-week program. Short interviews were conducted with the public safety personnel involved regarding the impact of the program on children from their perspective, their relationship with children via the TKC, and on the outcomes for themselves as public safety personnel.

### Contributions to Local Nonprofits

Total contributions to local charities (in-kind and monetary) are tallied and their approximate fair market value calculated, as per Team Kids protocol. These community effects are important in their own right, but they're also important in helping students, educators, public safety officials, and others understand the power of children as community assets.

### Evaluation Objectives and Report Outline

To evaluate the impact of the TKC on the short-term outcomes presented in the logic model (Figure 2), this report addresses the key investigative areas listed below. Note that this report will begin with the outcomes for students, then effects on school environment, and then public safety and community outcomes. The purposes of the study then, in order presented in the following pages, were to:

- I. assess the extent to which participants in the Team Kids Challenge experience improvements in developmental assets
- II. assess the extent to which participants in the Team Kids Challenge change their views about police officers
- III. investigate changes in students' acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and entrepreneurial skills via examination of student reflections
- IV. assess the impact of the Team Kids Challenge on the school via a principal interview, including changes in mindset about children as community assets and school climate
- V. explore observations of public safety personnel involved within the NYPD and FDNY about the impact of the Team Kids Challenge
- VI. document in-kind and monetary contributions to local charities resulting from the Team Kids Challenge at P.S. 149

## I. Student Perspectives on Key Developmental Assets

### Student Survey Methodology

To measure the degree to which targeted developmental assets changed, a Student Survey was administered before and after the five-week Team Kids Challenge at P.S. 149. Only “upper grade” students, i.e., students in grades 4 and 5, were surveyed since students in those grades were eligible to participate in the Leadership Team, and were asked to lead the school in meeting weekly community service challenges. Twenty-five survey questions, based primarily on the Search Institute’s Developmental Assets Profile, covered student’s opinions about the areas mentioned above, in addition to their perceptions of police.

Students were surveyed electronically or via paper surveys in their classrooms. Teachers administered the survey according to simple instructions, and passive parental consent was obtained by the schools. Tests of statistical significance were conducted, to get the clearest picture of the overall effects of Team Kids. Unique ID numbers linked pre- and post-program data, and only matched cases were included in analyses, resulting in a combined sample of 101 students.

### Results Overview

Student responses to 13 of the 25 items on the Student Survey showed statistically significant changes between administrations before and after the Team Kids Challenge. Even items which did not change significantly showed some improvement, as discussed below. The most noteworthy changes occurred in items related to students’ experience of helping others, their perceptions of themselves as community assets, and their positive perceptions of police officers.

### Helping Others, Beliefs and Behaviors

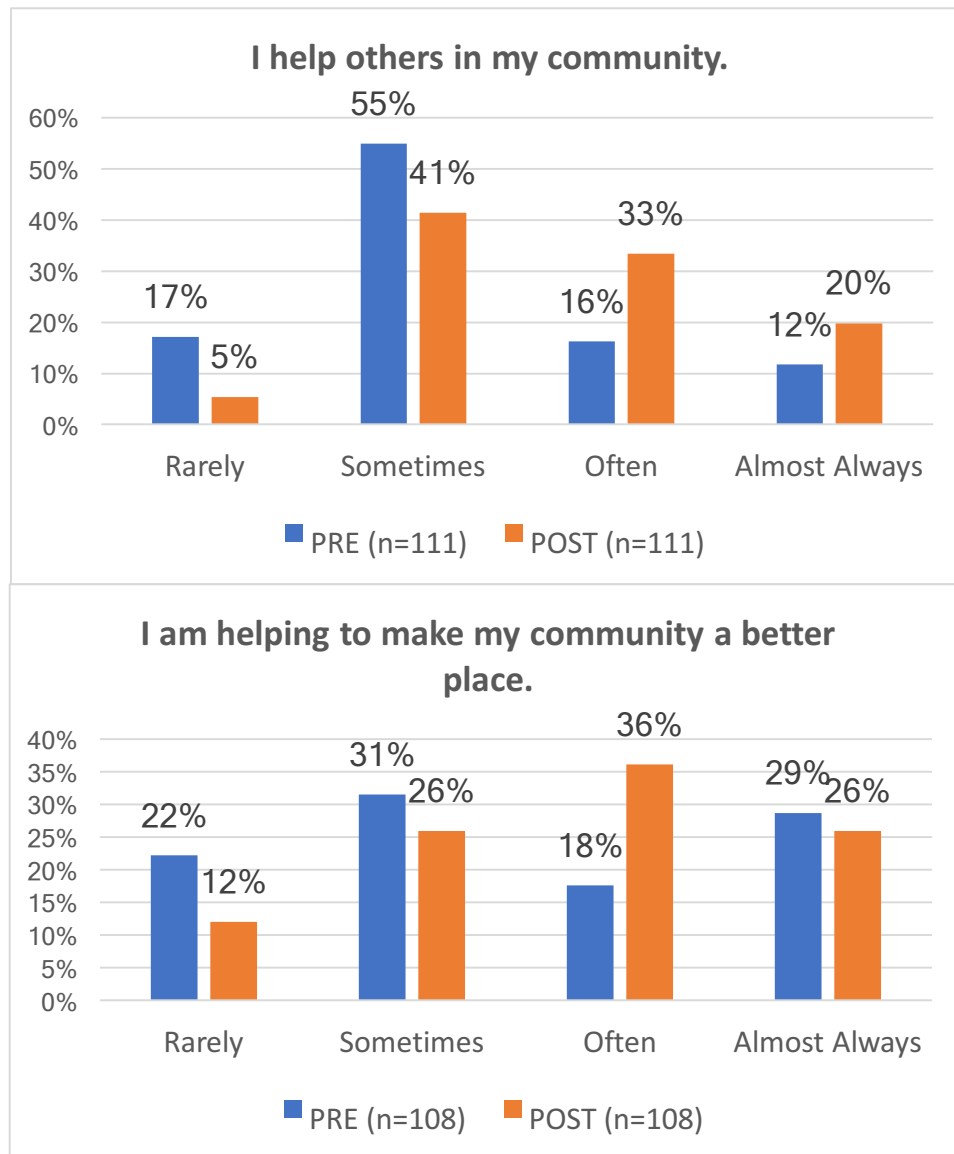
Three survey items were aimed at understanding students’ [beliefs about helping others](#), revealing that even before Team Kids came to their school, students generally had strong, positive beliefs about helping others. For example, when students were asked about their level of agreement with the statement, ““I think it is important to help other people,” the vast majority of students, 84%, strongly agreed, rating the statement “pretty true” or “very true.” Similarly, when asked to rate the statement “I want to help people who are struggling,” most students, 88%, responded “Very True” or “Pretty True.”

There were no statistically significant changes in these items between pre- and post-program surveys, given the high level of agreement with such items from the start. These data verify to some extent a foundational principal of Team Kids, that children want to help others, they are just not given the opportunity to do so often enough.

When asked about their *behavior* related to helping others, there was a statistically significant shift in both survey items between pre- and post-program surveys, suggesting that the Team Kids Challenge did indeed provide an opportunity for kids to change their behavior when it

comes to helping others. On the item “I help others in my community,” student ratings shifted upward 19% ( $p < 0.001$ ), and student ratings on “I am helping to make my community a better place” shifted upward 10% on average ( $p < 0.05$ ), (see Figure 3). Presented with the opportunity to help others and improve their community, P.S. 149 students indicate that they have been more frequently involved in making their community a better place.

