

**REPORT TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH HAWAII STATE  
LEGISLATURE 2009**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF  
ACT 158, PART 7, SECTION 204.1  
SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII (SLH) 2008**

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
Benefit, Employment, And Support Services Division  
December 2008**

**REPORT ON ACT 158, PART 7, SECTION 204.1, RELATING TO THE STATE  
BUDGET, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2008**

ACT 158, PART 7, SECTION 204.1, SLH 2008, requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to prepare a report on the effectiveness of the Uniting Peer Learning Integrating New Knowledge (UPLINK) program.

The following is information on the UPLINK contract which provides UPLINK services:

<b>Contract Name:</b>	UPLINK Program - Statewide		
<b>Contract Number:</b>	DHS-06-BESSD-3117 SA3		
<b>Contract Period:</b>	10/1/08 – 9/30/09		
<b>Provider:</b>	Department of Education		
<b>Population Served:</b>	Middle School Youths Attending Designated Campuses		
<b>Service Area:</b>	Statewide		
<b>Type of Procurement:</b>	MOA		
<b>Federal Funds:</b>	\$2,464,000		
Individual budgets for FFY 09:	<b>Oahu</b>	Dole*	\$205,800
		Jarrett*	81,000
		Central*	75,000
		Aiea*	75,000
		Kawananakoa*	95,400
		Wahiawa	105,000
		Waianae*	84,000
		Waimanalo*	61,000
		Waipahu*	75,000
	<b>Hawaii</b>	Waiakea*	60,336
		Pahoa	100,000
		Kau	150,000
		Kohala	164,809
		Hilo	141,214
		Keaau	84,000
	<b>Maui</b>	Maui Waena*	86,400
		Iao	86,400
	<b>Molokai</b>	Molokai	192,000
	<b>Kauai</b>	Chiefess Kamakahelei	75,000
		Kapaa	140,841

Report of Effectiveness:

At this time, the 2008 – 2009 school year has recently begun, therefore, data on the programs effectiveness is not yet available for this time period. However, an evaluation report on the UPLINK program for the 2006 – 2007 school year conducted by the University of Hawaii’s Center on the Family report states,

“Parent respondents were very satisfied with the program, as indicated by the high percentages who would enroll their child(ren) in the program again. In two-thirds of the schools, 100% of the parents reported that they would reenroll their child(ren) in UPLINK. In the remaining schools, more than three-fourths would do the same.”

And

“Teachers who were not a part of UPLINK (i.e., did not serve as an UPLINK staff member) also expressed the belief that the afterschool program had a positive influence on students, particularly those with academic and behavioral problems.”

Please see attached UPLINK Summary Report and Cross-Site Evaluation Report.

The report will be available in its entirety, after the Center of the Family completes its comprehensive report, at the following DHS website address:

[www.hawaii.gov/dhs/main/reports/LegislativeReports](http://www.hawaii.gov/dhs/main/reports/LegislativeReports)

# UPLINK PROGRAM



## 2007 SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT



**Center on the Family  
University of Hawai'i**

# **UPLINK 2007 SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT**

This summary report focuses on the UPLINK (Uniting Peer Learning, Integrating New Knowledge) Program, which was established to develop a proactive after-school program that prevents middle school students from engaging in high-risk behaviors when schools are not in session. The Department of Education (DOE) administers the program, which the Department of Human Services (DHS) supports through TANF funds. This report presents an overview of the UPLINK Program based on selected data from evaluations conducted at nine schools that offered the program during the 2006–07 school year. The data are presented in four sections: (a) Program, (b) Assessments from Students and Parents, (c) Assessments from UPLINK Staff, Teachers, and Principals, and (c) Improving the UPLINK Program.

## **PROGRAM**

A range of 67 to 551 unduplicated students enrolled in the UPLINK Program at the nine sponsoring schools, while the percentage of UPLINK students in relation to the student body ranged from 10% to 69% (see Table 1).

**Table 1. UPLINK Student Enrollment and Related Data**

School	Total Student Population	Total UPLINK Students <sup>a</sup>	Percentage of Total Students in UPLINK	Enrollment Criteria		Wait List to Enroll in UPLINK?
				Tutoring/Homework Assistance	Activities	
School A	956	396	41	Open	Open	No
School B	849	551	65	Open	Open	No
School C	841	183	22	Restricted	Activity Classes: Restricted <sup>b</sup> HSQ <sup>c</sup> : Open	Yes
School D	280	113	40	Open	Open	No
School E	808	416	51	Restricted	Restricted	Yes
School F	987	147	15	Open	Open	No
School G	160	111	69	Open	Open	No
School H	881	86	10	Restricted	Restricted	Yes
School I	186	67	36	Open	Open	No

<sup>a</sup>Unduplicated count of students

<sup>b</sup>Students had a choice of activities, but each activity was limited to 15 students. If the limit was met, students who wanted to enroll were placed on a wait list.

