

Appendix A

Truancy Prevention: Research, Policy and Practice

Heather MacGillivray, MA
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NCSE | National Center for School Engagement

Who is NCSE?

- The National Center for School Engagement
- Promoting truancy prevention and school success
- Provide training, evaluation and technical assistance
- NCSE is an initiative of the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children





**What does the research
tell us about truancy?**

Truancy Statistics

- Currently no national definition
- NCLB requires state definition of truancy and collection
- Colorado Truancy rates can be found on CDE website

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/truancystatistics.htm>



Some Truancy Statistics

- Around 7% of students report they did not go to school on one or more of the past 30 days because they felt unsafe at school or on their way to/from school. (YRBS)
- Rate of 9-12 graders that report missing school due to safety concerns has grown 50% since 1993 (YRBS)
- A longitudinal study of youth ages 12-16 found that 38% reported being late to school without an excuse (NLSY).
- Between 1985 and 2000, the rate of petitioned truancy cases in juvenile court more than doubled (NJCDA).

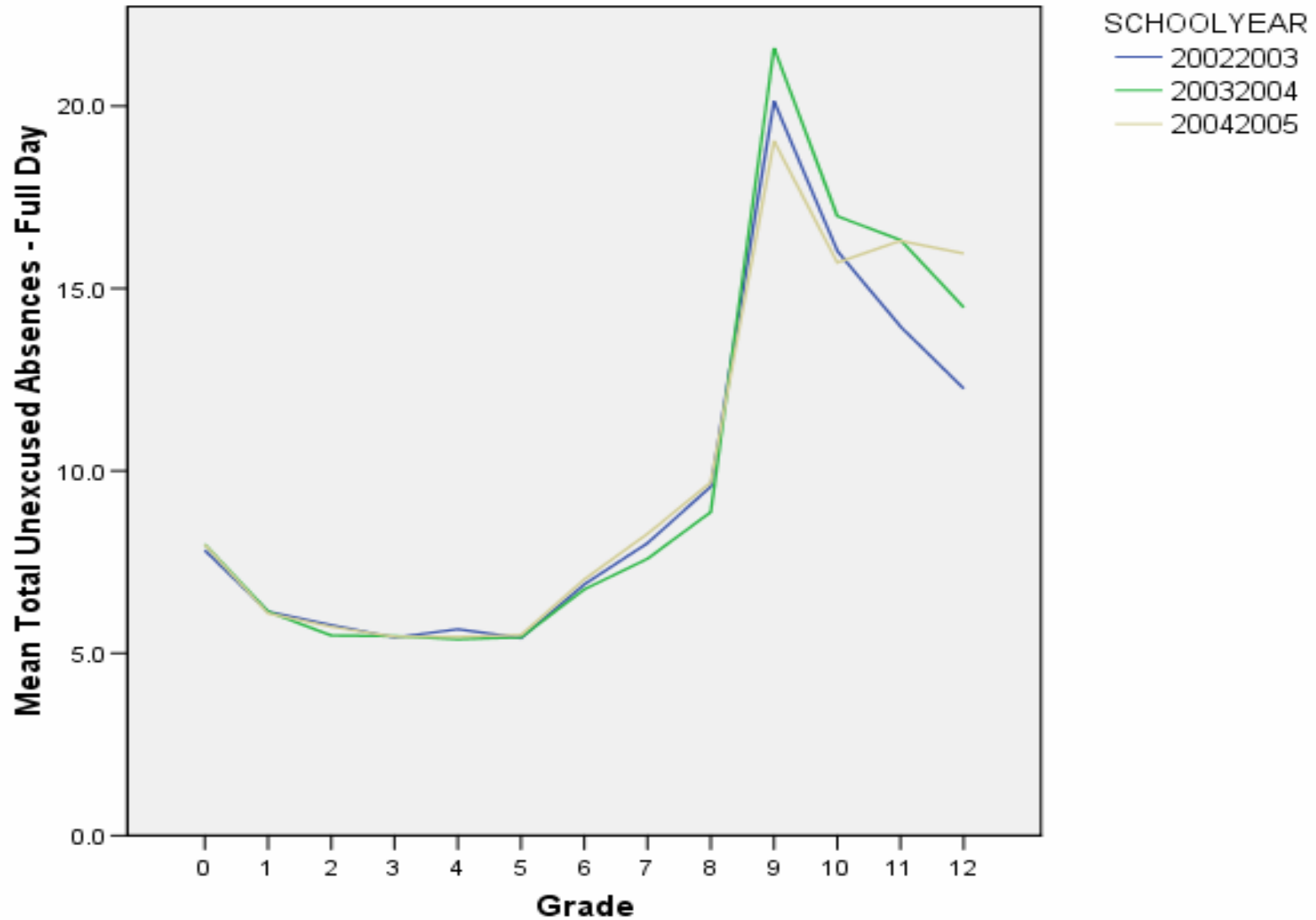


The Denver Data

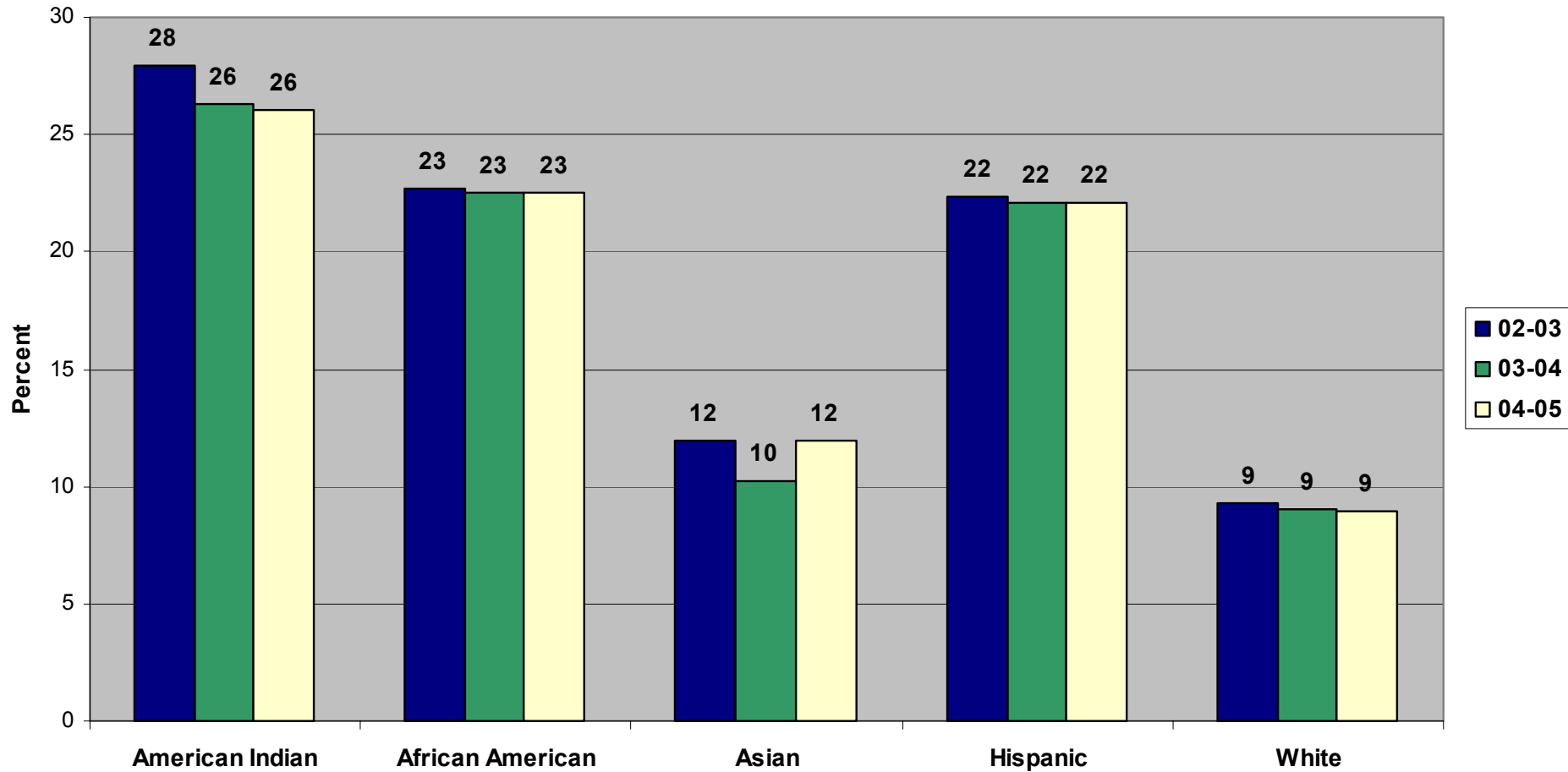
- Collected data from Denver Public Schools to assess prevalence of truancy
- This gives a better indication than attendance rates or drop out statistics
- Surprising results