Figure 3: Significant Change in Students’ Behavior Regarding Helping Others



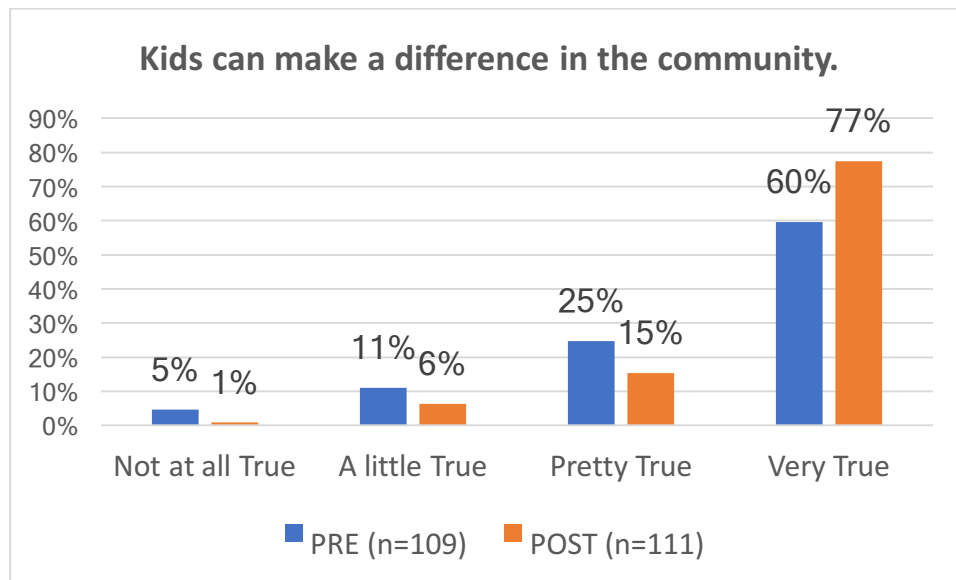
### Kids as Community Assets

When asked how much they agreed that “kids are too young to change the world,” 86% of respondents rated the statement as “not at all true” or only a “little true” before the Team Kids

Challenge was introduced, and this perception did not change significantly. This reflects a strong believe among children surveyed about the capacity and power of children.

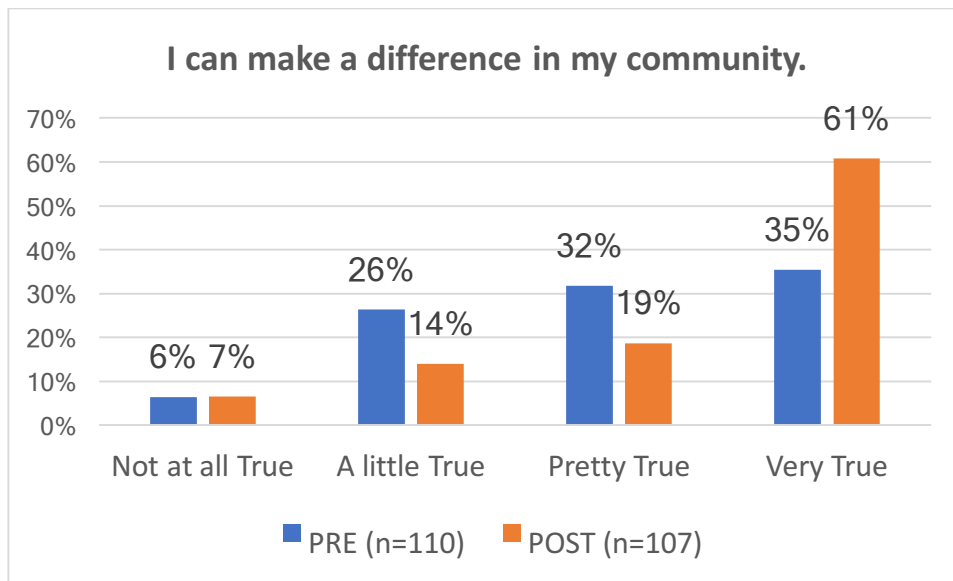
Overall, however, it seems students gained from the school-wide Team Kids Challenge in their [perceptions and experience of themselves as community assets](#). When asked about their ability to change their community specifically, there was a significant change (8%,  $p < 0.05$ ) from pre-program to post-program in average level of agreement with the statement, “kids can make a difference in the community” (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Significant Change in Perception of Kids as Community Assets



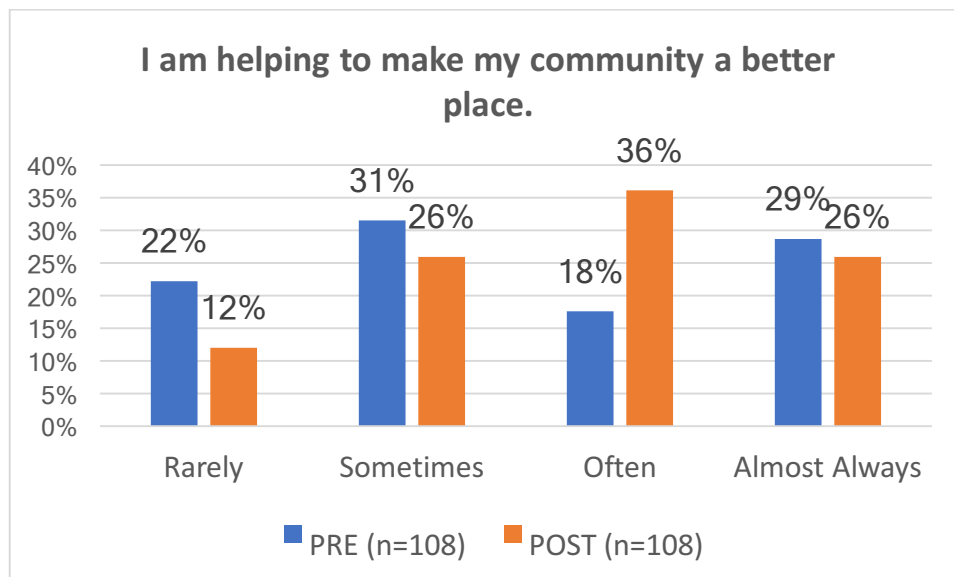
When it comes to [their own experience of being a community asset](#), respondents also experienced a statistically significant shift in perceptions of themselves. When asked about their level of agreement with the statement “I can make a difference in my community,” student perceptions increased 13% ( $p < 0.001$ ) on average. Note that only about a third (35%) of students surveyed before the program responded that this statement was “very true,” compared to 61% of students after the Team Kids Challenge (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Significant Change in Students' Experience of Being a Community Assets



When asked how much they are “helping to make my community a better place,” there was again a statistically significant improvement, with the average level of agreement increasing 10% ( $p < 0.05$ ) after the program. This increase is most visible in the pre-post difference in ratings in the “rarely” category, which dropped from 22% to 12%, and the “often” category, for which the agreement rate doubled, from 18% to 36% (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Significant Change in Students' Perception as Community Asset

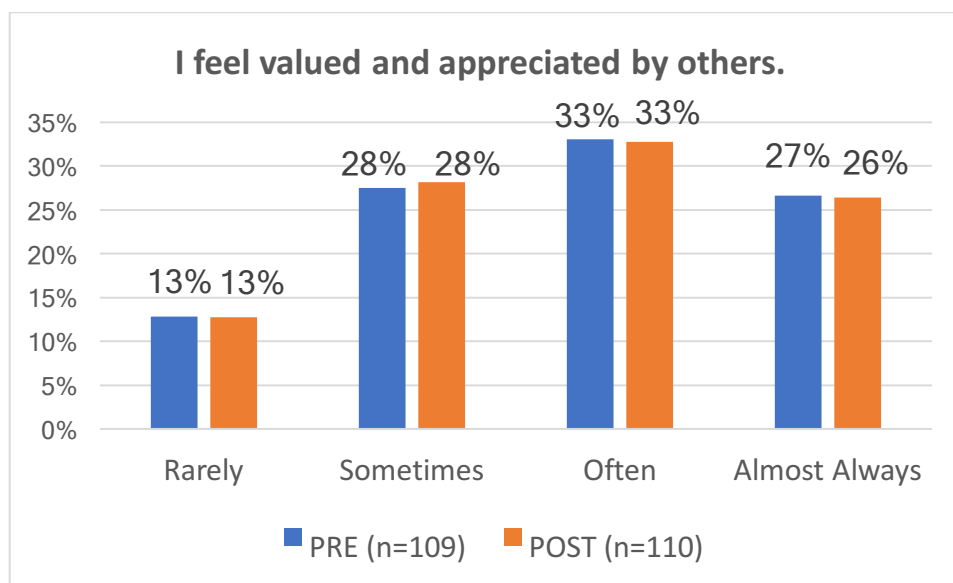


## Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is generally defined as a person's belief in her ability to succeed in a given situation. A number of questions aimed at assessing students' [perceptions of self-efficacy](#) overlap with other constructs discussed previously, such as helping others and perceiving oneself as a community asset. For example, construct overlap occurs in questions such as "I can make a difference in my community," and "I am helping to make my community a better place."