<sup>c</sup>HSQ: Hawai'i Speed and Quickness, a sports program

In keeping with the guidelines stipulated by the DOE and DHS, all schools designed their after-school program to include a tutoring/homework assistance component and an activities component. At six (67%) of the schools, all students could take advantage of both components. At the remaining schools, there were criteria for enrollment or restricted enrollment. Generally, schools with restricted enrollment (i.e., not open to all students) had a wait list of students who wanted to enroll in the UPLINK Program.

A majority (67%) of the schools offered four UPLINK sessions during the school year (see Table 2). Only one school had a continuous school year program, for which there was a single enrollment with no student restrictions.

**Table 2. UPLINK Program Characteristics**

School	No. of UPLINK Sessions During School Year <sup>a</sup>	Summer Program Offered?	No. of Weekdays UPLINK Was Offered	USDA Snack Program?	UPLINK Contracted to External Vendor?		Attendance Taken?	Orientation Training Conducted for UPLINK Staff?
					T/H <sup>d</sup>	Act. <sup>e</sup>		
School A	1	Yes	Tutoring: 5 HSQ: 2 <sup>b</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Staff: Yes Tutors: No
School B	4	Yes	5	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School C	4	No	4	No <sup>c</sup>	No	Yes	Yes	No
School D	4	Yes	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School E	2	Yes	5	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
School F	2	Yes	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School G	4	No	5	No <sup>c</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes
School H	4	No	5	No <sup>c</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes
School I	4	Yes	4	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

<sup>a</sup>This figure does not include winter break and summer sessions, which some schools offered in addition to the school year sessions

<sup>b</sup>HSQ: Hawai‘i Speed and Quickness, a sports program

<sup>c</sup>Ineligible for the USDA Snack Program

<sup>d</sup>T/H = Tutoring/Homework Assistance Component

<sup>e</sup>Act. = Activities Component

In addition to the school year sessions, 6 (67%) schools also offered a summer program. Most (56%) of the schools offered the UPLINK Program in some form from Monday to Friday; the remaining schools offered UPLINK for four school days during the week. One-third of the schools participated in the USDA Snack Program. Of the remaining 6 schools, 3 (50%) did not participate in this program because they did not meet eligibility requirements. All schools conducted their own tutoring/homework assistance sessions. Nearly 80% of the schools also conducted their own UPLINK activities, but 2 (22%) of the schools contracted the activity component to Hawai‘i Speed and

Quickness (HSQ), a sports program. Although all schools took attendance, participation in UPLINK was not mandatory, and students could drop in and out of the program at will. Almost all (89%) of the schools conducted an orientation training for their UPLINK staff prior to the start of the program.

Although the number of activities offered to students varied across schools, all schools sponsored non-academic activities to engage their students in the UPLINK Program (see Table 3). Eight (89%) of the 9 schools offered athletic and arts/music activities; nearly half of the schools also offered computers/games, special events, and other activities. Some of the schools used their special events to celebrate achievements; recognize students, faculty, and staff; and enhance relationships and communication with parents.

**Table 3. UPLINK Program Activities**

School	Type of Activities Offered					Special Events
	Athletics	Arts/Music	Educational	Computers/Games	Other	
School A	HSQ	Crafts				
School B	Basketball Cross-country running Volleyball Soccer	Art & crafts Ceramics Drama Music ensemble	Spanish Japanese Reading/Math fun	Card games Chess	Cooking Girl Scouts Newsletter/Yearbook Girl Scouts	Quarterly Community Meetings Halloween Musical School concerts Parent Workshops
School C	HSQ Basketball Volleyball	Calligraphy Ceramics Ukulele Wood burning		Computer		
School D	Fitness for life Team sports Weightlifting Yoga	Art Band Guitar			Cooking Storybook aprons	Hawai'i State Assessment Jeopardy Amazing Race Extreme Games Gobble Good Game Day Jolly Christmas Party Easter Eggheads Viva Las Kulia Aloha 'Oe Party

