

# Holistic Community Change, the Developmental Assets and Positive Youth Outcomes

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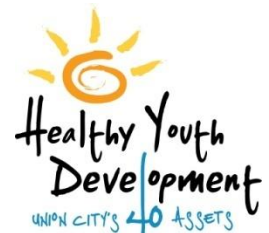
*National Outreach Scholarship Conference,*

*Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan*



# Healthy Youth Development of Erie County

- *Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Organizational Research and Evaluation (CORE)*, Penn State Erie, The Behrend College
  - Founded in 1998 through the generosity of Susan Hirt Hagen
    - Prevention Research & Evaluation (CORE)
    - Community Outreach (HYD)
- Erie County Policy & Planning Council
  - Response to Teen Pregnancy
  - 40 Asset Model- Increasing protective factors to buffer risk factors in youth



# Penn State Erie CORE Staff

## CORE and HYD Director:

- Dr. Carl Kallgren

## Co-Project Directors:

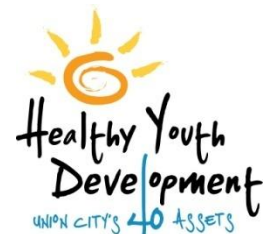
- Tammy Bartasavich
- Joe Markiewicz

## Associate Coordinators:

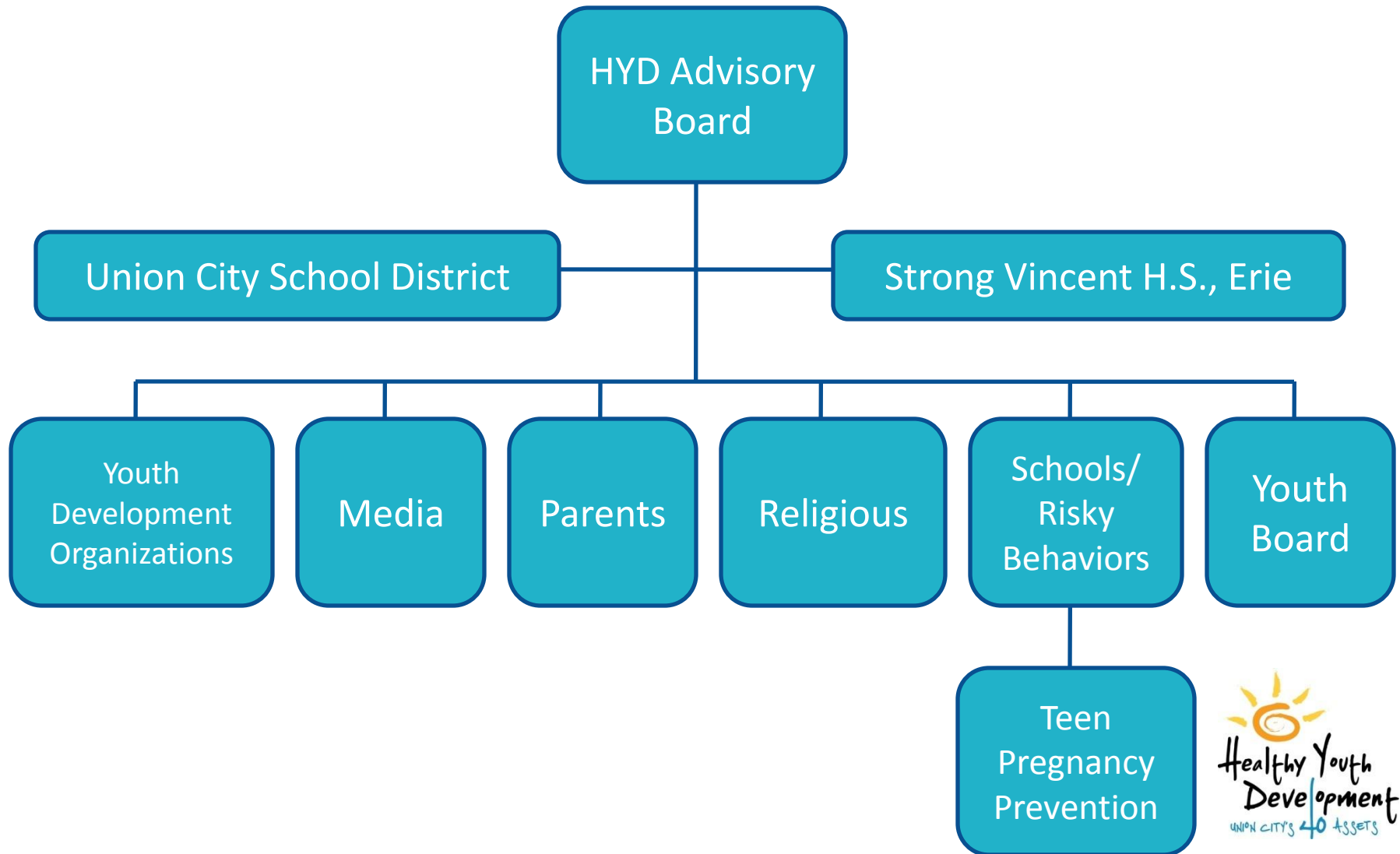
- Abbe Biebel- Union City HYD
- Katie Allison-Strong Vincent H.S., Erie

## CORE Staff:

- Administrative Support
- Research Associates & Assistants
- Communications Assistant



# HYD Task Forces



# “What are the 40 Assets?”

- Protective factors that buffer youth from risk
- Based on research studies
- Family members, friends, activities, sports, teachers, mentors, faith community members



