



THE SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING ACHIEVED BY AGASSIZ VILLAGE SUMMER CAMP

SUMMER 2019



Analysis & Report by SEED Impact

Agassiz Village provides children the opportunity to develop their leadership potential in a fun summer camp environment. With intent to instill Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies, children are guided to practice life skills that will impact their education, career, families and communities. While all children are welcome, more than 85 percent come from low income or poverty-level families in the greater Boston area. The findings in this report reveal that SEL practices are clearly taking root in Agassiz Village campers.



WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES THE AGASSIZ VILLAGE SUMMER CAMP MAKE?

"I have learned to not be scared to express myself."

SUMMARY RESULTS

Agassiz leadership worked closely with SEED Impact to measure Summer 2019 results two ways:

1. SEED Impact Competency Ladders™

Five-stage, developmental competency ladders were customized to assess and accelerate SEL growth, a critical dimension of youth development. Cabin counselors administered this aspect of our study.

COMPETENCY LADDER ANALYSES point to a **15 percent gain** in SEL development achieved by 114 Traditional campers, ages 8-12, over just a two-week camp experience. **A gain of 18 percent** was achieved by 62 youth in the Teen Advancement Program (TAP), ages 13-16.

2. Youth Self-Assessments

In addition, youth self-assessed their personal experiences of camp. They used a simple survey measuring nine aspects of SEL competency.

YOUTH SELF-ASSESSMENT FINDINGS reveal that the majority of campers felt they were following the nine SEL practices all or most of the time throughout the camp experience.

Both types of assessments took place near the start and end of each two-week session.

Youth with stronger SEL are more likely to have academic and career success, positive relationships, better physical and mental health and meaningful contributions to society.¹

¹ Council of Distinguished Scientists National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development. The Aspen Institute, September 2017.



“The most important thing that I learned and gained from summer camp is to not give up and try my best even through hard situations.”

THE TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPACT OF AGASSIZ VILLAGE

Below is a small sample of pre-post narratives provided by camp counselors as they supported and closely observed the youth throughout their camp experience. The narratives appear as written.

Returning female camper from last year, Traditional Camp

Pre: Camper has a dominant personality and does socialize but often starts unproductive and inappropriate conversation. She likes the attention to be on her and shows little self-awareness. Despite this she does usually participate to some extent.



Post: Camper has been “doing” better since the beginning of the session. She is more accepting of camp. She is “being” better, controlling her actions and thinking through decisions. She has been “relating” to everyone in the cabin more as well.

First time female camper, Traditional Camp

Pre: I'm worried about this camper, she is way too isolated. She doesn't eat much. I can't think of a moment when she participated. When I ask how her day is, she gives minimal answers. Maybe she does better in brother/sister time. Definitely needs more attention from counselors.



Post: Camper has improved like crazy from when she first got here. She is creating so many new bonds especially with the counselors. She always listens and she is aware of her actions. When one of her friends are acting-out, she calls them on it and tells them to stop. Her improvement is unreal.

Returning male camper from last year, Teen Advancement Program

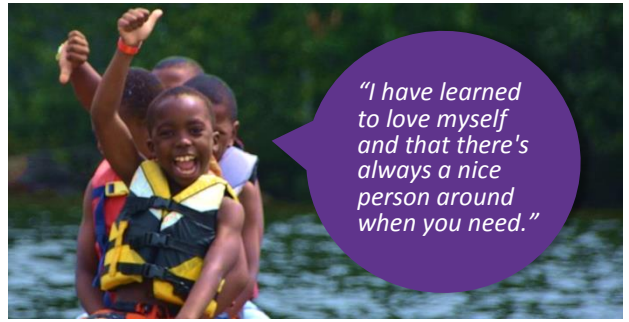
Pre: Camper is certainly more of a team player than last year. He is reserved and shows intuitive capabilities. He has no problem following instructions and gets stuck-in with the activities set, e.g. archery, art, and swim. He can often lack energy and motivation but after conversations, he seems willing to improve on this.



Post: He is practically a model camper. He has improved a lot over the session and has really shined as a responsible member of the group; he is often a great leader. He engages well in all activities and overcomes challenges... He effortlessly completes tasks without complaints and proactively helps out the counselors with everything.

HOW WE MEASURE SEL

Four competency ladders were customized by Agassiz Village leadership to assess changes in SEL. Both Traditional and TAP campers made significant advances in all four domains. These core competencies tend to be retained and carry over to new tasks and life challenges:



1

SELF-AWARENESS:

Progress on this ladder suggests that the camper is more composed, capable, confident and self-directed. There is an elevation of spirit, more optimism about self and world.

2

SELF-MANAGEMENT:

Progress on this ladder indicates gains in how the camper responds to assignments. There is evidence of more readiness to take on bigger challenges.

