

# **Impact of a Community Afterschool Program in Brooklyn Targeting the Urban Adolescent Population**

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## **Abstract**

This study investigated the social environments of adolescents from an underprivileged neighborhood who have been involved in an afterschool program in Brooklyn, NY, and the experience of students in the Good Shepherd Services' Groundwork for Success (GWS) program, which is a four year college and career readiness program that target high school students. The student researcher completed one-on-one interviews with 5 youth, 3 alumni, and 5 adult staff members of the GWS program. Participants answered questions pertaining to their social environment, their experiences in the program, the intended impact and the actual impact the program has on students. All participants were recruited either through staff at Groundwork for Success or via email.

Interview data suggest that Groundwork for Success generally has a positive impact on the students that attend. Specifically, participants report that staff members serve as a pillar of support for students, that the program supports students' desires to graduate high school and go to college, and that a program like GWS brings a sense of community to students. However, the data also raise questions about limitations of such a program and its staff. For instance, when funding for a program like this is limited, it limits the program's ability to provide for students. In addition, the ability to reach every student is rare. Each student has different needs, likes and dislikes skills, so staff often adapt a strategy of planning events, trips, and/or activities to satisfy the majority. Lastly, the study raises questions about differences between staff perceptions of the level program quality as compared to youth perceptions of quality.

## **Executive Summary**

This study investigated the social environment of adolescents that are or have been involved in Good Shepherd Services' Groundwork for Success afterschool program.

Groundwork for Success is a four-year program that prepares East New York high school students for success in high school and college. Students receive tutoring, free test prep, attend college tours, and receive support from success coaches with college applications. Groundwork for Success is an organization I hold near to my heart because I was once a scholar at the program and without it, I probably would not be attending Syracuse University right now. I got to have so many experiences and see first-hand the impact that this program has on students at a crucial stage in their development. The adolescence stage of life is exciting and alive with possibilities. This stage is where young people begin to lay the foundation for a successful and productive life by going to school and obtaining work opportunities. However, for many young people in the New York City area, opportunities are very different.

The success of programs like Groundwork are crucial in ensuring that students have the support they need to deal with this developmental phase. For example, according to their internal program evaluation, Good Shepherd Transfer School program students are more likely to graduate, outperforming comparison students by 12 percentage points (Tapper, 2015). These students also have a significantly higher average rate of school attendance. Such evidence suggests this program may be beneficial. However, what we do not know is how these programs might compensate for the other risk students encounter in their social environment. Possible mechanisms could include the importance of prosocial peers, healthy relationships with supportive adults, or the skill-building that occurs in program activities; currently, there is a lack of nuanced data to speak to how youth might experience such mechanisms. More in-depth data is

needed to understand the influence and impact of this program as one part of adolescents' social context. Therefore, this research project aims to address the following research questions:

- 1.) How did aspects of adolescents' social environment (schools, families, peers, and community) affect their trajectory?
- 2.) What are adolescents' experiences in the afterschool program Good Shepherds Services: Groundwork for Success (GWS)?
- 3.) How did aspects of Groundwork for Success afterschool programs affect their trajectory?

To answer these questions, conducted in-depth interviews with 10 students and 5 staff members that attend and work for Good Shepherds Services Groundwork for Success Program. Such qualitative data is advantageous as we gained a more nuanced understanding of how youth perceive the program impacting their lives. Findings provided an opportunity to develop richer descriptions of the mechanisms that explain the quantitative findings of Groundwork for Success' program evaluation. Student and alumni interviews explored students' perspective of how their social environment and participation in Groundwork for Success affected their trajectory inside and outside of school.

Staff interviews provided an understanding from the perspective of those who work with participants of the program. Staff perspective complemented the student and alumni perspective, as the staff understand the planning and administrative work that goes on behind Good Shepherds Services and may identify different changes in students and different mechanisms than reported by students. Staff interviews allowed the researchers to compare the perspective of the students and the perspective of an employee and see where they differ in answers and analyze why that might be.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

This study adds to the research on the role of afterschool programs in youth development. There is a need for afterschool programs because of their ability to improve students' academic performance, provide students with a sense of stability that they may or may not experience in their home life, and can even reduce risky behavior. However, such programs face resource constraints and programmatic compromises, which staff and students must navigate. Such constraints can help inform practices and policy affecting these programs

### **Literature Review**

Many studies have been written on afterschool programs. Afterschool programs are extracurricular hours of engagement that students participate in when school is not in session. Literature has found afterschool programs to be especially beneficial to low-income children, an additional tool in child development, a source for students to learn new skills, and provides students with different opportunities. The following articles explore these findings and what they mean.

Halpern (1999), has described afterschool programs as safe places for children. Afterschool program allow children to be themselves and serve as an escape from the pressures they encounter in their lives outside of program. An afterschool program is a valuable tool but is inaccessible to most. Many parents want their child enrolled in an afterschool program but are subjected to being placed on waiting lists with the hopes that they will get a spot. The article by Halpern (1999), discusses the need, demand, and supply for after school programs. Halpern looked at a specific afterschool program initiative called MOST, making the most of out of school time. MOST is based in three cities Boston, Chicago, and Seattle and targets low-income children. This initiative grew from the fact that “44% of children with working parents have no

adult care after school - with low income children more likely than their more affluent peers to be left alone for long period” (Halpern, 1999, pp. 83). This article evaluates the pros and cons of ways in which afterschool programs can be improved to reach more low-income children. Most after school programs have a similar structure that consists of free time, snacks, homework help, and recreational activity. They are also largely provided by schools, institutions, private nonprofit social service agencies, community centers, a national youth-serving organization (Halpern, 1999). Staffing is also important to the success of afterschool programs. Afterschool programs require adequate as well as competent staff members who are warm, inviting, and supportive. The findings of this article have concluded that children are burdened with making up for the lack of support they receive from other social institutions, afterschool programs are essential as they offer children a safe space for play, exploration, and an escape (Halpern, 1999). Low-income children experience social neglect and afterschool programs should not be looked at to fill those voids but as an additional developmental resource.