# 40 Developmental Assets

## Eight Categories

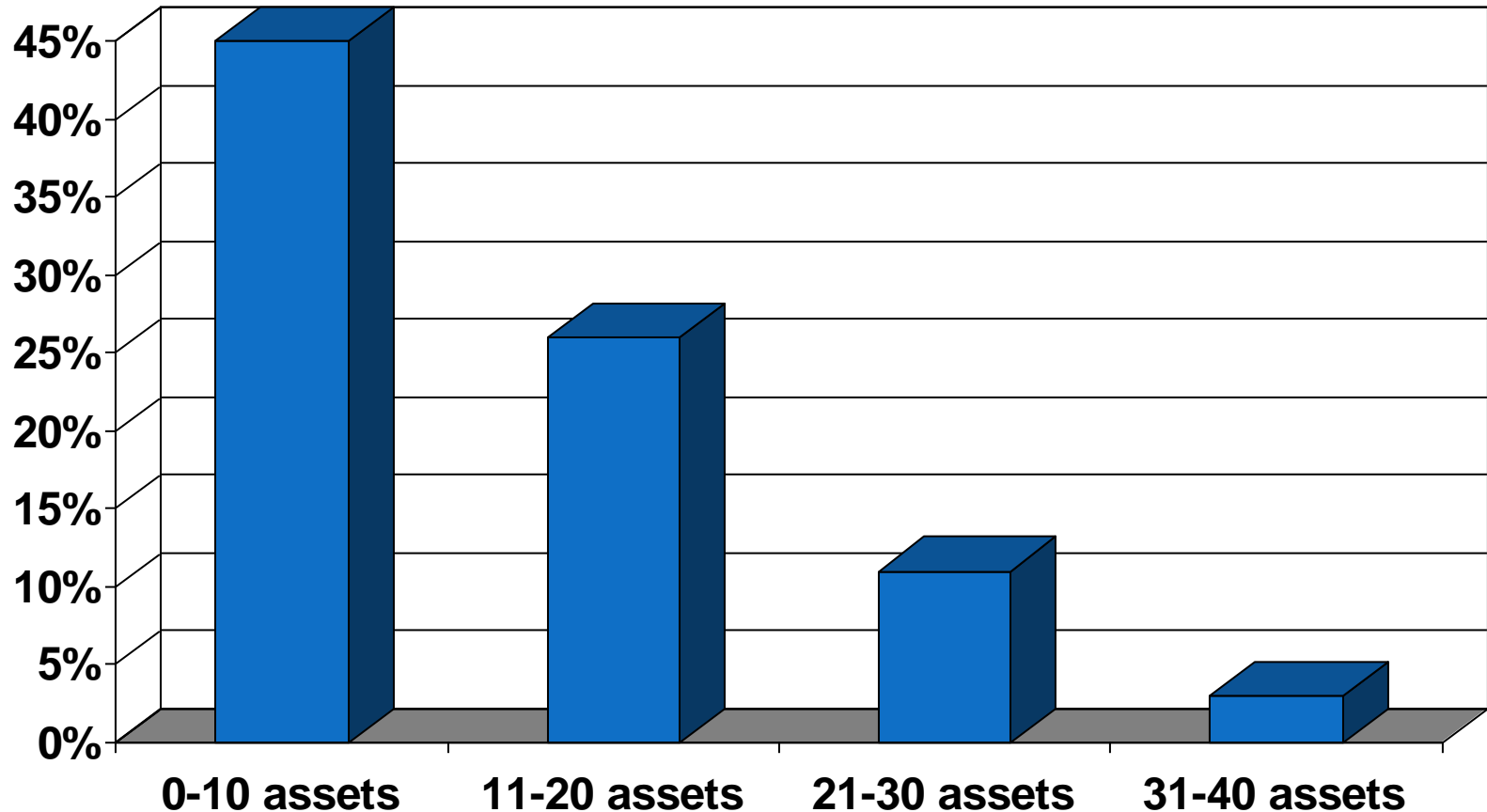
### External Assets

1. Support
2. Empowerment
3. Boundaries and Expectations
4. Constructive Use of Time

### Internal Assets

5. Commitment to Learning
6. Positive Values
7. Social Competence
8. Positive Identity

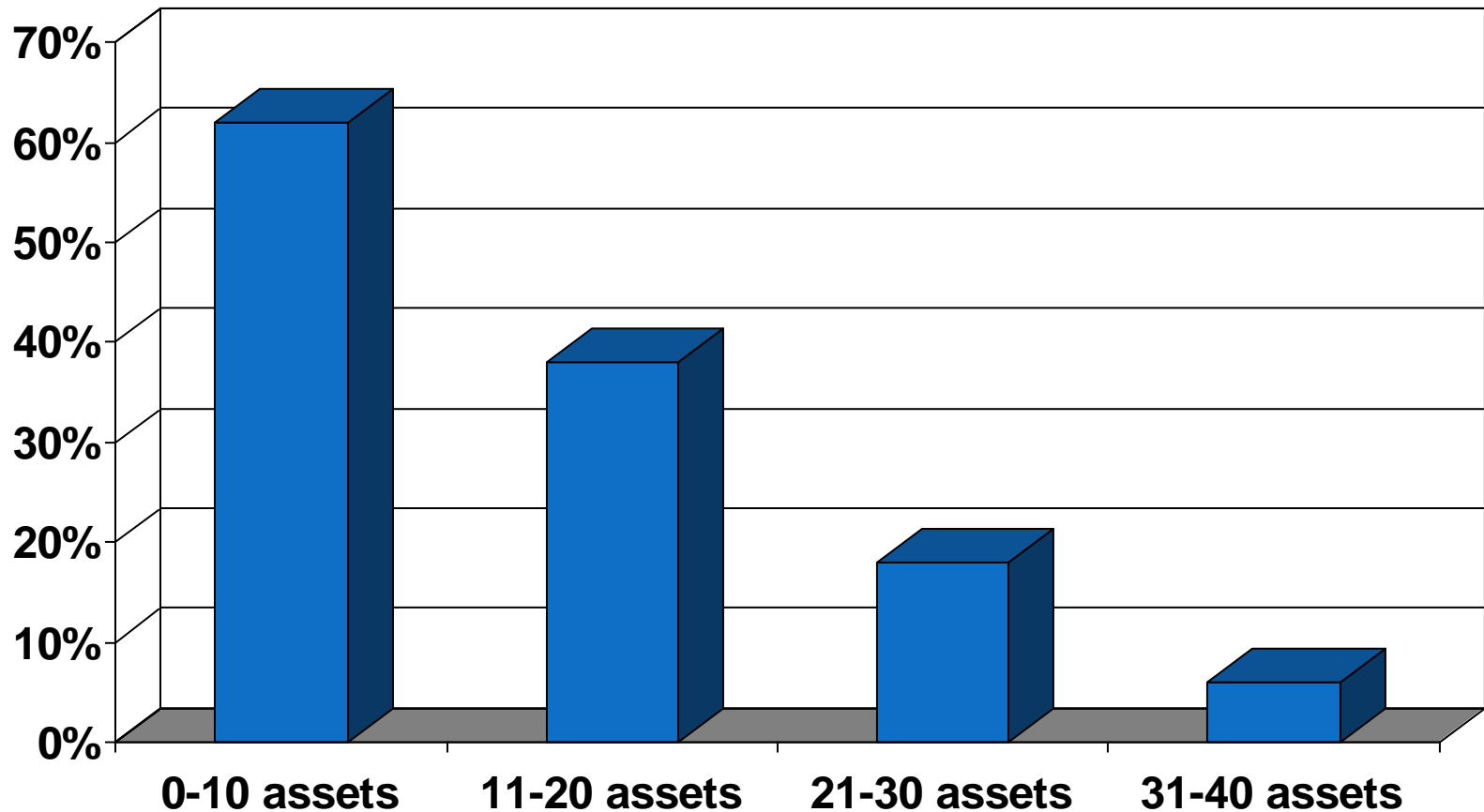
# Assets Protect Youth from Alcohol Use



(Based on survey of 150,000 students in grades 6-12; ages 11-18)

