

# Perceptions of Youth Development Programs in Pierson

Florencia Abelenda

Community- Based Research

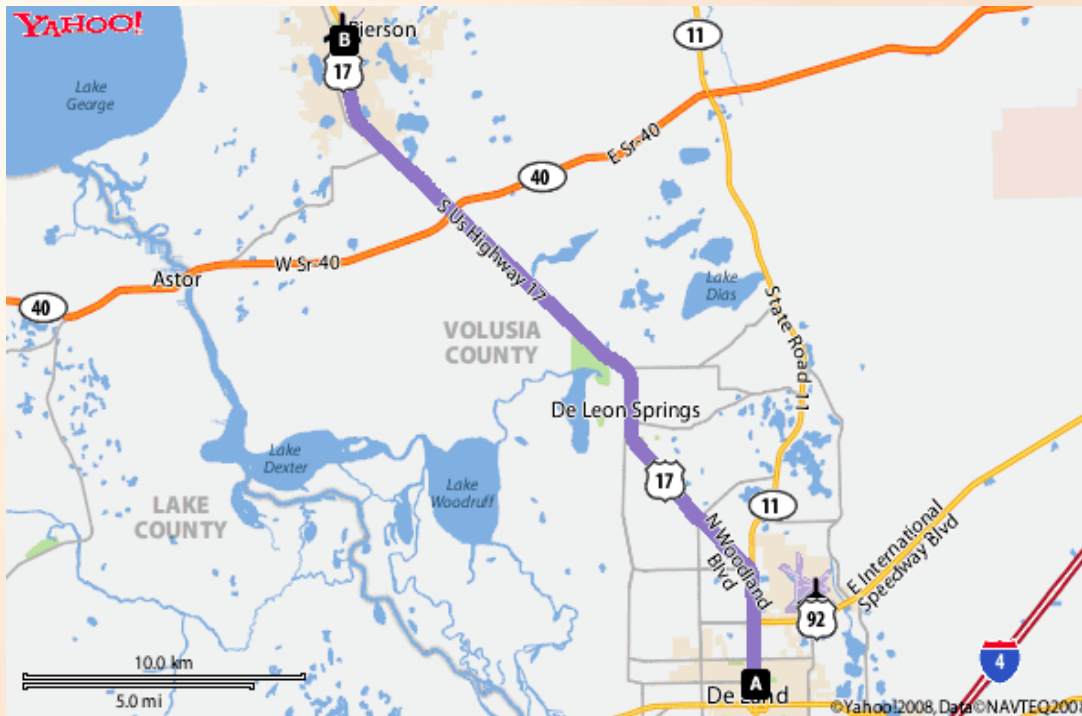
SY-363

May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Dr. Schorr

# Location- Pierson, FL

- From: Stetson U. To: Pierson
- Total Distance: 18.5 miles, Total Time: 27 mins (approx.)



**Pierson, FL** (town) - 7 square miles  
Location: 29.23766 N, 081.46092 W

# Background/ Demographics

- Rural community, “ Fern Capital of the World.”
- **Population:** 2,589 Citizens ( Census 2006).
- **Major Ethnic /Cultural group:** 62.4% Hispanic
- **Unemployment:** 19%
- **Key Industries:** Agriculture, ( Being Fern the most important activity), fishing, hunting and forestry.
- **Educational Resources:** Pierson Elementary  
Taylor Middle-High School
- **Cultural Highlights:** 56% speak other language rather than English at home.

# Background

- Income

- Less than \$ 35,000 - 311 households (63.8%)

- Education

- > 18 to 24 Years of age 488 ( 100%)

- High school graduates 211 (43.2%)

- Enrolled in college or graduate school 29 (5.9%)

- > 25 years or older

- Less Than 8<sup>th</sup> grade 848 (50.3%)

- Pierson Elementary School- Title 1 ( 80% of the students receive Free or Reduced Lunch Rate ).



# Introduction

- CBR as a tool
- Concern about the future of Pierson's youth.

## Youth Programs available

- Federal programs. Nothing local.
- After school programs ( athletics/clubs)
- **ACHIEVE** ( youth that already have a type of “problem”)
- YMCA 8 years ago.

# Problems

- Lack of youth programs in the community.
- No youth center.
- Gang and drug problems.
- Low enrollment in college.
- High dropouts and teen pregnancy rates.
- No leadership roles among the youth.

# Research Methodology

- **Qualitative and Quantitative data**
  - 4 month in Pierson.
  - Town Hall meeting, Pierson Elementary School, Local churches, Parents Meetings in Taylor-Middle High school, La Plaza Comunitaria, Park, Events and Local businesses.
- **Opinions of the youth surveys-** 49 surveys
- **Opinions of the parents surveys-** 59 surveys
- **Interviews-** 30 minutes to an hour long, tape recorded.
  - 1 Teacher/1 Professor
  - 1 Principal
  - 1 High school student
  - 1 Parent
  - 6 Youth Leaders
  - 1 Church leader
  - 5 Members of the local council
  - 1 Mayor



# Youth Demographic Survey

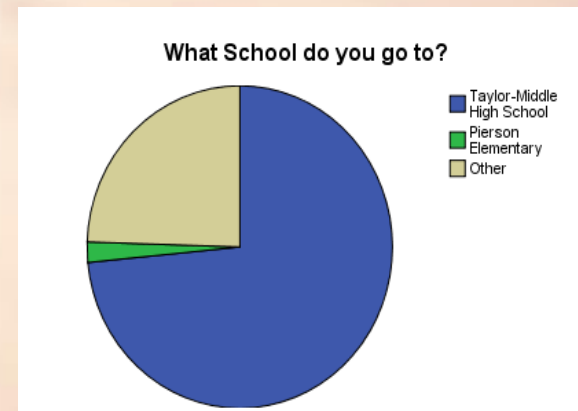
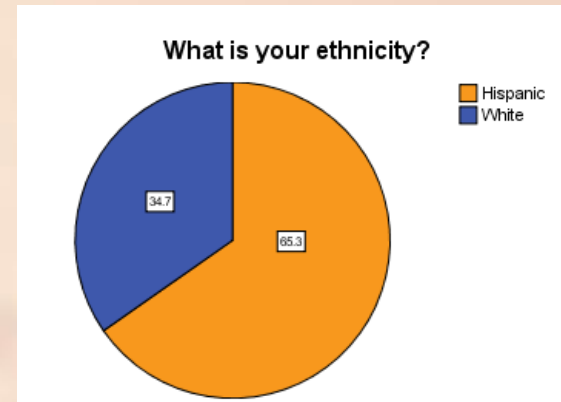
- Demographic/Background – 6 questions
- Opinions- 8 questions
- 10 questions SA (1),A (2),N(3),D(4),SD(5)

## Ethnicity- n=49

- 65.3% Hispanics ( n= 32)
- 34.7% White/ Caucasian ( 17)

## School

- 73.5% Taylor- Middle High School (n=36)
- 2% Pierson Elementary (n=1)
- 24.5% Other ( Seville) ( n=12)



# Youth Demographic Survey

What grade are you in?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	3	2	4.1
	6	3	6.1
	7	2	4.1
	8	3	6.1
	9	8	16.3
	10	10	20.4
	11	14	28.6
	12	7	14.3
Total		49	100.0

9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> – Grade n=32 (65.3%)