3

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING:

Progress on this ladder indicates how the camper considers consequences of choices. There is evidence of more able decision-making and responsibility for one's actions.

4

SOCIAL AWARENESS:

Progress on this ladder indicates gains in the camper's confidence and comfort interacting with others at the camp. There is increased interest in the success of self and others.

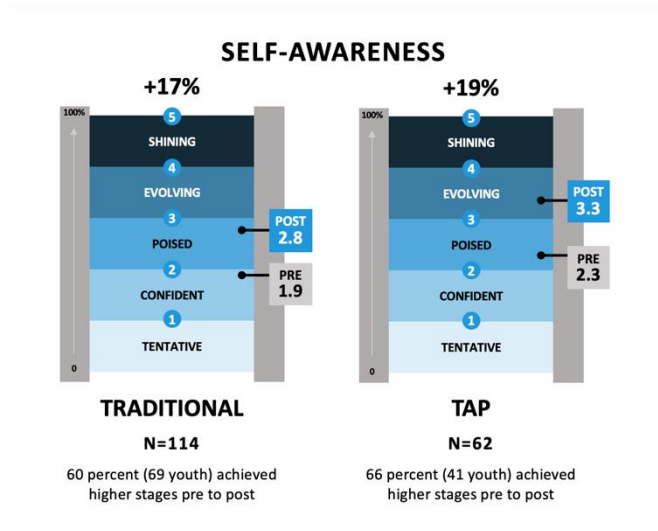
As defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL):

"Social and emotional learning is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions."

DETAILED FINDINGS

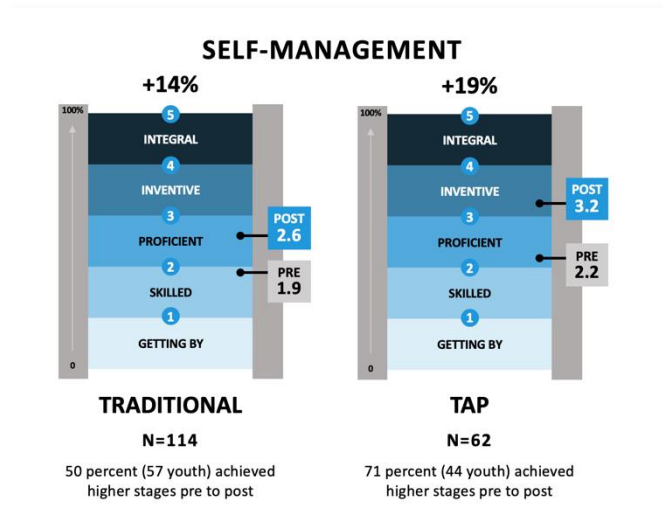
COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS BY CAMP COUNSELORS

For the 114 youth in the Traditional Camp, SEL advances across all four competencies averaged 15 percent. For the 62 youth in the Teen Advancement Program, SEL gains averaged 18 percent. Results specific to each of the four SEL competencies follow:



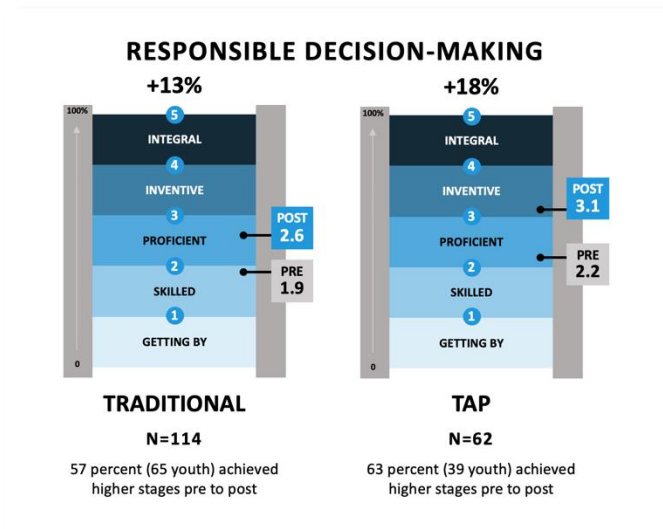
As shown at left, Traditional campers achieved a 17 percent increase in **Self-Awareness**, demonstrating a full-stage shift from confident to poised.

By comparison, TAP campers achieved a 19 percent increase, and showed a further stage jump from poised to evolving.