Responses on general well-being variables did not change significantly after the program. Since many factors may affect this kind of item, this is not unexpected. For example, 83% of students responded that they "often" or "almost always" "feel good about myself" prior to Team Kids coming to their schools, and agreement levels with this statement did not change significantly after the program on average. Likewise, there was no detectable average change in ratings on the item, "I feel valued and appreciated by others." Sadly though, 13% of respondents (pre and post) indicated that they "rarely" feel valued and appreciated by others (see Figure 7).

*Figure 7: No Change in Students' Feelings of Being Valued by Others*



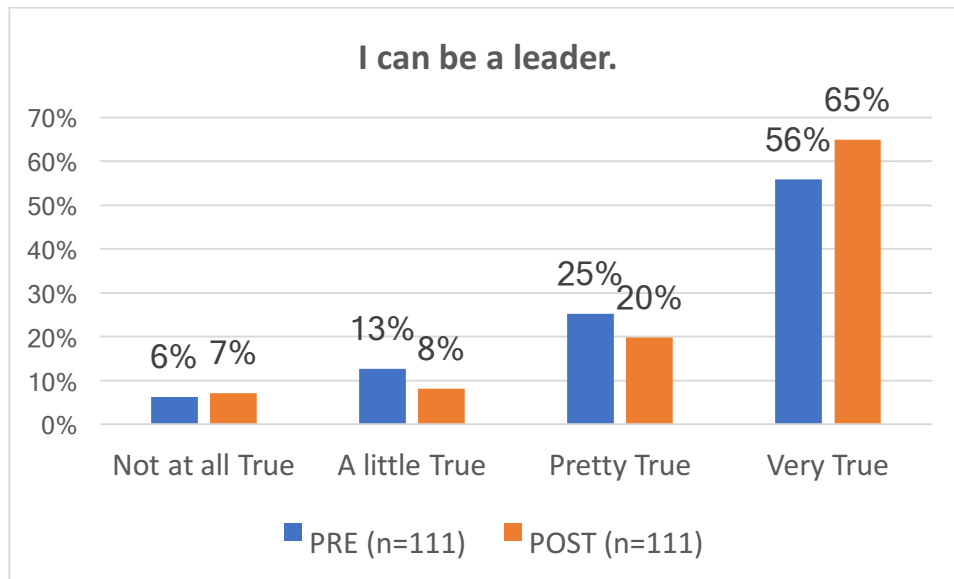
One area of interest for the evaluation, given the Team Kids Challenge focus on leadership training and identify, was related to their [perceptions of themselves as leaders](#). We simplistically assume here if perceptions of oneself as a leader improve, students may feel more confident in their ability to succeed with given tasks or challenges (self-efficacy). Likewise, if a student's feelings of self-efficacy increase (e.g., I can make a difference in my community), then her perceptions of her potential to be a leader may also improve.

It appears that students' [perceptions of and experience with leadership](#) had changed only slightly after the Team Kids Challenge. This could be because agreement levels were high to start with: prior to Team Kids coming to their school, 81% of students rated the statement, "I can be a leader" as "pretty true" or "very true," and about one fifth of upper grade students (19%) rated the statement as "not at all true" or only "a little true." After the program, student



perceptions on this measure did not increase significantly on average, although there was a jump from 56% to 65% responding “very true” (see Figure 8).

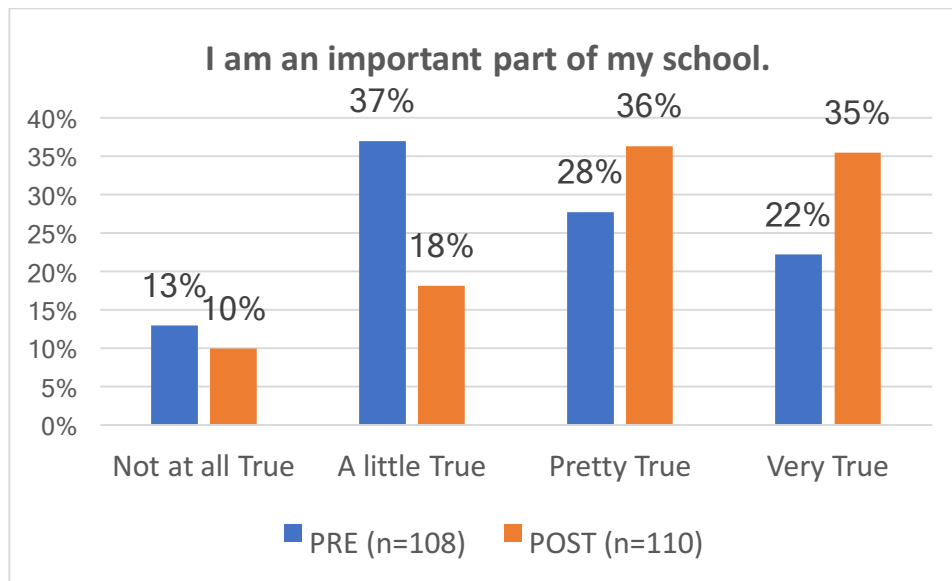
*Figure 8: No Change in Students’ Beliefs About Themselves as Leaders*



### School Engagement

Another construct of interest is whether TKC helps to increase students’ connection to their school. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with the statement, “I am an important part of my school.” Overall, student perceptions on this item increased significantly, 14% ( $p < 0.05$ ,) between the two survey administrations, with 50% of students responding “pretty true” or “very true” at the pre-program survey, and 71% in such strong agreement after the program (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Significant Change in Perception as Important Part of School



### Caring adults

One of the 40 developmental assets that is especially predictive a young person's success and avoidance of high risk behaviors is [support from caring adults](#). Through delivery of the Team Kids Challenge, TK coaches and public safety personnel deliver strong messages about their belief in kids, and work with LT kids weekly over the 5-week period of the program. Kids' perceptions of police officers' support changed definitively (as discussed in the next section), but none of the three other survey items related to adult support in general showed a significant change.