School E	Basketball Cross-country running Volleyball Soccer Sports conditioning Weightlifting club	Arts & crafts Band Drama Photography Web design	H.S.A. test prep workshop Science club Math team	Puzzles Video games	Fix-it Crew Robotics Modeling	Quarterly ice cream parties End-of-the-year pizza party
School F	Dance Physical fitness	Drama Creating i-movies	ESLL workshop Math workshop	Computer Typing skills	Cooking Horticulture Robot building	Campus beautification
School G	Volleyball	Art Sewing Ukulele Video production	Astronomy Hawaiian language Journalism journeys Math Mondays	Chess Family computer class	Culinary arts UPLINKing groups	Movie night sleepover In-school service project Family night Teacher appreciation high tea affair Leadership Day School staff and UPLINK students volleyball scrimmage Neighbor island volleyball tournament Neighbor island earned incentive trip Splash party
School H					Culinary arts Horticulture Explorations	Field trip to a community college Field trip to an orchid nursery
School I	Basketball Dance Soccer Volleyball	Arts & crafts Guitar Lei-making Sewing Singing Ukulele			Cooking	Bingo Night

## ASSESSMENTS FROM STUDENTS AND PARENTS

The students and parents who completed surveys on the program positively rated the UPLINK program (see Table 4; note that the numbers of students and parents completing the evaluation surveys were low, and the numbers were particularly low for the UPLINK parents).

**Table 4. Indicators of Program Satisfaction from Students and Parents**

SCHOOL	INDICATORS OF SATISFACTION					
	Students “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied with Program <sup>a</sup> ”		Students Who Would Recommend the Program to a Friend <sup>a</sup>		Parents Who Would Enroll Their Child(ren) in the Program Again <sup>a</sup>	
	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)
School A	59/69	86	45/71	63	16/16	100
School B	61/115	53	54/117	46	30/34	88
School C	43/60	72	40/61	66	22/22	100
School D	23/36	64	20/36	56	26/28	93
School E	76/107	71	68/114	59	62/62	100
School F	56/89	63	45/89	51	33/33	100
School G	28/33	85	26/33	79	27/27	100
School H	29/50	58	30/50	60	13/17	77
School I	27/37	72	20/37	54	6/6	100

<sup>a</sup>Note low numbers of student and parent respondents. See Table 1 for total number of UPLINK students at each school.

<sup>b</sup>Numbers refer to: respondents who answered as indicated/the total number of respondents who answered the question

Among students, from 53% to 86% of the respondents indicated they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the program, and 46% to 79% would recommend the program to a friend. Students could have responded at the lower end because they felt their friends would not be interested in participating and, therefore, indicated that they would not recommend the program. The following comments from students provide insights on how UPLINK affected their attitudes and behaviors, which led to their positive academic outcomes:

- *I’m paying attention in class, listening, and turning in all my work.*
- *We get to do our homework and stay away from trouble and getting [sic] my grades up.*
- *I keep wanting to go to school now.*

- *I am getting along with my teachers and friends, not talking back or yelling.*
- *The teachers are willing to help whenever you need it.*
- *Because it's fun and you get help when doing you're work.*
- *I don't get into fights.*
- *It helps me be a better person and make my grades go up.*
- *It made my behavior better because in order to go to my fun activity class, I had to finish my homework.*

Parent respondents were very satisfied with the program, as indicated by the high percentages who would enroll their child(ren) in the program again. In two-thirds of the schools, 100% of the parents reported that they would reenroll their child(ren) in UPLINK. In the remaining schools, more than three-fourths would do the same. The following comments from parents reveal how the UPLINK Program benefited their children and families:

- *I know that my child is in a safe, supervised environment instead of roaming and looking for something to do. Thank you!!*
- *It keeps kids out of trouble and focusing on school and trying to better themselves as an individual.*
- *It presents an opportunity for families to become actively involved in their children's interests and school events. Children get to experience new things, develop personal growth, and socially interact with their peers outside of a classroom environment.*
- *What I really enjoyed was seeing the pride and sense of accomplishment that my daughter had when completing her project. She looked forward to the program every day and didn't complain about the commitment. I'm thankful to her teacher, Mr. Chang.*

- *The best thing about the UPLINK program is how my child has shown more integrity in herself and improvement in her grades. This makes me very proud of my child since she's saying she gets it from participating in sports after school.*
- *It helps parents that have an 8–5 or 9–5 job by providing the students with activities for them rather than having students hang and get into trouble.*
- *Adult supervision for my child with interesting activities and topics to peak her interest. That way she isn't at home idle and bored, more apt to get into trouble.*
- *The staff. I think there's genuine desire to help support children and their learning. The homework assistance folks are firm and thorough. Volleyball was amazing. Cooking, chess, video production, ukulele classes have all been stimulating.*
- *The way the kids feel about themselves after learning the 5 Cs...I mean learning that it's not just something we teach at home, but that it's cool to live with them because they are surrounded by others who also live them.*
- *I believe it has taught my son to be responsible in a certain degree and his self-esteem level has improved along with his social skills. This program is a great place for kids in the intermediate grade level, because it's during the kids' hardest time (hormones, peer pressure, and social pecking order) along with finding their individuality.*

## **ASSESSMENTS FROM UPLINK STAFF, TEACHERS, AND PRINCIPALS**

The UPLINK staff at the nine sponsoring schools evaluated various aspects of the after-school program on a 5-point scale, where 1 = very poor to 5 = very good. At each school, fifty percent or more of the staff rated student development (77.8%), the activities offered (88.9%), and the overall program (100.0%) as “good” or “very good” (see Table 5). In addition, in 4 of the 9 total schools, all (100.0%) of the staff rated the activities offered and overall program as “good” or “very good.”