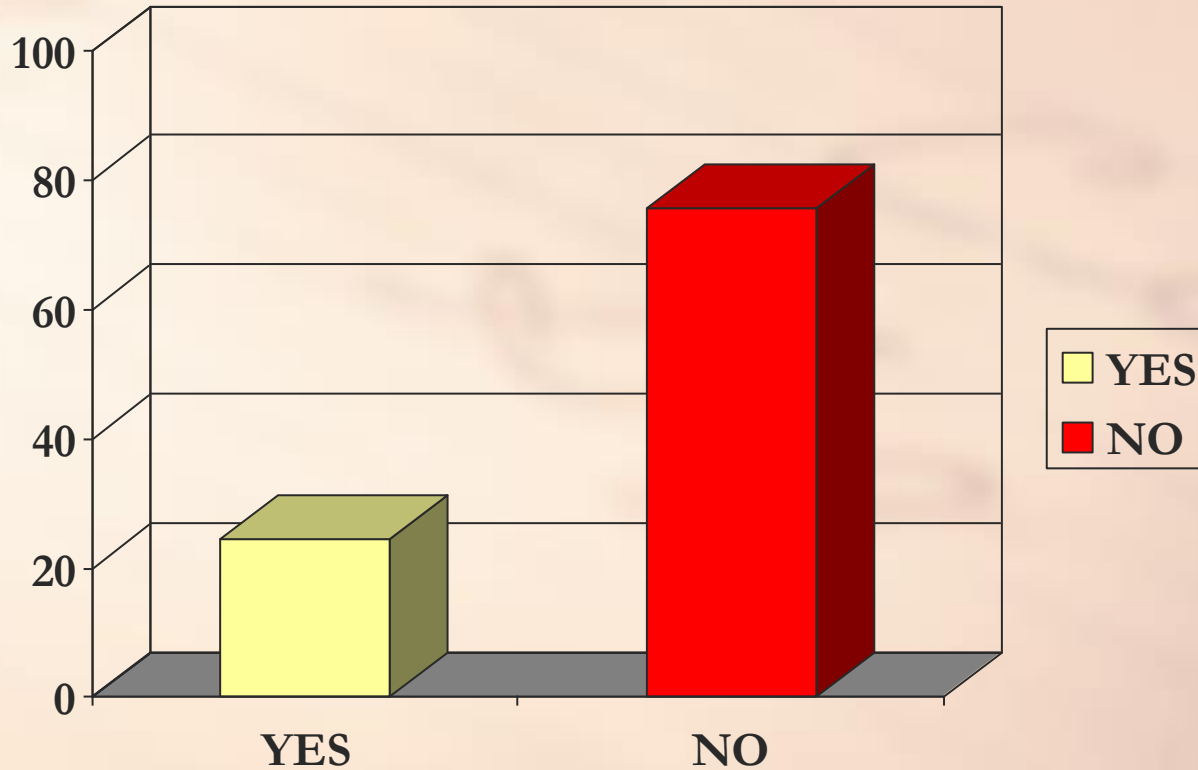
What is your average grades?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	A	11	22.4
	B	16	32.7
	C	11	22.4
	B+	8	16.3
	C+	3	6.1
Total		49	100.0

B Average n= 16 ( 32.7%)

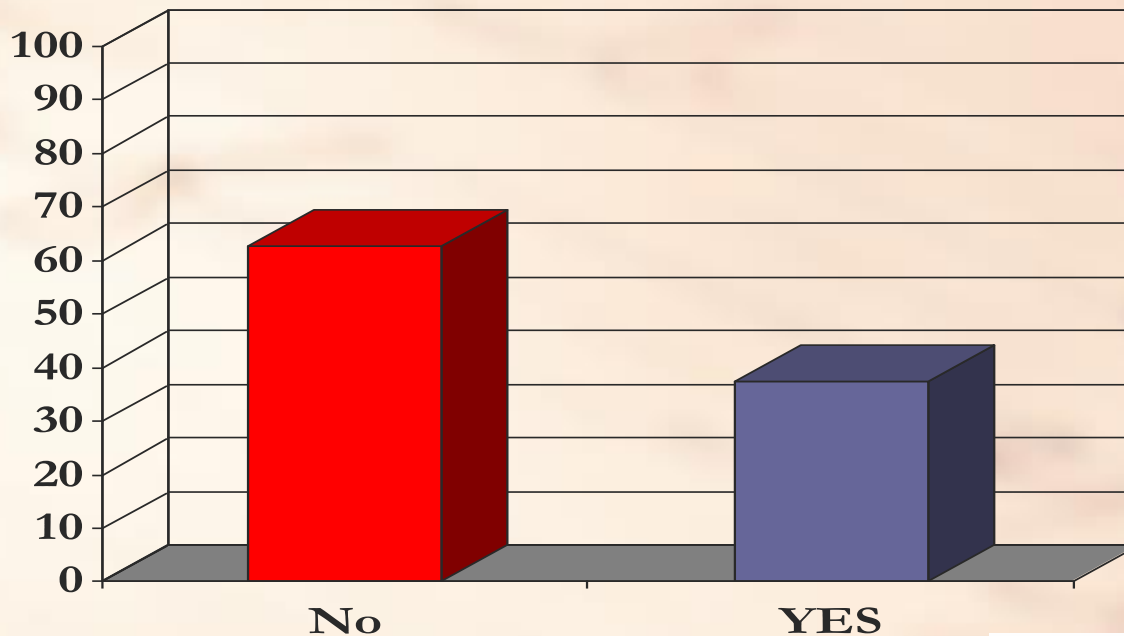
# Youth Programs?

Do you know any youth Programs at Pierson?



No- 75.5% ( n= 37)

## Are you involved in any youth program after school?



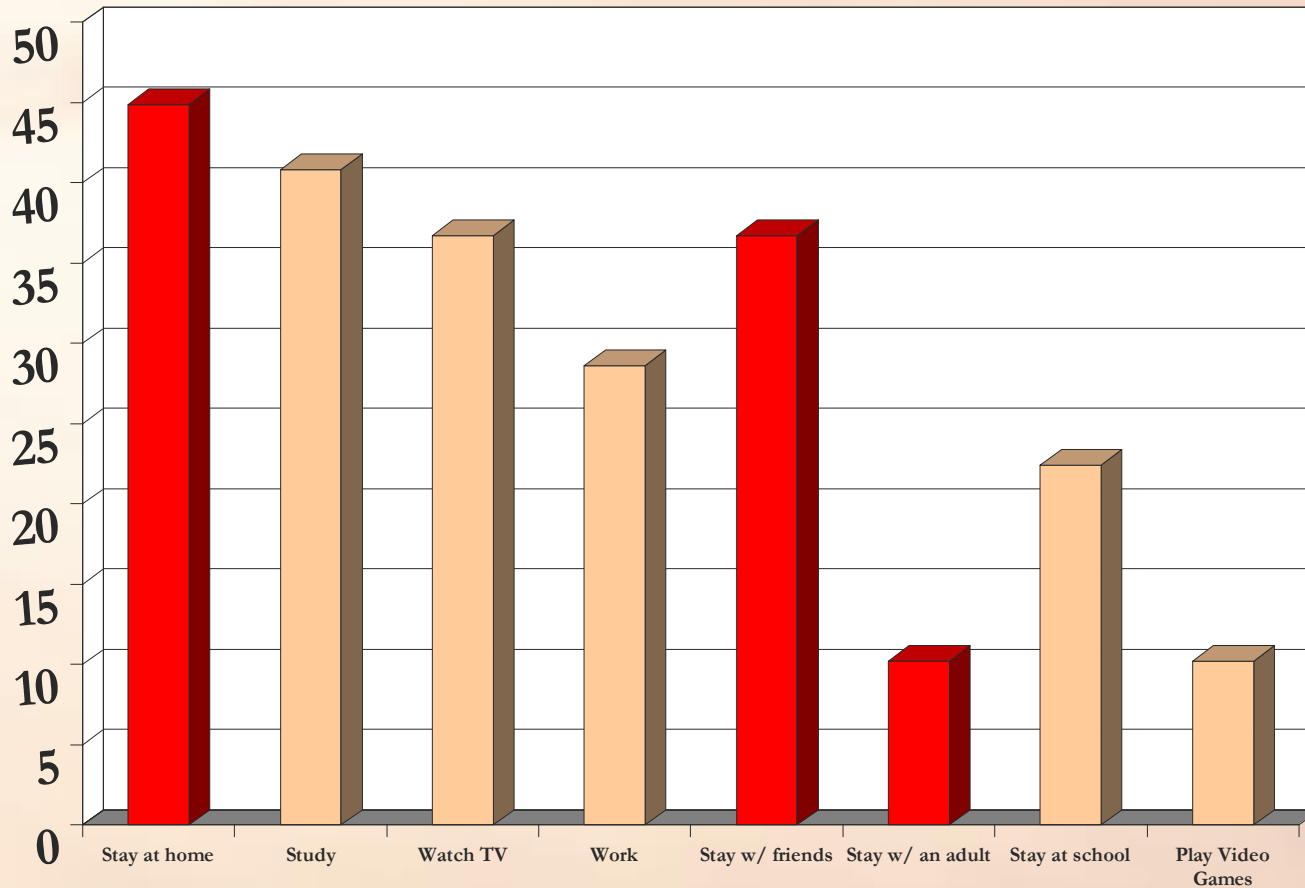
**62.5% of the youth are not involved in Programs after school**

•The majority of those “after school programs” are athletics or activities at school.