## II. Students' Perceptions of Police

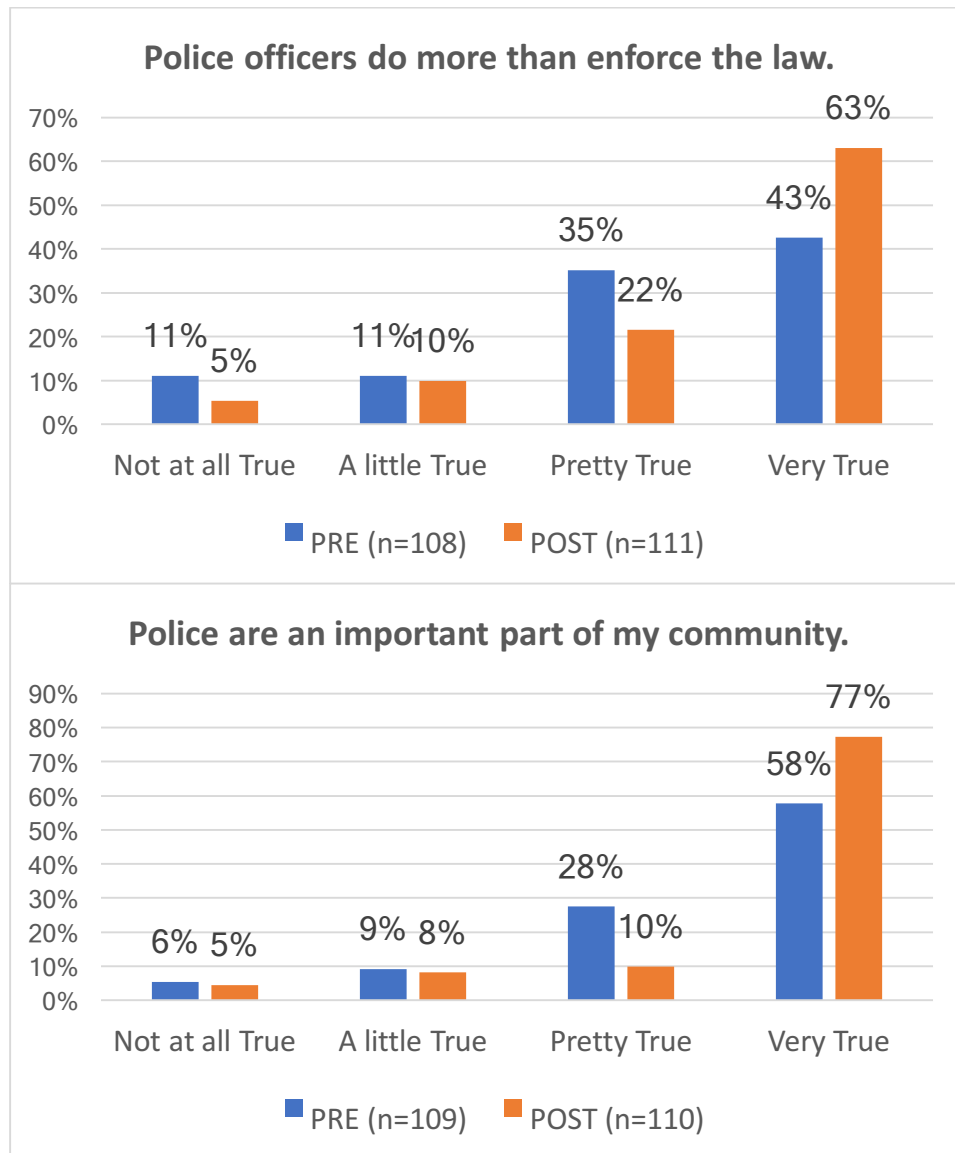
Having law enforcement on the team is a unique benefit of Team Kids over other school-based, youth development, and/or civic engagement programs. Through the Team Kids Challenge, police officers deliver the powerful message that kids are important and that they are needed to help address critical community issues. In order to better understand the effects that this collaboration might have on student perceptions of police, eight survey questions were developed for students. Statistically significant changes occurred on all 8 survey items related to students' perceptions about police officers in three categories: general perceptions of police officers' role; perceptions of support; and perceptions of kids as community assets. Below are the results of the student surveys, implemented before and after the Team Kids Challenge.

### Police Officers' Role

Overall, students' general perceptions about [police officers' role in the community](#) improved after the program, as indicated by statistically significant changes in ratings of two items (see

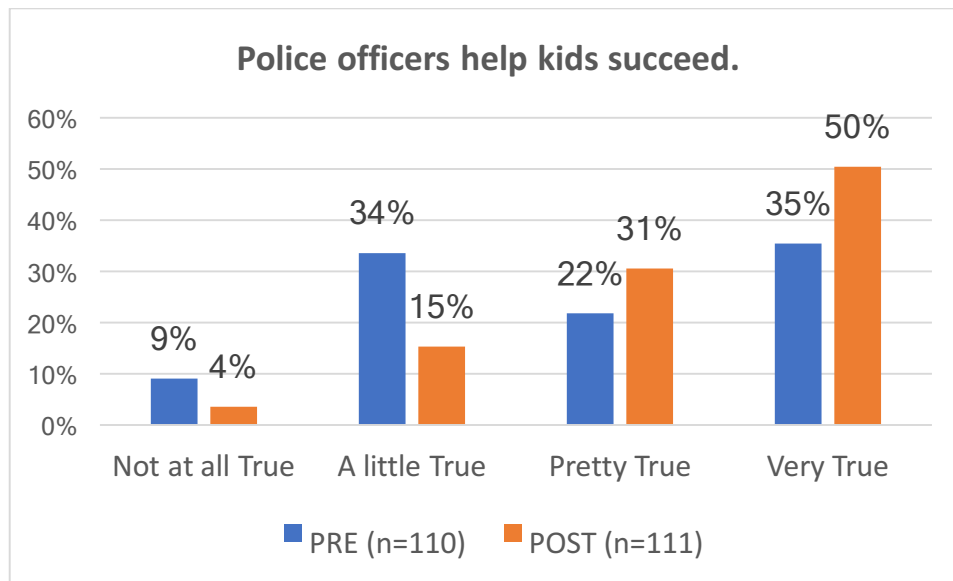
Figure 10), “police officers do more than enforce the law” (11% change,  $p<0.05$ ) and “police are an important part of my community” (7% change,  $p<0.05$ ).

Figure 10: Significant Changes in Beliefs About Police Officers’ Role in Community



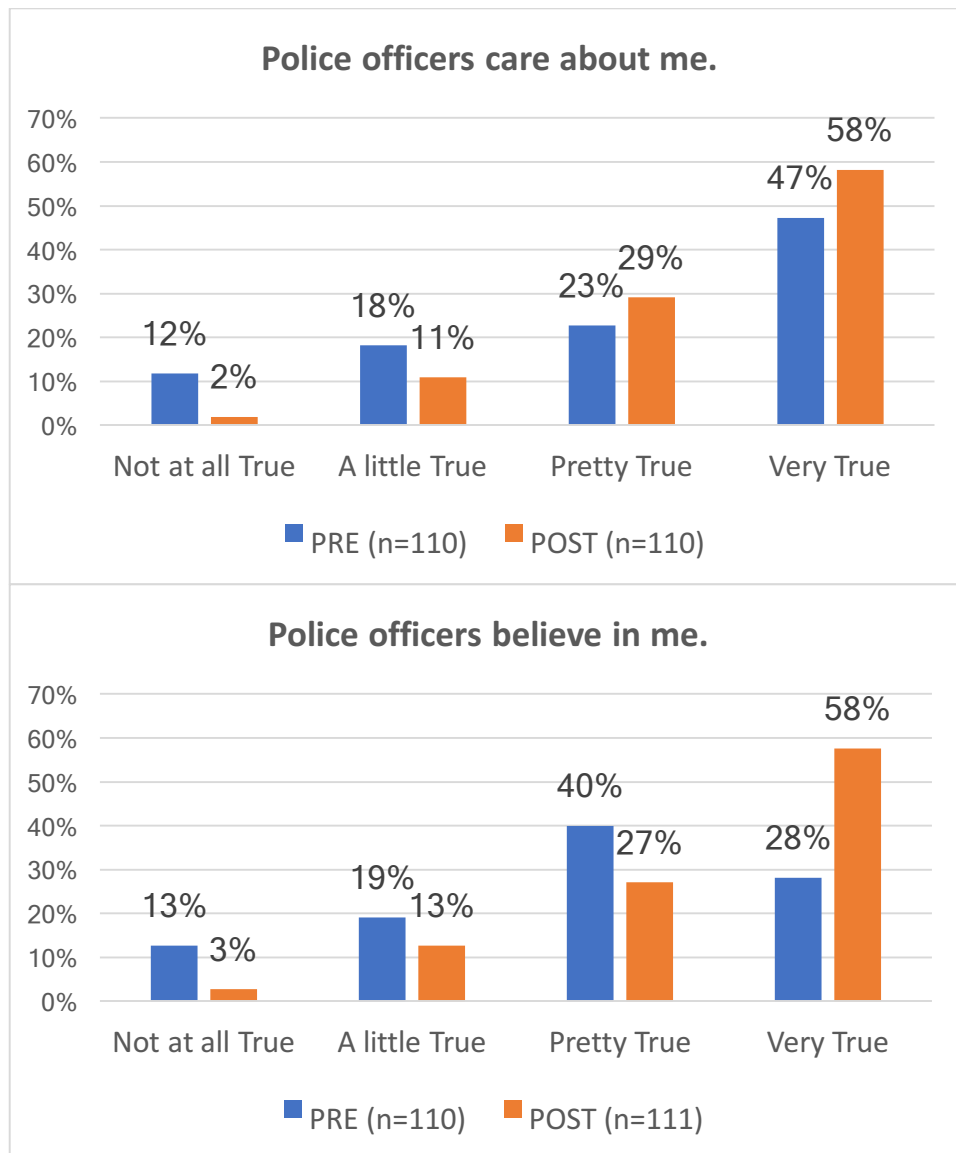
### Police Officers’ Support

Three survey items relate to changes in perceptions about police officers’ support. First, students were asked about police officers’ support of children generally; whether “police officers help kids succeed.” Student perceptions on this measure increased 17% ( $p<0.001$ ), with 50% responding “very true” on the post-program survey, compared to 35% pre-program (see Figure 11).

