

June 2010

**Oak View Renewal Partnership
June Board Meeting
Preliminary Report**



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Introduction

The Oak View Renewal Partnership (OVRP), a Community Service Corporation, strives to narrow the cultural, social, education, health and economic gaps between the community of Oak View and the larger Huntington Beach community. Through both a systemic and program-based approach, the OVRP utilizes a blend of social enterprise, community development, community reinvestment, advocacy, and neighborhood involvement to address and improve the challenges faced by the Oak View Community.¹

In early 2010, the OVRP hired the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI), a non-profit evaluation and consulting firm specializing in evaluations of education and social programs, to conduct a program-specific and community-wide evaluation. Specifically, the OVRP sought assistance with developing a comprehensive evaluation strategy to monitor the OVRP's progress in meeting its program-specific and overall goals and objectives. This preliminary report, prepared for the June 2010 meeting of the OVRP Advisory Board, includes information and analysis of data for two activities supported by the OVRP: the Oak View Youth Soccer League (OVYSL) and the Oak View Community Clean-Ups (OVCCU). Our detailed methods to evaluating these activities are outlined in the following section.

Methodology

Upon review of design and implementation details and, in collaboration with the OVRP leadership, ETI custom-tailored an evaluation plan for the Oak View Youth Soccer League and the Oak View Community Clean-Ups. Each differs in its history, implementation, the degree to which OVRP formally or informally supports the activity, and the type of questions the OVRP sought to address for each.

Oak View Youth Soccer League

As a Community Service Corporation, and not a direct service provider, the OVRP draws on the many stakeholders in the Oak View community and beyond to encourage and facilitate systemic change. Toward this end, the OVRP has supported the Oak View Youth Soccer League in a variety of ways. For example, the OVRP has helped financially to replace old equipment and, by turning to its network of resources in the larger community, secured a space for games and practices to take place. Beyond providing assistance on an as-needed basis, the OVRP is not directly involved in the coordination and facilitation of the OVYSL.

As such, ETI focused its methods of inquiry on the OVYSL as a community-wide activity independent of the OVRP. Specifically, ETI designed an evaluation plan to collect outcome data about the impact that the League has on participating players and, in turn, the Oak View community. Based on a literature review of youth extracurricular activities

¹ <http://www.oakviewrp.org>

and development, ETI created a brief questionnaire to be completed by the parent(s) of participating players (a copy of the questionnaire can be found in **Appendix A**).

The questionnaire prompted parents to assess various aspects of their child's development as a result of participating in the OVYSL. Relevant constructs included goal-setting, peer interaction and friendships, confidence, physical skills, community pride, and health and risky behaviors. The OVRP, including volunteers, administered and collected 123 surveys over several weeks in May, 2010. ETI conducted descriptive analyses of the demographic and quantitative items in the questionnaire. We also conducted a qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses to identify salient themes and direct quotes. These analyses and accompanying narrative can be found in the Findings section of this report.

Oak View Community Clean-Ups

OVRP has played a direct role in the recent restructuring and ongoing implementation of the Oak View Community Clean-Ups. In line with its global effort to identify and target issues that adversely impact Oak View, the OVRP played a leading role in rethinking the community clean-ups that have previously taken place on a periodic and scaled-down basis. Specifically, the OVRP devised a plan to reinvigorate the community clean-ups and impose a structure that encouraged the regular participation of more organizations, greater community buy-in and, in the long-term, a greater sense of ownership and empowerment on the part of Oak View residents.

ETI developed an evaluation plan to focus on the OVRP in its role as an advocate for community initiatives. This plan was created to study the OVRP's impact as a centralized organizational force behind an effort that involves multiple community stakeholders, including other organizations, students, and residents.

In order to assess the overall effectiveness of the OVRP's new system for the community clean-ups and its work with other community organizations, ETI conducted telephone interviews with seven individuals that represent a sample of organizations that have participated in the clean-ups over the past year (a copy of the interview protocol can be found in **Appendix B**). These organizations have served as lead facilitators under the OVRP's "new" plan and have had experiences working with the OVRP in this and other efforts.

