

SAN BERNARDINO/RIVERSIDE

Chino Experience Center

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"This is my second year in the case management program. I felt good joining it. They help me out a lot in thinking about the consequences of my actions, keeping my self-esteem up, how to keep up with my school work. It has been very wonderful. This program helps to keep teens away from gang activity and violence. It keeps us busy and away from the streets. Helps us build our goals and have self-esteem."

-- Rigoberto, age 15

"The key to success is having the parent involved. If you have a relationship with the parent, you will have a success rate up the roof. If the parent is willing to work with you and meet you half-way, then you are well off. You have to build up that relationship. Tell them about all the resources that are available for them and their kids and keep up that relationship."

-- Johnny Campos, case manager

Mission: Chino Experience is a teen center that offers youth the ability to participate in supervised programs and activities with their peers in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Overview: There are three main components to the Chino Experience Program: individual case management, after-school programming and the Chino Experience Center. Youth pay \$5 annually to become a member of the Teen Center, which offers a space for youth after school and provides the focal point of the Chino Experience Center's programming. The center offers school-enrichment classes, special events, dances, excursions and live-band music sessions. The Teen Leadership Club (TLC) plans programs and activities at the center and assists with other community events, fundraisers and service-learning projects.

The Chino Experience Center also has a Case Management component. Students who are having difficulties with grades and attendance and who may be in danger of dropping out are referred to case managers. They work one-on-one with troubled students to set goals, address problems and find assistance. Students in the case management program are tracked for up to three years.

Key Elements of Success:

- Tutoring and recreation opportunities
- Youth leadership development and involvement in decision-making
- Ongoing assessment and youth input in program planning
- Intensive one-on-one case management and support services

Target Population: Each month, 450 youth in 7th, 8th and 9th grades participate in Chino Experience programs; 858 in the 2002-03 program year.

Evaluations: Chino Experience held a Teen Summit in April where 75 youth from five different schools – 25 teens from each of the three target grades -- offered feedback on the kinds of programs they would like to see in their communities. Teen Summit participants' input will inform policymakers about future teen program needs in the City of Chino.

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Results:

- Sixty-four percent of participants in the case management program have decreased or zeroed out their unexcused absences.
- Sixty-nine percent of teens in the case management program have maintained or increased their GPAs.
- Calls for service by Chino Police Department in the target schools in the target area around the Chino Experience Center decreased by 54%.
- Juvenile arrests in the target area decreased by 56%.