<http://www.Search-Institute.org>

# Assets Protect Youth from Violence

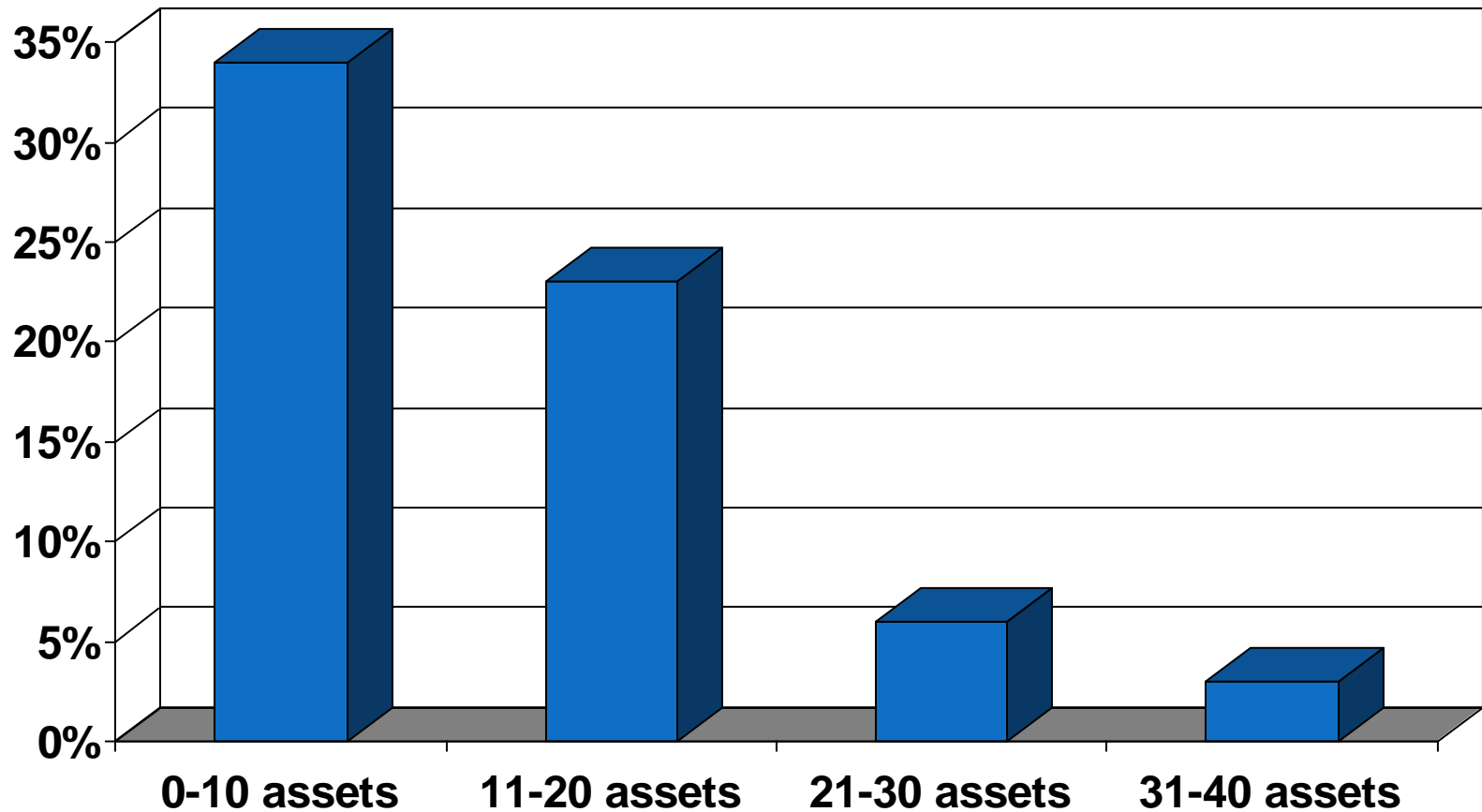


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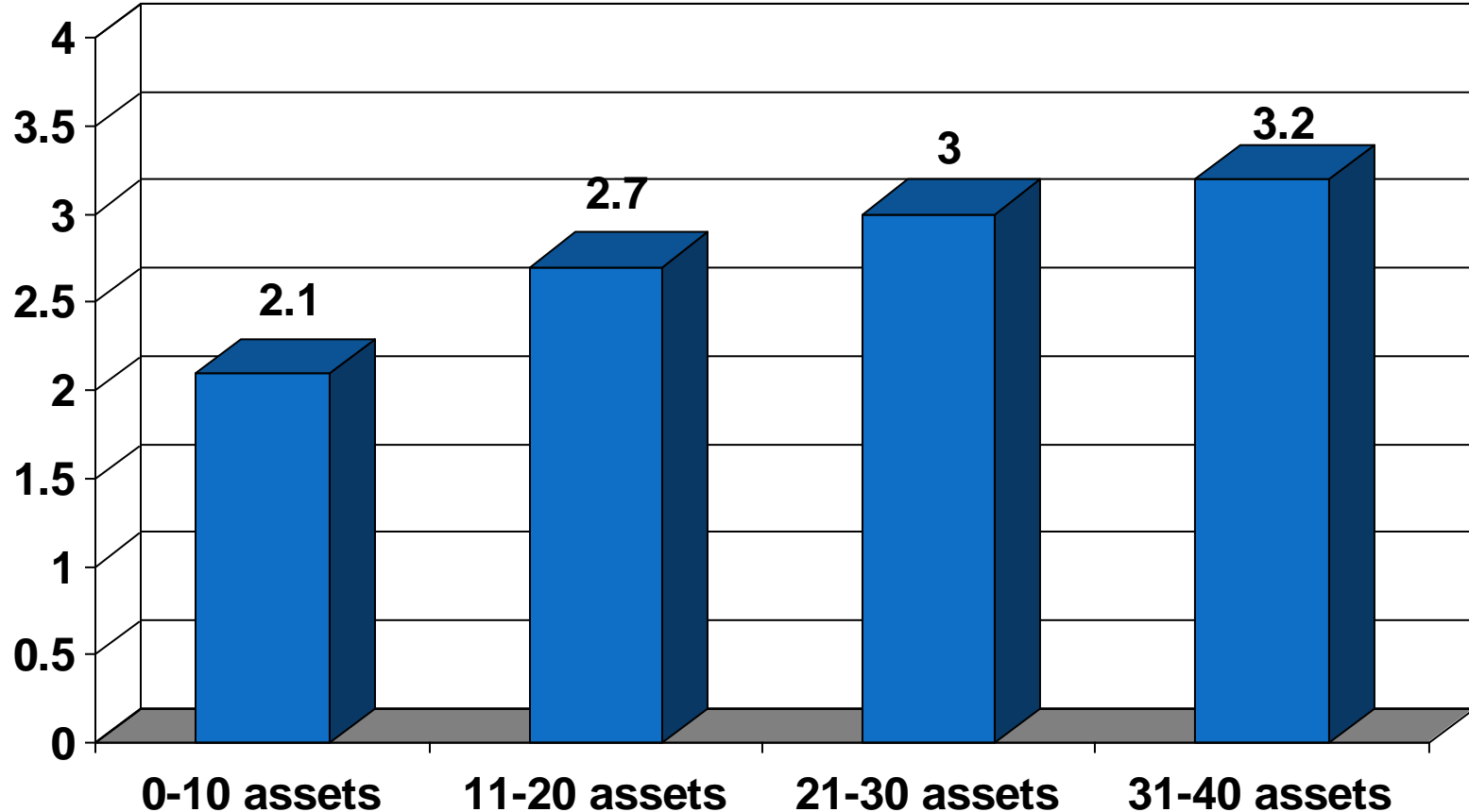
# Assets Protect Youth from Sexual Activity



(Based on survey of 150,000 students in grades 6-12; ages 11-18)

<http://www.Search-Institute.org>

# Assets Boost Academic GPA

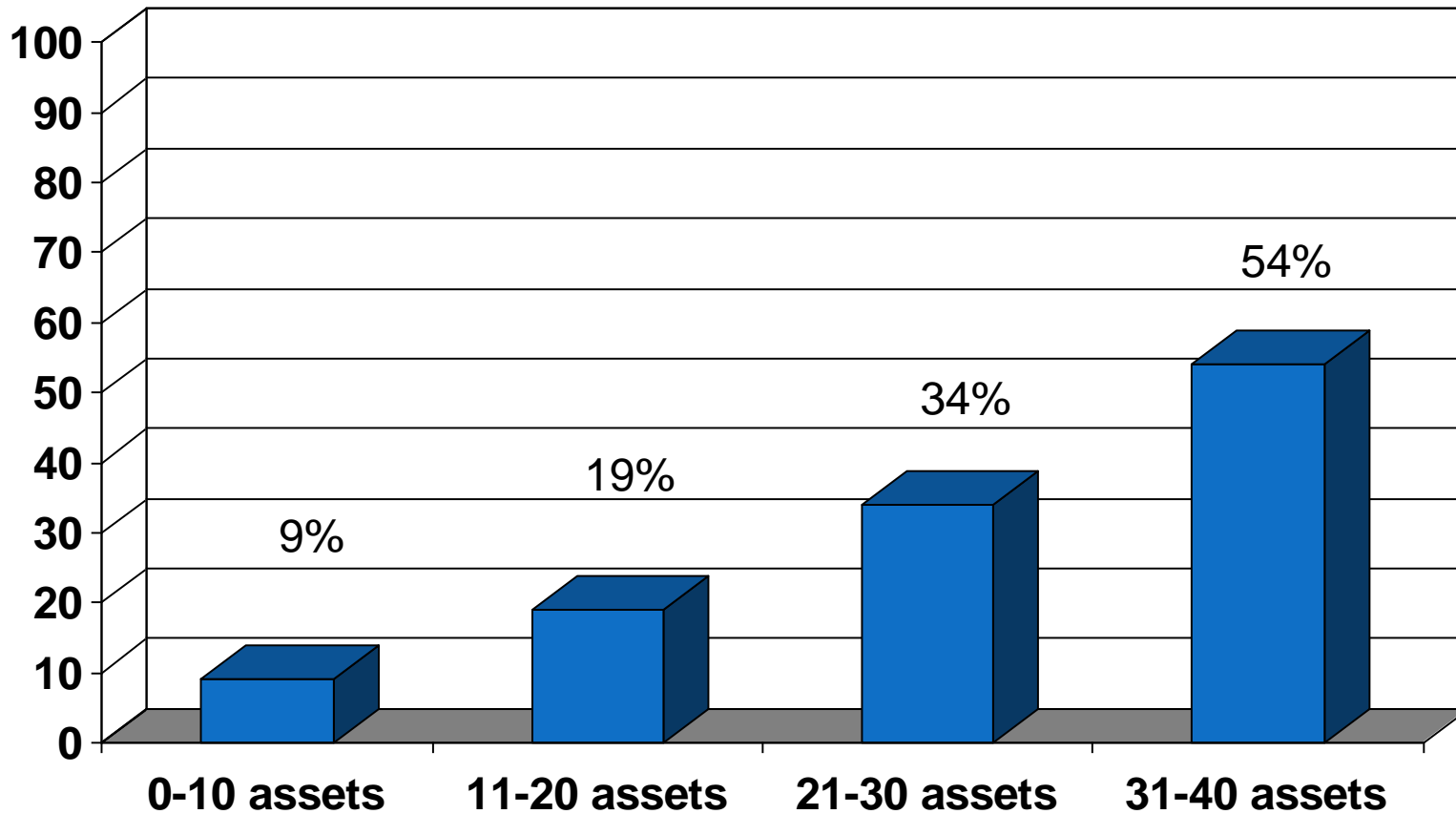


(Based on survey of 150,000 students in grades 6-12; ages 11-18)