OV Community Clean-Up Logic Model

ETI's interview protocol was based on a logic model we developed, in collaboration with the OVRP, for the "new" community clean-ups. The logic model depicts the logical connections between OVRP's planned work and the intended short- and long-term outcomes. In keeping with the scale of our overall evaluation plan for the clean-ups, the logic model focuses on the planning and implementation of the clean-ups, versus participant level activities or outcomes. An analysis of interview data and a graphic representation of the model can be found in the Findings section of this report.

Findings

The following section is divided into findings for the Oak View Youth Soccer League and the Community Clean-Ups.

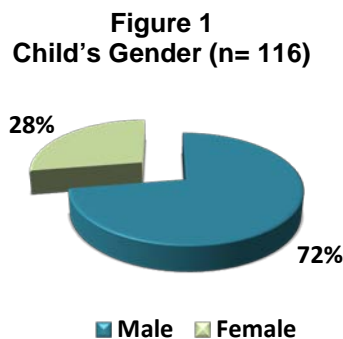
Oak View Youth Soccer League

The Oak View Youth Soccer League (OVYSL) is a free, volunteer-led extra-curricular activity open to Oak View youth, as well as youth from other communities. The OVYSL strives to teach “...basic soccer skills as well as the importance of teamwork and personal development skills².” To collect outcome data about the impact that the League has on participating players and, in turn, the Oak View community, ETI developed a brief questionnaire for parent(s) of participating players. OVRP staff and volunteers collected questionnaire responses from 123³ parents.

ETI conducted descriptive analyses of the demographic and quantitative items in the questionnaire. We also conducted a qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses to identify salient themes. These analyses and an accompanying narrative are presented below.

Demographics

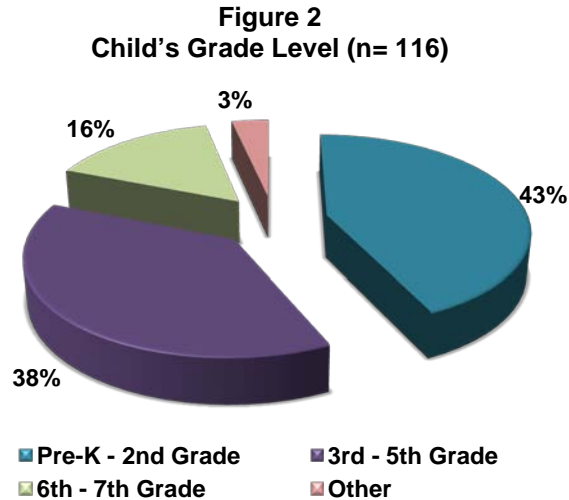
Parents provided basic demographic information about their child who participates in the OVYSL. The average age of participating youth is nine years (n= 116; maximum age= 15; minimum age= 4), 72 percent of whom are male (see **Figure 1**).



Of the 116 youth about whom parents completed a questionnaire, 43 percent are in grades pre-Kindergarten to 2nd grade and 38 percent are in grades 3-5 (see **Figure 2** on the following page).

² <http://www.oakviewrp.org/programs/soccer.htm>

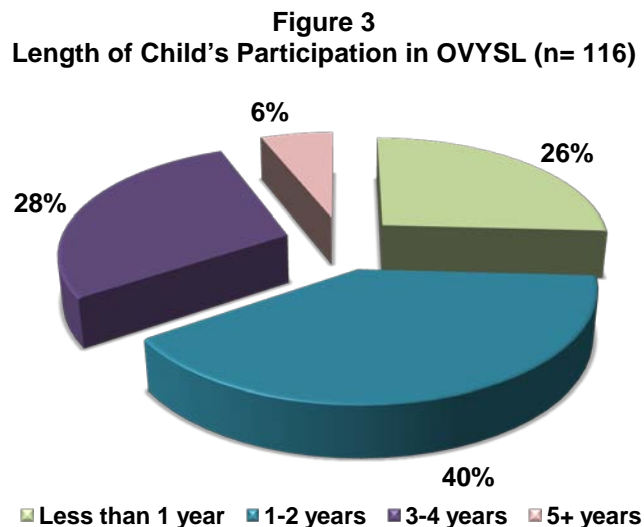
³ Six surveys were excluded from the quantitative analysis because data were provided for multiple children in one survey. Open-ended responses from these surveys were included in the qualitative analysis.