**Table 5. Staff Ratings of the UPLINK Program**

SCHOOL	Total # of Staff	INDICATORS <sup>a</sup>					
		Student Development		Activities Offered		Overall Program	
		n <sup>b</sup>	(%)	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)
School A	8	3/7	42.9	5/8	62.5	4/8	50.0
School B	39	8/10	80.0	10/10	100.0	9/10	90.0
School C	11	2/4	50.0	4/4	100.0	4/4	100.0
School D	26	9/10	90.0	10/10	100.0	10/10	100.0
School E	30	13/18	72.2	17/18	94.4	16/18	88.9
School F	24	2/5	40.0	2/5	40.0	5/5	100.0
School G	19	8/12	66.7	9/12	75.0	11/12	91.7
School H	11	7/7	100.0	7/7	100.0	7/7	100.0
School I	7	3/4	75.0	2/4	50.0	3/4	75.0

<sup>a</sup>UPLINK staff responses of “good” or “very good” to the statement, *Please rate the following parts of the after-school program: student development, activities offered, and overall program.* On this scale, 1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = fair, 4 = good, and 5 = very good.

<sup>b</sup>Sample size is limited to the number of respondents who answered as indicated/the total number of respondents who answered the question.

In the comments below, UPLINK staff describe how the program is beneficial to students:

- *Keep kids doing school-related and healthy activities in a safe place.*
- *It combines tutoring with a fun activity. It keeps kids occupied and out of trouble and provides an opportunity to both to learn and have fun. It attempts to keep kids involved in school activities, develop social skills, and foster good study habits. It also creates a close-knit community of students on whom individuals can rely.*
- *The after-school program provides a place where students can go to get homework assistance as well as learn about something that they are interested in. In my class it also creates positive self-esteem in my students. They feel proud knowing that they are able to do something that is popular amongst kids their age.*

- *I have definitely noticed a difference. I only do Kulia the first two quarters, but I still have some students even come during the day...some students really rely on the program because it's a lot of time for them to get their work done. Students voluntarily expressed how important it is for them to have it.*
- *It is really vital for the kids. I know several kids who would be hanging out on the streets and getting into trouble if not for this program.*
- *It provides students who are not doing well academically a chance to improve their grades and learn strategies to achieve academic success.*
- *This builds self-confidence and in turn they are able to excel in school, UPLINK, and extracurricular activities. To see students make changes and improve in their attitude and speech is the best reward of UPLINK.*
- *It incorporates core concepts along with activities...teaching kids respect, sportsmanship, teamwork, and being helpful not only will help them in school but in life.*
- *I think it's wonderful that students have somewhere to go after school to feel free and be themselves. This opportunity enables them to enjoy activities that only privileged students would get to do.*

Teachers who were not a part of UPLINK (i.e., did not serve as an UPLINK staff member) also expressed the belief that the after-school program had a positive influence on students, particularly those with academic and behavioral problems. The following are samples of what teachers had to say:

- *I've got 8th graders that have flunked several times and their discipline and their focus were astounding. They're sitting there quiet, focused, they're working on the Novanet program, and they're determined to go to Farrington. Nobody thought they could do it. What they're doing is amazing.*
- *There seems to be more of a desire to get things done. Whereas before they didn't care, but now some of them actually want to get things done, they want to get that paper they didn't turn in, they want to get it done and get it back to you.*

*Their motivation is maybe just pride, maybe they've discovered that they can do better. Having done better they realize this isn't so hard. I have seen that.*

- *I think it gives them something to do other than get into mischief after school. I think it gives them some safe place to do their homework, even if they don't need help on it, it's just one more place for them to get it done.*
- *I think the program is very valuable.*
- *UPLINK is another key resource in allowing the middle school to be tied into the community and it provides some of the missing tools we don't have—socialization skills that we can't always provide, the resources that we cannot provide, and allows the community to be closer to the middle school.*
- *I think the instructors in those [UPLINK] classes provide the mentoring that these kids cannot get anywhere else. It's very direct, very personal. Without that mentoring they wouldn't be as good as they are now.*

The school principals also provided feedback for the evaluation. All of the principals believed in the efficacy of the UPLINK Program and the positive effect it had on middle school students. Their comments regarding the benefits of and need for the program are presented below:

