

Touchpoint Connection Research Design

The research of the Touchpoint Connection program at Amphitheater High School will combine a quasi-experimental with an interrupted time series design to investigate the effectiveness of the coaching program on key measures of school success.

Research questions

The central research question is:

What is the impact of the Touchpoint Connection coaching program on participants' school attendance, number of discipline referrals, and grades?

Secondary questions are

- What is the impact of different dosages (number or minutes of student-coach meetings) of the program on the participants' school attendance, number of discipline referrals, and grades?
- Is one style of coaching more effective than another in impact on the participants' school attendance, number of discipline referrals, and grades?

To answer these questions we will compare the treatment group outcomes (school attendance, discipline referrals and grades) pre- and post-program and compare treatment and comparison group outcomes for the post-program period.

Research design

The independent variables are program exposure or dosage as measured by the number of coaching sessions (or minutes) completed, and the style of coaching as indicated by the name of one of the three coach trainers.

The dependent variables are the rates of attendance and discipline referrals and student grades.

We will use a quasi-experimental design in comparing rates of attendance and discipline referrals and grades post-program for the treatment and comparison groups. The treatment group will be divided into a low-dosage and a high dosage group to compare the effects of program exposure. The treatment group will also be divided into three groups according to the style of each coach trainer, and the outcomes for each group will be compared with the outcomes of the comparison group.

We will also use an interrupted time series design in comparing rates of attendance and discipline referrals as well as grades pre- and post-program for the treatment group.

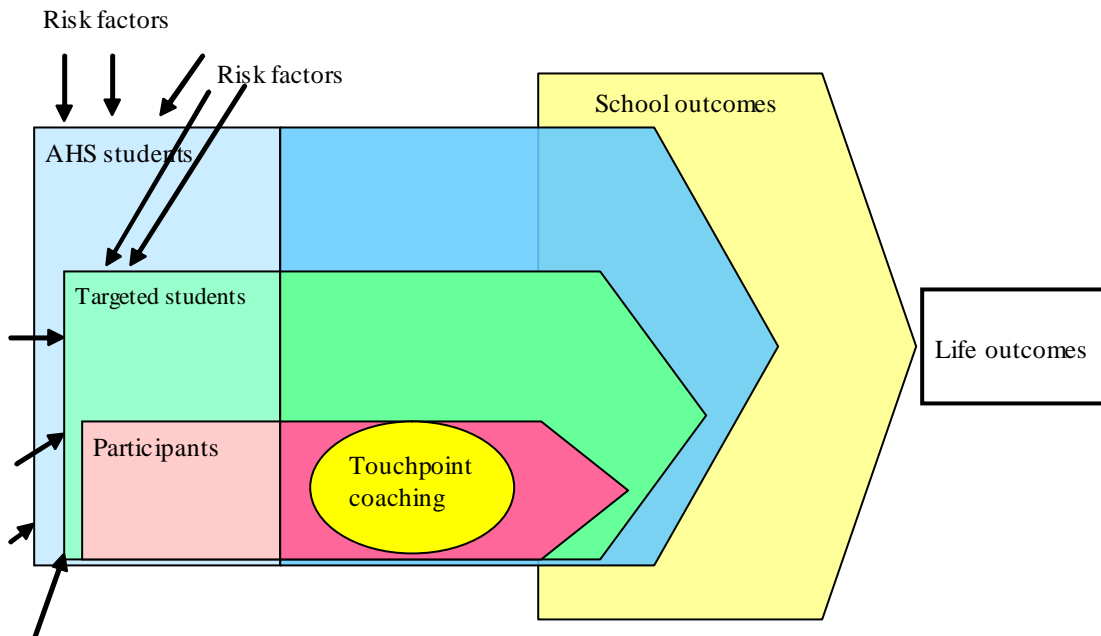
Again, the treatment group will be divided into a low-dosage and a high dosage group to compare the effects of program exposure, and into three groups to compare the effects of different styles of coaching.

Treatment and comparison groups

The treatment group consists of students at Amphitheater High School who meet with a coach through the Touchpoint Connection in 2008-09 and in 2009-10. These students have been identified by the school as ones who are not performing up to their academic potential, frequently because of adverse circumstances and the lack of a consistent, caring adult in their lives.

The comparison group will be composed of AHS students matched by grade and gender to the treatment group. Ideally these will be from the group initially contacted by Touchpoint Connection but who did not participate, and therefore are similar in preprogram attendance, discipline referrals and grades to the treatment group. If there are not enough of these students to form an appropriate comparison group, additional members will be identified from the general student body at AHS who most closely correspond to the treatment group.

Logic model



Data collection

Touchpoint Connection provides the names of participants and coaches and other program implementation data. Touchpoint also provides the names of students who were invited but who decided not to participate for possible inclusion in the comparison group.

The Research and Accountability Department of Amphitheater Public Schools provides attendance, discipline referral and grade data for each quarter or semester from school records. APS will also complete the comparison group based on student records.

Data analysis

The Research and Accountability Department at APS will analyze the data using appropriate software to:

- Compare frequencies and means of outcome variables (attendance, discipline referrals and grades) of treatment and comparison groups, and of the treatment group pre- and post-program.
- Identify differences in effectiveness of different styles of coaching.
- Identify differences in effectiveness of low and high exposure (number of coaching sessions).
- Identify trends in these measures.

Reporting

The Research and Accountability Department at APS will report the results of the data analysis to Touchpoint in an initial report in spring 2010 and thereafter in an annual report in the summer.

Timeline

APS will provide Touchpoint with updated attendance, discipline referral and grade data for participants after each semester. Touchpoint will provide APS with updated program information after each semester.

APS will complete an initial analysis using data from the pre-program 2007-08 and post-program 2008-09 in spring 2010. This will be expanded to include data from 2009-10 in the summer.

APS will report the results of the data analysis to Touchpoint by the end of March 2010 for an initial analysis of the 2008-09 data, and by the end of August for the 2009-10 data.

These reports will be part of a more comprehensive evaluation of the program by Touchpoint.

Responsibilities regarding research

| What | Who | When |
|--|---|---|
| Match participants with non-participants for a comparison group | Touchpoint provides names for possible group; APS does the matching | Late January 2010 |
| Provide information on participants and program implementation to APS | Touchpoint | At the end of each school semester (January, June) |
| Provide information on attendance, discipline referrals and grades for treatment and comparison groups to Touchpoint | APS | At the end of each school semester (February, July) |
| Analysis of 2008-09 data | APS | Spring 2010 |
| Report of data analysis to Touchpoint | APS | March 31, 2010 |
| Analysis of 2009-10 data | | Summer 2010 |
| Report of data analysis to Touchpoint | APS | August 31, 2010 |