### Which after school program?

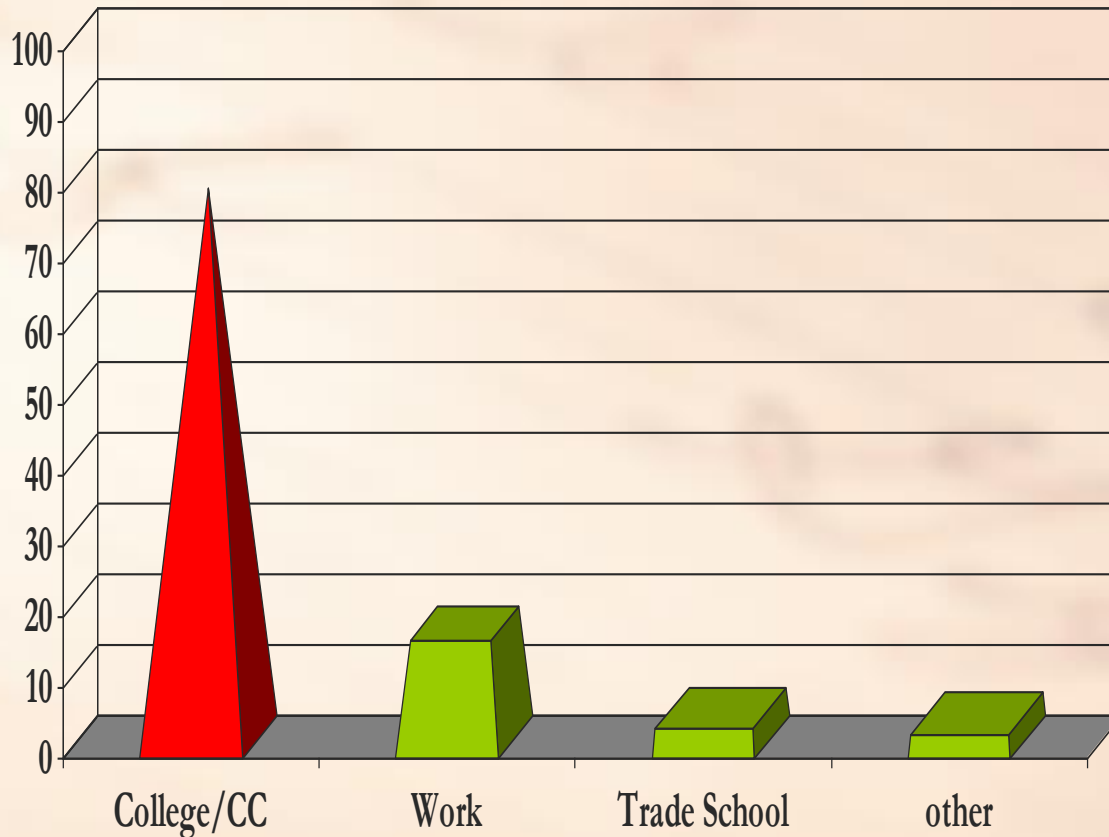
	Frequency	Percent
Valid tutoring	1	2.0
athletic	6	12.2
Migrant Community	1	2.0
Soccer	2	4.1
community	1	2.0
volunteer	1	2.0
teen trendsetters	2	4.1
teen trendsetters/tennis	1	2.0
Total	15	30.6
Missing System	34	69.4
Total	49	100.0

# What do the youth do after School?



- The majority stay at home, good part stays with friends and only 10.2% stays around an adult.

