

Florida TaxWatch Study of Florida Boys & Girls Club Organizations



"The recent results (March 2013) of a study we conducted on Florida Boys & Girls Clubs show they make a positive impact on their participants' academic performance and juvenile justice avoidance which helps mold productive and responsible citizens that give back to the state of Florida. (The Clubs') "FCAT achievements, low absenteeism, grade promotion, low dropout rate and avoiding contact with the juvenile justice system are all associated with a higher likelihood of Club members completing high school...which has significant effects on the individual taxpayers in general."



Boys and Girls Clubs of Lee County (BGCLC) is a local non-profit organization that offers low cost after-school and out of school enrichment programs to help participants develop positive character traits and improve their academic performance and behavior. The BGCLC joined 35 Boys & Girls Club organizations located in Florida to complete the Florida TaxWatch Study. The year-long study set about to determine what measurable effects there may be from participating in a Florida based Boys and Girls Club. The study was completed by comparing a group of Club members to a demographically similar "Comparison Group" using school and juvenile justice system records from 2007 through 2011. These findings strongly suggest a significant difference in educational and juvenile justice outcomes versus demographically similar peers who do not take advantage of Florida based Boys & Girls Club programs.

Study Findings:

Educational Impact:

- ✓ BGC participants' median achievement level in the Math and Reading FCATs are equal to the median performance of their peers in Math, and higher than their peers in Reading;
- ✓ Club members were absent from school half as often as their comparison group;
- ✓ Club members had a higher percentage of Grade Promotion than their comparison group;
- ✓ Club members had a much lower percentage of Grade Retention than their comparison group;
- ✓ BGC's dropout rate was significantly lower than that of their comparison group.

Juvenile Justice System Impact:

- ✓ Only 5.9% of BGC members studied were associated with the most common offense (felonies, misdemeanors and other minor violations) versus 15% of the Comparison group.
- ✓ More than half (58%) of referrals were first-time referrals for the BGC group, compared to only 40% for the Comparison group.
- ✓ A higher percentage of cases (466) in the Comparison group resulted in residential commitments over that of only 12 cases for BGC participants.
- ✓ Not a single case of a BGC participant was transferred to an adult court, compared to 162 (1.5 percent of all group referrals) in the Comparison group.
- ✓ The percentage of cases in the Comparison group (5,343) that required diversion or probation services were significantly higher than cases associated with BGC participants (250).

Economic Impact:

- ✓ BGC's economic impact ranges from a short-term taxpayer benefit of more than \$9,000 for each student that is not held back a grade,
- ✓ BGCs long-term, aggregate benefit of nearly \$29,080,000 for 100 additional high school graduates.
- ✓ Taxpayers also realize a cost-avoidance of \$5,000 per youth who is diverted from criminal activities.
- ✓ Taxpayers realize a savings of \$46,305 for each youth that is diverted from incarceration.

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