Parents provided over 50 different schools when asked for their child's school name. The most frequently identified among these was Oak View Elementary School (n= 34), followed by Perry Elementary School and Vista View Middle School, each with a count of six.

Participation in the OVYSL

Parents were also asked to report on their child's participation in the OVYSL. According to parents, most of the youth, at 40%, have participated in the League for 1-2 years, followed by 28 percent for 3-4 years, and 26 percent for less than one year. Only six percent of youth have participated in the League for five or more years (see **Figure 3**).



On average, youth participate in League activities, including games and practice, three times a week. When asked about their child's participation in other Oak View community activities, only 23 percent of the parents reported that their child is involved in such activities.

OVYSL’s Impact on Youth Participants

ETI’s questionnaire prompted parents to assess various aspects of their child’s development as a result of participating in the OYVSL. Relevant constructs included goal-setting, peer interaction and friendships, confidence, physical skills, community pride, and health and risky behaviors.

As evidenced by **Table 1** below, parents responded positively to items related to their child’s personal development resulting from participation in the League. Specifically, parents reported overwhelming agreement to all items in this part of the questionnaire. For example, over 90 percent of parents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their child has learned to interact with youth that are different from him/herself and has developed friendships with other youth from the community. Almost 60 percent of parents “strongly agreed” that their child has improved his/her athletic or physical skills and almost all parents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their child feels proud to be a member of the community.

Table 1
Child’s Participation and Impact
N= 106-116

<i>Because of my child’s participation in the Oak View Youth Soccer League, he/she...</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Has set goals for him/herself related to playing soccer in the League.	2%	3%	49%	47%
Has set other goals for him/herself outside of playing in the League.	1	7	48	44
Has learned to interact with youth that are different from him/herself.	2	6	48	44
Is more confident.	1	4	46	49
Has developed friendships with other youth from the community.	4	4	41	52
Has developed positive relationships with adults from the community.	1	5	51	43
Has improved his/her athletic or physical skills.	2	1	38	59
Feels proud to be a member of the community.	2	1	36	61

Parents were also prompted to describe how their child’s participation in the League has positively impacted his/her life in the areas of physical health and child friendships. In terms of their child’s physical health, the majority of parents who provided a response said that participating in the League is “*bettering [my child’s] health,*” has helped “*my daughter to lose weight,*” and “*is healthy for son’s health and mind.*” One parent said that her daughter “*now worried more about her health since she started playing,*” and another commented that she is “*helping [her daughter] control her weight and [that her daughter] is more informed about her health.*”⁴

Among those parents who commented on child friendships, most said that participation in the League has helped their child to make more friends and to meet “*good people.*”

⁴ Quotes have been edited for grammar and readability.

Other than physical health and child friendships, many parents noted that participating in the League has increased their child's confidence and has encouraged other positive activities or behaviors among their children. In terms of the former, parents said the following:

- *"It has increased my daughter's confidence."*
- *"It is good because my child is a little shy and it takes away his stress and helps him make new friends."*
- *"It is good because [my daughter] is communicating more with her friends when she plays and during classes."*
- *"It has helped [my son] get involved with more people and to have better confidence in himself."*
- *"For my son this has been very favorable because he is very shy and he has made friends."*

Many parents also noted that their child watches less television and is generally more active because he/she participates in the League. The following comments exemplify these and other thoughts:

- *"My child plays more sports."*
- *"My child watches less TV."*
- *"My children are active all week and are not thinking about eating and watching TV."*
- *"[My daughter's] time is more positively spent."*
- *"Playing soccer motivates [my son] to become more active and he's not in the house as much with the television or games."*
- *"[My son] behaves better with children his age and with adults."*
- *"My son is very demanding and this is helping improve his attitude and character."*
- *"In addition to my daughter improving her sporting activities, she is more interested in other activities, like she does her house chores more quickly and when we have family reunions, she participates more in activities."*
- *"Thanks to the sport, my son has kept busy and has not been involved with drugs and bad company."*
- *"[My daughter] is much more friendly with people, she knows how to control her character."*
- *"[My son] is more open with other people. He is more happy with himself."*

