

The image features a large black circle in the center, which serves as a backdrop for the text. The background of the entire image is a faded, low-angle photograph of several modern skyscrapers with glass facades, reaching towards a bright, hazy sky. The perspective is looking up at the buildings, creating a sense of height and urban density.

# TKOP

TEACHING KNOWLEDGE OF PRINCIPLES



**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
MAHALIA JACKSON EARLY  
CHILDHOOD & FAMILY LEARNING  
CENTER**



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# What We Believe

All youth benefit from a committed, caring and consistent healthy relationship with a mentor.

The only way to change anti-social or inappropriate behavior among youth is for them to change the way they think.

Learning *how to think* is more beneficial and empowering for youth than teaching them *what to think*.

Teaching youth how to identify and overcome self-imposed limitations enhances their social/emotional development and enables them to perform better academically.

Family is the first source of the development of values and moral reasoning.

“BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD”

-MOHANDAS GANDHI



# Executive Summary

The Circle of Courage Mentoring Program is an evidence-based cognitive behavioral curriculum designed to help students overcome behavioral challenges through *mentoring*. Application of the curriculum is informed by the logic, tenets and principles of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) and Response To Intervention (RTI) frameworks. Behavioral outcomes are evaluated and measured based on research data and is continuously monitored to quantify student improvement over time.

Mentors are trained in evidence-based cognitive behavioral intervention practices. This training provides them with research-based strategies and tools to help students develop new ways of thinking and problem solving. Mentors listen and talk with students about their life experiences as well as their grades and other issues that are important to them.

Students are taught that *thoughts* cause feelings and behaviors, not external things like situations, events and/or people. The primary benefit of teaching students this cognitive behavioral approach is they learn how to change the way they feel and act by changing their thoughts and embracing pro-social values.

The *Circle of Courage Mentoring Program* is guided by the following philosophy:

1. All youth can become successful students
2. Decision making and problem solving should be data-driven
3. Early intervention prevents and mitigates behavioral problems
4. Interventions must be targeted, multi-tiered and continuously monitored
5. Interventions must be culturally and linguistically responsive to effectively address the unique needs and strengths of students

Students who participate in the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program are trained to be peer leaders. As peer leaders, they are encouraged to:

- Develop pro-social thoughts and values;
- Take responsibility for their feelings, words and actions; and
- Apply what they learn to become successful students and positive role models

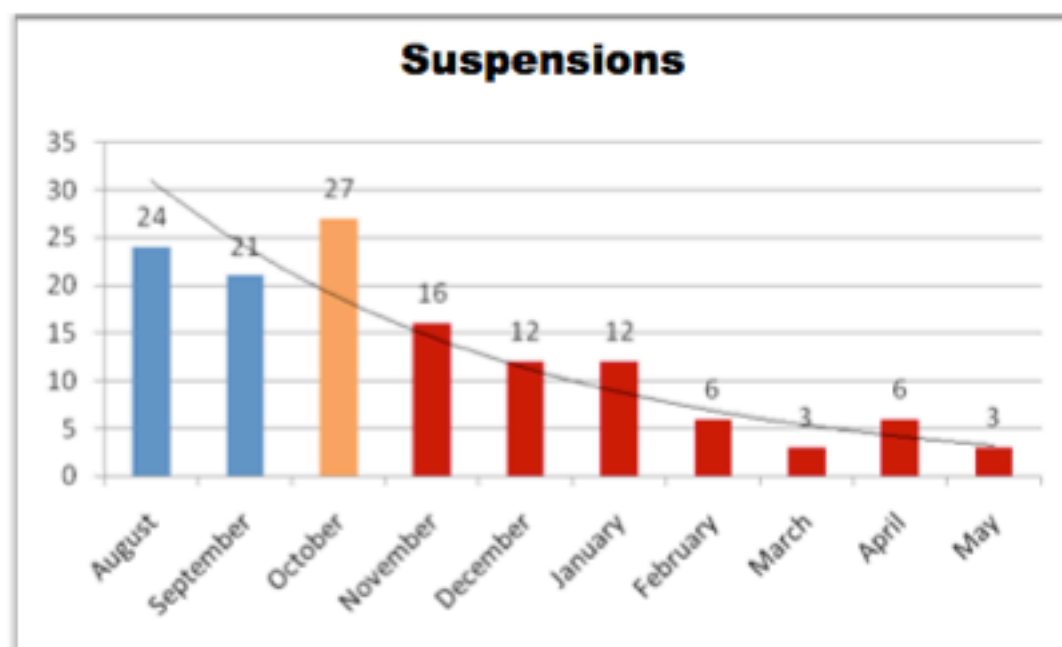
The *Circle of Courage Mentoring Program* builds upon current and validated evidence-based research related to reducing dropout, school failure and criminal behavior among at-risk youth. Mentors promote the use of pro-social values as an essential part of addressing anti-social behaviors. Students learn how to change the way they feel and behave by changing the way they think. Mentors engage students in a values-centered process designed to help them develop personally and socially as well as academically.