# After High School Graduation



**-77.5% College or Community College**

## Top 4 Choices Careers

**1- Doctor- 26.5% n=13**

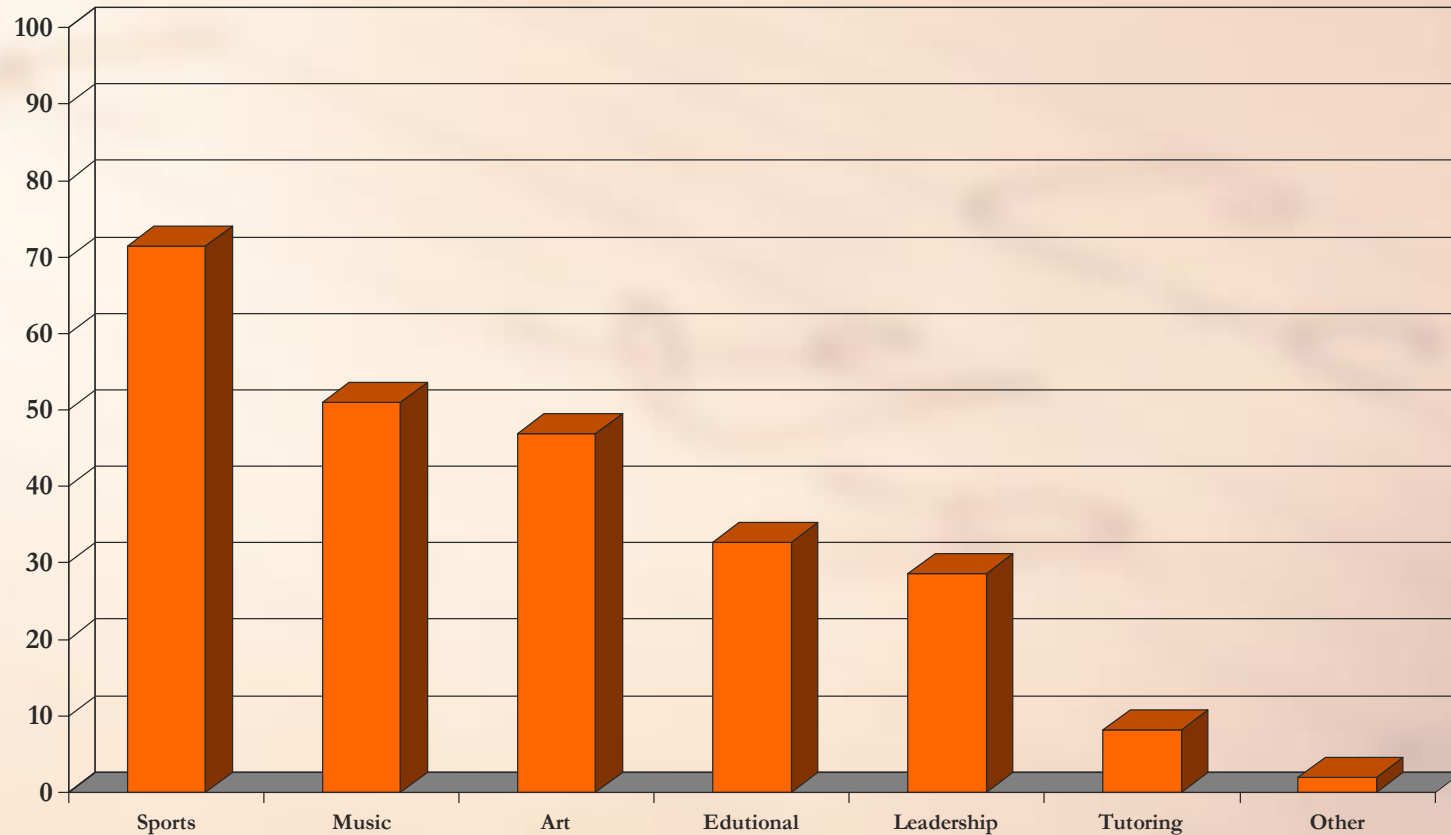
**2 -Lawyer- 18.4% n=9**

**3-Nurse- 16.4% n= 8**

**3 -Teacher- 12.2% n=6**



# What type of program would you like to see in your community?



Sports Programs- 71.4% n=35

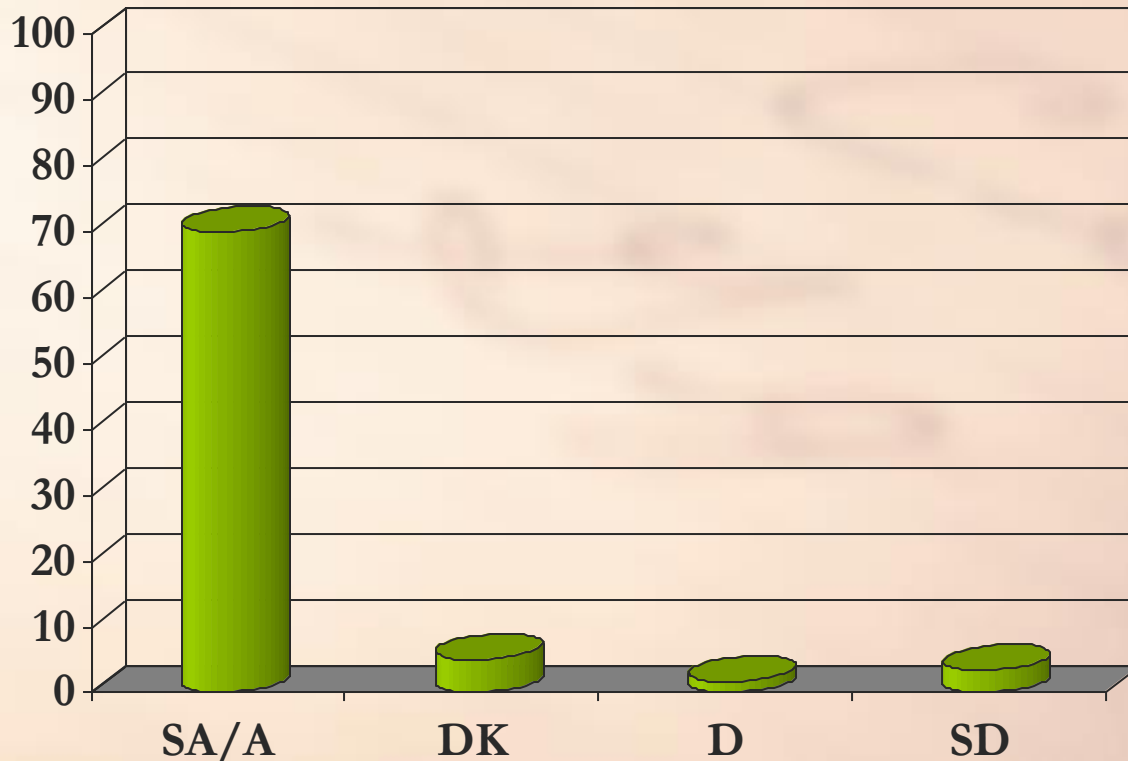
Music Programs- 51% n=25

Art Programs- 46.9% n=23

# SA/A/DK/D/SD

“I would get better grades at school if there would be a program that helps me with my homework”

-61.2% Strongly Agree or Agree

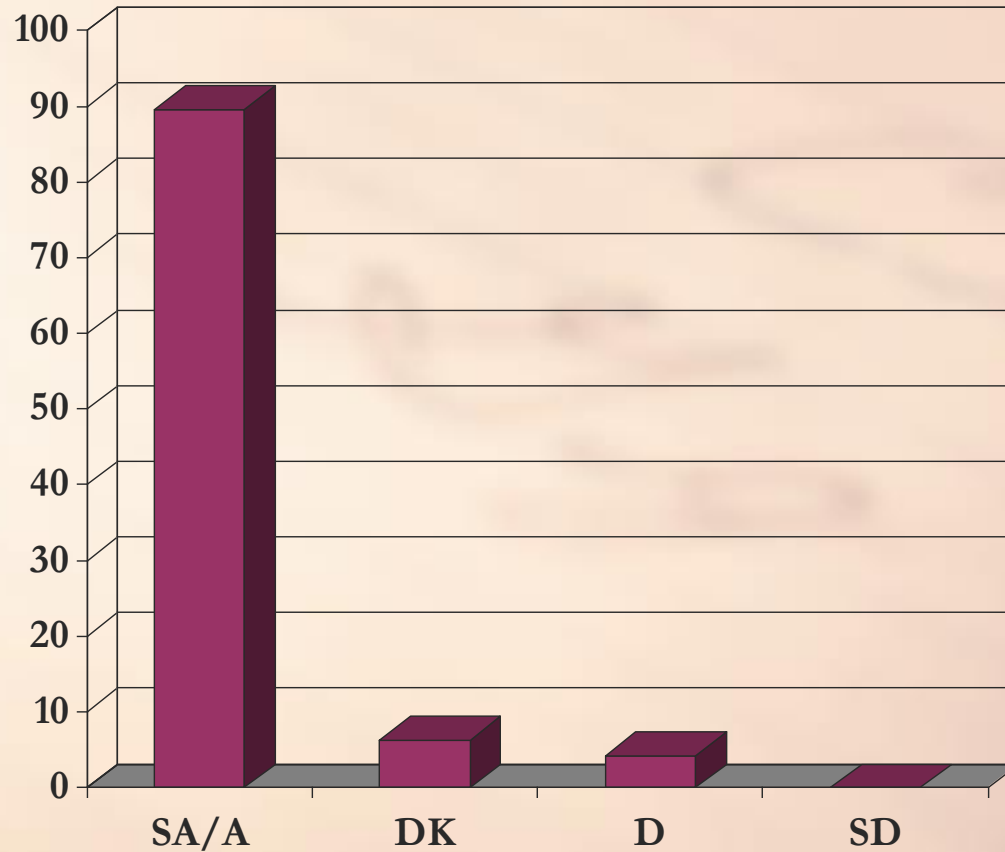




# SA/A/DK/D/SD

“I would like to have a place where I could hang out with my friends after school”

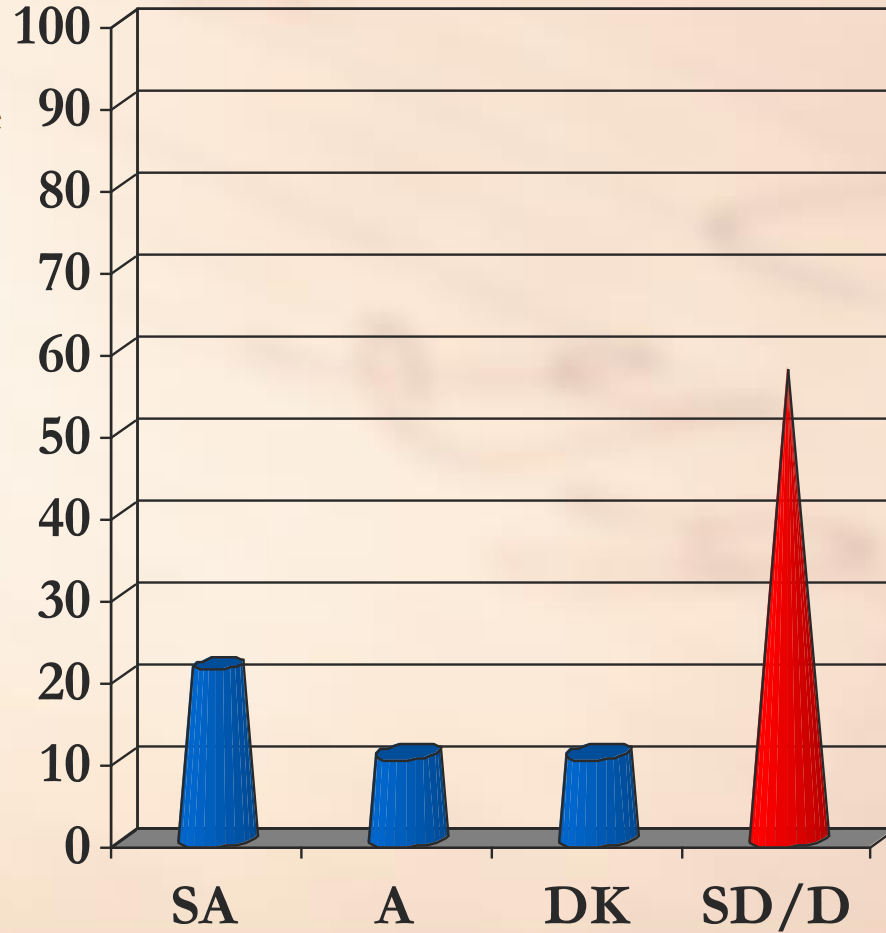
-89.6% Strongly Agree or Agree



# SA/A/DK/D/SD

“In my school I am involved with leadership activities”