*Figure 11: Significant Change in Students' Perception that Police Officers Help Kids Succeed*

Students were also asked about police officers' positive views of them; whether "police officers care about me" and "police officers believe in me." Responses to both items increased significantly and substantively, 14% ( $p < 0.001$ ) and 20.5% ( $p < 0.001$ ), respectively, between the pre- and post-program survey, as shown in Figure 12.

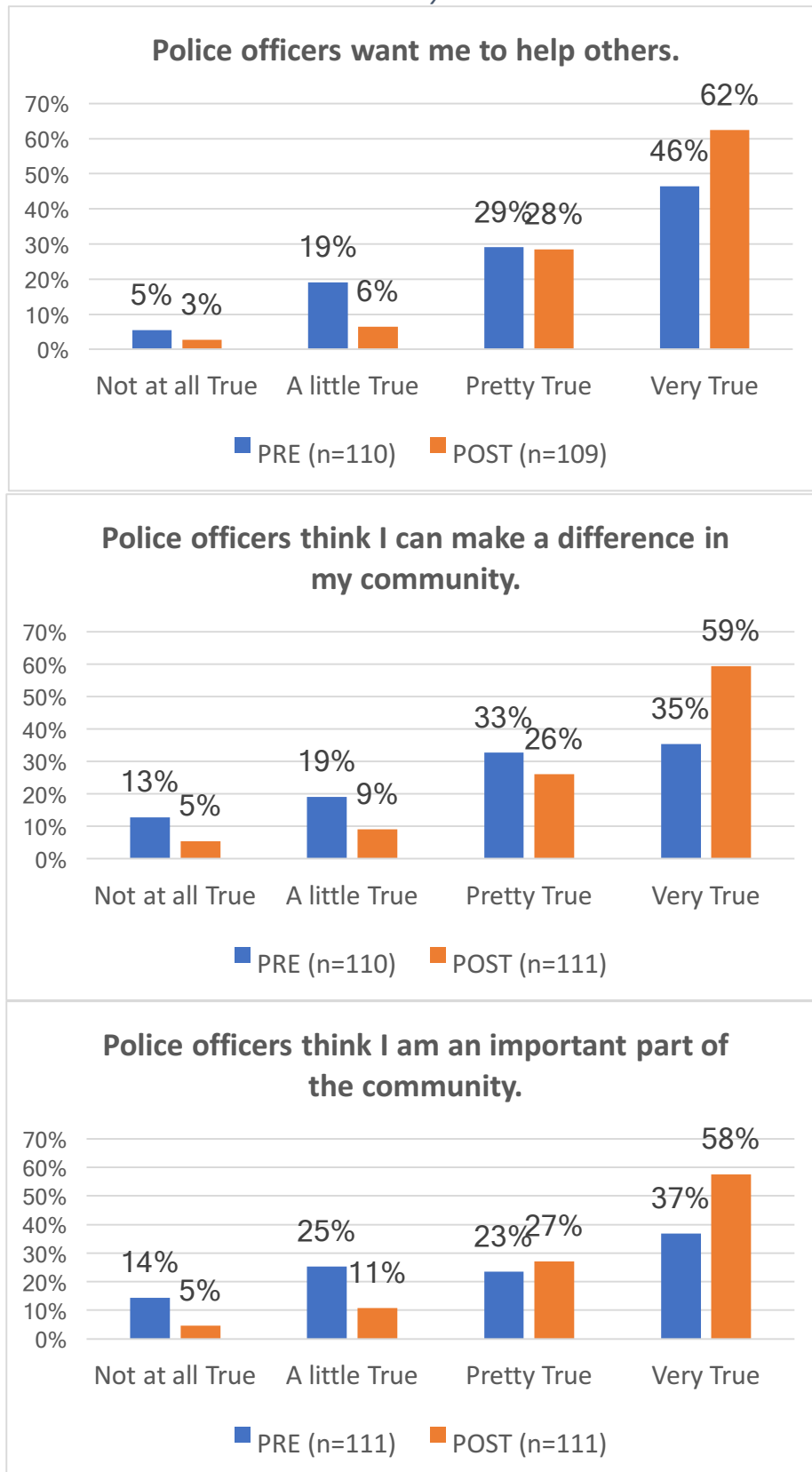
Figure 12: Significant Changes in Students' Perception that Police Officers Support Them



### Police Officers' Mindset that Children are Community Assets

Three additional survey items focused on the extent to which students believe that police officers view them as a community assets. Responses to all three relevant survey items increased significantly. Student ratings on “Police officers want me to help others” increased by 10% ( $p < 0.05$ ); ratings on “Police officers think I can make a difference in my community” shifted upward by 18% ( $p < 0.001$ ), and ratings on “Police officers think I am an important part of the community” increased by 21% ( $p = 0.001$ ) as shown below in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Significant Changes in Kids' Perception that Police Officers See Them as Community Assets



Overall, students' perceptions on most survey items (even when not statistically significant) shifted somewhat more positively between survey administrations, likely due to the TKC. In many ways, these student survey data show a shift toward even more support for Team Kids' foundational principles, that children want to help others and that their belief in their own ability to effect change in their community can be enhanced, as can their connection to school via the TKC. The results pertaining to children's perceptions of police officers are powerful, and demonstrate that the TKC is an intervention that can potentially move the needle on community relations of public safety departments at a community level.

### III. LT Volunteers' Self-Reported Learning

A third goal of the evaluation was to explore LT participants' perceptions about changes in their 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, including collaboration, communication, creativity, social competencies and entrepreneurial skills. Unfortunately, the LT Exit Survey designed to capture children's perceptions of those specific skills was not implemented (due to an internal Team Kids communication error). However, upon completion of the program, LT students were asked to complete the Team Kids Challenge Leadership Team Reflection which contained the following prompts:

1. What did you learn from being part of the Team Kids Challenge?
2. The spirit of Team Kids is about helping others. How do you plan to make a difference in your school, at home, or in your community?
3. What helped make your school's carnival or your carnival game successful?

Responses were coded manually into categories corresponding to skills and other developmental outcomes of interest depicted in the Logic Model (see Figure 2). The Leadership Team Reflection sample included 65 students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Staff were not able to capture LT Reflections from 5<sup>th</sup> grade LT participants, due to the end of the school year.

When asked what they learned from being part of the TKC, LT volunteer responses fell into two main outcome categories. (Note that many students gave more than one response to each question, so totals below exceed 100%.)