Average Unexcused Absences by Grade



Percent of Chronic Truants by Ethnicity



Percent of Chronic Truants and their Exit Status

- Approximately 60 % of students who left DPS for juvenile incarceration or detention were chronically truant.
- Approximately 60% of students who were expelled from DPS were chronically truant.
- Approximately 20% of students who left to be home schooled were chronically truant.
- Approximately 16 % of students who attended more than one school in a school year are chronically truant.

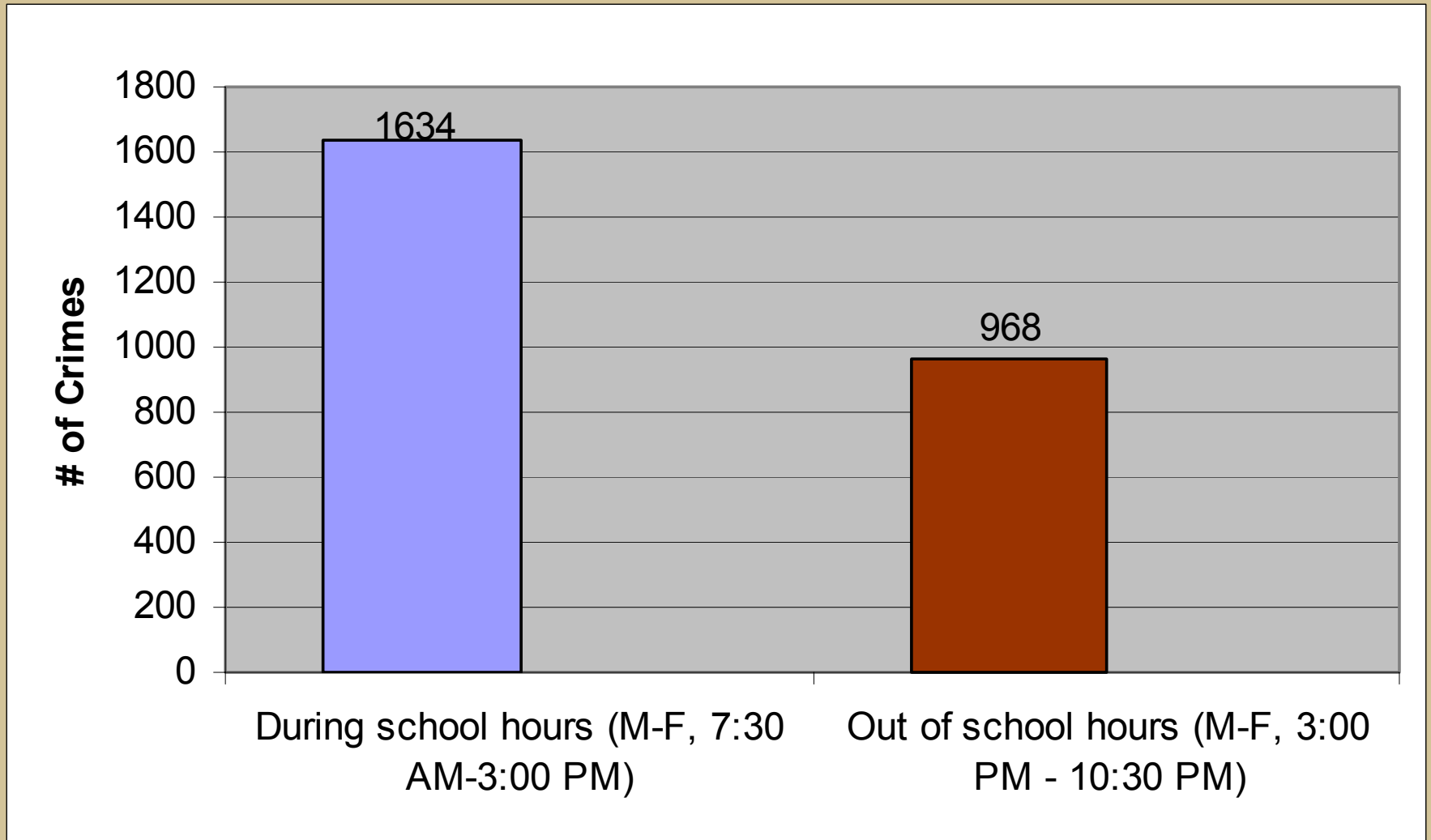


Percent of Chronic Truants who Drop Out

- Approximately 13% of student whose exit code was “mutual consent (under the age 16)”, “runaway or other causes”, or “no trace of enrollment in another school” were chronically truant.
- Approximately 50 % of students whose exit code was “dropout” were chronically truant.