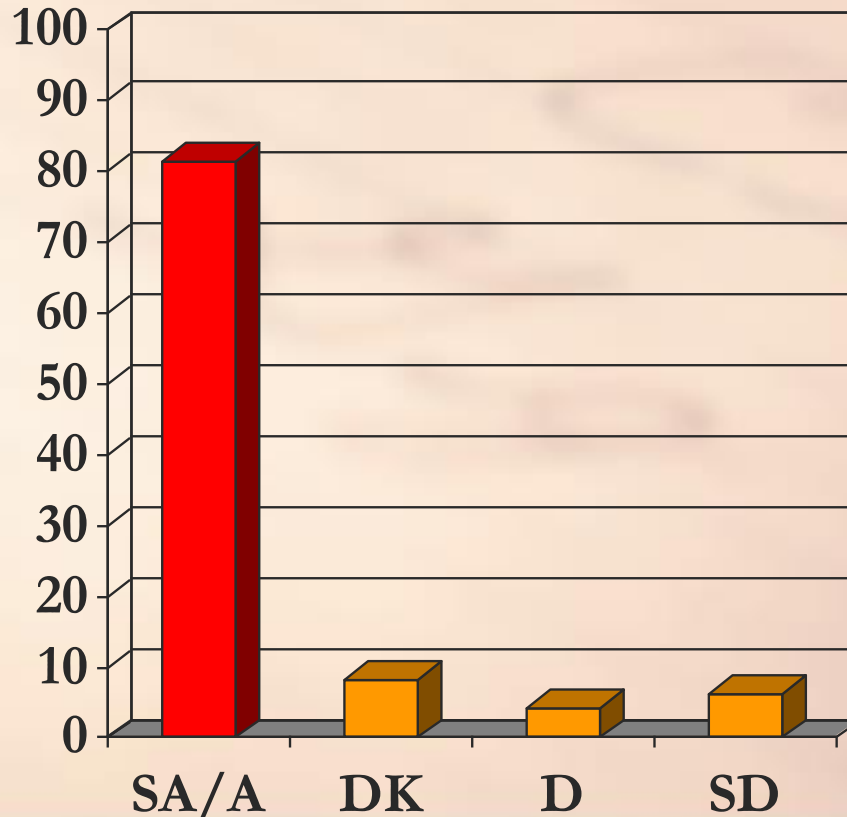
-57.4% Strongly Disagree/Disagree



# SA/A/DK/D/SD

“I would prefer to play outside rather than watch television in the afternoons if there was a program where I could do physical activities ( such as sports)”

**-81.6% Strongly Agree/Agree**



# Parents' opinions Survey

- Demographic/Background – 8 questions
- Opinions- 3 questions
- 9 questions SA (1),A (2),N(3),D(4),SD(5)

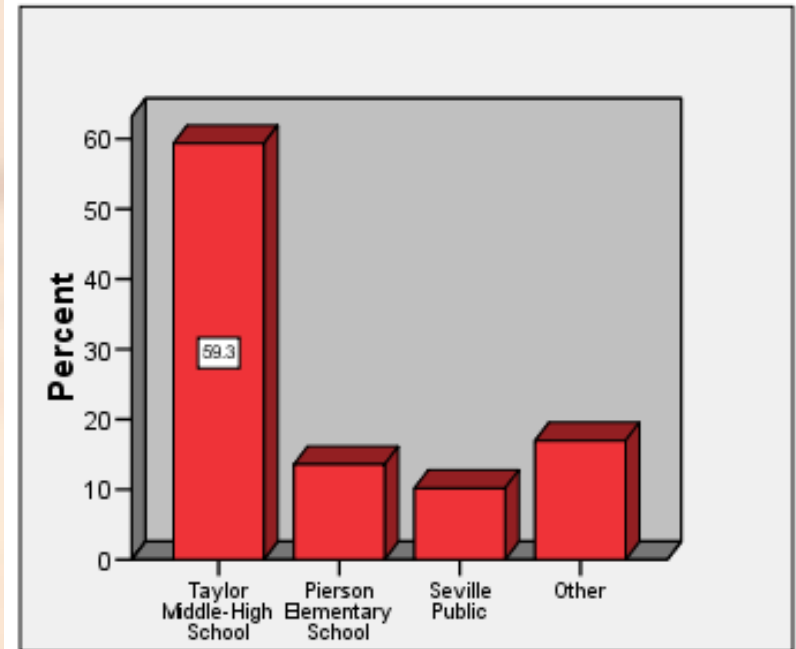
## Ethnicity- n=59

-100% Hispanics

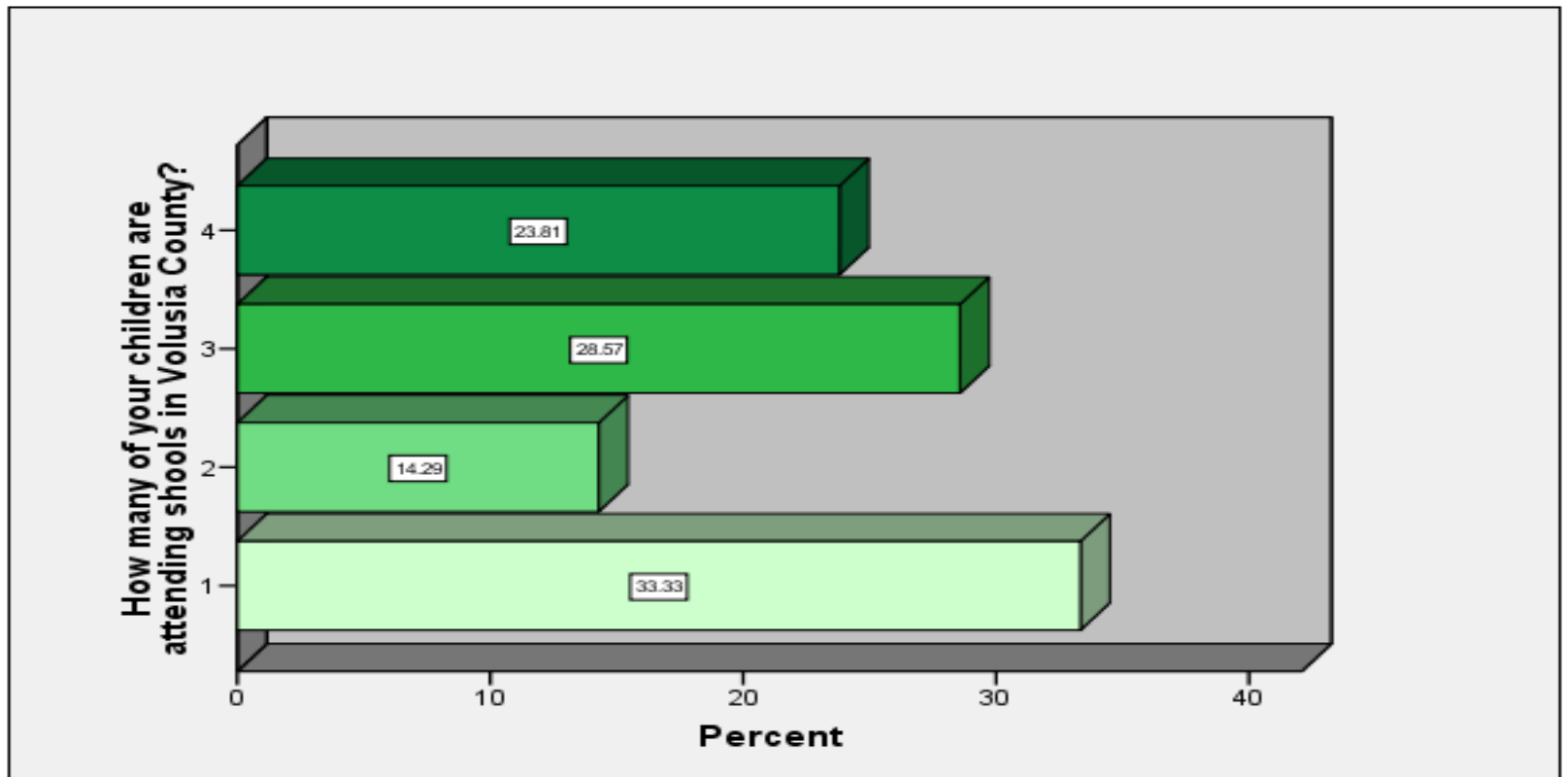
## School

- 59.3% Taylor- Middle High School (n=35)
- 13.9% Pierson Elementary (n=8)
- 10.2% Seville ( n=6)
- 16.9% Other ( n=10)

