

## Project Summaries

**Applicant:** Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia  
**GMS Number:** 2010-54556-VA-JF  
**Project Title:** An Evaluation of the Young Women Leaders Program

The primary goal of this project is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Young Women Leaders Program (YWLP), a one-on-one and group-based mentoring program, in preventing delinquency and related outcomes in girls who are at-risk for delinquency based on individual and/or ecological characteristics. YWLP serves 50-85 early adolescent girls in grades 7-8 annually in the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Researchers will evaluate YWLP through an experimental design: girls eligible for the program will be randomly assigned to the program or control group condition. Pre-, mid- and post-program surveys from girls, parents, teachers, and mentors will be used to assess changes in girls over the course of the program (one school year) and one-year after the program; the two groups will be compared statistically for evidence of program effects. Researchers will also use observational data and interviews to identify “best practices” for effective program implementation. Research reports will document YWLP’s effectiveness in reducing problem behaviors related to girls’ delinquency, the transferability of YWLP to other communities, and the cost-effectiveness of YWLP as a delinquency-prevention program.

**Applicant:** University of Connecticut Health Center  
**GMS Number:** 2010-54595-CT-JF  
**Project Title:** Voices: An Evaluation of Gender Responsive Treatments for Girls

Despite the growing call for gender responsive services in community-based and juvenile justice settings, there is little research on their efficacy. The VOICES curriculum is an innovative, gender-responsive, holistic, multidimensional, trauma informed, group intervention for adolescent girls. It is widely used nationally and internationally in community-based and juvenile justice programs to treat adolescent girls with mental health and substance abuse problems. The proposed study will address a critical gap in the clinical and research literature on treatment by estimating effect sizes associated with participation in VOICES on delinquency, psychological functioning and substance abuse outcomes among adolescent girls. Girls (n=150) between 14-17 years of age who are admitted to an outpatient mental health clinic for behavioral health issues and meet study eligibility criteria will meet with a research assistant for a baseline interview. Following completion of the baseline interview, girls will be randomly assigned either a) VOICES or b) Services-As-Usual (SAU) for 18 weeks of treatment. Short-term outcomes include 30-day point prevalence of involvement in delinquent acts, internalizing and externalizing symptoms, symptoms of depression, and days of any alcohol, marijuana or other illicit drug use will be measured at baseline (entry to treatment) and at 18 weeks (end of treatment) and 30 weeks (12 weeks after the end of the treatment) after the baseline interview. Long-term outcomes include arrests and convictions by offense type and severity, which will be

tracked for one year following treatment discharge. In addition, resiliency, coping strategies, delinquency and aggression will be assessed, as well as mid-treatment levels of treatment engagement (working alliance, attendance, and satisfaction with treatment). Characteristics that may be associated with improved outcomes within and across conditions will also be evaluated. Higher levels of psychological functioning and lower rates of substance use at follow-up are expected in the VOICES condition compared to the SAU.

**Applicant:** Development Services Group  
**GMS Number:** 2010-54620-MD-JF  
**Project Title:** Evaluation of the Girls Circle Program

The purpose of the project is to conduct an experimental evaluation of the Girls Circle (GC) model. Specifically, the goals of this study are to assess the short-term (from intake to program completion) and long-term (from intake to 12 months' post-program completion) effectiveness of the GC model. The sample will be obtained from the Juvenile Probation and Court Services Department (JPCSD) of the Circuit Court of Cook County in Chicago, Ill. Random assignment will be used to allocate 336 subjects into either an experimental (treatment) or a control group. The treatment group will receive GC services while the control group will receive traditional non-gender-specific probation services. Four primary data sources will be used to measure variables: 1) baseline, program completion, and follow-up surveys; 2) GC case-file data; 3) JPCSD records; and 4) staff interviews and site observation. This study will assess the effectiveness of the GC program on four families of outcomes: delinquency, self-efficacy, emotional and behavioral strengths, and perceived body image. The analytic techniques will include a repeated measure analysis that includes one between-group factor (group) and three levels of time (baseline, at the completion of the GC program, and 12 months post-program completion).