# Research Findings

1. The six-month assessment of the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program conducted by Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, ending in May 2010, reported the following findings:
2. The program was implemented as intended with strong program fidelity related to the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program's goals, methodology and educational strategies.
3. Observations related to mentor interaction processes supports the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program model and deploys research-based developmental teaching practices and strategies.
4. Mentors appeared to have mastered skills and knowledge needed to effectively implement the program.
5. The use of formerly incarcerated persons appeared effective in a number of areas, a result which was surprising given the controversy of the approach.
6. Student, mentor, parent and administrator perceptions of the program were extremely positive regarding goals and objectives and perceived benefits of the program.
7. During its initial implementation, documented declines in problem behavior as a result of Circle of Courage Mentoring Program implementation have been observed related to suspensions, expulsions, willful disobedience, and weapons, fighting and other problem behaviors. (See charts.)
8. The pilot program appears, based upon metrics collected and analyzed, to have been effective in accomplishing its major objectives and is deserving of continuation and ongoing support.
9. The pilot program generated a great deal of positive publicity in both local and national media and resulted in needed image building for the Recovery School District.
10. Expansion and increased support are recommended as the program achieved and exceeded any reasonable expectations of success.
11. As the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program is expanded to new schools within the Recovery School District, greater support in terms of funded training, mentor and student materials is needed to maintain quality standards achieved in year one of the program.