<http://www.Search-Institute.org>

# Success in School

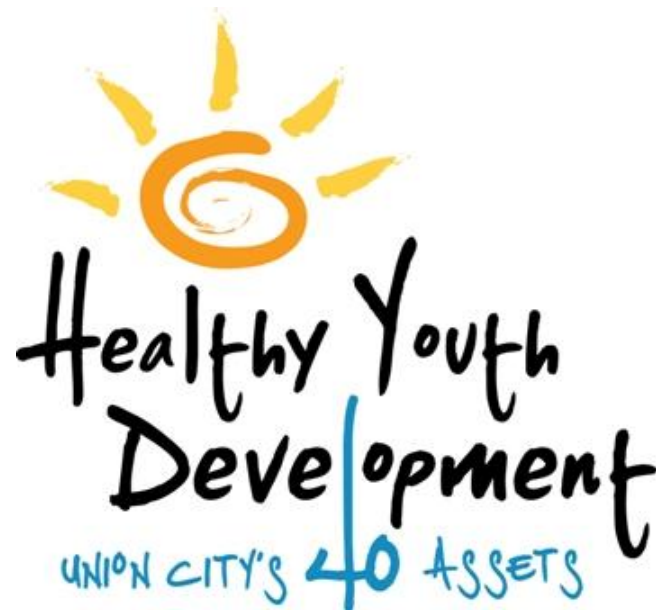
(Mostly A's on Report Card)



(Based on survey of 150,000 students in grades 6-12; ages 11-18)

<http://www.Search-Institute.org>

# Union City *Sustained* Healthy Youth Development and Dropout/Truancy Prevention





Do not go further unless, you ...

# ...Dare to Dream the Impossible Dream!

## And have the desire for total systemic change!

- The full support of:
  - The leadership (Superintendent, Principals)
  - Faculty & staff
- Long-term commitment to do whatever it takes
- Willingness to admit when it's not working and adjust accordingly
- **This is an initiative, not a program!**

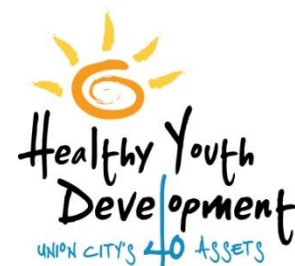
# Background

- Seven years ago we created the Union City Sustained Healthy Youth Development Council
- Shortly thereafter, we adopted the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets
- Six years ago, we received a grant from United Way of Erie County for \$50,000 per year to begin...



# The Union City Dropout/Truancy Prevention Project.

- Our initial proposal was to overhaul the high school with the idea that we work **one youth at a time**, and that **every youth matters**. Within the past three years, we have expanded to cover K – 12 grades.
- Our first step was to fully and honestly assess our current systems. What we found was ...





- Attendance policy was not enforced.
- No hearings for truancy or attendance.
- Students could miss 40+ days and still pass.
- No penalty in extra-curricular activities for tardiness.
- No extra support staff.
- No additional funding sources.
- A NUMBER OF STUDENTS WERE NOT CONNECTED TO THE SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY

*How did we make it better?*

Increased In-School  
Activities/Connections



After school tutoring/Clubs targeting

‘unconnected students’ – We asked them what they would like to do

- Community Mentoring (Senior Citizens)
- Staff and Peer Mentoring
- Peer Educator Group
- Chess Club/Tournament
- Gold Club Card
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Promotion Night
- Middle School Fun Night
- Second Mile Leadership

... to name a few of the 100-plus activities  
now offered



# Community Agencies

- Union City Family Support Center
- Union City Girl Scouts
- Adagio Power Up Nutrition
- Adagio Health
- L8O (Community Youth Group)
- Pyramid (Drug and Alcohol Prevention Programming)
- Smiles Dental Van/Union City Family Dentistry
- Thurston House
- Safe Horizons



# Increased School to Community Activities/Connections





# Main Street Planting



## Peer Educating



# Locks of Love Donation



# Increased Community to School Connections





# L80 Community Youth Group



## Community Arts Program



# Now to Specific Policy Changes Addressing Dropout and Truancy Prevention

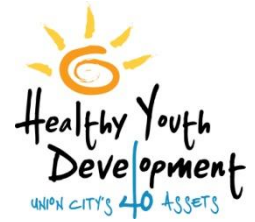


# New Attendance Policy

- For students who are of compulsory school age, five days of total absence or three (3) days of unlawful absences will necessitate a warning notice to be sent in accordance with Section 1333 of the School Code.
- All subsequent absences will result in the filing of a complaint for court action with the district magistrate.
- For purposes of this policy, **compulsory school age** shall mean the period of a child's life from the time the child's parents elect to have the child enter school, which shall be no later than the age of eight (8) years, until the age of seventeen (17) years. Administrative discretion will be used in all cases.

# PROCEDURE CHANGES

## Class attendance policy:



- Two criteria must be met in order to pass each class: coursework and attendance.
- A high school student shall not be granted credit for a course if absences from class total more than 7 absences a quarter.
- A student is considered absent if they miss the class, or if they miss 10 or more minutes of the class period unexcused.
- The individual teacher's attendance will stand as the official attendance for that class. Because of lateness or early dismissals, attendance often varies from class to class.
- An appeals procedure exists for students who believe there are extenuating circumstances for their absences. Forms are available in the main office.

# Additional Programming/Staff

1. Associate Coordinator for Healthy Youth Development
2. Social Worker
3. Resource Officer
4. Truancy Task Force
5. Strict Five-Day Policy
6. Truancy
7. SAP & ESAP
8. District Justice Cooperation:  
Court Orders/Jail Terms/  
Creative Sentencing-cell phones, pets



# Effects

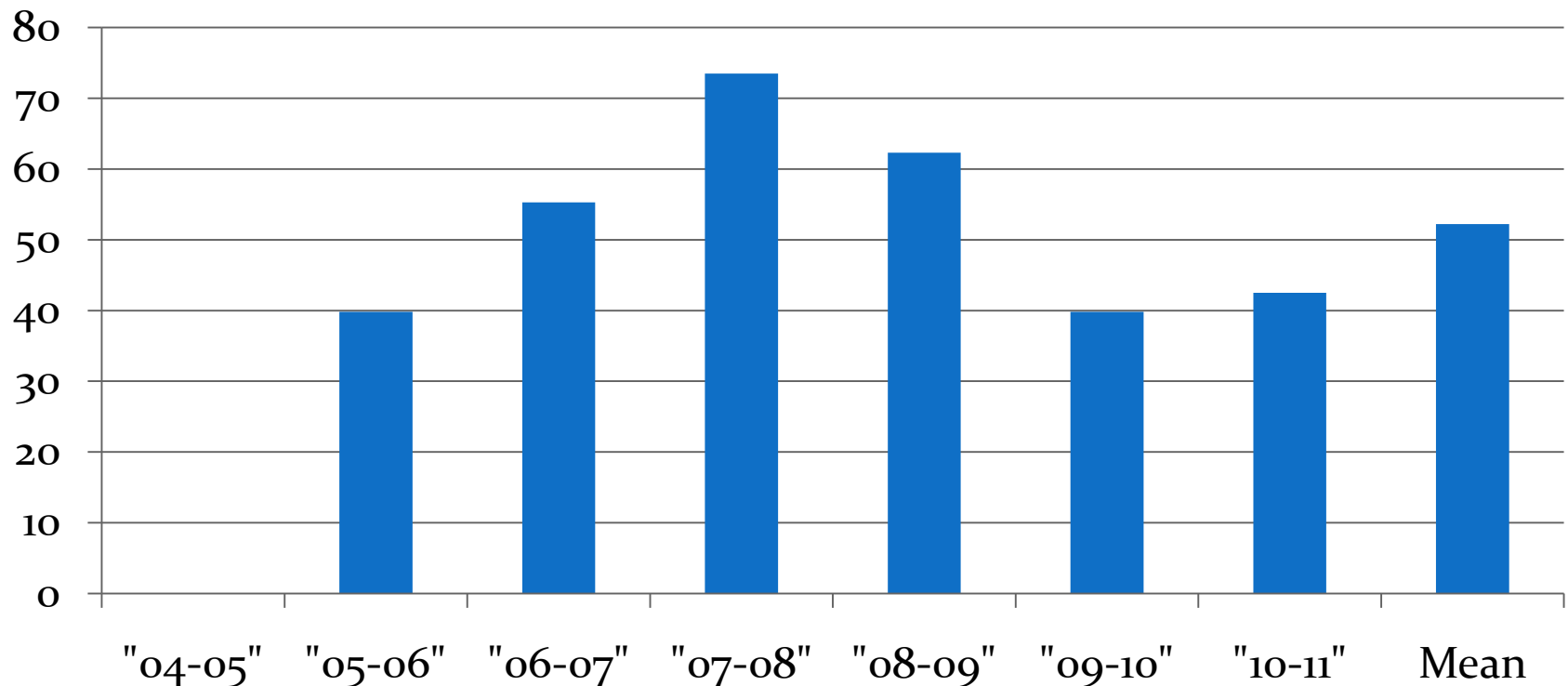
- Lowered dropout rate/truancy
- Increased student participation in extra-curricular activities
- Additional open relationships between students and staff
  - *Mentoring relationships*
- Additional open relationships between students and community members
  - *Higher student attendance/participation at community events*
- Increased cooperation from the School Board and Community
  - *Higher attendance of School Board members and Community members at student functions*
- Improved school spirit



