



ANDRUS CENTER FOR LEARNING & INNOVATION RESEARCH BRIEF



Sanctuary in Schools: Preliminary Child and Organizational Outcomes

Josette Banks, PhD and Lorelei Atalie Vargas, MPP, MA
January 2009

To date, the Sanctuary model has been piloted in three public school districts and fully implemented in 5 schools – one public school in North Carolina and four special education schools serving primarily emotionally disabled youth in New York and Pennsylvania. In addition, close to 100 organizations have been trained in the Sanctuary model throughout the world. These programs range from juvenile residential treatment programs (for both emotionally disabled and mandatory juvenile justice populations), community based organizations and inpatient hospital units for both children and adults.

Organizations using the Sanctuary Model experience:

- Decreases in restraints
- Decreases in critical incidents
- Improved academic performance, treatment and placement outcomes
- Decreases in staff turnover

“The Sanctuary in the Schools program rests upon the basic premise that the school environment is a critical determinant in facilitating the learning, growing and healing process. Successful implementation of the model requires that most schools change their philosophy and structure toward a nonviolent and community-oriented paradigm, change in the organizational culture, and change in attitudes and behavior of youth and staff as community members.”¹

The Andrus Center for Learning & Innovation (ACLI) provides professional leadership on issues, practices and policies affecting vulnerable children and families.

The ACLI is housed and operated by the Andrus Children’s Center, a private, non-profit community agency that provides assessment, treatment, education and preventive services for children and their families in residential, day and other restorative programs.

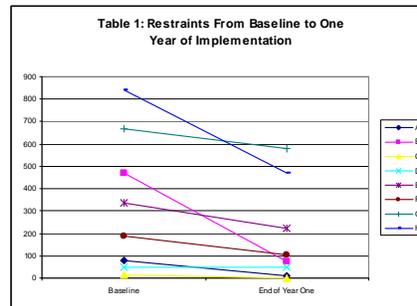
The Sanctuary Model is a trauma-informed model for treatment and organizational change.

Andrus Children’s Center
1156 North Broadway
Yonkers, NY 10701

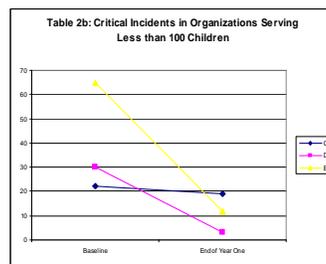
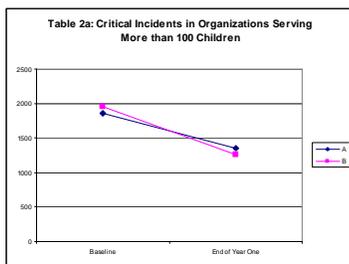
P. 914.965.3700
F. 914.798.5544
www.andruschildren.org

CHILD OUTCOMES

Decrease in Restraints: Organizations using the Sanctuary Model experience a decrease in physical restraints. Over a seven year period, the Andrus Children’s Center (Andrus) experienced a sustained 50% drop in restraints (from 104 to 51 annually). From pre-implementation to one year post-implementation, organizations using Sanctuary also experienced impressive drops in restraints. The drops in restraints after one year of implementation ranged from 6% to 88%, with three organizations having a decrease greater than 80% and six organizations having a decrease greater than 33% as illustrated in Table 1.



Decrease in Critical Incidents²: Organizations using the Sanctuary Model experienced significant decreases in the number of critical incidents in their programs. Over a seven year period, Andrus experienced an 88% drop in the number of critical incidents (from 7518 to 842). Table 2a illustrates that similar-sized organizations serving more than 100 children at a given time, experienced about a 30% decrease from baseline to the end of the first year of implementation. Table 2b