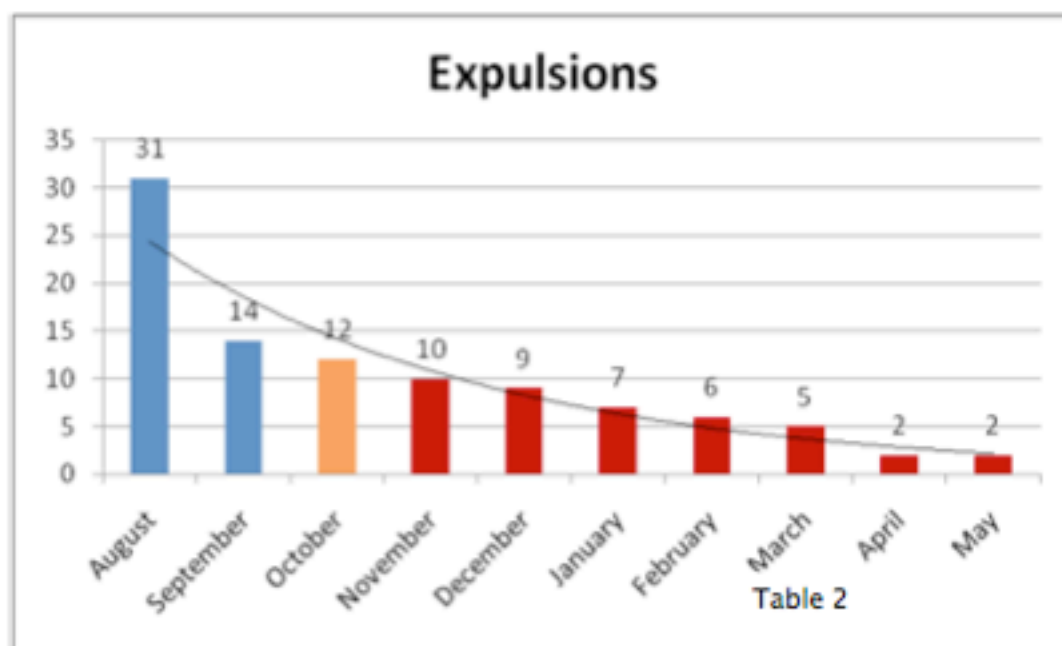
The pilot program reported was implemented within the Accelerated Academy at Booker T. Washington, a Transitional School in New Orleans, LA. The Recovery School District's Multiple Pathways Network allows "over-aged" 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students the opportunity to meet grade level expectations through intense accelerated small group instruction with an emphasis on social skills development. In order to gain entry into the program, students must have scored "Unsatisfactory" on the iLEAP English Language Arts or Mathematics<sup>1</sup> test portions, have been retained twice in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, and have met all the appropriate age requirements. From November 2009-May, 2010 the program has been implemented with all Booker T. Washington students participating in *Circle of Courage Mentoring Program* life skills classes. Quantitative research suggested strong outcomes supported by qualitative interviews with students, mentors academic teachers, administrators and parents: Outcome results as summarized below, pending ANOVA, Time series and related statistical tests to rule out statistical inferential error are summarized below:

Suspensions: Suspensions showed a dramatic decline following the introduction in November 2009. An average of 24 suspensions was reported prior to introduction of the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program (August-October) compared with an average of 4 for the last three months of the year (March-May):

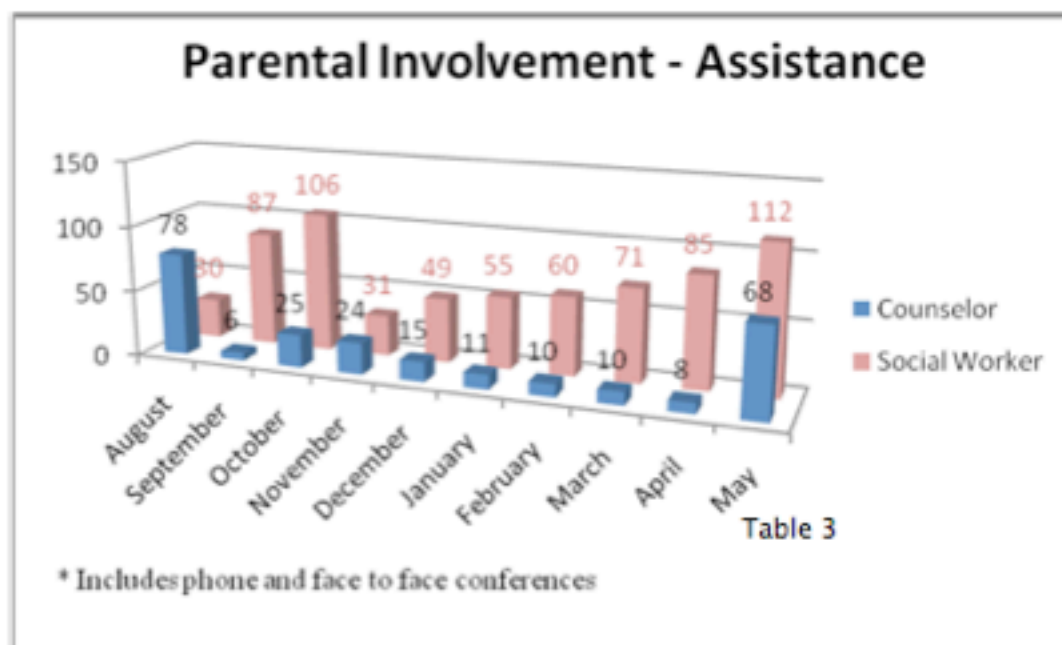


<sup>1</sup> iLeap is the integrated Louisiana Educational Assessment Program used to assess the 3,5,6,7 and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in response to the No Child Left Behind Act.