# District Justice/Truancy Hearings

School Year	Truancy Hearings
2002-2003	3
2003-2004	9
2004-2005	17
2005-2006	34
2006-2007	43
2007-2008	40
2008-2009	23
2009-2010	23
2010-2011	33

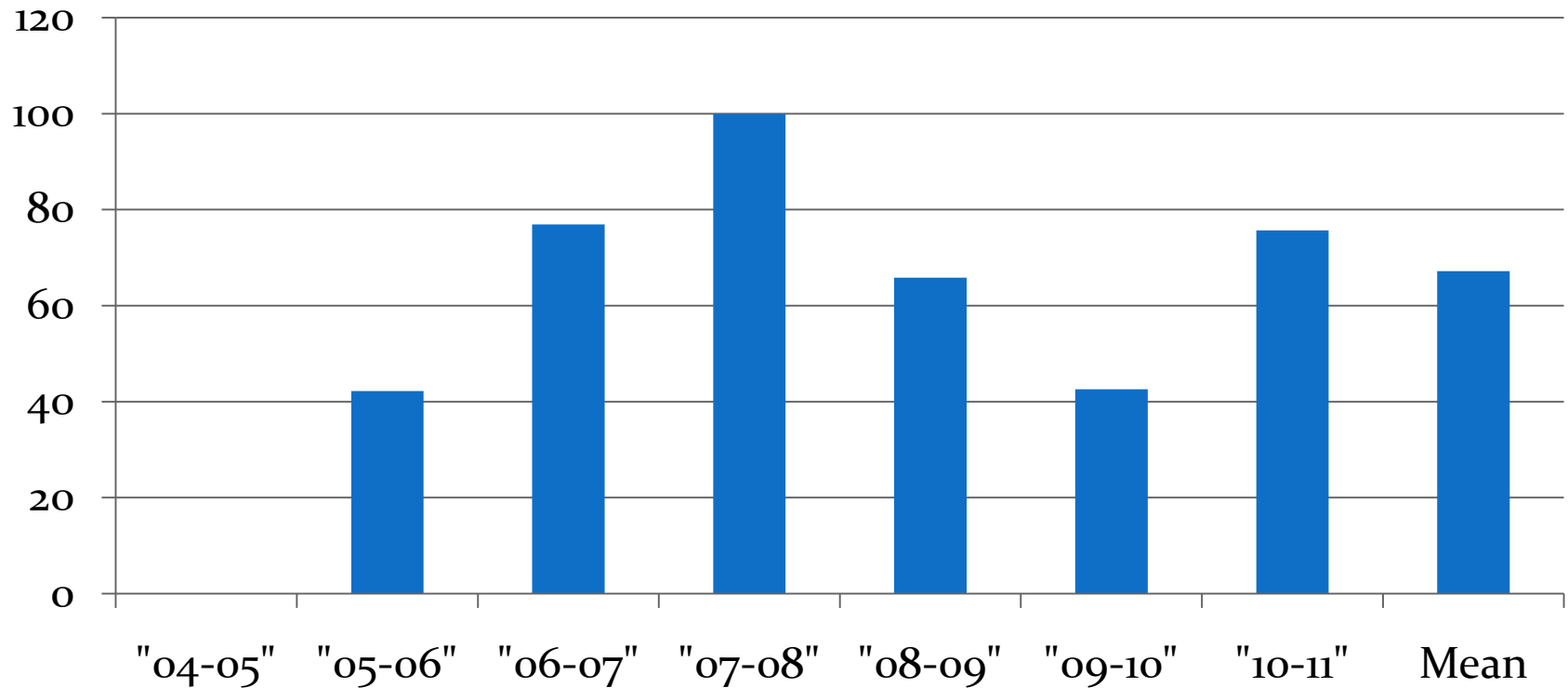
# Percentage Decline in Chronic Truancy (40 or more missed days)



- Note : 2004-2005 is baseline year. Mean = Mean decrease from baseline year.

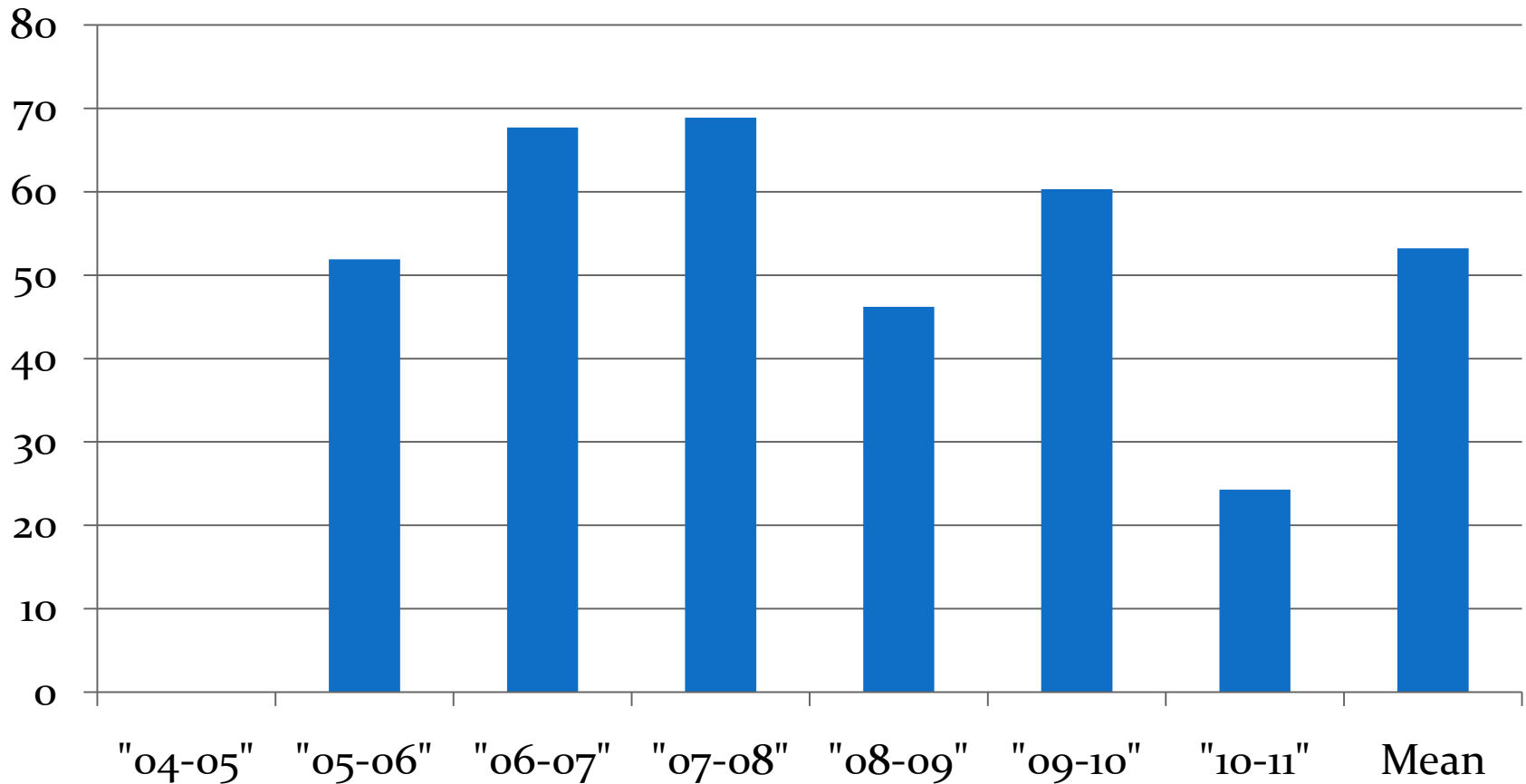


# Percentage Decline in Extreme Chronic Truancy (60 or more missed days)



- Note : 2004-2005 is baseline year. Mean = Mean decrease from baseline year.