- *I believe in the program. We definitely need to keep it. The intent is to decrease teen pregnancy, but it's more than that. It addresses drugs, keeping students off the street. It's a big asset to the school.*
- *The kids are passing: it's a better opportunity for kids to do homework. Better results in retention; they're not holding back as many students. They have to continue to fund this program. It's a good program...Middle schools need this.*
- *We've seen students that regularly attended tutoring making academic progress. Students in the "Refuse to Use Booze" and Hawai'i Speed and Quickness programs are gaining social skills, competence in showing character, and speaking out among their peers about appropriate behavior.*
- *Yes it is benefiting, more parents and students want to get in, and there is a waiting list. More ways than just academics, going into the classroom where kids are baking—kids take pride in what they're doing, motivation is key at this age.*

*Reinforcement with homework strategies that the tutors are doing to help the kids. The big part is helping them be involved in socially accepting activities, so they have a sense of “I can be successful and I can do these things.*

- *We had a girl that was ordered by the court to come to the after-school program and she went from not attending school at all to only missing six days last year. Her grades improved also.*
- *It extends the relationship beyond the school day. It improves their academic achievement and also non-academic service learning projects...that they can't do during the school day. It is an essential part of how we can help kids.*
- *The HSA scores speak for themselves. The amount of headway we made, and the overall effect comes from the after-school program. Supporting kids with the after-school program. Adults had time to spend with the students after school. It has been a benefit to the kids and the community. The kids are a lot more disciplined because of the highly structured environment in the classroom that extends to the after-school program. I hope it continues longer. The more we can extend the highly disciplined structure the more you can plan for the future.*
- *It's an important to give students an alternative. I like the concept of supervised tutoring. The premise is sound; learning something new makes them less at risk. I advocate for more middle schools to get into it.*

## **IMPROVING THE UPLINK PROGRAM**

In addition to the positive assessments from responding students, parents, UPLINK staff, teachers, and principals, the evaluation identified several areas that can be improved to develop a more effective UPLINK Program. These areas include the following recommendations: improve communication, educate students on high-risk behaviors, review and improve the UPLINK structure and activities, provide professional development for UPLINK staff, and provide transportation for students (see Table 6). Based on the evaluation data, the Center on the Family made two to four recommendations to each school. Some recommendations were directed at administrators beyond the school level and were identified as “cross-site” items. The five recommendations are briefly delineated below:

## **Improve Communication**

Sharing the following information with respective UPLINK parties would improve communication and effectiveness in helping students to be more successful:

- Parents: program criteria, important dates and events, schedule changes, cancelled activities, feedback on child's attendance and progress, suggestions on how they can assist their child and support the program.
- Teachers: list of UPLINK students, staff, and tutors; program updates.
- UPLINK Staff: clarity on and verification of students' homework assignments, identification of areas where students need assistance.
- Cross-site: share information across sites on program administration, organization, and activities; fiscal procedures and documents; student recruitment; and work with families to enhance the functioning and effectiveness of the UPLINK Program.

## **Educate Students on High-Risk Behaviors**

Students who engage in problematic behaviors at younger ages have a greater probability of academic and behavioral problems when they get older. The UPLINK Program was established to positively address and avert potential problem behaviors, such as teen pregnancy and the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other substances.

## **Review and Improve the UPLINK Structure and Activities**

One of the keys to a successful program is conducting continuous reviews to assess areas of strengths and weaknesses, and to identify what improvements can be made. Because the UPLINK Program is relatively young, with many schools initiating their

program in 2007 with short planning times, there is a special need for the program assessment. The following questions can be used by schools to elicit discussion on how they can improve their UPLINK Program:

- Is the UPLINK Program organized (e.g., number of sessions offered) and administered (e.g., application process and procedures for enrollment) efficiently and effectively?
- Is there a good balance between tutorials/homework assistance and non-academic activities that strengthen students' interest in and relationship with school?
- Do students who would benefit most from an after-school program participate in UPLINK?
- Does the program accommodate all of the students who would like to enroll in UPLINK?
- Is there a range of activities to attract the diverse interests of students attending the school?
- Is there an effective recruitment campaign that reaches all families and students who can benefit from the program?

### **Provide Professional Development for UPLINK Staff**

One of the strongest indicators of a successful program is the quality of its teachers and staff—the individuals who develop and implement the curriculum and work directly with students. For this reason, professional development for the UPLINK staff is very important, particularly for those who serve as academic tutors and are not credentialed educators. Training can enhance the UPLINK staff's ability to:

- Develop and implement an effective curriculum for a wide range of students.
- Effectively manage students' behavioral and disciplinary problems.

- Assist students with their homework assignments, especially in math and English.