Expulsions: Expulsions showed a dramatic decline following the introduction of the *Circle of Courage Mentoring Program* in November 2009. An average of 19 expulsions was reported prior to introduction of the *Circle of Courage Mentoring Program* (August-October) compared with an average of 3 for the last three months of the academic year (March-May, 2010):

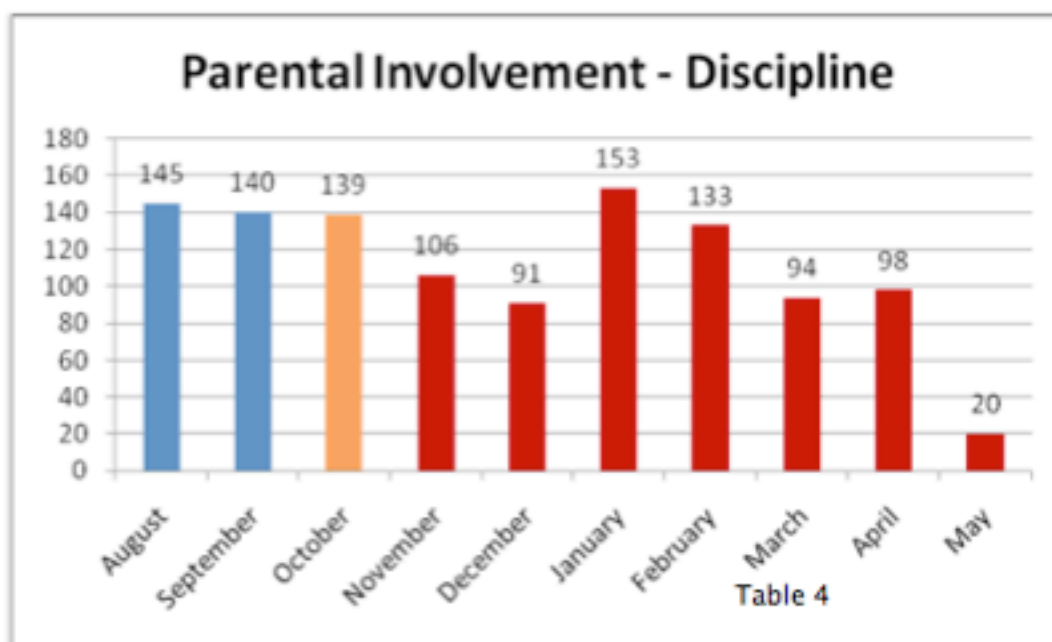


Parental Involvement-Assistance from November through the end of the academic year increased from 55 contacts in November (2009) to 180 in May (2010):