Homework programs and after school activities have an impact on school success. Developmental outcomes are impacted by a child's ability to balance homework and other aspects of their home life (Cosden, et. al, 2004). It has been reported by the U.S. Department of Justice (2018) that juvenile crime peaks during the after-school hours between the times of 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. These findings suggest that after school programs have the potential to reduce juvenile crime (Cosden, et. al, 2004). This article by Cosden (et. al 2004), examines the impact, strengths, and weaknesses of after school homework assistance programs. After school homework programs appear to benefit children, but there are other types of extracurricular activities that may benefit children such as sports, service activities, and art that they may miss out on if they are attending homework programs (Cosden, et. al, 2004). This is a concern for



after school homework programs because children will be missing out on engaging in extracurricular activities and engaging with peers that share a common interest. Another concern about homework programs is that they could possibly impact how involved parents are with the homework process (Cosden, et. al, 2004). However, parents who are limited by means of education, income, and resources may find the homework programs extremely beneficial. The findings of this article have concluded that, “After school homework programs can provide students with structure, supervision, academic assistance, and the opportunity to learn study skills” (Cosden, et al., 2004, pp. 224). Participation in afterschool homework programs can help as well as hinder students. On the one hand it can maintain their academic standing, allow them to feel more bonded to their school and their peers, and reduce family stress. On the other hand, after school homework programs can interfere with extracurricular activities that promote student bonding and reduces parental involvement.

According to Fredricks, Bohnert, and Burdette (2014), a key aspect of participation in afterschool programs is engagement. It is believed that participation in afterschool programs has an impact on how a child performs academic, their mental health, and their behavior. Engagement focuses on the quality of an individual’s experience while involved in activities. This article outline why engagement is an important aspect of after school programming; engagement reflects the quality of programming (Fredricks, et. al, 2014). Relations with staff and peers and activities are two features that are important aspects of engagement (Fredricks, et. al, 2014). Engagement has been assessed by using a survey and an ESM (experience sampling method), which allow participants to answer questions and report on their dimensions of engagement (Fredrick, et. al, 2014). The authors of the article have concluded that “after school activities should complement the learning day... programs should be engaging and provide youth

with opportunities to participate in interesting and challenging activities” (Fredrick, et. al, 2014, pp. 52). After school programs should build an environment for youth in which they can attend, participate, and contribute. This will allow them to have room to grow and establish positive relationships with others.

Organized activities are known as afterschool programs, summer camps, community service and extracurricular activities, sports, and other programs that are school and/or community based. Vandell, et al., (2015) argue that organized activities have an impact on development as they make up a significant portion of children and adolescents’ time. Organized activities are beginning to be recognized as a powerful setting and in this setting, participants develop skills and their psychological functioning (Vandell, et. al, 2015). Hence, organized activities are a source for positive development and future success. Person, process, context, and time are the four defining properties that when joint together lead to development. After school programs refer to activities that meet regularly, are supervised by adults, offer several activities, and are structured with group-based activities (Vandell, et. al. 2015). Factors that impact development in the context of after school programming are social class, participation, types and breadth of activities, peers and friendships, and school and community.

Social Class impact the type of programming that is provided to individuals that attend after school programs. After school programs located in low-income neighborhoods will be geared towards providing youth with experiences that help prepare them for college, entering the work force, and networking (Vandell, et. al., 2015). Example of some experiences include college tours, test prep courses, assistance with applications, and more. Peers and friendships impact attendance and participation at afterschool programs. Young people are more apt to attend after school programs if their friends are also participating and will drop out of

programming if their friends do so too (Vandell, et. al., 2015). School and community impact the relations that youth develop and how they do so. This article concluded “organized activities provide a space in which young people can follow their interests in diverse areas...[they] are structured, have goals, and expectations that incorporate arcs of effort that extend over days, weeks, and months that lead to culminating events. They also offer substantial opportunities for collaboration and constructive conversations with peers and adult leaders around shared interests, interactions that are constrained at school and much less common in leisure settings” (Vandell, et. al., 2015, pp. 31). Extracurricular participation is frequently associated with different and sometimes stronger outcomes. Youth prefer activities that align with their gender but should try activities that are gender atypical. The possible benefits of extracurricular activities are greater than those from higher socioeconomic status. Lower income youth participate at lower rates, but this varies based on activity type. Youth of color might benefit as much as or more than white youth in terms of noncognitive outcomes and higher dosage of participation may be advantageous for youth of color in terms of both academic and nonacademic outcomes.

These studies suggest the important role afterschool programs can play in adolescents’ social environment. It additionally suggests that youth may benefit from programming that is tailored to helping them achieve success. Future research should be able to find how programming is linked to future success, and adolescents’ perceptions of the programming, and how it may differ from staff perceptions. This current study seeks to help address these gaps, by using qualitative methods to study how Groundwork for Success Afterschool Program is beneficial to the students it serves and served.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Methods**

This research was done in three major phases: data collection, data analysis and report/publication preparation. In data collection, in depth interviews were conducted by the student researcher. The data analysis consisted of transcription of the interviews, creation of a code book, coding of the data and identification and interpretation of patterns.

#### **Data Collection**

For this study, participants were asked to complete an in-depth interview with the student researcher. All participants were recruited by the student researcher. There were three groups of participants: students, staff, and alumni of the Groundwork for Success Program. The consent forms informed them of the purpose of the study, and student participants were required to also assent to participate. Once enrolled in the study, participants then answered interview questions in a one on one setting, with their responses being recorded. The participant could stop at any point during the interview if they felt they no longer want to go on, participants were also allowed to refuse to answer certain questions if they chose to.

Student participants were required to obtain parental consent before the student researcher could conduct the one on one interviews. Parent consent forms for student participants were sent home with the student to get their parents signatures. Once the form was signed and returned to the student researcher during her next visit to program then the student signed assent forms and the interview was conducted.

Program alumni and staff were recruited by the student researcher. Once they agreed to participate in the study, they then set up a time to conduct the interview. Interviews were

conducted at the program site during program hours. On the day of the interview, the alumni participant signed an assent form and the interview was conducted.

When the staff member had time in between instruction they signed an assent form and sat down with the student researcher to conduct the interview. All interviews were audio-recorded with the informed consent of the participants.

### **Data Analysis**

After all the interviews were conducted, the student researcher transcribed them all. Qualitative analysis was conducted using the software program Atlas.ti (Atlas.ti: Qualitative Data Analysis, Version 8.4.24.0). Based in a grounded theory approach, the student researcher reviewed the transcripts with the advisor to identify initial themes, then used these themes to propose an initial codebook. Based on the codebook, the student researcher coded the transcripts. Coded transcripts were analyzed for patterns and variation in responses, deviant cases and conflicting responses, and references to processes and perceived casual relationships. We deliberated to summarize the major trends and did concept mapping. After all the results and interpretation were finalized, we brought them back to the program and participants for member-checking.