Parents provided similarly positive responses to the items in **Table 2** on the following page. Over 70 percent of parents "strongly agreed" that the OVYSL keeps their child

from engaging in risky behaviors. Over 90 percent of parents also “agree” or “strongly agreed” that the League provides a healthy activity for their child and is the only affordable sports activity in the community for their child.

Table 2
Results of Participation in the OVYSL
N= 105-110

<i>The Oak View Youth Soccer League...</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Provides a healthy activity for my child.	3%	1%	33%	64%
Keeps my child from engaging in risky behaviors (i.e. drug use and gang activity).	3	0	27	71
Is the only affordable sports activity in the community for my child.	1	7	44	49

In order to document the impact of the OVYSL on the Oak View community in general parents were asked to describe any changes they have seen. Among the parents who provided a response, most reported that the League discourages youth from participating in risky behaviors, including drugs, loitering, and violence, that impact the community. Parents provided the following comments:

- *“The kids are spending more time in sports and their minds are distracted from bad friendships.”*
- *“It is impacting the community because many other boys and girls choose gangs and drugs.”*
- *“Many of the children are occupied and have less time to walk the streets by themselves and running into trouble.”*
- *“The community seems more peaceful, there is less violence and gang activity.”*
- *“Instead of walking around the streets by themselves, they are now practicing sports.”*
- *“There is an impact because children are talking about soccer and are more involved in sports on the TV and not just cartoons.”*
- *“I don’t see as much graffiti or groups of children doing nothing. More kids are playing sports with the team or in parks by themselves.”*

Parents also remarked that the League has helped to facilitate family unity and supports a healthier community. Parents said that *“it has helped all of the kids to be healthy and have fun,”* and *“it is helping control the problem of child obesity, especially now that there are many overweight children.”*

Other parents noted the positive impact that the League has had on family unity and familial relationships. Parents said *“we go out as a whole family to participate in the games,”* and that there are *“a lot of fathers, like me, who are involved in their children’s activities.”* Finally, one parent said the League is *“a good example for the community in general.”*

Oak View Community Clean-Ups

In a document produced by the OVRP⁵, the OVRP outlines the tenuous history of the old system under which the Oak View Community Clean-Ups took place— citing both organizational and leadership issues— and presents a plan for a new system “*that rotates the major responsibilities to different community-based groups every month.*” As “primary facilitators” each group would be responsible for any work leading up to and on the day of the clean-ups, and would also be in charge of marketing and education for their respective clean-ups.

The logic model on the following page provides additional information on the new system for the community clean-ups. In keeping with the scale of ETI’s overall evaluation plan for the clean-ups, the top-half of the logic model (multi-color components) focuses on the planning and implementation of the clean-ups. Specifically, the logic model depicts the logical connection between planned work (the new system) and intended results leading to the “ultimate impact”: that the Oak View community benefits from the reestablishment of the community clean-ups.

The bottom-half of the logic model (uniform color components) includes participant level activities and outcomes that go beyond the planning and implementation phase. As the new system for the clean-ups continues to mature, the OVRP and relevant stakeholders can use this part of the logic model to present a fully fleshed-out depiction of this community activity- from planning and implementation to long-term outcomes at the level of community residents.

⁵ Oak View Community Clean-Up: Concept Paper (2009-2010).

Sample and Previous Involvement

In order to collect relevant information on the OVRP's engagement of various community-based groups, as well as the effectiveness of the new plan, ETI conducted brief telephone interviews with seven individuals representing various community-based organizations. These organizations included the Oak View Literacy Adult Program, the Youth Volunteer Corps of Orange County, the El Viento Foundation, the CSP Gang Prevention/Youth Development Program, the Oak View Youth Soccer League, the Entre Amigos Club at Ocean View High School, and the Oak View Community Center. Interview participants held various titles, including coordinator, team leader, program manager, youth development specialist, president, and volunteer.