### **Provide Transportation for Students**

The lack of transportation prevents some students from participating in the UPLINK Program. Schools should conduct a needs assessment on this issue that includes the resources required to support such services. Providing transportation for students to return home after the school day, an allowable UPLINK Program expense, would do the following:

- Relieve the undue burden on the UPLINK staff members who have been taking students home after the program.
- Enable students who can benefit from the program to enroll in UPLINK.

# UPLINK PROGRAM



## 2007 CROSS-SITE EVALUATION REPORT



**Center on the Family  
University of Hawai'i**

## UPLINK 2007 CROSS-SITE EVALUATION REPORT

This summary report focuses on the UPLINK (Uniting Peer Learning, Integrating New Knowledge) Program which was established to engage middle school students in after-school activities to proactively prevent them from engaging in risk behaviors. It presents a macro view of the program based on selected data from an evaluation of the UPLINK Program offered at nine schools during the 2006-07 school year. The report is presented in three sections: (a) Program, (b) Students, and (c) Recommendations.

### PROGRAM

The number of unduplicated students enrolled in the UPLINK Program at the nine sponsoring schools ranged from 67 to 551 students, while the percentage of UPLINK students in relation to the student body at the various schools ranged from 10% to 69% (see Table 1). In keeping with the guidelines stipulated by the Departments of Education and Human Services, all schools designed their after-school program to include a tutoring/homework assistance component and an activities component. Both aspects of the program were open to all students at 6 (67%) schools, but there were criteria for enrollment or restricted enrollment at the remaining schools. Generally, schools with restricted enrollment (i.e., not open to all students) had a wait list of students who wanted to enroll in the UPLINK Program.

**Table 1. Cross Site Student Enrollment and Related Data**

School	Total Student Population	Total UPLINK Students <sup>a</sup>	Percentage of Total Students in UPLINK	Enrollment Criteria		Wait List to Enroll in UPLINK?
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<sup>b</sup>Students had a choice of activities, but each activity was limited to 15 students. If the limit was met, students who wanted to enroll were placed on a wait list.

<sup>c</sup>HSQ: Hawaii Speed and Quickness, a sports program

A majority (67%) of the schools offered four UPLINK sessions during the school year (see Table 2). Only one school had a continuous school year program for which there was a single enrollment with no student restrictions. In addition to the school year sessions, 6 (67%) schools also offered a summer program. The UPLINK Program was available in some form to students from Monday to Friday at most (56%) of the schools; the remaining schools offered UPLINK for four school days during the week. One-third of the schools participated in the USDA Snack Program. Of the remaining 6 schools, 3 (50%) did not participate because they did not meet USDA program eligibility requirements. All schools conducted their own tutoring/homework assistance sessions. Nearly 80% of the schools also did the same for the UPLINK activities, but 2 (22%) schools contracted the activity component to Hawai'i Speed and Quickness (HSQ), a sports program. Although attendance was taken at all schools, attendance was not mandatory and students could drop in and out of the program at will. Almost all (89%) of the schools conducted an orientation training for their UPLINK staff prior to the start of the program.

**Table 2. Cross Site Program Characteristics**

School	No. of UPLINK Sessions During School Year <sup>a</sup>	Summer Program Offered?	No. of Weekdays UPLINK was Offered	USDA Snack Program?	UPLINK Contracted to External Vendor?		Attendance Taken?	Orientation Training Conducted for UPLINK Staff?
					T/H <sup>d</sup>	Act. <sup>e</sup>		
School A	1	Yes	Tutoring: 5 HSQ: 2 <sup>b</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Staff: Yes Tutors: No
School B	4	Yes	5	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School C	4	No	4	No <sup>c</sup>	No	Yes	Yes	No
School D	4	Yes	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School E	2	Yes	5	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
School F	2	Yes	4	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
School G	4	No	5	No <sup>c</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes
School H	4	No	5	No <sup>c</sup>	No	No	Yes	Yes
School I	4	Yes	4	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

<sup>a</sup>This figure does not include winter break and summer sessions, which were offered in addition to the school year sessions at some schools.

<sup>b</sup>HSQ: Hawaii Speed and Quickness, a sports program

<sup>c</sup>Ineligible for the USDA Snack Program

<sup>d</sup>T/H = Tutoring/Homework Assistance Component

<sup>e</sup>Act. = Activities Component

Although the number of activities offered to students varied across schools, all schools sponsored non-academic activities to engage their students in the UPLINK Program (see Table 3). Athletic and arts/music activities were available at 8 of the 9 (89%) schools; a majority of the schools also offered computers/games, other, and special events activities. Some of the schools used their special events to celebrate achievements; recognize students, faculty, and staff; and enhance relationships and communication with parents.