### **Report Preparation**

As a part of the report/publication phase, this honors thesis was written up by the student researcher. Edits were made by the advisor, and an outside reviewer in who was not involved in collection or analysis of the data.



## **Chapter 3**

### **Results & Discussion**

Interviews were completed with 13 participants, 5 scholars, 5 staff members, and 3 alumni of the Groundwork for Success Program. With those interviews, an initial codebook was created consisting of 16 codes, 56 sub codes, participant's answers, and how they were interpreted. The codebook was condensed to 50 codes made up of 11 code groups. In general, data suggested that participants have positive experiences within the Groundwork for Success program. However, these responses had some variation, inconsistencies and interesting results. Results reflected major themes: (1) perceived benefits, (2) social context, (3) program features (4) program qualities, (5) program activities, (6) recruitment and attrition, (7) staff-participant relationships, (8) possible changes to the program, and (9) youth aspirations.

#### **Perceived Benefits**

What do the students that attend or have attended Groundwork for Success get out of the program? That is what one of the code groups identified attempts to answer. From participants answers we drew that the benefits of program ranged from social support, college readiness, experience, knowledge, and skills (leadership & social). One staff member stated that for them the most important aspects of the Groundwork for Success Program is "being a support system for the kids". This means that staff members understand that students may need to turn to them during their time of need. Support is important as it may enhance one's quality of life and improve their resilience. Groundwork for Success is career and college prep program. Therefore, college readiness was identified as a benefit of the program. For instance, one alumni of the



program credits Groundwork for Success for helping them with college and SAT prep; and a scholar currently attending program stated she joined program because of the promise that this experience would go on her college application. The assistance that Groundwork for Success provides for its students is a testament to their goals and mission as an organization. Groundwork provides students with knowledge and experience. Apart from helping students with academic work, Groundwork attempts to help them learn things that they do not necessarily get to learn in school by providing them leadership groups to engage with. Groundwork also provides the students with experiences that they may not have had exposure to without being a GWS participant. Groundwork is also some students first opportunity at being leaders and/or holding leadership positions. As they learn about leadership and how to become leaders these scholars are developing skills, they will be able to take with them in the future. When asked what activities have influenced who they are one alumni referred to two leadership programs she was a part of as a GWS scholar and credits these leadership positions as some of her first opportunities to practice being a leader and filling leadership shoes. Like many other students and alumni, I suppose this also true for them because Groundwork does not change much about their mission and goal for the students that attend their program, they just improve how they go about meeting these standards.

How staff and students view and evaluate program is significant to understanding program and the impact it has on its participants and staff members. In assessing for how participants of the study perceived and evaluated program what we drew from responses were the important aspects of program, the novelty it caused, the feeling of it being a something like a second home, how staff and students would rate program, and any suggestions they may have for how it could

be improved or made better. When asked what they thought were the most important aspects of program participants answers were as follows:

- “The staff are there for you. They want you to succeed, they want you to do better. And so, does your cohort. Those kids that you spend four years with are going to always be a point of contact for you it is very much a family environment” -Alumni
- “The most important thing that I’ve seen out of them [scholars] is watching them grow up to young adults and actually applying the tools that they have learned in our afterschool program and using those skills when they go off to college” - Staff
- “Being a support system for the kids” - Staff
- “I feel like everything. Honesty, communication, love” - Scholar
- “Well the most important thing about groundwork is they know that fun is a very important thing of life and that as long as we don’t take advantage of it it’s okay to have a little fun here and there. They also understand that work needs to get done so that we can have good grades. So, they make sure that we get our homework done and stuff like that. If we need help, we can always go to them. They want us to have an experience of what life is, so leadership is always an option for us to grow up and be leaders” - Scholar

From these responses from scholars, staff, and alumni there is a congruence that the important aspects of program are academic, professional, and social growth. Success overall is a general theme that comes from these responses.

## Social Contexts

Community- Community was an important topic to be covered in this study because of the role that a community can have on an individual's development, sense of belonging, and perception on life. However, the responses received from participants when asking questions relating to their community were not as in depth as expected. When scholars were asked if they felt safe in their neighborhood answers varied between “yes”, “no”, “pretty safe”, and “not really”. However, those students that said that they did feel safe in their neighborhood also noted that gangs and violence were a problem; and although they claim that they feel safe in their neighborhoods, they do not tend to hang out in their neighborhoods. One student who was asked if she felt safe in her neighborhood responded, pretty safe. Then when she was asked if gangs or violence was a problem she responded saying, “I feel like it’s a problem, but it’s not really my business because I’m not really involved with that because I stay inside”. Some children are unaware of the dangers in their community because they do not see it firsthand, but may hear about it later on the news, social media, or by word of mouth. Only student, when asked if they feel safe in their neighborhood, respond saying they do not feel safe, but that gangs and violence are not a problem. However, he did not go on to insinuate what exactly about his neighborhood made him feel unsafe. Groundwork for Success is based in the scholar's communities and allows them to engage with their peers and other adults that care about them and teach them new things. During these engagement hours parents can be assured that their child is in a safe environment and not too far from home.

Family- Family was not a topic that has proven any relevance to the results. However, it is important to note the importance of family during the adolescence stage of life.

Peers- Peers play a critical role to during adolescent development. During this stage of life youth are spending an enormous amount of time with their peers and are looking to them for support and acceptance. For scholars attending Groundwork for Success their peers are their biggest support system. One way that they get to connect with their peers is through ‘peer group’, which is an hour of instruction time that scholars get together with the other students in their graduating class and discuss. When talking about peer group one student says, “It was just a small group of friends, my small group of friends, it was just us. I felt like nothing could break us we were all tight”. From her response, peer group is an important aspect of program to her. Another student describes peer group as, “we talk about stories and how our day was...they share good advices”. Having a tight knit group of individuals that can come together and feel togetherness is important to her and just as important to her development into adulthood. As beneficial as it may be to be able to grow so close to your peers, it can also be just as detrimental when you lose that connection you built. When scholars stop attending program, this impacts the other students that they have grown close to because they are now missing out on a connection and as one scholar explains it, things become different. This then forces staff and students to adjust.