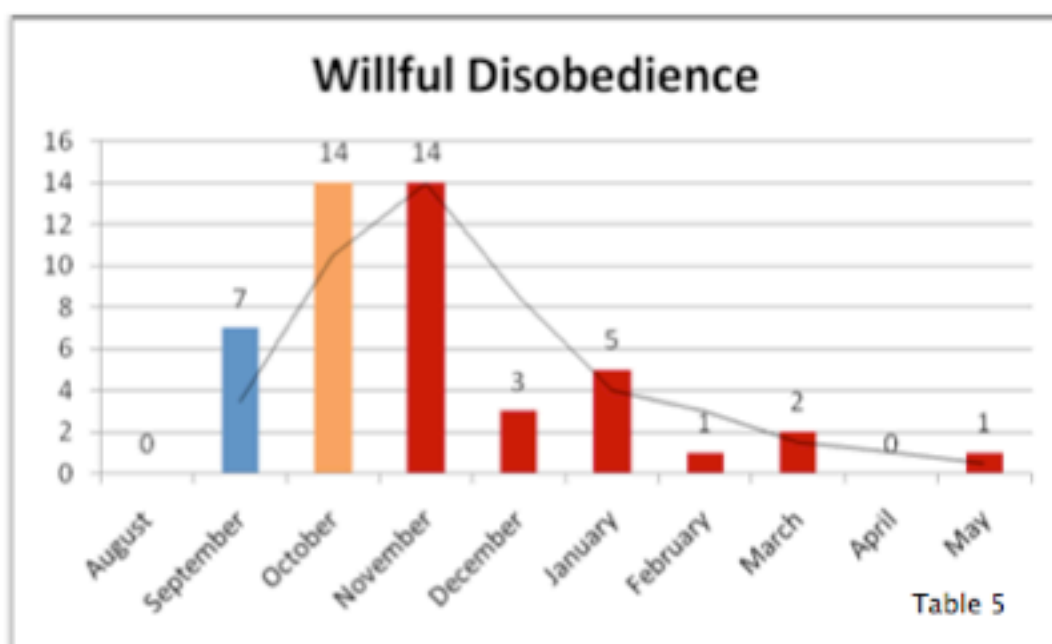




Parental involvement in discipline incidents: Suspensions showed a dramatic decline following the introduction in November 2009. An average of 141 parental involvement disciplines were reported prior to introduction of the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program (August-October) compared with an average of about 70.6 for the last three months of the year (March-May, 2010):

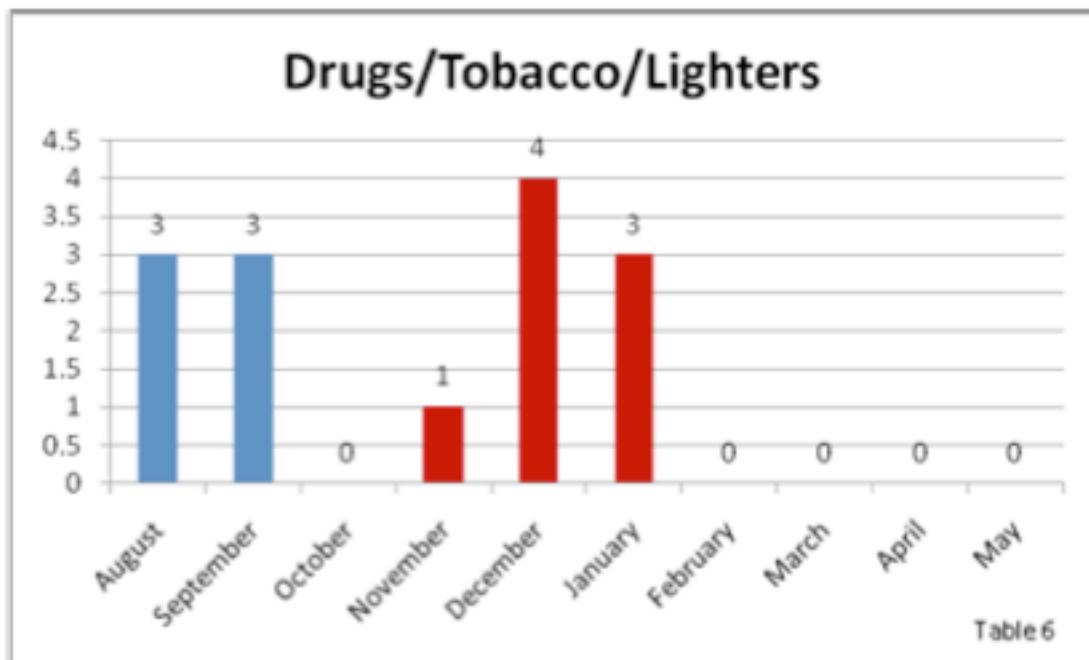


Willful disobedience Willful disobedience showed a dramatic decline following the program's introduction in November 2009. An average of 7 events was reported prior to introduction of the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program (August-October, 2009) compared with an average of 1 for the last three months of the year (March-May, 2010):