**Table 3. Cross Site Program Activities**

School	Type of Activities Offered					Special Events
	Athletics	Arts/Music	Educational	Computers/Games	Other	
School A	HSQ	Crafts				
School B	Basketball Cross-country running Volleyball Soccer	Art & crafts Ceramics Drama Music ensemble	Spanish Japanese Reading/Math fun	Card games Chess	Cooking Girl Scouts Newsletter/Yearbook Girl Scouts	Quarterly Community Meetings Halloween Musical School concerts Parent Workshops
School C	HSQ Basketball Volleyball	Calligraphy Ceramics Ukulele Wood burning		Computer		
School D	Fitness for life Team sports Weightlifting Yoga	Art Band Guitar			Cooking Storybook aprons	Hawaii State Assessment Jeopardy Amazing Race Extreme Games Gobble Good Game Day Jolly Christmas Party Easter Eggheads Viva Las Kulia Aloha 'Oe Party
School E	Basketball Cross-country running Volleyball Soccer Sports conditioning Weightlifting club	Arts & crafts Band Drama Photography Web design	H.S.A. test prep workshop Science club Math team	Puzzles Video games	Fix-it Crew Robotics Modeling	Quarterly ice cream parties End-of-the-year pizza party
School F	Dance Physical fitness	Drama Creating i-movies	ESLL workshop Math workshop	Computer Typing skills	Cooking Horticulture Robot building	Campus beautification
School G	Volleyball	Art Sewing Ukulele Video production	Astronomy Hawaiian language Journalism journeys Math Mondays	Chess Family computer class	Culinary arts UPLINKing groups	Movie night sleepover In-school service project Family night Teacher appreciation high tea affair Leadership Day School staff and UPLINK students volleyball scrimmage Neighbor island volleyball tournament Neighbor island earned incentive trip Splash party
School H					Culinary arts Horticulture Explorations	Field trip to a community college Field trip to an orchid nursery
School I	Basketball Dance Soccer Volleyball	Arts & crafts Guitar Lei-making Sewing Singing Ukulele			Cooking	Bingo Night

The UPLINK Program was positively rated by the students and parents who completed surveys on the program (see Table 4). Among students, from 53% to 86% of the respondents indicated they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the program, and 46% to 79% would recommend the program to a friend. The lower percentage of students who rated the recommendation question favorably could be because some students felt their friends would not be interested in participating and, therefore, indicated they would not recommend the program. Parent respondents were very satisfied with the program as indicated by the high percentages who would enroll their child(ren) in the program again. In two-thirds of the schools, 100% of the parents reported they would re-enroll their child(ren) in UPLINK, and in the remaining schools, more than three-fourths would do the same. Note, however, that the number of students and parents completing the evaluation surveys, including the satisfaction questions, were low and the numbers were particularly low for the UPLINK parents.

**Table 4. Cross site Indicators of Program Satisfaction**

SCHOOL	INDICATORS OF SATISFACTION					
	Students “satisfied” or “very satisfied with program <sup>a</sup>		Students who would recommend the program to a friend <sup>a</sup>		Parents who would enroll their child(ren) in the program again <sup>a</sup>	
	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)	n <sup>b</sup>	(%)
School A	59/69	86	45/71	63	16/16	100
School B	61/115	53	54/117	46	30/34	88
School C	43/60	72	40/61	66	22/22	100
School D	23/36	64	20/36	56	26/28	93
School E	76/107	71	68/114	59	62/62	100
School F	56/89	63	45/89	51	33/33	100
School G	28/33	85	26/33	79	27/27	100
School H	29/50	58	30/50	60	13/17	77
School I	27/37	72	20/37	54	6/6	100

<sup>a</sup>Note low numbers of student and parent respondents. See Table 1 for total number of UPLINK students at each school.

<sup>b</sup>Sample size is reported as the number of respondents who answered as indicated/the total number of respondents who answered the question.

## STUDENTS

There were several indicators of students’ engagement in risk behaviors which could potentially set them on a developmental trajectory leading to negative academic, career, and personal outcomes. Note that (a) the UPLINK students were 12 – 14 years old and in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and (b) a special effort was made to recruit students with academic problems at some schools. Teen pregnancy was reported at 4 of the 9 (44%) UPLINK schools. From 3% to 28% of the students reported “no harm” resulted from using marijuana, methamphetamine, inhalants, cigarettes, alcohol, and/or ecstasy and other club drugs. Problematic behaviors were reported by 37% to

71% of the students. These behaviors included breaking the rules at home or school, lying to parents or guardians, taking something without asking, and/or getting in a fight four or more times in the past month.