Social Media- Social media has grown immensely over the past couple of decades. It has influenced how the current generation interact, behaves, feel, think, and even perform academically. This was a topic that we knew had to be addressed when discussing this population. When asking participants about social media all answers credit social media with having some level of impact or influence on the scholars. From the perspective of students, the impact that social media has on them is that it affects how they interact and their knowledge

about the use of social media. One student had this to say, “How I interact yes because I don’t see myself going outside just to talk to a person. I would probably text”. Access to cell phones and social media platforms, teens no longer feel the need to go outside to see their friends when they can call them on the phone. Another student reflects on how social media is a good and a bad thing, “It’s done good things and it’s done bad things. For one the reason why it’s done good things is because it’s made it easier for people to post what’s going on in society and what we can do to change it. But on the bad side people have abused that privilege and used it for things like cyber bullying and stuff like that”. This student is aware of the power that comes with having a social media platform. While some may use it to spread positive images and/or news others may use it to spread negativity. It is notable that students can see the impact that social media is having on them as well as the society around them and understand what that mean for them and their peers.

Staff also recognize the influence social media has on students. When they interact with the students, they must take into consideration what the students are seeing on social media and how that may affect them when they come into program and when they are outside. One staff member stated, “I feel like they heavily impacted. That is actually our biggest challenges because as a school program it’s only 3 hours of the day so out of the week that’s like 12 hours. So, 12 hours each week we’re trying to help them not always believe that they are just a product of their environment. So, we are battling with that because that impacts heavy. Especially today with social media because it is easy to get access to anything so sometimes that affects what we are trying to preach at our program because their everyday life looks different. Sometimes we talk about leadership and college they’re like well we want money right now and you’re talking about money later and this is why I need money now, which also sometimes trickles down to what

people are posting on social media, what it looks like people have in your neighborhood, etc.”. With social media consuming so much of adolescent’s time and attention it is easy for them to seek acceptance through their social media network. Social media makes it hard for teens to differentiate what is real and what is fake. Staff try their best to teach their students that social media cannot be how they think they will achieve success, and that they cannot believe everything they see.

### **Program Features**

Groundwork for Success is a unique program and staff and alumni understand that. The novelty that comes from this program may go unrecognized for scholars who are currently going through the program, but when they leave they will come to that realization that they may never have an opportunity like Groundwork again, which is true for one alumni. When asked to describe Groundwork an alumnus exclaimed, they never experienced anything close to this program, it was a new and exciting experience for them. The novelty also extends to staff members. A new staff member to the program compared Groundwork to previous places they have worked and expressed that at the end of the work day they feel like they have done something, which is not a usual feeling for them to have after a work day. She describes the places she worked at as not having any substance. This says something about Groundwork and the impact it not only has on its students, but also on the staff members. They appreciate and enjoy coming to work and leave feeling satisfied. Groundwork is an environment where the students and staff grow close and for one scholar that is especially true. One scholar describes the Groundwork program as her family and a place that she loves to be “...this is my family. I love this place a lot and I try my best even though I am working, I try my best to get here

because I love these kids, I love my friends, I love the adults”. Having people to go to that you consider family is important to adolescents and can influence how they interact with others.

### **Program Quality**

The student researcher thought that a question asking the participants to rate program would be interesting to ask during the interview. By asking participants to rate their Groundwork for Success experience, we expected raw and honest answers. Overall, all staff members gave the program a high rating. Whereas students’ answers were not as cohesive. For one staff member a scale from one to ten did not suffice and they went on to rate it a million. This staff member in particular has been working at Groundwork the longest and holds one of the highest positions, but a staff member who has only been at Groundwork for a month also went off the scale and rated the program one thousand stars. The reason for their high rankings were “...I would rate it a million. I feel like I wish I had program like this growing up. Every student that has a chance to be a part of this program they’re very lucky. Because they’ll realize when they’re older how much it helped them in many many different ways not just college. When I bump into people and tell them about the program, they’ll be like I wish I had this when I was growing up”; “I would honestly give it like 1,000 stars. Not even trying to be dramatic the places that I have worked in the past I didn’t get any substance from it, but working here, I feel like I’ve done something at the end of the day”. For students’ answers ranged between 7.5 - 10 out of 10, with only one student giving the program a 10. Based on the student’s responses the reason for their ratings came from their level of engagement with program, their level of satisfaction with program, and how well they get along with their peers. For instance the student that rated the program a ten had this to say “Because I love it here and I felt like a few years ago I felt like I was going to die, like I wasn’t safe, but when I’m here or in a different building with these same people - we

move from different building to different building- I don't care what building we're in as long as I'm with these same people that I'm safe". In comparison to the student who rated the program a 7.5, "Because I like it, it's fun, but you know I don't really engage or interact". Depending on how involved a student was or how impacted they are by program influences their perception, appreciation, and likeness of program.

### **Program Activities**

Groundwork for Success has many activities that they supply for their scholars. They offer students recreational time and dedicate program hours to allow students to complete their homework and to join clubs that are of interest to them such as art, music, dance, writing, and even anime. One student noted the homework hour as his favorite activity at program because he can receive assistance. Another student says that dance is a big part of why she comes to program because she is excited to come in and learn a new dance. Groundwork also takes students on college tours and retreats that allow them to get out of Brooklyn. The college tours and retreats were referenced by alumni as some of their favorite memories while a GWS scholar. These trips serve as a great way to get student who have never been out of the Brooklyn to experience a new city even a new state. It allows them to escape the noise, hustle, and bustle of their everyday lives and immerse themselves into something outside of their norm. Then, there are also the leadership groups, a major aspect of Groundwork. GWS, teaches their students about leadership and how to be leaders. There are leadership groups that students can join that each have their own mission and teach the students different things about themselves and leadership. As a student in a leadership position these students are looked at by the staff and their peers as leaders.



## **Recruitment and Attrition**

Many scholars were influenced to join program by presentations given by program staff at their schools. However, although they are recruited to come to program not all students stay through to the end of their high school journey. As the student researcher conduct interviews something that came up when interviewing the student and alumni participants was attrition, why were students leaving program? As we reached the end of the interview, I began asking them, why do you think other students stop coming to program? I received answers from boredom and lack of motivation to better opportunities and a dislike for learning. Some the responses from participants were “maybe they just have other things to do or they just don’t feel like it’s necessary to be here”; “Because they have to move on with their lives. Their lives aren’t going to be stuck here forever. This isn’t their life. This isn’t what they want to do. I mean these are the people that they love, but this isn’t what they want to do here. They want to grow, they want to move on, they want to let go”; “After a while it just gets like boring. Especially because you get older you can do more things per say, so it just gets boring”. There are many different reasons why students stop coming to program. However, whatever the reason may be the impact that it has on the other students they leave behind is apparent. If Groundwork could figure out a way to keep their attrition low, it would do wonders for their program.

