



## Research Proves that Think Detroit PAL is a Game-Changer!

### Evidence is mounting that where and how youth spend their time outside of normal school hours has important implications for their development.

Estimates suggest that more than 7 million children in the United States are without adult supervision for some period of time after school. This unsupervised time puts young people at risk for such negative outcomes as academic and behavioral problems, drug use and other types of risky behavior (*Weisman & Gottfredson, 2001*). On the positive side, young people benefit when they spend time engaged in structured activities that offer opportunities for positive interactions with adults and peers (*American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; Carnegie Corporation, 1992; Larson & Verma, 1999; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002*).

### Research shows that out-of-school activities are a fantastic social investment if the right adult mentors are involved.

The benefits of such programs are noteworthy. Compared to doing nothing at all, having an effective out-of-school activity results in 27% more youth with better grades and 37% more with higher achievement test scores!

Other data is equally compelling:

- 35% more youth engage in positive social behaviors;
- 30% demonstrate less problem behavior;
- 25% fewer experiment with drug use;
- an additional 30% feel more connected and bonded to their school; and
- 43% feel better about themselves and their abilities

*(The Impact of After School Programs that Promote Personal and Social Skills).*

Further, a recent evaluation of Detroit after-school programs commissioned by the Skillman Foundation makes it clear: **when it comes to character-enriching after-school programs, Think Detroit PAL is at the top of the list!**

Prior to playing in a Think Detroit PAL sports program, 52% of surveyed youth believed that they “[knew] how to work with people who disagree with me.” After only one season of playing with Think Detroit PAL, the number jumped to 76%! That is an amazing 24% improvement in teamwork scores!

If you think the teamwork scores were compelling, Think Detroit PAL’s scores around valuing diversity were equally amazing! In three separate categories, participants in Think Detroit PAL programs reported an increase in valuing diversity 13-18% more than youth who participated in the other programs!

The chart below summarizes the survey results for teamwork and diversity:

Outcome	Avg change among participants in other after-school programs	Improvement among participants in Think Detroit PAL programs
Ability to work with others who disagree with me	7%	24%
Understanding that you have to work with others to solve most problems	0%	19%
Want friends with backgrounds different from mine	6%	19%
Feel comfortable joining groups where I am different	-5%	14%
Think people from different backgrounds can work together	0%	14%