OUTCOME OF YOUTH PROGRAMS FOR AT RISK TEENAGERS

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Background
Research has shown that children who are actively involved in after-school programs are less likely to be involved in gangs, criminal acts, and risky behaviors. Our hypothesis is that youth who participate in the Hartland Youth Program tend to do better in school and become better leaders in their community.

Methods
Identify ten to twenty youth at the Hartland apartment complex, between the ages of 10-18, to participate in a series of leadership activities. Create the Hartland Youth Program, in which the chosen youth would help plan youth activities for their community. Create the Hartland Tutoring Program to help youth increase academic performance. Create a pamphlet to reach out to Hartland Youth and to explain these programs.

Results
After the initial interviews with the youth, the chosen participants were not showing up to the scheduled orientations and activity meetings. As a result we held youth activities on scheduled Saturdays, and opened the activities to children of all ages. As a result of switching to Saturday’s activities, the participation rate has increased steadily. Our main results in youth participation were around 70-80% among children between the ages of 3-11, and about 10% in youth around the ages of 12-16.

Conclusion
As a result of low participation, we have been unable to draw clear conclusions regarding our hypothesis. However, our strategies have changed from our original plan with the intention to increase youth participation toward subsequent leadership development.