## **Staff-participant Relationships**

Staff are an important aspect of Groundwork for Success. Without the staff there would be no program. However, not just anyone can work at a program that is geared towards working with and impacting the adolescent population. For staff, the goals that they had are being involved, preparing the students for college, continually improving program, and providing support for the students both academically and emotionally. For staff being involved goes

beyond just helping them achieve success. For one staff member he also wants to make sure his students are living stable lives, that their mental health is good, and that they get to experience new things. Staff understand that they are only with the students a few hours out the week and that when they are not with them, they are dealing with life outside of Groundwork. They try their best to be available to students whenever they need them even if it is outside of regularly scheduled program and if it is within means. Another goal of staff is to prepare the scholars for college. As a college and career prep program it is no surprise that staff stressed the importance of teaching the students about college and providing them with the tools, they need to take the necessary steps to get there. Staff are confident that they share similar if not the same goals and expectations with one another regarding the scholars and helping them achieve success. They can be on the same page because according to staff they are constantly improving because they are constantly meeting, brainstorming, and coming up with new activities to meet the needs and expectations of their students.

Staff get to see firsthand how students grow from when they first begin program to when they end program. Staff note that they see positive changes in students as they go through program from how they perform academically to how they behave. According to one staff member, "... the biggest change that stands out the most is students that tend to not really like school and never plan on going to college and have like a 65 average and as time goes on with them being in the program and starting to learn what college is really about and what they real world is really about they tend to like pick up a new drive and like school like wanting to go to school and wanting to go to college so that's like really big that happens within program". Groundwork for Success is teaching students about college and preparing them for life outside of high school and as a result they are turning around and having a change of heart when it comes

to being serious about school and taking those next steps. If they did not have Groundwork and the staff members, it is hard to say if they would think twice about improving their grades, graduating high school, or applying for college.

### **Possible Changes to Program**

As for improvements that could be made at program the staff generally do not see anything that they need to change about program, well not anything they have control over. Two things that were mentioned that staff wish they could improve would be funding and the selection of interns that come to their program. More funding would allow staff to provide more activities, trips, and snacks to students. The chance for the program to pick their own interns because sometimes they get great interns and other times they get interns who realize this work is not for them, which may be hard to navigate an entire school year doing something you do not care to be doing. This will also impact the students that the intern interacts with because they may be able to pick up on that. All in all, the staff at Groundwork for Success love what they do and are satisfied with their performance.

### **Youth Aspirations**

The students that attend Groundwork for Success have various aspirations and goals. Their future successes are anywhere from continuing their education to having careers. Goals are important to have and being able to work towards these goals are equally if not more important. Too many times children are unable to achieve what they want in life because of the limited access they have to the necessary resources. That is why programs like Groundwork are significant as they can provide students with those resources they were lacking before. Some of the future goals of students are to finish high school and/or college, to become an orthopedic

surgeon, a lawyer, a business owner, a nurse, a doctor, successful, and happy. Groundwork staff members work with students to take the necessary steps to achieve this goal or they at least provide them with the necessary tools to be able to plan for their futures.

## **Summary**

The present findings confirm that Groundwork for Success is a worthwhile experience not only for the scholars that attend the program, but also for the staff members that work at the program. The staff members enjoy coming just as much the students, which makes for a great learning and teaching environment. Programs like Groundwork for Success are essential to students development, but they also need to be staffed with individuals who care about the students and the work that they are doing for the students in order for both parties to get anything out of the program. In line with previous studies, this study has demonstrated that in fact afterschool programs are especially beneficial to low-income children, serves as an additional tool in child development, are a source for students to learn new skills, and provides students with different opportunities. The limitation of the present study naturally are that you cannot verify the results as participants have control over the content of the data that was collected and the conclusions are not general because of the few subjects and their unique characteristics.

A popular opinion is that afterschool programs can improve student's academic performance, reduce risky behavior, and provide students with safe structured environment. However, without adequate support, afterschool programs cannot perform at their full potential. Therefore, we believe that for Groundwork for Success to be able to reach more kids they need proper funding to operate.



## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, GWS scholars overall would describe their Groundwork for Success experience as a successful. Scholars learned new things while at Groundwork, they met new people, and they are more prepared for their futures. Future research could expand on looking at the effect that having been a GWS scholar has impacted individuals.

Based on the findings of this study, for social workers who work at these programs it may be critical to get to know the youth you are working with. Although, as staff you are only interacting with them for a couple of hours out of the day, get to know what they do when they are not in program, learn about their likes and dislikes, try to gain an understanding of what their home life is like, and pick up on how they are mental. As a social worker in their life, you become another adult figure to them and depending on how well you build a rapport with them will let them feel comfortable enough to open up to you, which will then allow you to get a better understanding of who they are. Young people need support at these programs, not just academically, but emotionally as well. Being there for them and a stable being in their life can impact their development and their growth.

As an agency, these programs understand that they are an outlet for young people and a resource. Keeping youth idle for a couple hours after being in an instructional learning environment for 6-8 hours is a difficult task. However, it is important to tailor program to those that utilize it to ensure that you keep them engaged. Engagement will keep the young people coming back and possibly off the streets. These programs are trusted by parents and the community to keep their children in a safe, fun, learning environment. Getting feedback from

participants about how they could keep them more engaged is a step that some programs should take to ensure attrition.

For the government entities that are assisting in funding these programs, they need more. Programs like these need more funds to support the number of students that they would like to take in. Money goes towards trips, snacks, and activities that are provided to the students. Without the proper funding the program cannot run at its full potential.

If future research were to be done, this study would go further and focus on alumni and where they are having been a GWS scholar and completed the program. A future study would analyze if GWS alumni feel that their time as a scholar has impacted them at all and/or contributed to where they are now in their lives. This would allow researchers to study if there is a benefit to afterschool programs.