#### Value of Helping Others and Community

1. **Value on Helping Others, Helping and Understanding Community** (44/65 responses). Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents mentioned learning the importance of helping others in the community, how to help others and/or understanding the needs of others. As discussed previously in relation to the Student Survey results, elementary school children are eager to help others, but they are not often given the means and permission to do so. This may explain why helping others was the most prevalent response to the question of what LT volunteers learned. Some exemplary statements are provided below.
  - *I learned that helping the community is great.*

- *What I learned from being a part of Team Kids is that helping the community is very important because some people need more than we do, so we can help people in need.*
- *I learned to be kindful, help homeless people and cancer people. I want them to stay strong and be brave.*
- *I learned a lot of kids are sick and don't go to school.*
- *We helped other people that are homeless, we raised money for them so that they can eat, have fun and have a home just like us.*

## Kids Are Effective Community Assets

2. **Self-efficacy, self as community asset** (32/65 responses). About half of respondents (49%) mentioned that they learned about their own ability to have an impact on others or in the community. Mirroring results from the Student Survey, these LT volunteers changed the way they saw themselves as a result of participating in the TKC. Some exemplary statements are provided below.

- *Kids can do a lot more than they think.*
- *Kids can do anything if they put their mind and heart into it.*
- *Kids are powerful and kids can change the world or community.*
- *A simple task can make a huge difference in our community.*
- *Kids can do anything.*
- *You're not too small to help others.*
- *I learned that if you believe in yourself, you can achieve anything.*
- *I learned that I can be anything I want.*

A variety of other responses arose, but overall, LT students' written reflections generally confirmed that participating children took away many of the core messages and values that Team Kids Challenge aims for. The responses below stood out as exemplifying the developmental assets that Team Kids targets.

- *Police officers care about what the kids are doing, and more adults believe in us now than they did before.*
- *I learned that even kids my age and younger or older can make a huge difference in the world just by donating or writing letters.*
- *We should all be kind to each other, even if you don't know that person. I even learned that homeless are not ugly, stanky, and dum, they are pretty, smart, everything.*
- *I learned that we are never too young to change the world. For example, we made a big change in the world.*
- *I am so thankful that Ms. Donald did Team Kids for us. But Team Kids, we thank you for doing this program.*



## Plans to Make a Difference

In response to the question about their plans to make a difference in “your school, at home, or in your community,” 95% (62 of 65) of Leadership Team respondents gave a positive, specific answer about how they will helping others. Some exemplary statements are provided below.

- *I will make a difference to my school by being a leader for lower graders. I will also show what’s wrong and what’s right.*
- *Recycle plastic, metal and wooden objects. Also, if you have a dollar or two, give it to the homeless if you see any.*
- *When I grow up, I’ll get a leading job to stop semi-automatic or regular gun violence. I’ll put up more ‘no littering’ signs. I’ll work to the best of my ability to save the Earth.*
- *I plan on making a difference by asking homeless people what they need to survive and stay off the street.*
- *I plan to make a difference by encouraging people so they can do whatever they want.*
- *Stay joyful. And you are beautiful just the way you are. Don’t care what people say about you.*
- *I plan to make a difference in my school by telling people to stop picking on other kids.*
- *I plan to make a law to not abuse animals.*
- *I plan to make a difference in my school by trying the best that I can to work really hard.*

## Keys to Success

When asked, “what helped make your school’s carnival or your carnival game successful,” 16 of 65 respondents (25%) mentioned teamwork, 11 (17%) mentioned the fact that the carnival and/or games were fun, and 9 (14%) mentioned that the success came from the fact that funds raised were for a good cause, homelessness. Some exemplary statements are provided below. Remaining responses were varied, or not applicable. In the latter case, students’ responses took the form of indicators that the carnival was successful (e.g., the amount of money raised, or the fact that all the challenges were met) rather than describing what factors helped create a successful event.

- *What helped make my school’s carnival successful was all the hard work we put in to the things we did with Team Kids.*
- *The fifth grade made the carnival a success by working together and not against each other.*
- *It made it successful because there was just so many people having fun.*
- *What made the school carnival game successful was that it was so much fun. When I mean fun, I mean it so much!*
- *Making sure games are safe, you have to test out the games first.*
- *We made posters for the whole school to put up, and we made posters for the carnival too.*
- *The money that we give for the tickets is going to help the homeless.*

- *The way it was successful is that they have a lot of fun games and everyone was having fun.*
- *The jokes we got to tell to the police officers, so we could get more tickets to play more games.*

## IV. School Principal's Perspective

The school principal was interviewed along with one assistant principal via phone, after the Team Kids Challenge and the school year had concluded. The purpose of the interview was to elicit the principal's perspectives on the impact of the Team Kids Challenge on the students, and on the school.

### Effects of TKC on Children

When asked to identify "2 or 3 most powerful effects of the Team Kids Challenge on children at your school," the principal identified three targeted program outcomes specified via the Logic Model (see Figure 2). Two of the three outcomes reinforced findings from the student survey and LT reflections, strengthening the case for the causal connection between the TKC and key outcomes for children.

#### 1. Children learned the power of effective teamwork

*"It was clearly a sense of understanding what it means to work as a team to get something done. We have been doing some service activities, but the TK challenge on site with every single 4 and 5<sup>th</sup> grader, as well as all the kids, really left 4 and 5 with a strong understanding that they can get other kids to do something powerful. 'When we work together we as kids can do a lot.'"*

#### 2. Leadership Team students learned self-efficacy and leadership

*"There was a big effect on the kids when they saw how much money they raised. There are students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade who are going into middle school wanting to join student government, to get things done, because they have experienced the power of working together."*

*"The amount of \$ raised also created a big effect. I had parents calling to tell me how impressed they were, and how powerful the program was for their children."*

The principal shared a related anecdote: On the day of the TK Carnival, "...a student had an accident with a car. She fell and bruised herself, and she was hurt. She came into the school with her family, she was crying, but she came in because she didn't want to miss the TK carnival. She didn't want Coach Ryan to think she didn't do her part. Well, we made her go to urgent care anyway, to make sure she was ok. She said to tell the first responder mentors that she didn't want to not be there, and to tell Coach Ryan. She got back in time to do the carnival. Then at awards ceremony we talked about the amount of \$ raised, and she was so proud that she was a part of it...she had the feeling of 'I really made a difference.'"

### 3. LT students expanded their understanding of the role and importance of public safety personnel

*“The relationship with the NYPD and Fire, the first responders, was also a key” to how powerful the program was for LT students, according to the principal. “The kids could see them working together, speaking to them together, and working in NY together. It was a powerful model for the students... The kids learned that first responders are there to serve us. And when we do wrong, we need to own up to it.*

*One student came up to me after the TK ceremony and he said now he knows why there are more citizens than police officers. I thought about it, and I thought, ‘ok, why? Why would that be?’ He said, ‘Because we are all officers of safety -- we are all responsible for everyone making safer decisions.’ This idea had started to grow within our school.”*

The principal gave an example she learned about after the program, to illustrate the point that children’s understanding of public safety had expanded. *“One of our students comes from a complex and challenged home environment. He has an older brother who doesn’t always make great decisions... he gets mixed up in some activities... [and] NYPD came to arrest him. His mother... was cursing at the NYPD officers, antagonizing them. ...Her son, my student, after participating with first responders with Team Kids, he intervened and said, ‘Mom, stop, put the phone away, they’re only trying to help.’ He told her that his brother must have done something wrong if the police were there, that they were just doing their job. If he didn’t do something wrong, they will leave him alone.”*

### Effects of TKC on School

The principal was also asked to identify the “2 or 3 most powerful effects on the school.” Changes in the school community’s mindset about children as community assets and effects on school climate were explored (see school-level outcomes of interest in TKC conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 2).