# Percentage Decline in Dropouts




- Note : 2004-2005 is baseline year. Mean = Mean decrease from baseline year.



In six years, we prevented  
43 dropouts.


At an \$800,000 savings to  
society per dropout –  
a savings of

**Over \$34 million!**



Over six years, United Way  
has contributed \$300,00 to  
this project.

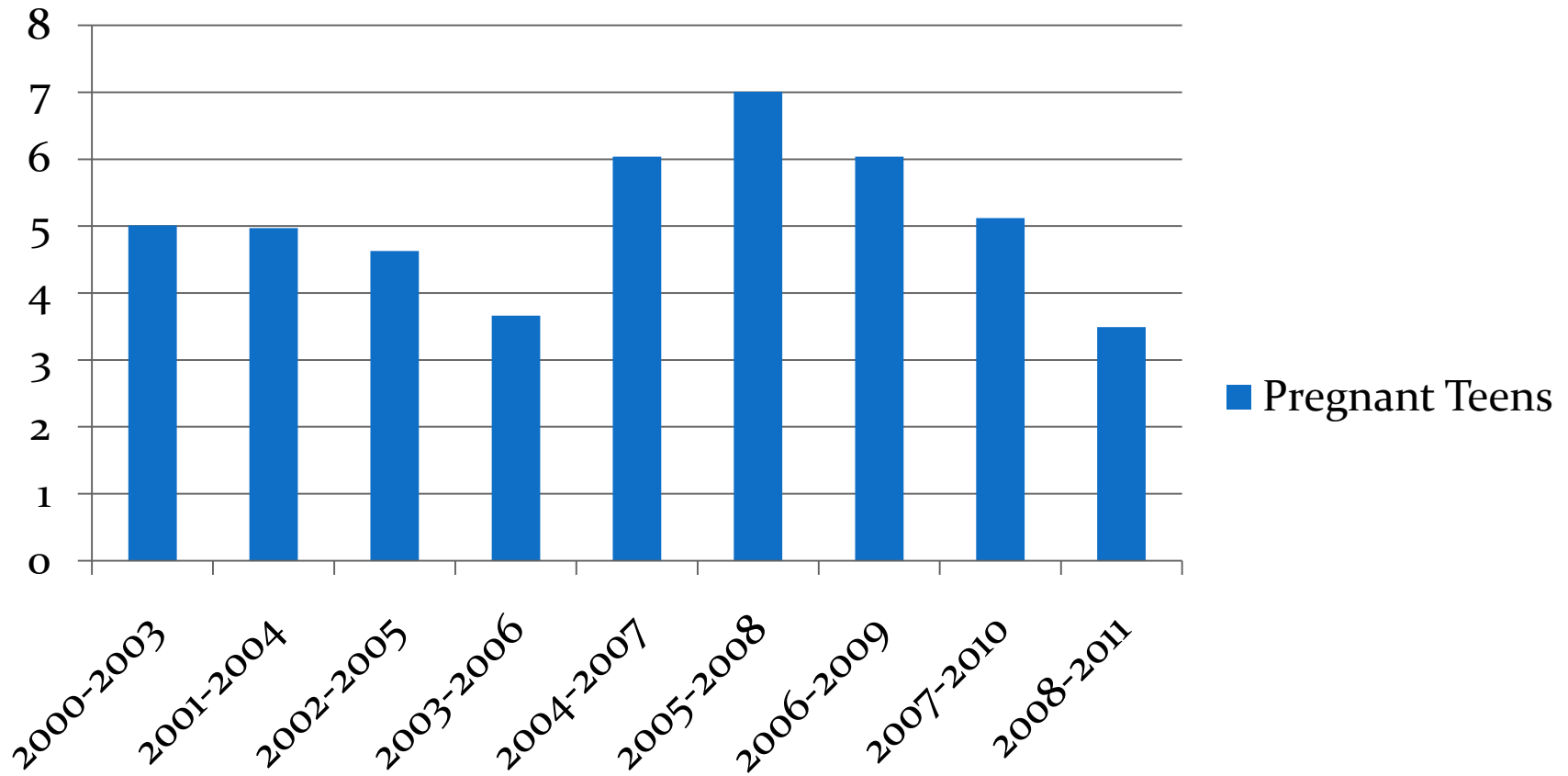
For every \$1 United Way has  
contributed, society will reap  
a **\$115 return on investment  
(ROI).**