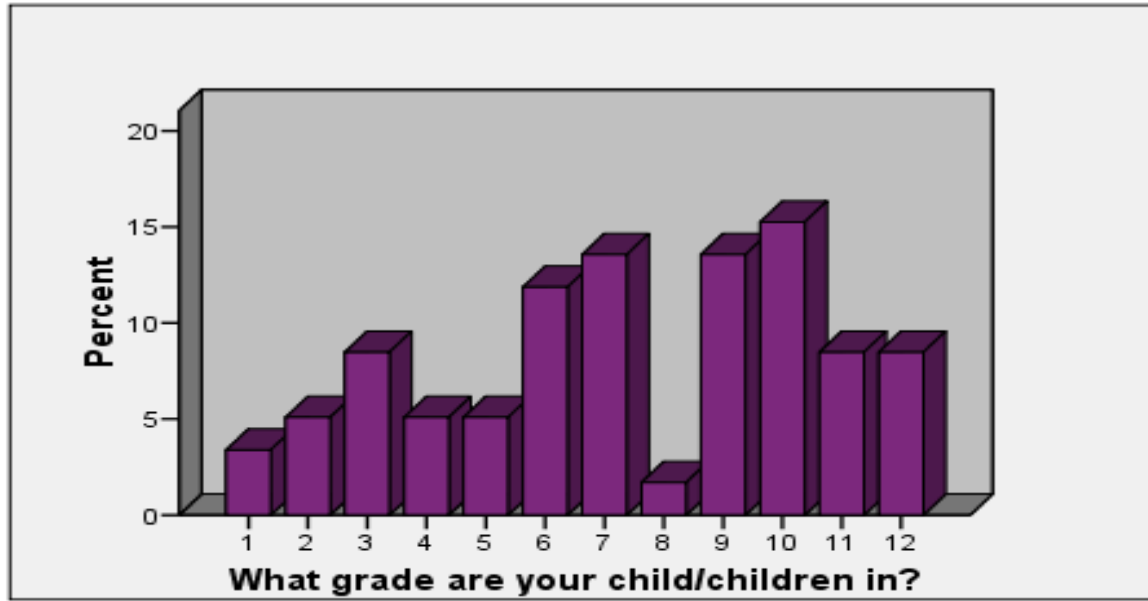
Which School your children/child attend?



## How many of your children are attending shools in Volusia County?



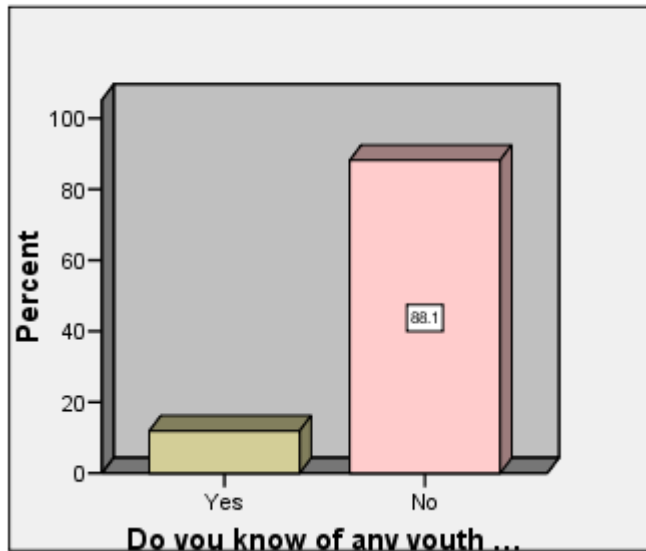
### What grade are your child/children in?



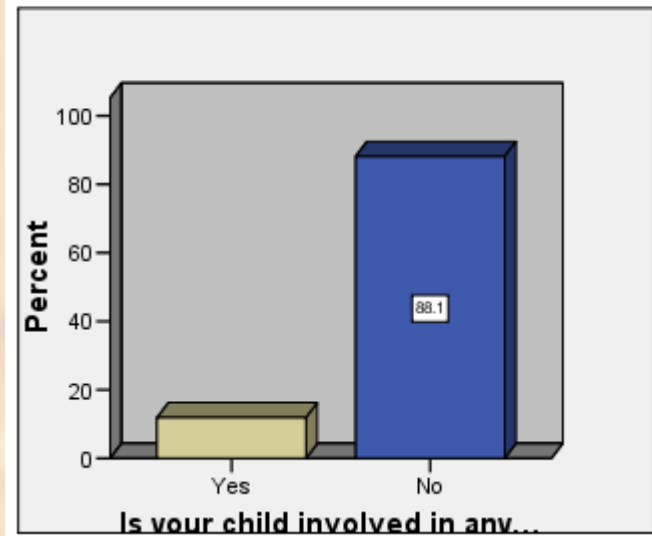
- Majority have children in 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	A	3	5.1
	B	25	42.4
	C	6	10.2
	B+	12	20.3
	C+	13	22.0
	Total	59	100.0

**Do you know of any youth program in Pierson?**



**Is your child involved in any youth program in Pierson?**

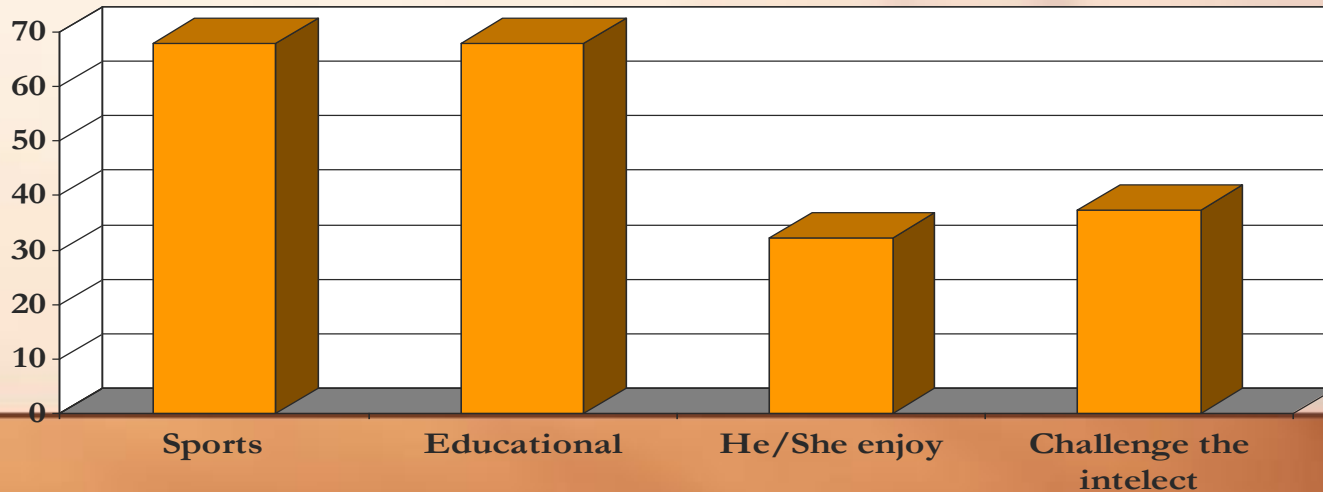


**If yes, which one?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Tutoring	7	11.9	87.5	87.5
	Achieve	1	1.7	12.5	100.0
	Total	8	13.6	100.0	
Missing	System	51	86.4		
Total		59	100.0		