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## **Appendix**

### **Child Participant Assent Form**

**Protocol Title:** Impact of an Afterschool Program in Brooklyn on Urban Adolescents

**Key Research Personnel:**

Briyana Henry  
Student Researcher

Ryan D. Heath, Ph.D., LCSW  
Assistant Professor, Principal Investigator

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about participation in a research study and to offer you the opportunity to participate. We are asking you to participate because you are a current member of Groundwork for Success. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your involvement with Groundwork for Success will not be affected if you choose not to participate. You can take as much time as you wish to decide. You can ask any questions you may have now, during, or after the research is complete.

**What is the purpose for this research study?**

The purpose of this study is to understand how an adolescents' social environment and participation in Groundwork for Success may have affected their life trajectory. We will be interviewing approximately 15 participants, alumni, and staff to complete this study.

**What will I be asked to do?**

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in an interview that will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Questions being asked will cover topics about family, social life and environment, and program involvement. The interview will be audio recorded and handwritten notes may be taken by the interviewer throughout the course of the interview.

You might not feel comfortable answering some of the questions that are going to be asked in the interview, but you do not have to do anything you do not want to do. If you rather not answer a question, you have the right to refuse to answer or ask the interviewer to move on. If you change your mind about participating, you can stop at any time without penalty.

**What are the possible risks of participation in this research study?**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. You are being asked to participate in an interview, and some questions may cause thoughts, feelings or emotions that you do not necessarily wish to think, feel, or talk about. These feelings might include that of stress, guilt, or embarrassment.

There is a minimal risk of the loss of confidentiality in the unlikely case that data from your interview is compromised.

### **What are the possible benefits of participation in this research study?**

There is no direct benefit to the participant; however, there may be benefits to other individuals, organizations, institutions. The results of this study may improve afterschool programs and the communities that they serve, including Groundwork for Success. This research may benefit the Groundwork for Success program and programs like it. The results of this study can be used to assist program directors assess what works, what does not work, and what can be approved. If you continue to be involved with Groundwork for Success, you may experience indirect benefits as a result of improvements in the program.

### **How will my privacy be protected?**

Provisions are in place to protect your privacy. Data collection will happen at the afterschool programs site location (1 Wells St. Brooklyn, NY), unless you prefer to be interviewed at another public location, such as a library. Only the researcher will be present at the interview, which will allow you to express yourself and answer questions that may be personal. All records of participants will be discarded after five years.

### **How will my data be maintained to ensure confidentiality?**

To ensure confidentiality and data security all digital files and identifiable information will be maintained on password-protected computers that only the research student, Briyana Henry, and principal investigator, Ryan Heath will be able to access. Paper files will be kept in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office. Audio recordings will be saved onto the password-protected computers and erased from the recording device. Data will only be shared through secure file sharing between the student researcher and the principal investigator.

When we are finished with the study, we will write reports about what we learned and gathered from the interviews conducted. These reports will not include your name, that you were in the study, or any other identifiable characteristics about you (e.g. your email, phone number, or audio recording of your voice). The information that has been collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed to anyone else for future research studies.

### **Will photographs, audio, video, or film recording be used?**

All interviews will be recorded on an audio recording device. This allows the researcher to be engaged in the interview and to review exactly what you said and accurately reflect your answers. Recordings will be transferred from the recording device to a password-protected computer immediately following the interview. Only the student researcher and principal investigator will have access to the recordings. Recordings along with all other materials will be discarded after five years. Photographs, video, and film recordings will not be used.

### **Will I receive compensation for participation?**

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be compensated for the time they take to complete the interview with a \$30 visa gift card. If you decide to withdraw at anytime during the interview you will still receive the \$30 Gift card.

**What are my rights as a research participant?**

Participation is completely voluntary. One may skip and/or refuse to answer any question for any reason. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.

**Whom may I contact with questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact the student researcher, Briyana Henry, at any time by phone at 347-301-5808 or by email at [brhenry@syr.edu](mailto:brhenry@syr.edu); or you may contact the principal investigator, Assistant Professor Ryan D. Heath by phone at 315-443-1989, or email at [rdheath@syr.edu](mailto:rdheath@syr.edu).

If you have questions or concerns about this study or your rights as a research participant, or feel as though your rights have been violated, you may contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at (315) 443-3013.

By signing below, I indicate that all my questions have been answered. I am a participant in the Groundwork for Success program and I agree to participate in this research study and for my interview to be audio recorded. I have received a copy of this form for my personal records.

I agree to be audio recorded \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

-----  
Printed Name of the Participant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Participant

-----  
Printed Name of the Researcher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Researcher

### **Adult Alumni Consent Form**

**Protocol Title:** Impact of an Afterschool Program in Brooklyn on Urban Adolescents

**Key Research Personnel:**

Briyana Henry  
Student Researcher

Ryan D. Heath, Ph.D., LCSW  
Assistant Professor, Principal Investigator

**Introduction:**

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about participation in a research study; and offer you the opportunity to participate. We are asking you to participate because you are a current and/or former member of Groundwork for Success. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your involvement with Groundwork for Success will not be affected if you choose not to participate. You can take as much time as you wish to decide. You can ask any questions you may have now, during, or after the research is complete.

**What is the purpose for this research study?**

The purpose of this study is to understand how an adolescents' social environment and participation in Groundwork for Success may have affected their life trajectory. We will be interviewing 5 alumni to complete this study.

**What will I be asked to do?**

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in an interview that will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Questions being asked will cover topics about family, social life and environment, and program involvement. The interview will be audio recorded and handwritten notes may be taken by the interviewer throughout the course of the interview.

You might not feel comfortable answering some of the questions that are going to be asked in the interview, but you do not have to do anything you do not want to do. If you rather not answer a question, you have the right to refuse to answer or ask the interviewer to move on. If you change your mind about participating, you can stop at any time without penalty.

**What are the possible risks of participation in this research study?**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. You are being asked to participate in an interview and some of the questions may cause thoughts, feelings or emotions that you do not necessarily wish to think, feel, or talk about. These feelings might include that of stress, guilt, regret, or embarrassment.

In the case that you express distress during the interview, you may be referred to available psychological counseling resources. In the unlikely case that you express intent to harm

yourself or others, the student researcher will inform the Good Shepard's staff, the appropriate authorities, and the Principal Investigator so that adequate responses may be taken.

There is a minimal risk of the loss of confidentiality in the unlikely case that data from your interview is compromised.