# Additional Positive Outcomes

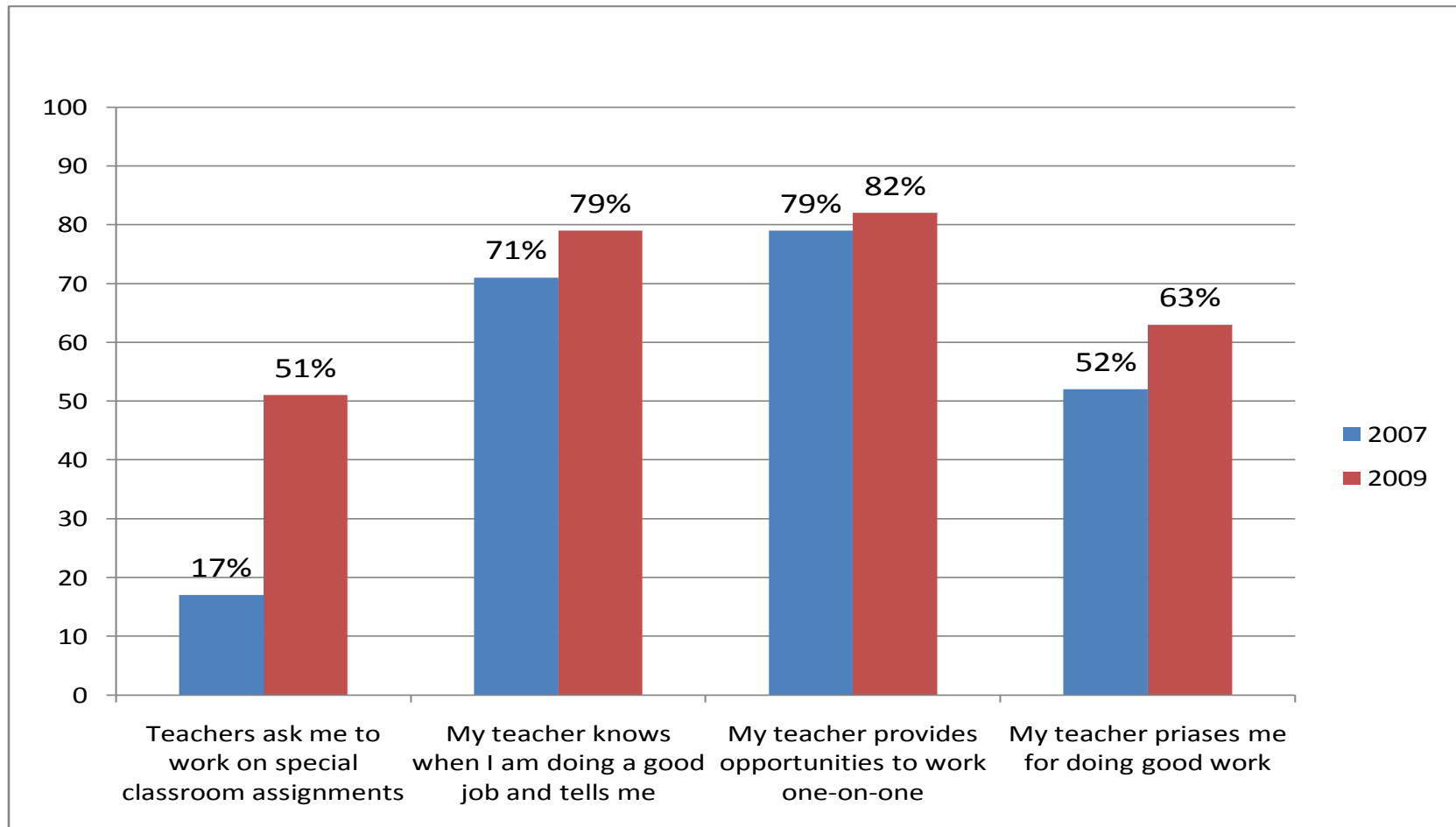
# Teen Pregnancies

## Three-Year Moving Average



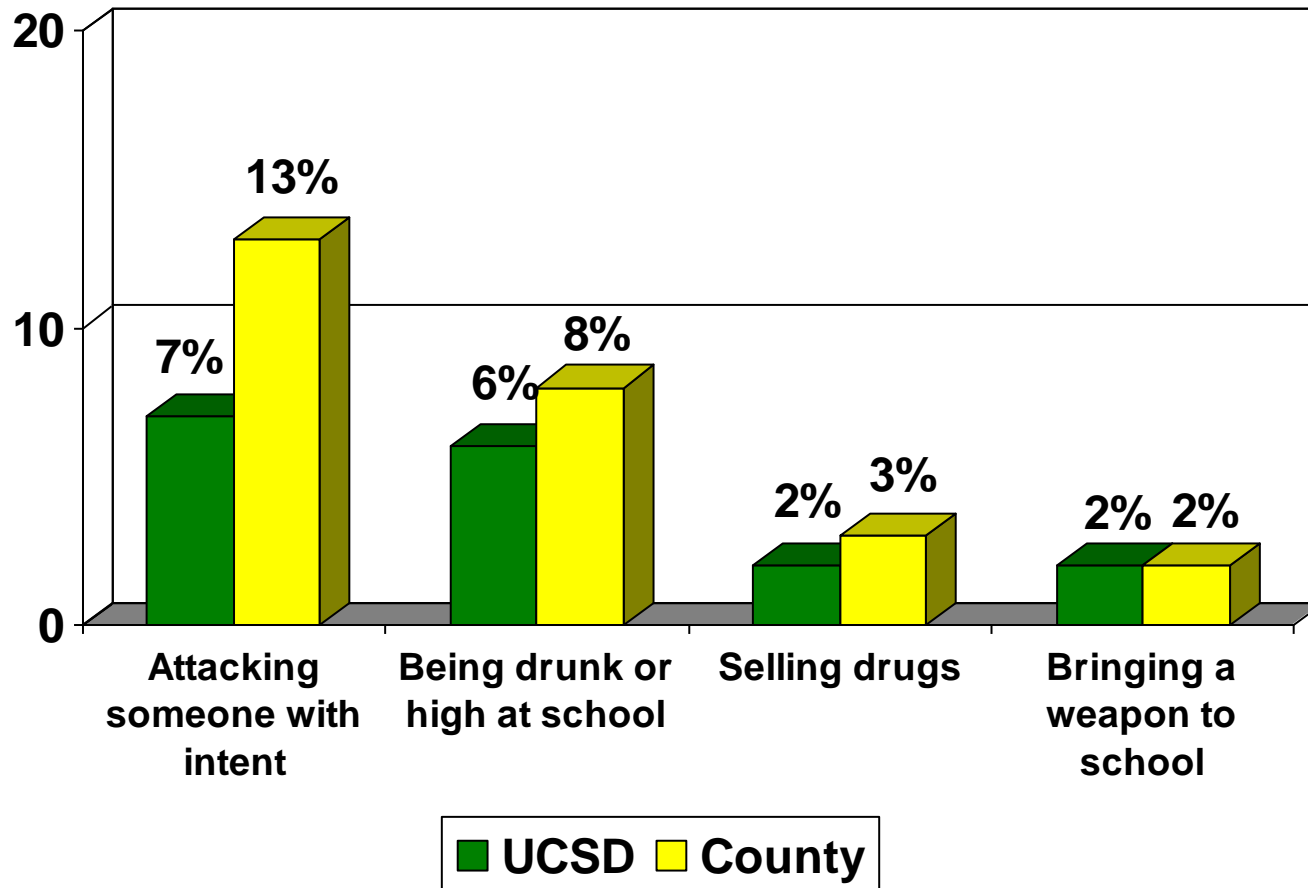
Note: 2004-2007 & 2005-2008 are our baseline years.

# Percent of students responding "Yes"(grades 6, 8)



# Antisocial Behaviors

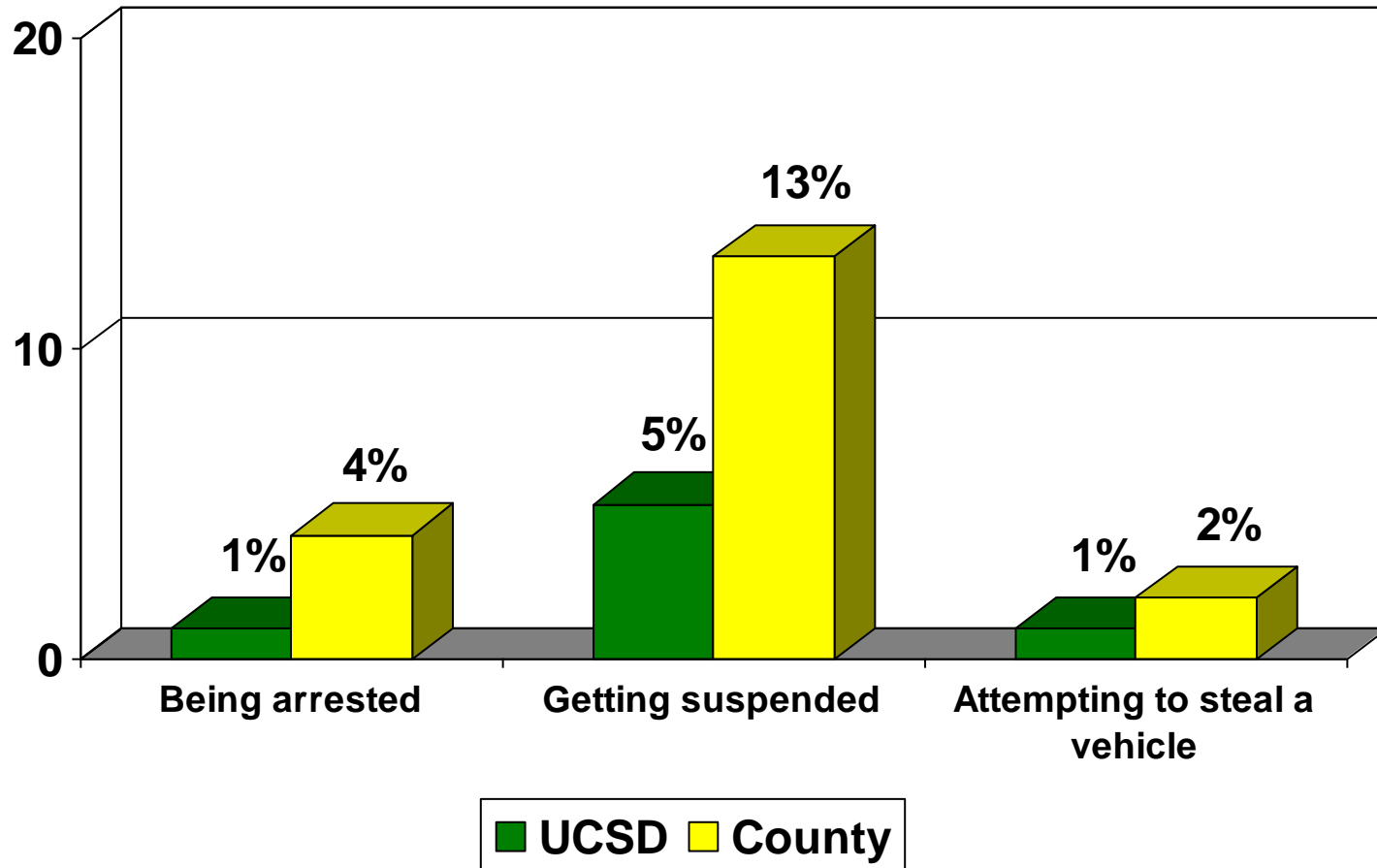
(Percentage of students-Grades 6,8,10)