#### 1. Teachers saw children as community asset

*“We also learned a lot from the kids. Our staff was very impressed with what the kids were able to do. Students are seen in a different light now... Through Team Kids, kids showed the staff there’s so much we have the power to do. When we announced how much money they raised through the carnival, teachers said, ‘Oh my God, they did that?! Maybe we do have some entrepreneurs! Maybe we do have professionals!’ And I’m thinking, ‘But didn’t you think we had those people here in the first place?!’ It took this to say ‘See, I told you I can be more than what you think.’ It was a very interesting and powerful thing to observe.*

*We have over 30% of our families in shelter or temporary housing. After working with a population going thru trauma for a long period of time, sometimes your focus is on teaching your subject and not the person you’re teaching... [Teachers] may not think about whether a*

*child is hungry, because they were late and the kitchen was closed and the child didn't eat... They can forget how much kids bring to the table."*

## 2. School climate improved as First Responders and TK staff reinforced positive discipline approach

*"Between the first responders and Coach Ryan, they set clear expectations. 'There's a different way to say that' and then they would wait until the student says it differently. It was not about their uniform their badge, but just who they were, and being firm with the kids who needed it, and then moving on.*

*The kids opened up about the personal things that were going on in their lives. When this person goes home, they go home to a life that's so different. The first responder mentors were critical in that... They listened more than they spoke. If they heard something that didn't sound correct, they would go over and say 'when someone is talking, or sharing something personal, you don't say that, you don't make fun of it.' They would correct the behavior and then move on.*

*The kids who were fifth graders have been here at this school since the first year I started. I said to the fifth grade kids, 'What's interesting is that what you like about these interactions is what I have tried to get over to you since the beginning... I can dislike what you did, but that does not equal me not liking you. I may reprimand you, and address the behavior, and then we can move on.' It was really redemption for the kids with the officers. The students got that 'it's not like forever and ever, I'm going to be the kid who got called out.' A lot of my girls really got it."*

## 3. School climate improvement seen in increased attendance

*When asked about any changes in data related to disciplinary referrals, the principal responded, "Over the course of this year, we saw a decrease in discipline referrals, but I cannot say whether it was attributed to TK. We've done a lot over the year to focus on social emotional development and other interventions... I will say I saw better attendance on TK days. They tend to have good attendance anyway, but in warmer times, attendance falls off. In comparison to non-TK days, there was higher attendance on the days when there were Team Kids activities."*

### Program Feedback

Finally, the school principal was asked for program feedback, and suggestions for improvement. The principal commented on a couple of program elements that worked well.

*"Having the same first responder and mentor each time was very important. The consistency and commitment is critical to build the relationship. A lot of these moments only happened at the end of the 6-week program. There was enough emotional capital built so that these exchanges could happen.*

*Also, it felt to the kids like Coach Ryan lived here. He truly became a part of the school. It is potentially 90% his personality and 10% the program, I really don't know. But the person from Team Kids was given the time to get to know the school... When Coach Ryan went thru the halls, and he smiled at everyone. He became known to our staff as 'the Team Kids guy.' He's so friendly, they all liked him, and trusted him.... Having him be who he was, was a big win for the teachers, as it helped promote the importance of having the kids be present for their Team Kids sessions.*

*To be honest, sometimes outside people put on a false presentation. They try to get the kids to give you what they think you want. For Team Kids to work, it needed to be real. The kids needed to be who they were... sometimes sassy, or troubled, or more colorful sometimes. And we as a school needed to be ourselves... exhausted from working with children from this community.... busy, loving... We need to be all those things so we could really be able to identify the lows and glows. That's what it needs to allow such a program to happen. It's not always in the honeymoon phase. We need to be able to just show and be who we are. Coach Ryan and the first responders and Team Kids were all part of making that happen."*

## V. Public Safety Perspectives

In keeping with Team Kids' adoption of the Search Institute's Developmental Assets Framework, a short-term goal of the Team Kids Challenge is to connect caring adults with children in a positive, safe, goal oriented setting, with the aim of strengthening relationships between children and public safety personnel and other adults involved in the program. By engaging law enforcement personnel in delivery of the program's key messages and activities (including the school-wide kickoff assemblies, Leadership Team meetings, Carnival, and debrief), Team Kids may help public safety personnel and educators see elementary school children as more effective community assets. Further, data from other program interviews have indicated that there may be a variety of positive outcomes for public safety, such as building trusting relationships with young students and the community around them.

To explore public safety perspectives, post-program interviews were conducted with three people involved in TKC delivery: from NYPD, a detective, and a Community Affairs Officer; and a firefighter from FDNY. Questions focused on their perceptions of the most powerful outcomes of TKC for children, and the most powerful outcomes for public safety. Responses were coded manually into categories corresponding to the outcomes of interest discussed above and depicted in the Logic Model (see Figure 2), i.e., strengthening adults' views of children as community assets and building trusting relationships. Additionally, respondents were asked what they see as being most unique about the TKC, and what ideas they have for improving the program.

### Effects of TKC on Children

When asked for their opinion about the [most powerful outcomes for children](#) from the Team Kids Challenge, and a number of points were made by each respondent, and all are included here. Three areas of the program's impact were identified, which all relate to intended

outcomes for children of the Team Kids Challenge depicted in Figure 2. Like the principal data, these responses from public safety personnel involved in the program reinforce findings from the student survey and LT reflections, strengthening the case for the causal connection between the TKC and key outcomes for children.

### 1. Children learn to help and focus on others

*“You can see the children’s growth on the goal, which is outside of themselves. It was not just to get a prize... it was outside of themselves. I think they also saw that it’s important to help other people. Not just poor people, but everyone. The world doesn’t revolve around individuals. We want everyone to be a helpful, loving person, and work together to make things better.” – FDNYfighter*

### 2. Children gained self-efficacy (e.g., pride or sense of accomplishment)

*“I did see kids taking pride in the projects. Team Kids gives them hands-on projects to accomplish, and they accomplished more than what was expected. There was definite pride in that. Once we told them how they did after every challenge, they were very happy to know that they were the ones who accomplished it.... Since I was a kid, I remember certain things that affected me as a child, things that I remember that really stuck with me. I would imagine that without reaching too far, having kids be around police and fire could have an impact long-term, but it’s hard to say for sure.... It’s hard to tell if there’s lasting change. There were some changes in their behavior, they were very engaged in the program. But we were only there for 1 hour a day, 2 times a week for 6 weeks, so I’m not sure you can have a lasting impact. But it was a wonderful experience for the kids, in having a sense of pride, and knowing they had full control, working toward their goal.” – FDNYfighter*

*“We always give things to the kids or to certain communities. This is unique because the kids were asked to give back. Especially with inner city communities, they are never asked to give, they just receive. Even though their need is greater, they were eager to give back.” – NYPD Detective*

### 3. Children gain more positive perceptions and/or trust of police

*“A lot of times when we deal with kids, it’s a different experience... there are negative ones, they don’t always have great outcomes. If there’s some problem or parents are fighting, and PD is involved, it’s not a good experience. Now when they see us, they see something positive. They will be more trustworthy toward the police. Especially in the area where Team Kids was – it’s a high crime area where they don’t usually see the police in a positive light.” – NYPD Detective*

The NYPD Community Affairs Officer stated, *“There is an increase in trust in police by the young kids who were involved. Because of the role in TK, I am more connected with the young kids now. Especially in this neighborhood, young kids are apprehensive to interact with police, but now they come up to me.”* The Officer gave several examples:



*“One thing that happened was, I work in the neighborhood, and I was just doing some maintenance on my car. I was in the shop, and one of the kids who was in TK was walking up the street with her parents. She saw me and they came over...she gave me a big hug and told her mom that I was the officer in her school for Team Kids.*

*And now, I run a summer camp, and we have 3 of the kids from Team Kids in our program. Just now, literally just before you called, I was meeting with one of the parents of one of those kids. She had called and asked for a meeting. She said her daughter suffers from anger issues. I told her it was a surprise to me... that I don't see that side of her daughter. The mom said that the reason her daughter wanted to be in the program was because of me. She identified me as someone she wanted to be around in the summer.” – NYPD Community Affairs Officer*

*“The community has an affection for police and fire, when their work is conducted properly. It's even easier for kids to look up to a police or fire. It's a benefit to kids to have someone to look up to who believes in them. And Team Kids gives them something to look forward to.”*  
– FDNY Firefighter

### Effects of TKC on Public Safety Personnel

When asked for their opinion about the [most powerful outcomes for public safety personnel](#) from the Team Kids Challenge, four areas of the program's impact were identified, which relate directly to the intended outcomes of the Team Kids Challenge depicted in Figure 2.