Interview participants were asked to describe their organizations' participation in the old clean-ups (i.e. those held prior to the clean-ups conducted under OVRP's new system). In general, participants reported that they were not sure of their organization's previous involvement or their involvement was minimal. Several participants reported that their organization informally promoted the clean-ups within their program, but never held a leadership role. Finally, one participant stated that his organization is a major organizer of the annual Oak View Pride Day, which includes a clean-up component.

New Clean-Ups and Participation

When asked how their organization became involved in the new clean-ups, a majority of participants said that they were approached directly by the OVRP or were invited during meetings of the Oak View Collaborative. Participants said, *"[The OVRP] asked the organizations to step up and run the clean-ups on a regular basis,"* and *"[the OVRP] wanted to involve organizations that are already doing so much work in the community."* Many participants noted the common purpose espoused by the OVRP and their respective organizations and that their involvement in the clean-ups went *"hand-in-hand"* with their mission. Additionally, participants noted that, on average, they have served as "primary facilitator" at least once but no more than two times during the past year. In leading the clean-ups, participants described distributing the promotional and educational materials provided by the OVRP.

Participants were asked to describe their knowledge and opinions of the new community clean-ups. When describing their understanding of the new system, participants highlighted the *"cyclical basis"* of the clean-ups, the fact that it now *"involves multiple organizations in Oak View to mobilize volunteers,"* and that *"different agencies in the community come together and lead the clean-ups on different dates."*

Many participants emphasized how effective and organized the new clean-ups have been. Participants said, *"Now the program has taken a big step forward so that organizations host and put in more time and effort,"* *"getting through the new structure has been smooth sailing,"* and *"the new system has been pretty effective."*

Most participants attributed these positive outcomes to the increased sense of accountability and ownership placed upon participating organizations. The following comments serve as examples:

- *“The new program has encouraged Oak View organizations to take ownership because we all have the same overall mission.”*
- *“Before it was just a basic clean-up, there were no roots or ownership among the community or the various organizations. Now, each organization takes a leadership role and we also teach healthy habits that will sustain in the long-term.”*
- *“Before the new structure, no one wanted to take accountability for every single clean-up day. It was seen as a big burden, especially for the smaller non-profit organizations. Now different agencies are collaborating and this is a very positive thing and will continue.”*

While one participant noted that he did not have direct knowledge of the old clean-ups and one said, *“I know very little about the new system- we do the same thing that they have done in the past, cleaning up the streets,”* the majority of participants were knowledgeable and in favor of the new system implemented by the OVRP.

Community-Wide Impact

As the primary facilitators of the clean-ups, participants were asked to describe the positive impact that regular clean-ups have had and/or will continue to have on the Oak View community. Participants noted that they have seen a marked increase in the number of residents who participate each month. One participant comment, *“Before it was only one mom and whoever else was there that ran the clean-ups. Now more community members participate because it is organized. There are organizations in charge so they get a lot more people to come.”* Another participant reported that more and more young residents are helping during clean-up days. He said, *“A lot of young people are coming and getting involved in their community, which is a positive thing in their lives.”* Several participants explained that the community is generally more clean. As one participant noted, *“Between August 2009 and April 2010 I have noticed that there is a lot less trash in the neighborhood.”* Another said, *“I have seen changes in the way the community looks. Now that residents know when to put out items for pick-up the neighborhood has less trash.”*

Several participants described the deeper impact that regular clean-ups will have on residents of the community. Their comments are provided below:

- *“[The clean-ups] encourage team work and pride in the community. The clean-ups make the community feel more comfortable, safe and united. As a result, residents feel more pride and may want to help one another. Community members will learn to lift themselves up.”*
- *“Tons of kids enjoy coming each month and this helps to open up the discussion with kids about their relationship with the community and why they should be involved. I see a real movement toward keeping the neighborhood clean.”*