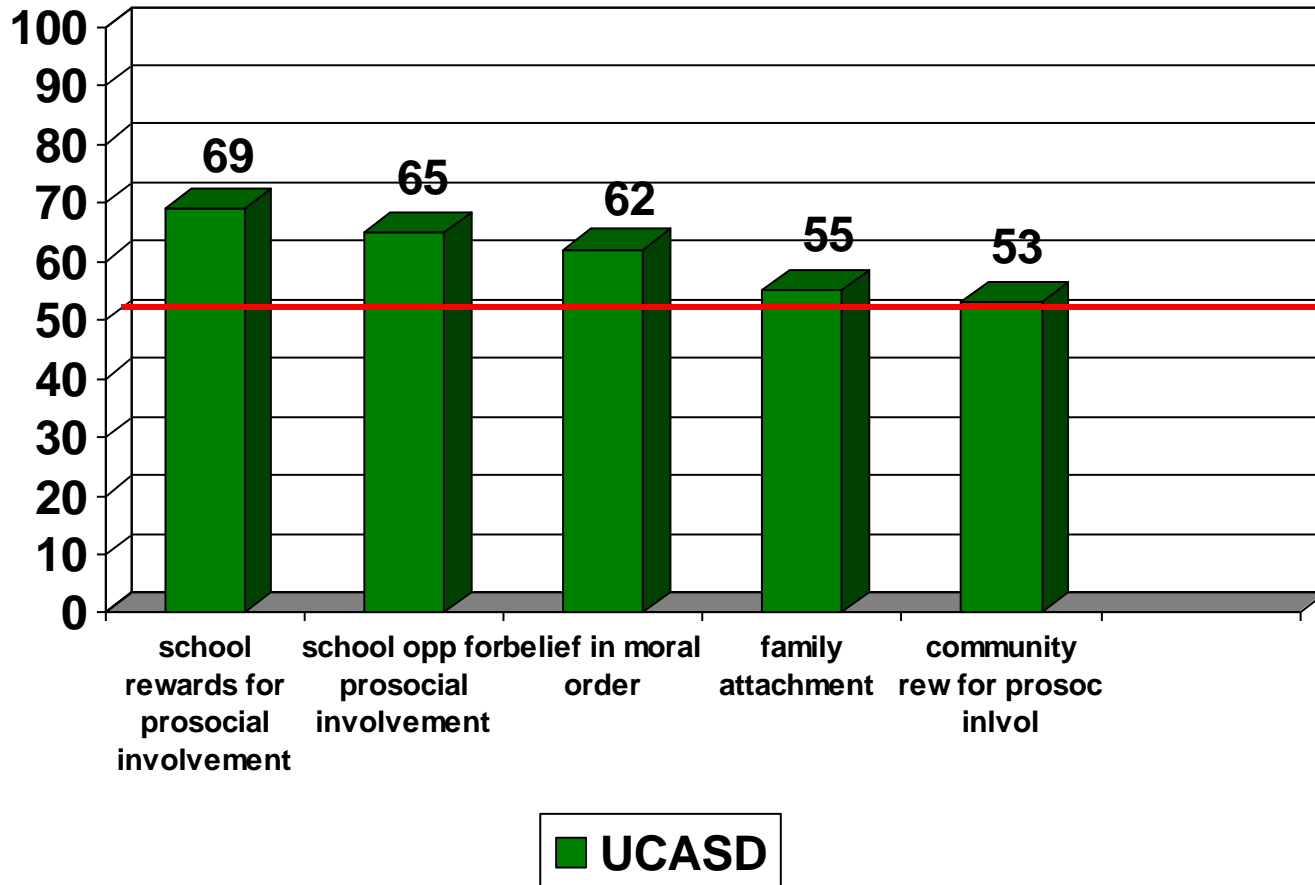
# Antisocial Behaviors

(Percentage of students-Grades 6,8,10)



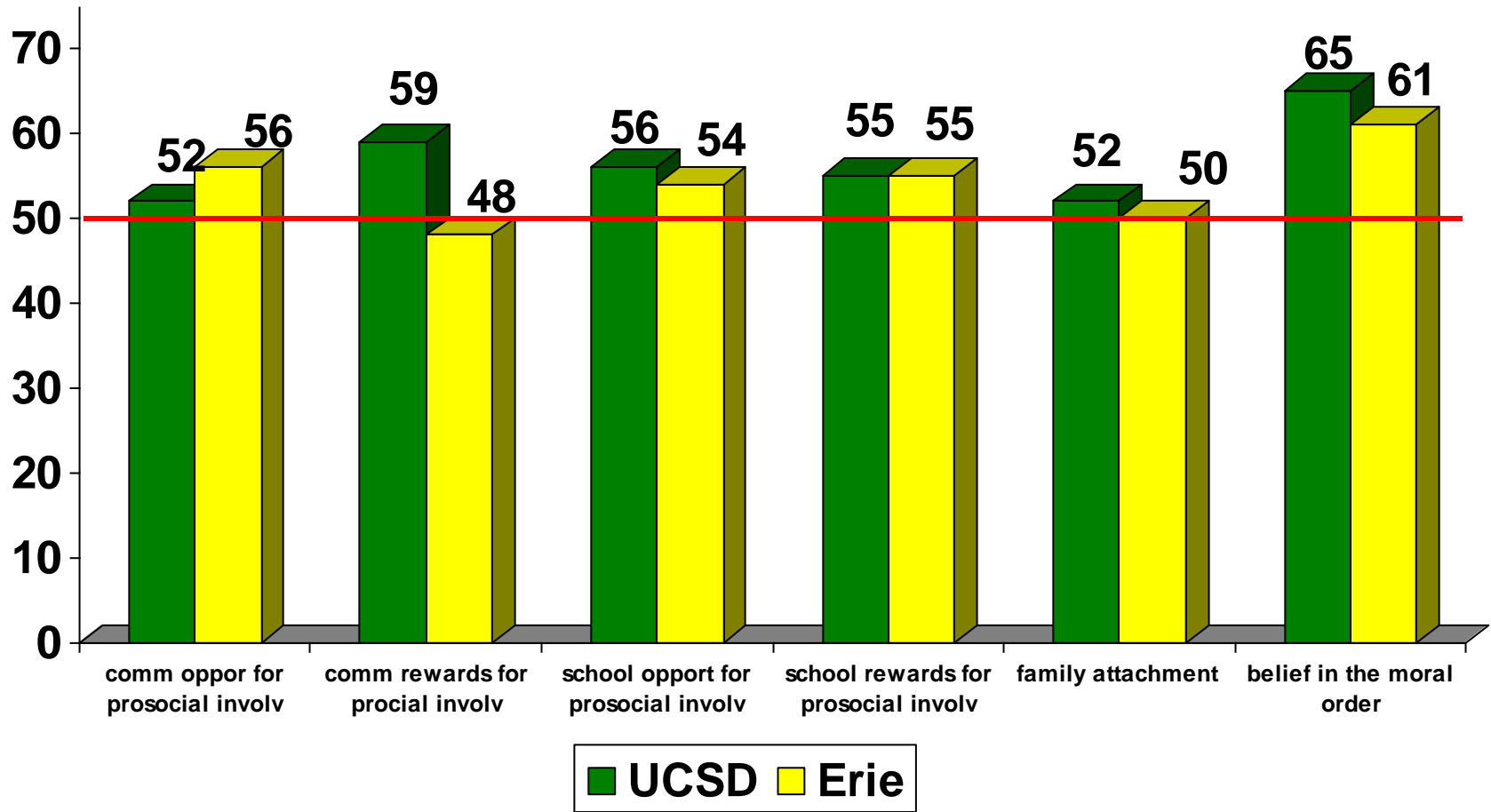
# Protective Factors

*(UCASD- higher scores are positive; 50=national average)*



# Protective Factors

*(UCASD – Erie County)*





# Take Home Message

Our mantra remains:

**Every Youth Matters**

**One Youth at a Time**


# Future

- We are excited and hopeful to maintain the initiative and effects. We are currently working with United Way of Erie County to develop a strategy to fund these projects far into the future.
- We are working on expanding our initiative to other communities. Our overall research design is the delayed treatment cohort design. We are currently in the early stages of working with two additional local high schools, one rural and one inner-city, with other communities on the horizon.
- The past three years we have expanded into the Middle and Elementary Schools. Thus, pun intended, we are truly engaged in primary prevention. Time will tell ...



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# Policy Implications

Based upon our unique perspective, the following policy changes would help us to continue making school a positive, nurturing environment that encourages student success.

1. Increase mandatory school attendance age.
2. Link social services that benefit family (welfare, food stamps, disability Social Security, etc.) to student attendance/success at school.
3. Resources for intense intervention with families that have had generations of school dropouts and students otherwise disengaged from school (truancy, etc.).