#### 1. Public Safety adults see children as community assets

*“To be honest, I was shocked, I didn't think they would be able to raise that much money. There is so much need here already. But the kids proved me wrong. I was shocked, and I was very happy for them. Reaching their goal gave them a sense of achievement. This is a great program for the kids to gain a sense of achievement.... It's a very rewarding experience. To achieve a goal, working together with the kids to achieve their goals, it's very rewarding.” – NYPD Detective*

*“Team Kids has helped police officers take a different approach. We don't usually come up with ideas about getting kids to do a project or something. It never had come across our minds or my mind to give them something to do. Instead of just telling them what not to do, Team Kids gives them a positive thing to do. They raise money for a charity and achieve their goal.... I really thought they would not be into it.... I think they responded that way because they had an objective, and because they were part of the team. They didn't want to let the team down, and it gave them a chance to showcase their own talents.” - NYPD Community Affairs Officer*

## 2. Law enforcement personnel build more personal or trusting relationships with children

*“For police officers, you see the kid differently now. They are not just a kid in the community, they have a name. They are ‘Jon’ or whatever, and they know you. They are part of the community, you know what school they go to... you identify the kids more personally.” – NYPD Detective*

*“I am a police officer, so I can say that Team Kids really makes a difference. Especially in cities where there is more crime. There’s a stigma about police, because of what kids see on tv, and they are reluctant to get involved with police officers, and they’re scared. But we stereotype the kids as well. Team Kids gives officers a chance to get to know these kids, to hear them voice their opinions, and honestly, it was a chance to be like a child myself. When I was working with Team Kids, I forgot who I was and had fun. You’re in another world when you’re participating in the program....*

*I have more interaction with young kids than an officer on patrol, and I have changed my perspective gradually in a more in a more positive way. Team Kids was like a kicker. The program pushed me way ahead in how I think about working with young kids.” - NYPD Community Affairs Officer*

*“Children need someone to look up to. Everyone needs at least one person on your side, one person who you know believes in you. I think we did that, we served as role models and the kids saw that we were a team ourselves, and we were on their team. Teamwork, that’s what has kept the human race going. It’s one thing to be told about it, but it’s another thing to actually see it. Kids learn more from what they see you do than what you tell them. So for them to see us working with them – a firefighter with two police officers -- we guided them and we were here consistently for the entire 6 weeks. Yes, I did see the teams come together. They worked together and felt pride in reaching their goals.” – FDNY Firefighter*

## 3. TKC may help prevent high-risk behavior or reduce crime in the long run

When asked whether building positive relationships between law enforcement and elementary schools kids will help reduce crime in the long run, the NYPD Community Affairs Officer responded, *“Yes, definitely. We have kids a little bit older, transitioning into junior high school who are involved in gangs in this area. When I worked patrol, we had to make arrests in junior high schoolers. I never would have thought that kids so young would be getting onto gangs. I think a program like TK can steer them away from things like that. Giving them something positive to work toward could help reduce the number of kids who go and get into gangs in middle school.”*

## 4. TKC offers public safety personnel a positive message and role, resulting in good community and public relations

*“It’s different with fire from the police... yes, there are problems in the community with police, and how they are perceived – less than with fire, because we just help, there’s less*



*conflict. But things are going to be better if we go into the community with a positive message.... As far as my job, it's good community relations. What better publicity than to know your team is out in the community? What better PR is there than being actively involved in being a role model for children.” – FDNY Firefighter*

### Program Feedback

Finally, public safety liaisons were asked for feedback about the Team Kids program, and any ideas they have for improvement. All three respondents were complimentary of how Team Kids staff managed the program with their agencies.

*“It was very efficient. They were really good with emails, what time we needed to be there, and details like that. They were very understanding, like when things happen and we couldn't be at some of the meetings, they were very understanding about it. They were just very professional.” – NYPD Detective*

*“I feel like they genuinely do care. We have some organizations come in to the community and I think they don't really care about the kids. Team Kids cares.... they are genuine. It was just very rewarding. I wish Team Kids all the best. I hope they will work in all the cities to empower the kids, they have a program that's truly empowering for the kids.” – NYPD Detective*

*“I think it was great. We need more programs, and I hope Team Kids can get more funding so we can share it across other neighborhoods. I do think it would help reduce crime across the country. Maybe that's just me being naïve, but anyway, I think Team Kids is a great program..... Any other department should definitely do Team Kids, they would really like the program.” – NYPD Community Affairs Officer*

The FDNY Firefighter respondent was particularly motivated by the TKC, and shared at length about how the program aligned with his own perspective on his professional role:

*“This is the example that we should be setting for our children. We seem to be going away from team work. The goal is in the name, Team Kids. We need more of this in the world. Teamwork, that's what has kept the human race going, not just a focus on individualism and me me me. Character building is good, but I like the message that we did this together. It's not I did this, it's WE. Team Kids could be the vanguard of pushing this message across the country. WE WE WE! We as a community can do anything we set our minds to.*

*I'm telling everyone that we can do more. Yes, we get paid, fire and police, but even when you're not on the clock, even an hour of your week or month, go to a school or wherever there are kids gathered and talk to them. People look up to you. There aren't that many people who people look up to. People still have reverence for people in uniform, for police, fire, veterans. Go the extra mile, if you have any extra time, go out there to these kids. They CRAVE this inspiration. Go out with a positive message and help....*

*Working together to make things better. That's why we have continued as a species. We are only as strong the weakest link. The focus on individualism in society is fine, but that has never been what keeps us moving forward as a species. I am happy and proud to be part of this, and whatever Team Kids needs, I am there, I want to be a part of it."*

## VI. Contributions to Local Non-profits

Over the course of the month-long Team Kids Challenge, four 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations (NPOs), typically very local to the school, benefit from the compassionate efforts of children. All students in the school are invited and encouraged to participate in 3 weekly donation or service drives, to have an impact on important issues in their community (see Figure 1). In addition, upper grade students select a non-profit to be the beneficiary of the school-wide carnival that they plan. While the monetary value of contributions varies greatly, one Team Kids Challenge program on average generates about \$1,200 in value to four community-based nonprofits.

In the case of P.S. 149, Team Kids generated the following contributions to local non-profits:

- 1st Weekly Challenge: 671 letters for the elderly at Brookdale Nursing Home
- 2nd Weekly Challenge: 3 Bins of hygiene items and 526 letters for troops
- 3rd Weekly Challenge: 3 Bins of new art supplies for Brookdale Children's Hospital
- Carnival Beneficiary Charity: \$947.01 for City Harvest

Combined, the value of these donations is over \$1,800. The real value of the Team Kids contributions, however, goes far beyond any monetary approximation. It's in the outcomes for children, schools, public safety, and other adults who recognize the capacity that children have for making a real difference in the lives of others.

## Conclusion

The evaluation of the TKC at P.S. 149 reported here found good evidence of effectiveness on short-term outcomes targeted by the Team Kids Challenge. After the program:

- ✓ Children had gained significantly more positive views about their ability to help others, their effectiveness as community assets, and their role as an important part of their school.
- ✓ Student opinion about how much police officers care about kids increased significantly, as did their view that police officers believe kids can make a quantifiable difference in the community.
- ✓ Leadership Team children learned the value and "how to" of helping others, and learned about their own ability to have an impact in the community, as well as how to work effectively in teams.

- ✓ The Principal indicated that the TK Challenge helped kids improve understanding of the power of teamwork, advance self-efficacy, and understand better the role of public safety personnel in the community.
- ✓ Teachers strengthened their view of children as effective community assets; messaging around positive discipline was reinforced and advanced; and school attendance was improved on days when the TKC activities occurred, according to the school principal.
- ✓ Public safety personnel have more positive views of elementary school kids as assets in the community, and believe that the TKC helps them build trusting relationships with children.

The evaluation provides good support for the Team Kids Challenge as an effective evidence-based model for building developmental assets, school connection, and trust between children and public safety, including law enforcement personnel. These results are especially pertinent in an era when trust between the public and law enforcement is tenuous. With walls between communities and police going up, at least in some jurisdictions, the Team Kids Challenge may offer a documented way to help bring them down.