# What Type of youth program would you like your child to attend?

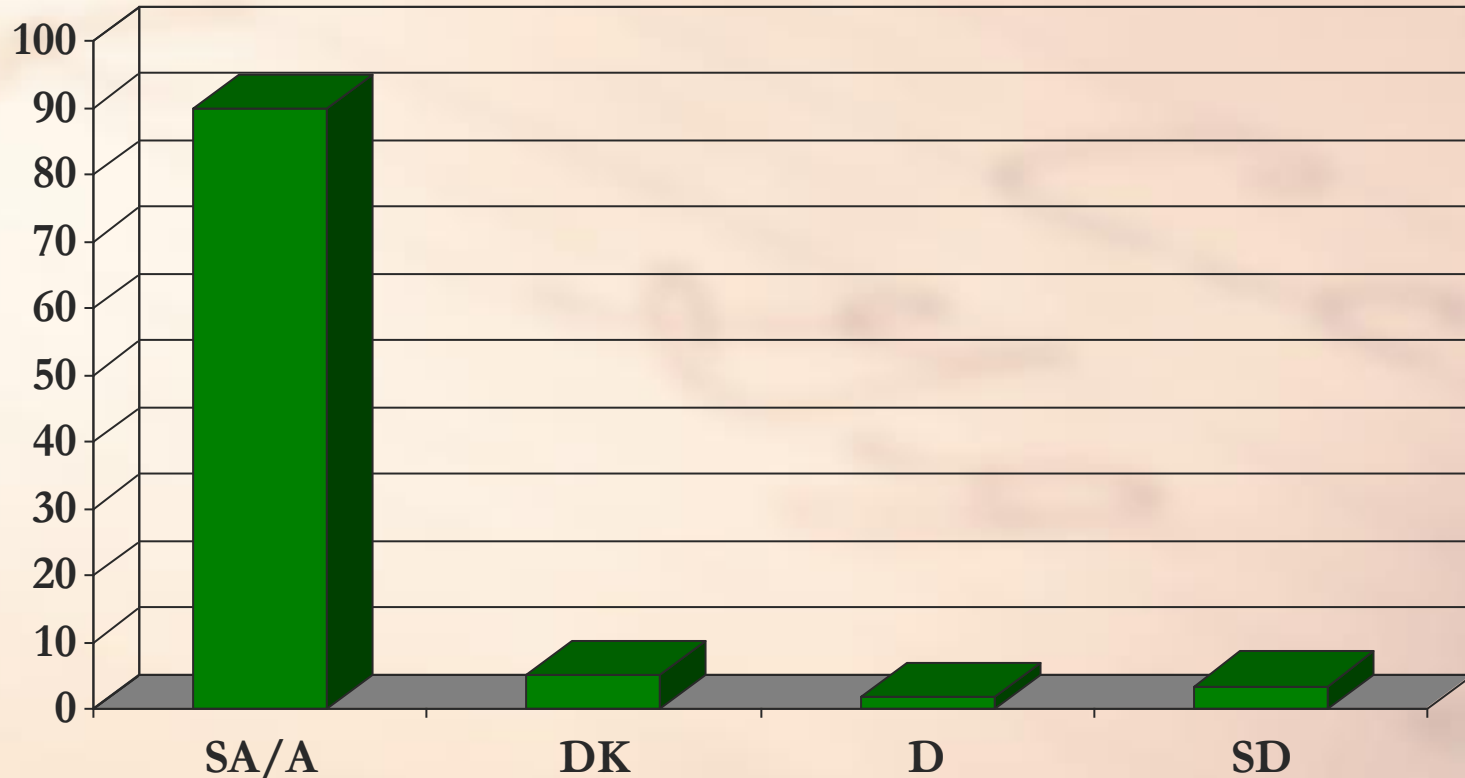
- Sport Programs- 67.8% n=40
- Educational Programs- 67.8% n=40
- Programs/Activities that challenge the intellect - 37.3% n=22
- Activities that he/she enjoy- 32.3% n=19
- Other- 6.8% n= 4





# SA/A/DK/D/SD

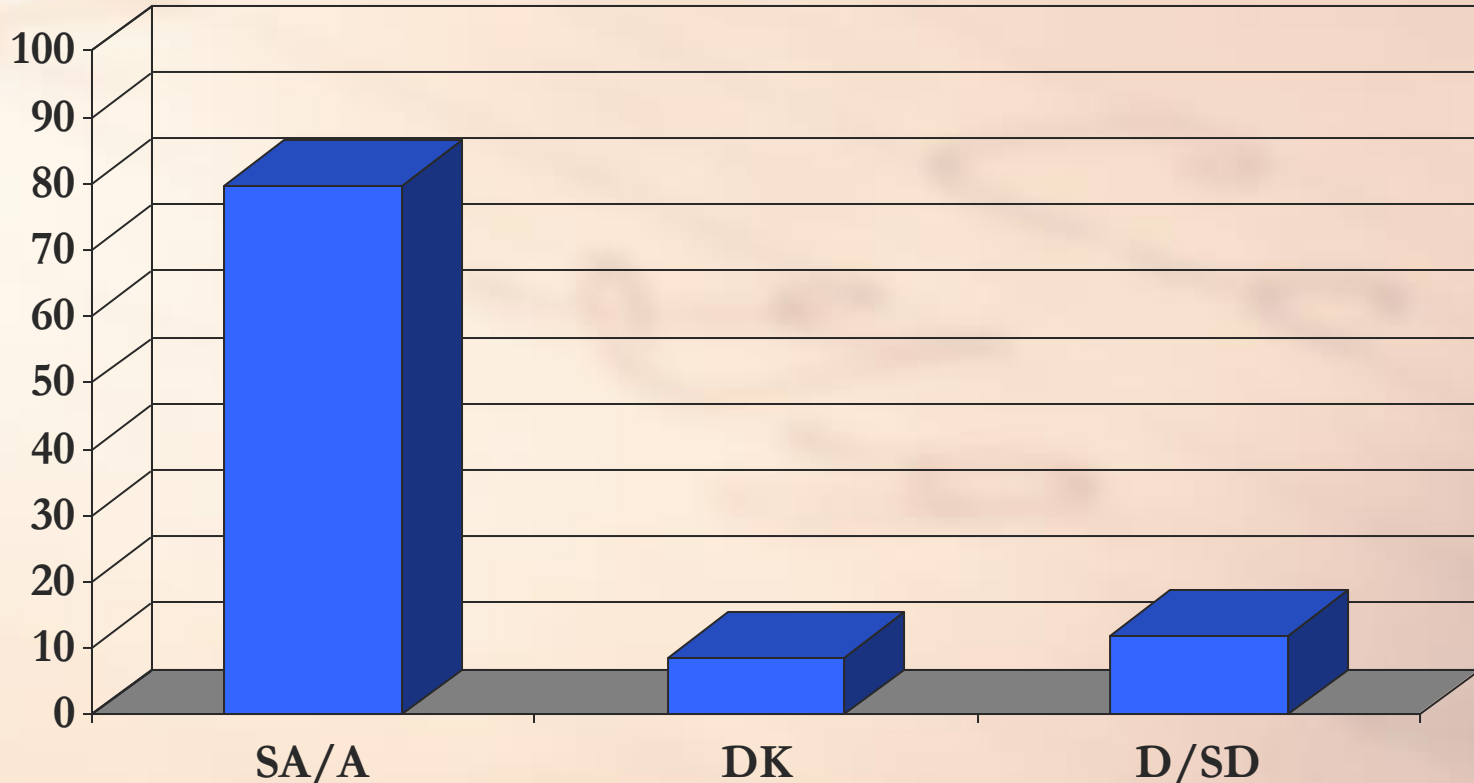
“ A youth program in this area would help families to create stronger bonds.”



**-89.9% Strongly Agree/ Agree**

# SA/A/DK/D/SD

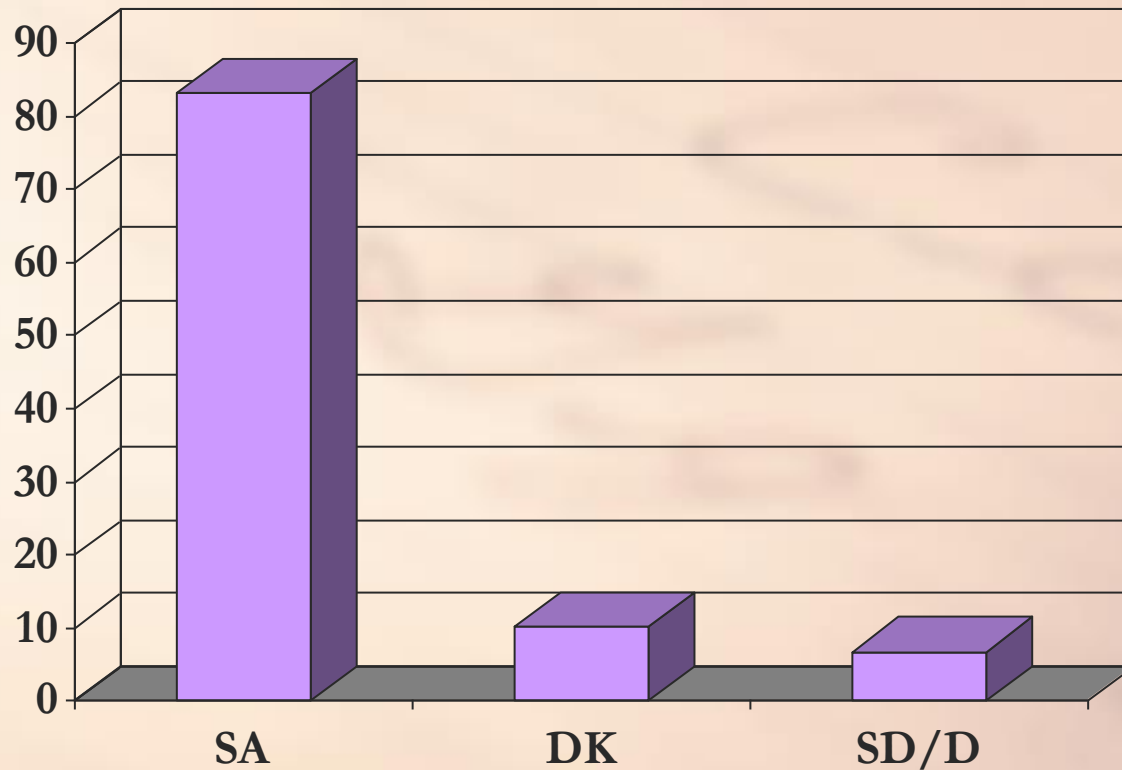
“ A youth program in this community would help pursuit the well-being in spirit, mind and body of the youth”