Incidents of Crime by Youth (10-17) School Year 04-05



Source: National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

Effect of Truancy on Later Delinquency

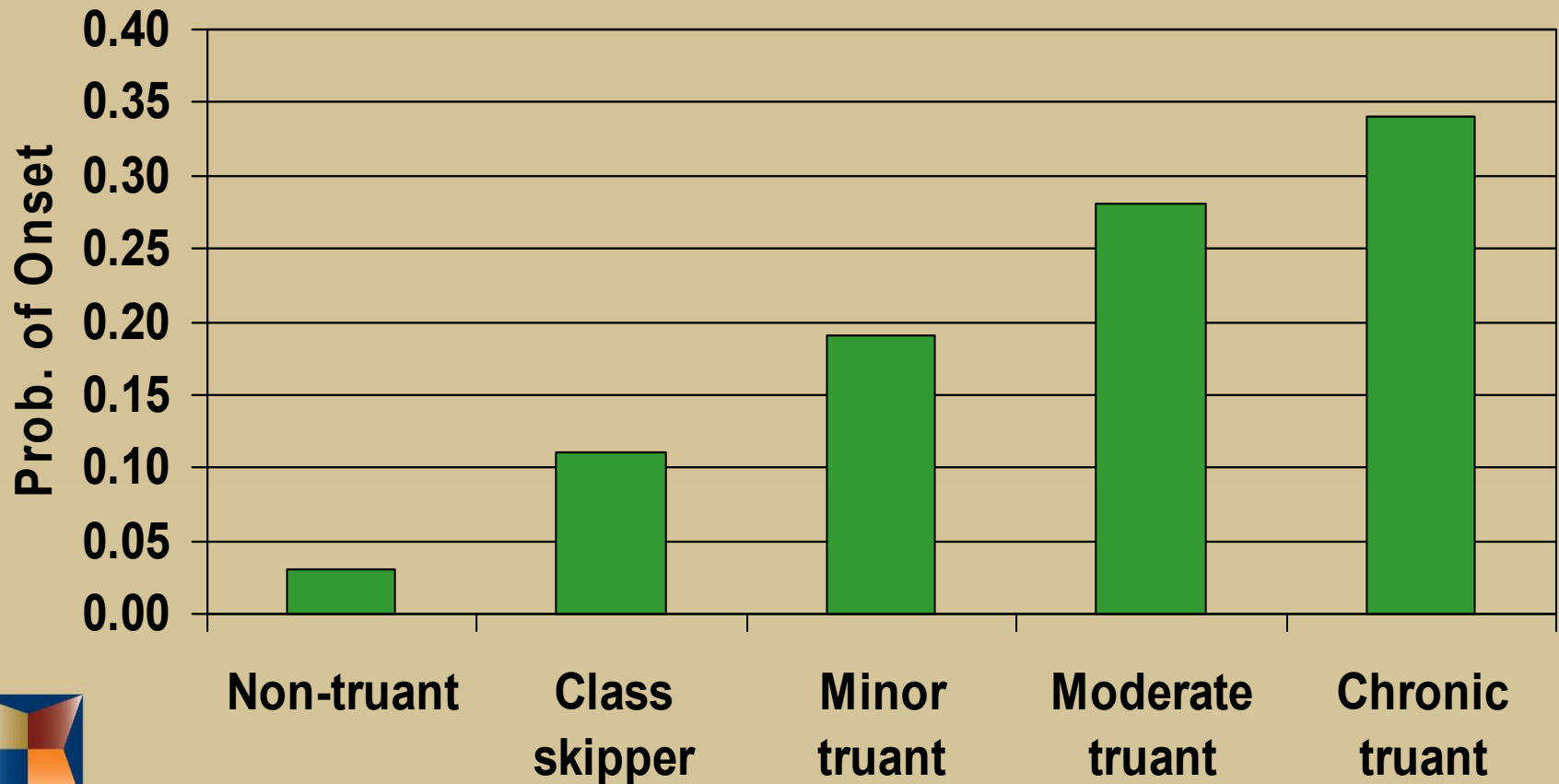
Onset of Serious Assault Crimes

Class Skipper	4.12 times as likely
Minor Truant (1-3 days)	4.03
Moderate Truant (4-9 days)	6.84
Chronic Truant (> 9 days)	12.15

(Henry & Heizinga, 2005)