**Table 5. Cross Site Student Risk Behaviors**

School	No. of teen pregnancies reported in school	UPLINK students who Report No Harm from Substance Use <sup>a</sup>		UPLINK students Who Report Problematic Behaviors (4 or more times in past month) <sup>a</sup>	
		n <sup>b</sup>	%	n <sup>b</sup>	%
School A	2	8-14/137	6-10	68-92/144	47-64
School B	3	17/134	13	94-109/181	52-60
School C	0	2/31	6	15-21/31	48-68
School D	0	3-4/21	14-19	8-15/21	38-71
School E	0	5/164	3	66-85/164	40-52
School F	1	4-5/19	22-28	8-9/19	42-47
School G	N/A	2-4/49	4-8	27-32/51	53-63
School H	0	3-5/27	11-19	10-12/27	37-44
School I	2	1-2/16	7-13	7-8/16	44-50

<sup>a</sup>Note low numbers of student respondents. See Table 1 for total number of UPLINK students at each school.

<sup>b</sup>Sample size is reported as the number of respondents who answered specific items in a set of questions/the largest number of respondents who provided answers to the set of questions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There were common issues across schools which required attention. The issues that all schools were asked to address were: improve communication and educate students on risk behaviors, followed by review and improve the UPLINK structure and activity component (44% of schools) (see Table 6). Based on the evaluation data, from two to four recommendations were made to each school. Some recommendations were directed at administrators beyond the school level and these are presented as “cross-site” items under Improve Communication and Provide Professional Development to UPLINK Staff. The five recommendations that were included in the UPLINK evaluation reports and related concerns are presented below.

### Improve communication

Parents, teachers, and UPLINK staff expressed a desire for increased and improved communication. They indicated a need for the following kinds of information:

- Parents: program criteria, important dates and events, schedule changes, cancelled activities, feedback on child’s attendance and progress, suggestions on how they can assist their child and support the program.

- Teachers: list of UPLINK students, staff, and tutors; program updates.
- UPLINK Staff: clarity on and verification of students' homework assignments, identification of areas where students need assistance.
- Cross-site: shared information across sites on program administration, organization, and activities; fiscal procedures and documents; student recruitment; and working with families to enhance the functioning and effectiveness of the UPLINK Program.

### **Educate students on risk behaviors**

Students who engage in problematic behaviors at younger ages have a greater probability of academic and behavioral problems when they get older. The UPLINK Program was established to address and avert potential problem behaviors.

- See Table 5 for information on students' reported risk behaviors across the nine UPLINK schools.
- Most schools did not appear to directly address the issue of risk behaviors, including teen pregnancy, and their consequences.

### **Review and improve the UPLINK structure and activities**

The following questions can be used in the review to elicit discussion on how the UPLINK Program can be improved.

- Is the UPLINK Program organized (e.g., number of sessions offered) and administered (e.g., application process and procedures for enrollment) efficiently and effectively?
- Is there a good balance between tutorials/homework assistance and non-academic activities that strengthen students' interest in and relationship with school?
- Do students who would benefit most from an after-school program participate in UPLINK?
- Does the program accommodate all of the students who would like to enroll in UPLINK?
- Is there a range of activities to attract the diverse interests of students attending the school?
- Is there an effective recruitment campaign that reaches all families and students who can benefit from the program?

### **Provide professional development for UPLINK staff**

One of the strongest correlates of a successful program is the quality of its teachers and staff—the individuals who develop and implement the curriculum and work directly with students. For this reason, professional development is desirable for the UPLINK staff, particularly those who serve as academic tutors and are not credentialed educators. Training is needed to:

- Develop and implement an effective curriculum for a wide range of students.
- Effectively manage students' behavioral and disciplinary problems.
- Assist students with their homework assignments, especially in math and English.
- Cross-site: improve staff competence and the UPLINK Program across school sites and perhaps should be administered centrally, rather than by individual schools.

**Provide transportation for students**

The lack of transportation is a barrier for some students to participate in the UPLINK Program. Providing transportation for students to return home after the school day:

- Relieves the undue burden on the UPLINK staff members who have been taking students home after the program.
- Is an allowable UPLINK Program expense.
- May make it possible for students who can benefit from the program to enroll in UPLINK.

**Table 6. Cross Site Recommendations**

School	RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDED IN EVALUATION REPORTS				
	Improve Communication	Educate Students on Risk Behaviors/Prevent Potential Problem Behaviors from Developing into Larger Problems	Review and Improve UPLINK Structure and Activity Component	Provide Transportation for Students	Provide Professional Development for UPLINK Staff
School A	✓	✓	✓		
School B	✓	✓			
School C	✓	✓	✓		
School D	✓	✓			
School E	✓	✓			
School F	✓	✓	✓		
School G	✓	✓		✓	✓
School H	✓	✓	✓		
School I	✓	✓			