**-77.7% Strongly Agree/Agree**

# SA/A/DK/D/SD

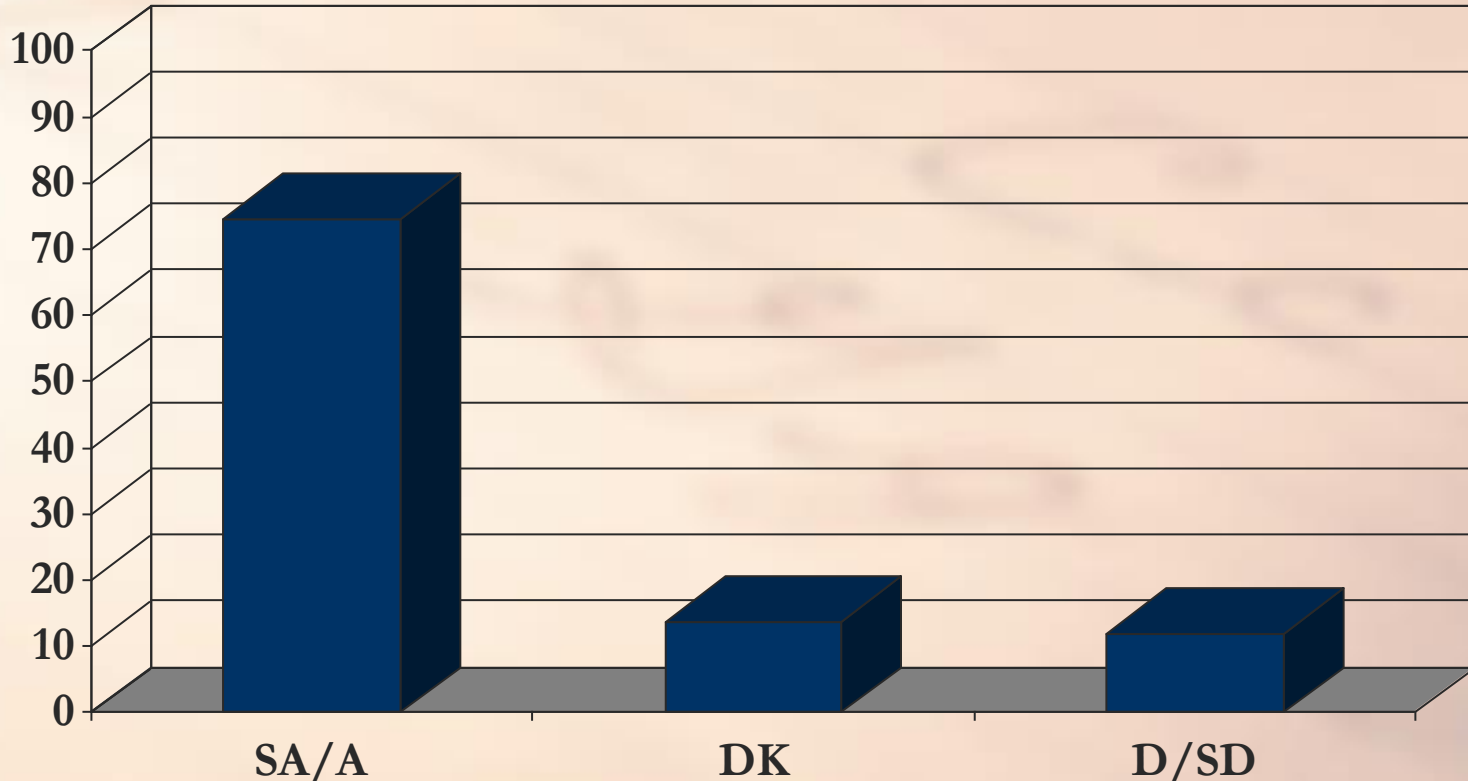
“A youth program would help my child to be more engaged in matters of the community”



**-83.1% Strongly Agree/Agree**

# SA/A/DK/D/SD

“A youth program in this area would help create a healthier behavior among my children”



**-74% Strongly Agree/Agree**

# Interviews

**6 Youth Leaders**

**1 High school student ( Hispanic)**

**1 Professor (Caucasian/White)**

**1 Parent( Hispanic)**

**1 Church leader ( White/ Caucasian)**

**1 Teacher ( White/ Caucasian)**

**1 Principal ( White/ Caucasian)**

**5 Council Members ( White/Caucasian)**

**1 Mayor ( White/ Caucasian)**

# Youth Leaders and Church Leader

## **Biggest Problems of the youth in the community**

- No opportunities/incentives for the future
- No programs/activities/resources open to everyone in the afternoons.
- Drugs, alcohol, teen pregnancy and high dropout rates.
- They are by themselves in the afternoons.
- A lot of segregation between the Whites and Hispanic Youth.

## **Do you know any program designated youth in the community?**

- After school programs ( clubs/ athletics)/ church programs once/twice a week/ Achieve.

## **Is the local government doing something to improve the situation/ Have you done something?**

- “Not really. They Promise during many meetings a YMCA or youth center but nothing for the moment.”
- Many of them tried to bring programs but without the support of local government is very difficult.

# Teacher/Principal

## Pierson Elementary Teacher

- **Teacher-** Art teacher for Pierson Elementary school for 24 years, recently retired. **(Caucasian/White)**

### Problems

- Poverty and no resources.
- No programs for the youth.
- Afternoons youth do not anything creative.

### Youth Programs?

- No. They need physical activities programs.

### Is Local Government helping?

- Not that he knows of.

## Pierson Elementary Principal

- **Principal-** 2 years as a teacher, 5 years as an assistant principle and 2 years as principal **(Caucasian/White)** (Does not live in the community).

### Problems (After thinking for a few moments)

- Think that school is a social place.
- Do not take things seriously.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> time I asked the question**

- Do not have fun programs after school.
- Not enough jobs for the youth outside agriculture.

**Offended when the opinions of the parents and children about the programs were revealed. School provides activates**

- Transportation.
- Parental issue not community issue.

**( many excuses)**

**Is Local Government helping?**- Absolutely. They built the community park.

# Council Members / Mayor

**What are the biggest problems with the youth at Pierson?**

- None. The youth has no problem in the area.
- Probably the graffiti from outsiders.

**Is the local government doing something about it?**

- “Talk to the police. They handle the issues.”

**Is there any youth programs in the community?**

- Yes. Plenty. Soccer leagues, county program, federal programs, athletics, clubs, etc.

**Do you think that the youth would be interested in youth programs?**

- “There was a YMCA a few years ago, but the youth have no interest”
- “Lack of supervision”
- “They are too busy in the afternoons with many athletics activities.”
- “Many of them are too busy working with their parents in the farms.”
- “Before trying to do something in the community. I would suggest that Stetson University come and try out programs in the community center in Pierson so they do not waste their time. ( we already do that!).”

**Is there any segregation in the community among whites and Hispanics?**

- NO.



# Conclusion

- Youth and parents want youth programs in the area.
- There is segregation
- Council are not very informed.
- There is a lack of communication between everyone in the community.
- There is not a center or a local program that the youth can go to.
- Lack of leadership roles in the community for the youth.

# Suggestions

- More communication among the different leaders..
- Leaders and Mentors in the community that influence the youth
- A place where the youth could “hangout” in the afternoons.
- Sport/Educational programs.
- Pressure the local government.
- Listen to what the youth need.
- Empower the youth to be leaders.

# Any questions?

- Thank you!!