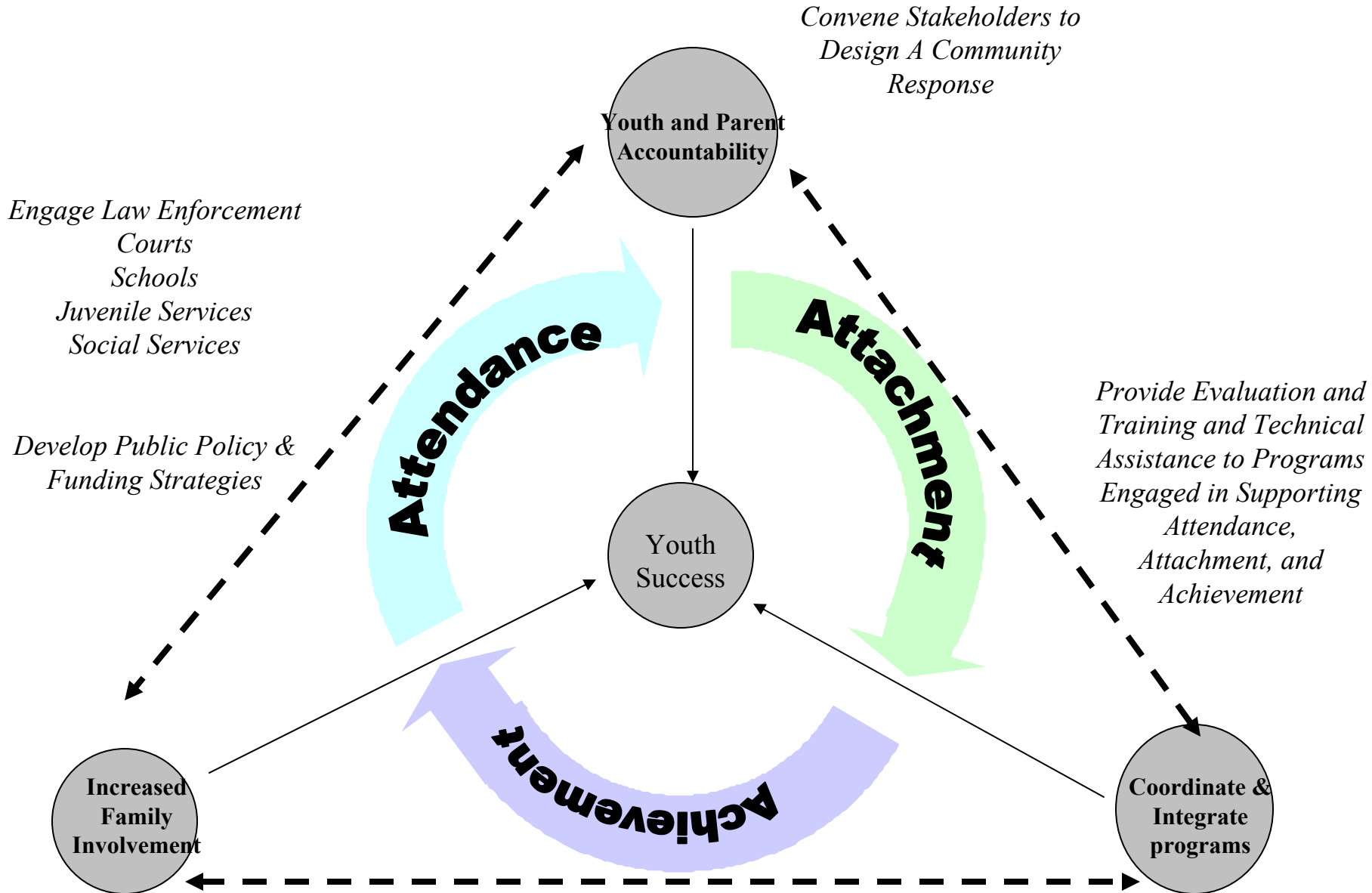


Predicted Probability of Onset of Marijuana Use at Age 14 by Truancy



Solutions for Truant Youth

Strengthening Networks – Building Capacity - Supporting Youth - Creating Cycles of Success





**What are some
recommended Truancy
Prevention & Reduction
Policies?**

Levers for Change

- Federal No child Left Behind Law
- Attendance = School Funding
- High Stakes Achievement Testing
- Truancy Reduction ↓ Day time crime
- Truancy Reduction ↓ Court Costs



Contributions from the Community

- Set community standards that value going to school (involve retired persons)
- Work with businesses to not serve students during school hours
- Improve transportation access
- Increase awareness of the problem and the solutions
- Connect schools with law enforcement and youth services



State/County/Municipal Policies



- File CHINS/PINS
- File D&N
- Daytime curfew
- Subpoena school records



- School revenue based on average daily enrollment
- Include school truancy rates in report card
- Claim revenues for students with truancy petition



Court Sanctioning Policies



- Fine parents & students
- Arrest parents
- Contempt citations
- Suspend driver's license
- Detention



- Court ordered family or individual therapy
- Court ordered tutoring or health services
- Waive fines with improved attendance



• Community service

School Policies




- School F grading
- No Extra Curric. Act.
- Suspension/expulsions
- Employ truancy officers
- Grading on participation
- Change Ed. Placement
- Appeals processes
- Consistent attendance policy and practice known by all (students, parents, staff, community agencies)



Other Policy Change Needs

- **End out of school suspensions for being truant**
- **Finance Schools by average daily attendance not one day counts**
- **Document attendance and truancy by school & set goals**
- **Less use by courts of detention for truancy**
- **Remove attendance as a factor in grading**
- **Start secondary schools later in the day**
- **Provide partial credit options for students**
- **Conduct a “push out “policy audit of rules and practices**
- **Raise compulsory attendance age to 18**





**What are the promising
practices for
truancy reduction and
prevention?**

Truancy Reduction is no One Agency Show

Who should be at the table?

- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Juvenile Justice (Courts & youth services)
- ✓ Law Enforcement (Police & prosecutors)
- ✓ Service Agencies
- ✓ Public health
- ✓ Parents
- ✓ Youth



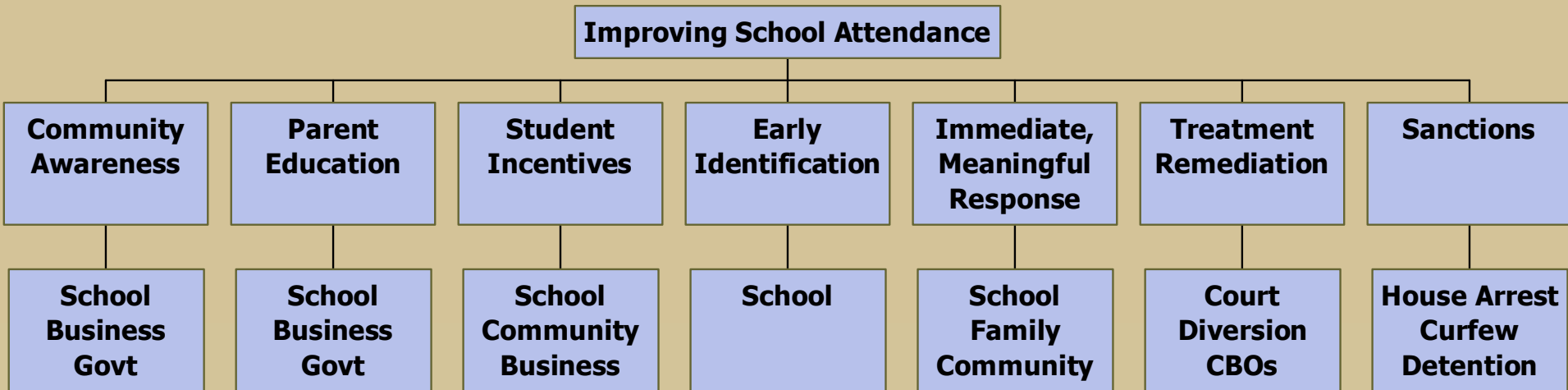
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Faith-Based Organizations

✓ Local Business Representatives

A Continuum of Support



Principles of Effective Programs

- Include special attention to health and special education needs
- Data driven decision making
- Community and Business involvement
- Focus on school transition years
- Include public awareness campaigns
- Meaningful parent involvement planning together toward solutions with school & agencies



Demonstration Sites

- King County Superior Courts, Seattle WA
- State Attorney's Office, Jacksonville, FL
- University of Hawaii, Honolulu, HI
- Weed and Seed Office, Contra Costa Co., CA
- Safe Streets Campaign, Tacoma, WA
- Mayor's Anti-Gang Office, Houston, TX
- Suffolk Co. Probation Dept., Yaphank, NY



Alternatives to Court

- Youth Court
- Mediation
- Quasi-judicial proceedings
- Diversion
- Truancy workshops
- Knock and talks



Community Based Programs

- Truancy centers to take youth found truant
- Community assessment center to help families access services (health, mental health, tutoring, mentoring etc.)
- Community workers such as probation officers or social workers act as liaisons between youth, school and JJ
- Case management services
- Walking school bus
- After school programs (recreation & educational)
- Home visitation



Clothing and school supply drives

School Based Programs

- Attendance recognition awards
- Letters/voice/e- mails to parents
- Catch up classrooms or tutoring
- Student attendance review boards
- Class letters home
- School climate programs (anti-bullying, tolerance, school involvement activities)
- Attendance specialists in building



Psych evaluations or social work services

Visit NCSE's Truancy Website

www.schoolengagement.org

info@schoolengagement.org

303-837-8466 x121

Contacts:

Heather MacGillivray, MA