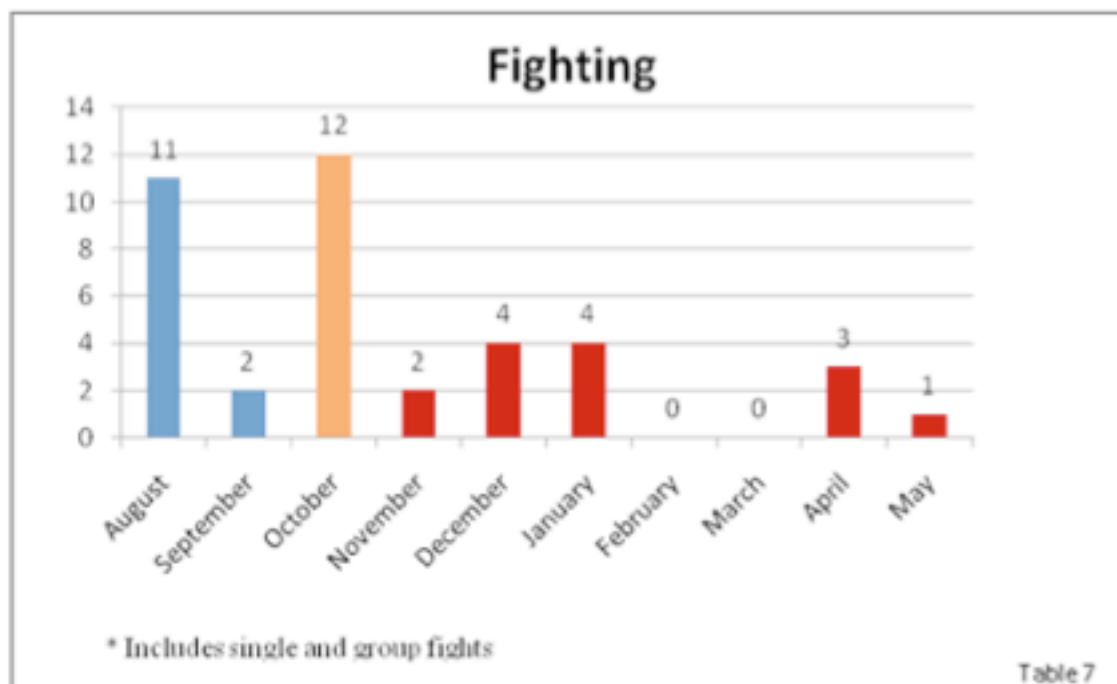




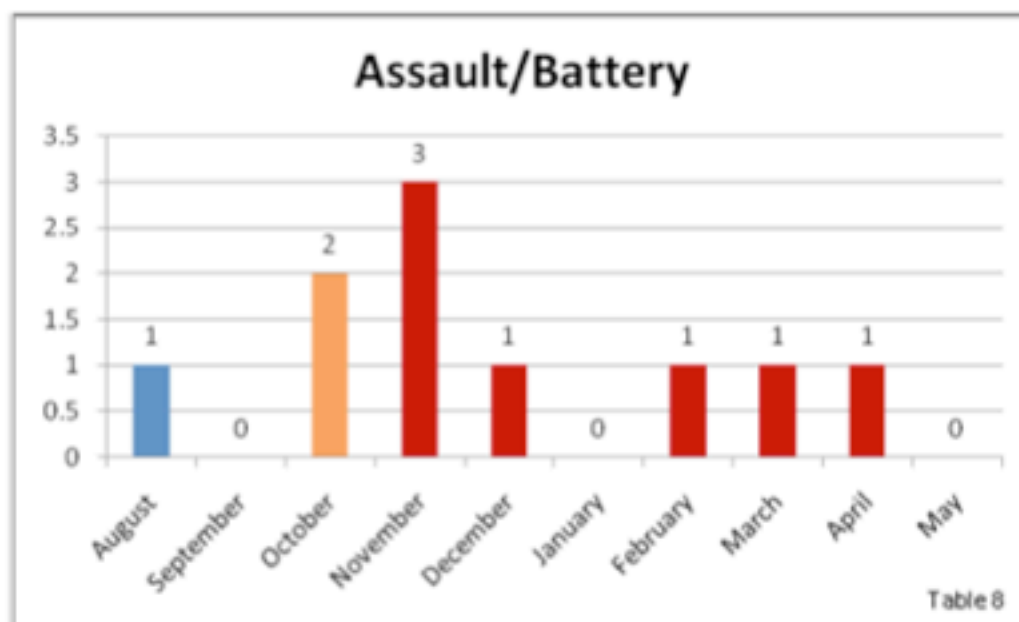
Drugs/Tobacco/Lighters: Incidents involving drugs, tobacco and lighters were reduced to non-existent levels as the program evolved through the 2009-10 academic year.



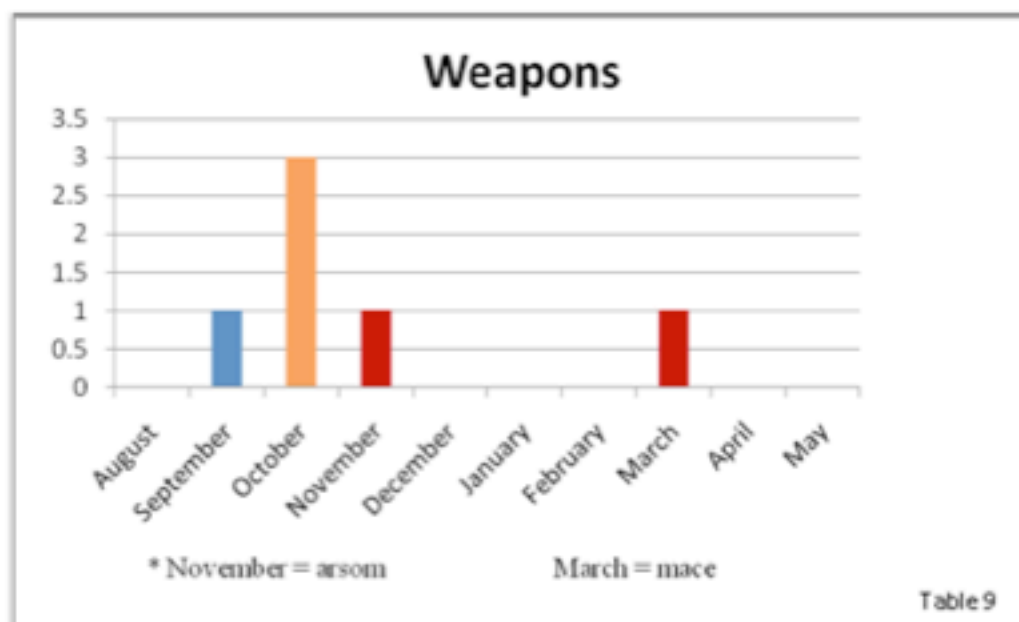
Fighting: Incidents involving *fighting* declined from an average of 8.3 from August-October, 2009 to an average of 1.3 in the last three months of the year.



Assault and Battery: Incidents involving *assaults* declined from an average of 1 from August-October, 2009 to an average of .6 in the last months of the academic year. Longer term outcomes of the program were assessed using post program interviews with graduates.