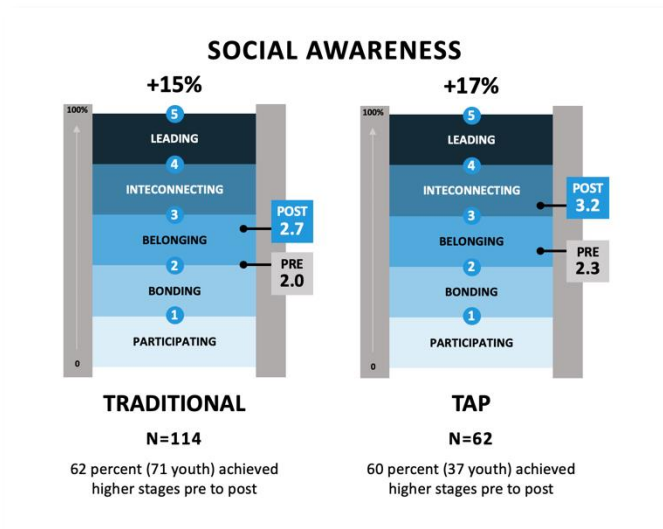
In **Self-Management**, Traditional campers achieved a 14 percent gain, advancing from skilled to proficient.

TAP campers demonstrated 19 percent gains and further advanced from proficient to inventive.



In terms of **Responsible Decision-Making**, Traditional Campers increased their competency by 13 percent, developing from Skilled to Proficient.

TAP campers achieved 18 percent increases, developing further from Proficient to Inventive.

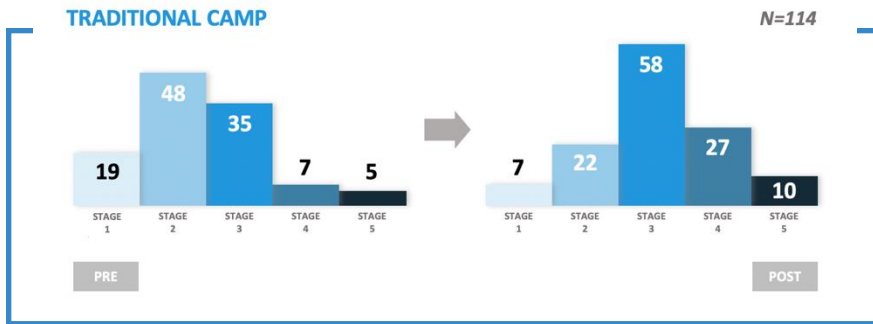


Traditional campers increased in **Social Awareness** by 15 percent, advancing from Bonding to Belonging.

TAP campers increased by 17 percent and advanced further from Belonging to Interconnecting.

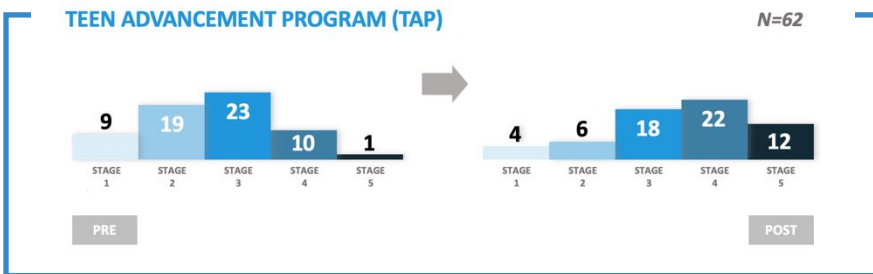
SEL Score. The sum of their four competency ratings yields a total SEL score for each youth. The distribution of SEL scores, Pre and Post, clearly shows an upward shift for both Traditional and TAP campers engaged in this extraordinary summer camp experience, as shown below:

SHIFT IN SEL SCORES PRE TO POST Numbers of Youth by SEL Stage



Movement of Traditional Campers

- Significant increase in excelling and thriving: **12 to 37 youth**
- Jumped two or more stages: **9 youth**
- Jumped one stage: **33 youth**



TAP

- Significant increase in excelling and thriving: **11 to 34 youth**
- Jumped two or more stages: **10 youth**
- Jumped one stage: **33 youth**

YOUTH SELF-ASSESSMENTS



Youth self-assessments revealed that the percent of Traditional campers who felt they were following the nine SEL practices all or most of the time **increased from 70 to 74 percent** over the two-week period. The single largest gain was in *"staying calm when faced with life challenges."* The second largest gain was in *"aiming to be helpful and effective."*

For the Teen Advancement Program, the percent of campers who felt they were following the nine SEL practices all or most of the time **increased from 84 to 89 percent** over the two-week period. The single largest gain was in *"setting and achieving goals."* The second and third largest gains were in *"lifting others up"* and *"staying calm when faced with life challenges."*

Agassiz Village is developing an effective and inspiring model for delivering SEL creatively in a summer camp environment. The exceptional value of this camp experience is evident in the data and radiates through its young campers finding words to express what they gained.