- *“There is a big social value and benefit to the community. Nobody wants to visit a dirty community. It is not pleasant to walk streets that are dirty. A clean community represents positive and good people.”*
- *“It is not just about picking up trash. More and more kids are involved and we’re teaching them to understand the connection between health and a clean community. Every time I participate, I notice that the kids and parents who are cleaning up have an impact on some of the residents in the community who do not feel like they need to contribute. It goes a lot deeper than the trash, we’re out there, visible, and sending the message that we’re not going to let our community fall apart.”*

Relationship with and role of the OVRP

When asked to describe their organizations’ relationship with the OVRP some participants cited a longstanding pattern of collaboration and a common mission to support the Oak View community. One participant said *“We have a sister relationship because we are both tied to Oak View and invested in improving the community,”* and another commented that, *“we both work to benefit the community which helps to bind our relationship.”*

Some participants described a less direct relationship with the OVRP. One said, *“I have been a member of the Advisory Board for OVRP since the beginning. I go to meetings and keep in touch but not a whole lot more beyond that.”* Another remarked on that his organization *“operates independently of the OVRP but they have offered to help improve our services.”* Yet another participant expressed ambivalence about the OVRP’s work in the community. He said, *“This is a small community and we’re all tied up and sometimes it’s hard to distinguish between some of the organizations. I am personally not familiar with what the OVRP does but this is the nature of non-profit work in general.”*

When asked to provide their opinion of how the OVRP has stewarded the new system for the clean-ups, participants unanimously agreed that the OVRP has been doing *“a great job.”* Participants provided the following positive feedback about the OVRP’s efforts:

- *“OVRP is at the center and makes sure it’s happening well. They are very supportive and helpful.”*
- *“OVRP is doing a nice job of being inclusive and motivating and supporting the lead agencies. Most of the organizations in this community were reluctant to take on another program, especially during the past year when funding dropped. But OVRP has been good at supporting and organizing the clean-ups so organizations feel confident participating.”*
- *“The new structure is really good and very organized. [They are] informative and up-front and very good at keeping all of us up-to-date and informed. The program is well-done, clear and expectations are well articulated.”*

- *“It is now more effective than previous model, which was just a group of dedicated parents. New model gives each organization the opportunity to participate and to ‘own’ their own events.”*
- *“Before, not as many organizations were involved because they didn’t know what it was or they didn’t think it was their role. [The OVRP] was friendly and welcoming and did a good job of getting different agencies on board. It is organized so well and [they are] keeping everyone accountable.”*

Several participants felt that the community clean-ups align well with the OVRP’s overall efforts in the community. One participant said, *“the OVRP is really interested in the ‘betterment’ of the community and their goal is to empower residents.”* Another participant expressed a similar sentiment and said, *“Their work helps to reinforce the fact that the community needs to contribute to its own upkeep and improvement.”*

Information collected during interviews indicates that participating organizations are committed to their roles as primary facilitators, favor the new system imposed on the clean-ups, have seen the positive short-term outcomes of their work with the OVRP, and anticipate continued and greater long-term success.

Conclusion

This preliminary report, prepared for the June 2010 meeting of the OVRP Advisory Board, includes analysis of data for two activities supported by the OVRP: the Oak View Youth Soccer League (OVYSL) and the Oak View Community Clean-Ups (OVCCU). Using a custom-tailored evaluation design for each activity, ETI created evaluation tools to assess the impact of the OVYSL on its participants and to assess the overall effectiveness of the OVRP's new system for the community clean-ups and its work with other community organizations.

Findings from an analysis of 117 OVYSL questionnaires indicate that parent respondents feel overwhelmingly positive about the impact that the League has had on their child's development (including goal-setting, peer interactions and friendships, confidence, physical skills, etc.) and the community in general.

Findings from interviews with organizations who act as primary facilitators for the new system for community clean-ups were similarly positive. Interview participants reported that the new system for the clean-ups has been a success and is helping to reestablish the clean-ups on a consistent basis in the Oak View community. More importantly, interview participants agreed that the clean-ups have encouraged more residents to participate and has helped to keep the community clean.

Collectively, these findings point to the positive work that the OVRP is doing in the Oak View community, either through its informal support of positive youth activities or direct restructuring of a struggling community resource.