### **What are the possible benefits of participation in this research study?**

There is no direct benefit to you; however, there may be benefits to other individuals, organizations, institutions. The results of this study may improve afterschool programs and the communities that they serve, including Groundwork for Success. This research may benefit the Groundwork for Success program and programs like it. The results of this study can be used to assist program directors assess what works, what does not work, and what can be approved. If you continue to be involved with Groundwork for Success, you may experience indirect benefits as a result of improvements in the program.

### **How will my privacy be protected?**

Provisions are in place to protect your privacy. Data collection will happen at the afterschool programs site location (1 Wells St. Brooklyn, NY), unless you prefer to be interviewed at another public location, such as a library. Only the researcher will be present at the interview, wish will allow you to express yourself and answer questions that may be personal. All of your records will be discarded after 5 years.

### **How will my data be maintained to ensure confidentiality?**

To ensure confidentiality and data security all digital files and identifiable information will be maintained on password-protected computers that only the research student, Briyana Henry, and principal investigator, Ryan Heath will be able to access. Paper files will be kept in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office. Audio recordings will be saved onto the password protected computers and erased from the recording device once transferred over. Data will only be shared through secure file sharing between the student researcher, Briyana Henry, and the principal investigator, Ryan D. Heath.

When we are finished with the study, we will write reports about what we learned and gathered from the interviews conducted. These reports will not include your name, that you were in the study, or any other identifiable characteristics about you (e.g. your email, phone number, or audio recording of your voice). The information that has been collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed to anyone else for future research studies.

### **Will photographs, audio, video, or film recording be used?**

All interviews will be recorded on an audio recording device. This allows the researcher to be engaged in the interview and to review exactly what you said and accurately reflect your answers. Recordings will be transferred from the recording device to a password-protected computer immediately following the interview. Only the student researcher and principal investigator will have access to the recordings. Recordings along with all other materials will be discarded after five years. Photographs, video, and film recordings will not be used.

**Will I receive compensation for participation?**

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be compensated for the time they take to complete the interview with a \$30 visa gift card. If you decide to withdraw at any time during the interview you will still receive the \$30 Gift card.

**What are my rights as a research participant?**

Participation is completely voluntary. One may skip and/or refuse to answer any question for any reason. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.

**Whom may I contact with questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact the student researcher, Briyana Henry, at any time by phone at 347-301-5808 or by email at [brhenry@syr.edu](mailto:brhenry@syr.edu); or you may contact the principal investigator, Assistant Professor Ryan D. Heath by phone at 315-443-1989, or email at [rdheath@syr.edu](mailto:rdheath@syr.edu).

If you have questions or concerns about this study or your rights as a research participant, or feel as though your rights have been violated, you may contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at (315) 443-3013.

I agree to be audio recorded \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

By signing below, I indicate that all of my questions have been answered. I am 18 years of age or older, I am an alumnus of Groundwork for Success, and, I agree to participate in this research study and for my interview to be audio recorded. I have received a copy of this form for my personal records.

-----  
Printed Name of the Participant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Email

-----  
Printed Name of the Researcher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Researcher



## **Parent Consent Form**

**Protocol Title:** Impact of an Afterschool Program in Brooklyn on Urban Adolescents

**Key Research Personnel:**

Briyana Henry  
Student Researcher

Ryan D. Heath, Ph.D., LCSW  
Assistant Professor, Principal Investigator

### **Introduction:**

The purpose of this form is to provide your child with information about participation in a research study; and offer them the opportunity to participate. We are asking your child to participate because they are current members of Groundwork for Success. Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child's involvement with Groundwork for Success will not be affected if they choose not to participate. We ask that you and your child take as much time as you wish to decide. You can ask any questions you may have now, during, or after the research is complete.

### **What is the purpose for this research study?**

The purpose of this study is to understand how an adolescents' social environment and participation in Groundwork for Success may have affected their life trajectory. We will be interviewing 5 Ground for Success student to complete this study.

### **What will my child be asked to do?**

As a participant, your child will be asked to participate in an interview that will take approximately 1 hour. Questions being asked will cover topics about family, social life and environment, and program involvement. The interview will be audio recorded and handwritten notes may be taken by the interviewer throughout the course of the interview.

Your child might not feel comfortable answering some of the questions that are going to be asked in the interview, but they do not have to do anything they do not want to do. If they rather not answer a question, they have the right to refuse to answer or ask the interviewer to move on. If your child changes their mind about participating, they can stop at any time without penalty.

### **What are the possible risks of participation in this research study?**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. Your child is being asked to participate in an interview, and some questions may cause thoughts, feelings or emotions that they do not necessarily wish to think, feel, or talk about. These feelings might include that of stress, guilt, or embarrassment.

There is a minimal risk of the loss of confidentiality in the unlikely case that data from your child's interview is compromised.

### **What are the possible benefits of participation in this research study?**

There is no direct benefit to your child; however, there may be benefits to other individuals, organizations, institutions. The results of this study may improve afterschool programs and the communities that they serve, including Groundwork for Success. This research may benefit the Groundwork for Success program and programs like it. The results of this study can be used to assist program directors assess what works, what does not work, and what can be approved. If your child continues to be involved with Groundwork for Success, they may experience indirect benefits as a result of improvements in the program.

### **How will my child's privacy be protected?**

Provisions are in place to protect your child's privacy. Data collection will happen at the afterschool programs site location (1 Wells St. Brooklyn, NY), unless they prefer to be interviewed at another public location, such as a library. Only the researcher will be present at the interview, which will allow your child to express themselves and answer questions that may be personal. All your child's records will be discarded after five years.

### **How will my child's privacy be maintained to ensure confidentiality?**

To ensure confidentiality and data security all digital files and identifiable information will be maintained on password-protected computers that only the research student, Briyana Henry, and principal investigator, Ryan Heath will be able to access. Paper files will be kept in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office. Audio recordings will be saved onto the password protected computers and erased from the recording device once transferred over. Data will only be shared through secure file sharing between the student researcher, Briyana Henry, and the principal investigator, Ryan D. Heath.

When we are finished with the study, we will write reports about what we learned and gathered from the interviews conducted. These reports will not include your child's name, that they were in the study, or any other identifiable characteristics about them (e.g. email, phone number, or audio recording of their voice). The information that has been collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed to anyone else for future research studies.