Weapons: Incidents involving *weapons* declined from an average of 1.3 incidents per month from August-October, 2009 to an average of .3 per month in the last months of the academic year.



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## **Student's Guide:**

*The Circle Of Courage Mentoring Program: Twelve Values To Promote Student Success - Student's Guide* is designed to help students improve their academic performance and become positive role models. This is accomplished by providing students with an opportunity to participate in weekly group sessions with trained teachers/mentors who care about their educational and personal growth. These teachers/mentors build a rapport with students as they share with them the real life consequences of poor choices. This workbook promotes academic and social/emotional learning. The goal is to empower and equip students to take responsibility for their education.

## **Teacher's Guide:**

*The Circle of Courage Mentoring Program: Twelve Values To Promote Student Success – Teacher's Guide* is designed to provide teachers with additional tools and resources needed to support students' academic and social/emotional learning. This is accomplished by providing teachers with training focused on the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program's cognitive behavioral intervention model. The *Teacher's Guide* is based on the Circle of Courage, a Native American tradition of positive youth development and is guided by Twelve Values. The goal is to support teachers as they help students become critical thinkers and make healthy life choices.

## **Parent's Guide:**

*The Circle of Courage Mentoring Program: Twelve Values To Promote Student Success - Parent's Guide* is designed to provide parents with the knowledge, understanding, and tools needed to support students' academic and social/emotional learning. The *Parent's Guide* is based on the Circle of Courage, a Native American tradition of positive youth development and is guided by Twelve Values. As students are helped by teachers to improve their academic performance and to become positive role models, parents are equipped with tools necessary to help students with their educational and personal growth.

## **Instructional DVD:**

*The Circle of Courage Mentoring Program: Twelve Values to Promote Student Success - Instructional DVD* is designed to provide teachers and parents with a practical explanation of the philosophy, principles and purpose of the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program.



# About The Founder



Khalil Osiris is founder of the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program. He is an author, educator and youth advocate who spent 20 years of his life in prison. During his incarceration at Norfolk Prison Colony in Massachusetts, Osiris earned a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree from Boston University—aware of the historic significance of the facts that Norfolk was where Malcolm X served time and Boston University was where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., earned his doctoral degree.

His message to incarcerated adults and youth is “turn the cell into a classroom and the prison into a university.”

Since his release, Osiris has co-authored two books: *Psychology of Incarceration* and *TLC-Talking and Listening with Care*. *Psychology of Incarceration* is recognized by the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction as an “approved institutional re-entry program.” It is also a groundbreaking eight-part DVD series distributed by GWC, Inc., a leader in the addiction and criminal justice field.

Osiris' latest works includes: Circle of Courage Mentoring Program: Twelve Values to Promote Student Success; Prevention and Re-entry Strategies: Teaching Personal Accountability; Get Out & Stay Out: Overcoming Self-imposed Limitations; Taking Responsibility: A Faith-Based Approach for Successful Re-entry and Healing From Within: Twelve Values For Personal Well-Being. These works embody the spirit of his commitment to helping at-risk youth and formerly incarcerated adults discover their power to make healthy life choices.

As founder of TKOP, Inc., a non-profit restorative justice organization, Osiris' work focuses on educating, empowering and equipping people to take responsibility for themselves and the improvement of their communities. TKOP's signature project is the Circle of Courage Mentoring Program, an initiative designed to help youth become successful students and positive role models.

A nationally recognized expert on adult re-entry and juvenile justice, Osiris is a dynamic speaker and engaging trainer. He conducts seminars, workshops and faith-based retreats around the country on topics ranging from Five Steps to Freedom and the Power of Forgiveness to Reclaiming Youth At-Risk and Overcoming Self-Imposed Limitations.

Osiris' passion is helping at-risk youth and formerly incarcerated adults transform their way of thinking. He believes we must live as Gandhi taught - “Be the change you want to see in the world.”