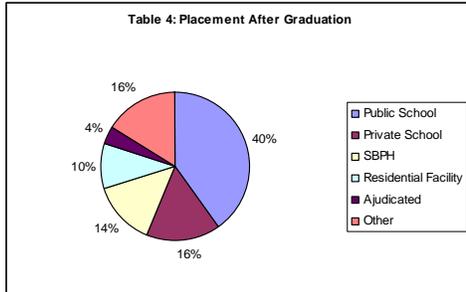
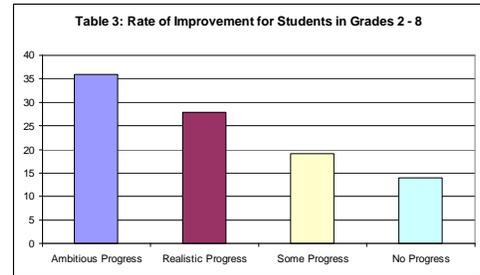
illustrates an even greater decrease averaging around 60% for organizations serving less than 100 children at a given time.

¹ From Sanctuary in Schools project for Atlantic County, New Jersey and New Jersey Department of Education, located at: http://sanctuaryweb.com/Services/sanctuary_in_schools.htm

² Critical Incidents are defined as events requiring immediate staff response (e.g., physical aggression, property damage, etc...) but not necessarily requiring physical restraints by staff.

Improved Academic and Placement Outcomes³:

In a school that has obtained certification in the Sanctuary Model, after two years of implementation, 64% of the students achieved realistic or ambitious rates of reading improvement, as illustrated in Table 3. In addition, 99% of the children were promoted to the next grade. With regard to hospitalizations, there was a 41% reduction in the number of children

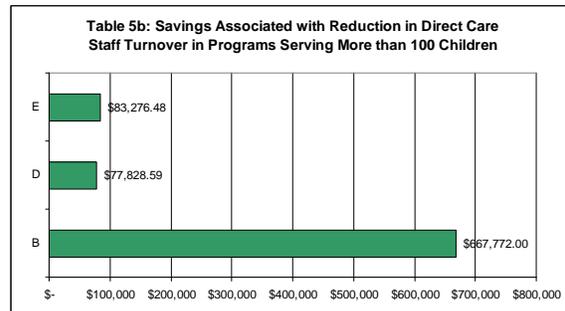
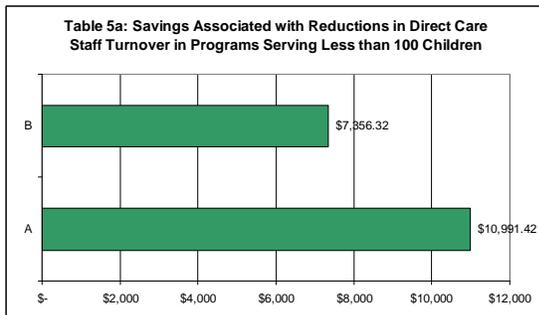


requiring inpatient psychiatric hospitalization and a 25% reduction in days children spent in inpatient

hospitalization. Table 4 shows the same school enjoyed a 56% placement rate in public and private school programs once the student graduated.

ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

Decrease in Direct Care Staff Turnover: In a study of seven organizations that successfully implemented the Sanctuary Model, 100% experienced a decrease in turnover of direct care staff, with the greatest decrease from 46% turnover at baseline to 24% after two years of implementation. All organizations enjoyed and sustained a 10 percentage point average drop in direct care staff turnover from baseline to the end of year two of implementation. Tables 5a and 5b illustrate the total dollar savings associated with the decrease in direct care staff turnover, which averaged close to \$170,000 over two years.



General Improvements in School Environment: Results from a 3 year national study of organizations using the Sanctuary Model have found that employees of these organizations report significant improvements in the following areas:

- Open communication
- Safety – Physical and Emotional
- Behavior among colleagues and between staff and children
- Sense of responsibility to the organization / school
- Clarity on their role in the organization / school

Overall, staff employed in organizations using the Sanctuary Model experience improved satisfaction with their work environment.

³ Unless otherwise noted, chart source: <http://paceschool.org/program/performance.html>