### **Will photographs, audio, video, or film recording be used?**

All interviews will be recorded on an audio recording device. This allows the researcher to be engaged in the interview and to review exactly what was said and accurately reflect their answers. Recordings will be transferred from the recording device to a password-protected computer immediately following the interview. Only the student researcher and principal investigator will have access to the recordings. Recordings along with all other materials will be discarded after five years. Photographs, video, and film recordings will not be used.

### **Will my child receive compensation for participation?**

Groundwork for Success scholars who agree to participate in this study will be compensated for the time they take to complete the interview with a \$30 visa gift card. If your

child decides to withdraw at any time during the interview, they will still receive the \$30 Gift card.

**What are my child's rights as a research participant?**

Participation is completely voluntary. Your child may skip and/or refuse to answer any question for any reason. They are free to withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.

**Whom may I contact with questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact the student researcher, Briyana Henry, at any time by phone at 347-301-5808 or by email at [brhenry@syr.edu](mailto:brhenry@syr.edu); or you may contact the principal investigator, Assistant Professor Ryan D. Heath by phone at 315-443-1989, or email at [rdheath@syr.edu](mailto:rdheath@syr.edu).

If you have questions or concerns about this study or your child's rights as a research participant, or feel as though their rights have been violated, you may contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at (315) 443-3013.

I agree to be audio recorded \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

All my questions have been answered, I am the parent/guardian of a Groundwork for Success Scholar, and by signing this consent form I agree to let my child participate in this research study. I have received a copy of this form for my personal records.

-----  
Printed Name of the Parent/Guardian

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Email

-----  
Printed Name of the Participant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Email

-----  
Printed Name of the Researcher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Researcher

## **Adult Staff Consent Form**

**Protocol Title:** Impact of an Afterschool Program in Brooklyn on Urban Adolescents

**Key Research Personnel:**

Briyana Henry  
Student Researcher

Ryan D. Heath, Ph.D., LCSW  
Assistant Professor, Principal Investigator

### **Introduction:**

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about participation in a research study; and offer you the opportunity to participate. We are asking you to participate because you are a staff member for Groundwork for Success. Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your involvement with Groundwork for Success will not be affected if you choose not to participate. You can take as much time as you wish to decide. You can ask any questions you may have now, during, or after the research is complete.

### **What is the purpose for this research study?**

The purpose of this study is to understand how an adolescents' social environment and participation in Groundwork for Success may have affected their life trajectory. We will be interviewing 5 staff members to complete this study.

### **What will I be asked to do?**

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in an interview that will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Questions being asked will cover topics about family, social life and environment, and program involvement. The interview will be audio recorded and handwritten notes may be taken by the interviewer throughout the course of the interview.

You might not feel comfortable answering some of the questions that are going to be asked in the interview, but you do not have to do anything you do not want to do. If you rather not answer a question, you have the right to refuse to answer or ask the interviewer to move on. If you change your mind about participating, you can stop at any time without penalty.

### **What are the possible risks of participation in this research study?**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. You are being asked to participate in an interview, and some questions may cause thoughts, feelings or emotions that you do not necessarily wish to think, feel, or talk about. These feelings might include that of stress, guilt, or embarrassment. Questions will require you to assess how you are as a staff member and how you may have impacted students.

In the case that you express distress during the interview, you may be referred to available psychological counseling resources. In the unlikely case that you express intent to harm

yourself or others, the student researcher will inform the Good Shepard's staff, the appropriate authorities, and the Principal Investigator so that adequate responses may be taken.

There is a minimal risk of the loss of confidentiality in the unlikely case that data from your interview is compromised.

### **What are the possible benefits of participation in this research study?**

There is no direct benefit to you; however, there may be benefits to other individuals, organizations, institutions. The results of this study may improve afterschool programs and the communities that they serve, including Groundwork for Success. This research may benefit the Groundwork for Success program and programs like it. The results of this study can be used to assist program directors assess what works, what does not work, and what can be approved. If you continue to be involved with Groundwork for Success, you may experience indirect benefits as a result of improvements in the program.

### **How will my privacy be protected?**

Provisions are in place to protect your privacy. Data collection will happen at the afterschool programs site location (1 Wells St. Brooklyn, NY), unless you prefer to be interviewed at another public location, such as a library. Only the researcher will be present at the interview, wish will allow you to express yourself and answer questions that may be personal. All your records will be discarded after five years.

### **How will my data be maintained to ensure confidentiality?**

To ensure confidentiality and data security all digital files and identifiable information will be maintained on password-protected computers that only the research student, Briyana Henry, and principal investigator, Ryan Heath will be able to access. Paper files will be kept in a locked cabinet in the principal investigator's office. Audio recordings will be saved onto the password protected computers and erased from the recording device once transferred over. Data will only be shared through secure file sharing between the student researcher, Briyana Henry, and the principal investigator, Ryan D. Heath.

When we are finished with the study, we will write reports about what we learned and gathered from the interviews conducted. These reports will not include your name, that you were in the study, or any other identifiable characteristics about you (e.g. your email, phone number, or audio recording of your voice). The information that has been collected as part of the research will not be used or distributed to anyone else for future research studies.

### **Will photographs, audio, video, or film recording be used?**

All interview will be recorded on an audio recording device. This allows the researcher to be engaged in the interview and to review exactly what you said and accurately reflect your answers. Recordings will be transferred from the recording device to a password-protected computer immediately following the interview. Only the student researcher and principal investigator will have access to the recordings. Recordings along with all other materials will be discarded after five years. Photographs, video, and film recordings will not be used.

**Will I receive compensation for participation?**

There is no direct compensation for participation in the interview.

**What are my rights as a research participant?**

Participation is completely voluntary. One may skip and/or refuse to answer any question for any reason. You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.

**Whom may I contact with questions?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may contact the student researcher, Briyana Henry, at any time by phone at 347-301-5808 or by email at [brhenry@syr.edu](mailto:brhenry@syr.edu); or you may contact the principal investigator, Assistant Professor Ryan D. Heath by phone at 315-443-1989, or email at [rdheath@syr.edu](mailto:rdheath@syr.edu).

If you have questions or concerns about this study or your rights as a research participant, or feel as though your rights have been violated, you may contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at (315) 443-3013.

I agree to be audio recorded \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

By signing below, I indicate that all my questions have been answered. I am 18 years of age or older, I am a staff member for Groundwork for Success, and, I agree to participate in this research study and for my interview to be audio recorded. I have received a copy of this form for my personal records.

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Printed Name of the Participant

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Cell Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Email

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Printed Name of the Researcher

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Researcher