



## D.2 METRICS AND REPORTING

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TAH's mission is to *enable at risk youth to positively change their lives*. TAH defines *positive change* as an increase in ability to handle stress, self-esteem, communication skills, social skills and school life. Because these are fairly subjective, actually measuring success is challenging.

In deciding what to measure, TAH has considered the following:

- What metrics are currently measured by the School District(s)?
- What other metrics can be implemented to demonstrate progress and positive results of the program as communicated in the organization's core messages?
- How much rigor is there around the measures and can this be impacted by TAH?
- Is it possible to measure the dollar impact on society of not changing lives vs. changing lives? Has it been measured by someone already?
- Is it possible to follow up with students one, two and three years out to gauge the success of the program?

Generally, organizations measure impact to improve performance and to attract funding. Increasingly, funders and other stakeholders are demanding a higher level of accountability.

The information required to measure the success and quality of the program may be different from the information that outside stakeholders (i.e. donors, partners) are looking for. Therefore, metrics need to address two audiences:

1. Internal quality control – How do we measure if the program is doing what we want it to? How do we define 'success'?
2. External stakeholders – How do donors and partners know their support is contributing to that 'success'?

From a performance management perspective, the programs should provide TAH with metrics that are operational in nature and also address the four key aspects of the program. Since TAH is based on four critical pillars – academics, adventure-based learning, therapy and community involvement – it makes sense that key metrics should cover these four areas.



## ACADEMICS

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Academic performance is measured by the School Districts. This includes grades, test scores, completion and graduation rates.

From a program measurement perspective, the base data of test scores, pass/fail, graduations (Dogwoods and parting certificates) and honour roll students are critical to assessing the success of the program in the community.

Looking at the percentage of students who passed their grade is also critical as it may indicate that there are problems with the academic portion of the program. If the grade 10 and 11 students are not being successful, they will not be successful in graduating in grade 12.

## ADVENTURE BASED LEARNING (ABL) - ON HOLD

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ABL is a critical component of the program but may be more challenging to measure.

Fitness testing are good indicators of overall health. The data would be collected and then inputted when students complete the online Survey Monkey tool to minimize data loss and have less of a role for teachers.

1. *Waist Circumference* – Assessed with measuring tapes donated by the Physical Activity Line (PAL). The measurement has been shown to be a good indicator of health, and changes towards a smaller waist circumference were observed in both studies.
2. *Height* – Assessed with a measuring tape against the wall with shoes off.
3. *Weight* – Assessed using a basic scale from the classroom
4. *Body Mass Index (BMI)* – Calculated from the height and weight. Able to be compared to national standards and data for adolescent health.
5. *BIA* – A useful form of assessment that indicates body composition. This would be useful to assess the changes in students' fat/muscle ratios over the school year.
6. *Beep Test* – A shuttle run completed in the gym in tune with the Canadian Exercise and Sport Physiologists (CESP) standardized recording. The pace gradually increases and students complete the shuttle run until they can no longer keep pace with the recording. A standardized measure of aerobic fitness.



7. *Grip Strength* – A manual grip hand dynamometer was used to assess grip strength. This is a good indicator of overall muscle strength and subsequently health.
8. *Sit-ups* – Completed as a group, students do as many partial curl-ups as possible in sync with teacher/researchers count. An indicator of core strength.
9. *Push-ups* – Suggested to be added for future evaluations. Push-ups are used as a disciplinary technique in the classroom and it has been speculated that changes would be seen across the school year and could act as a good indicator of strength.

#### *Equipment to Purchase*

For the fitness testing to be completed annually, only a few supplies would be needed: measuring tapes, a hand dynamometer and BIA scale.

- Measuring tapes – 2 per site - \$ 8 for six available at [amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca) or any fabric store
- Hand Dynamometer – 1 per site - \$124-\$190 available at [amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca), [orthocanada](https://www.orthocanada.com) or cheaper (\$80) in the US at [wayfair.com](https://www.wayfair.com)
- BIA Scale– 1 per site - Salter Body Composition Scale - \$48.99-90 available at [Costco.ca](https://www.costco.ca) and [thebay.com](https://www.thebay.com)

Certifications are also a good indicator of skills acquired through the ABL component of the program.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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Community service is a critical component to the TAH program. From a performance perspective, calculating the number of hours of community service performed helps to assess whether the student has completed the base requirements.

Historically the total number of community service hours has been reported in the annual report. This fluctuates year over year with the number of students and the type of volunteer work they are involved in. Going forward, volunteer hours per student will be used to limit the variability caused by the addition of more students.



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## **THERAPY**

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TAH has traditionally used the Global Assessment Function (GAF) measure to assess changes in well-being.

The psychological variables are also tested through a TAH custom questionnaire located in the Resource Kit (B5-8). Students spend 30-45 minutes answering these questions which are automatically stored electronically in an excel spreadsheet available to the teacher/therapist.

In addition, the therapist meets with their students at the beginning of the year to identify goals. It is acknowledged that it is difficult to track and rate each student's success at this time.

The collection of Drug & Alcohol (D&A) counselling data is also relevant and important to TAH.

## **STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

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While absenteeism and dropping out of the program may be expected from TAH's at-risk population, these may also indicate issues with the quality of the program that the Foundation needs to be aware of. These are critical internal metrics that can be used to evaluate the success of the expansion program as well.

Daily attendance is maintained by the TAH staff in accordance with School District policy. Attendance speaks to the level of engagement of the students and research indicates that increased absence from school is highly correlated with dropping out.

Dropping out or transferring out of the program is another critical measure of the expansion program's success. The reasons for dropping out or transferring out should also be reported to TAH. In some cases, transferring out is success for a student if it means that the student is ready to go back to the mainstream school system, for instance. In this case, it could be reported as a 'transfer' versus a 'drop out' from the TAH program.

If data and year over year changes can be quantified, they should also be used for external audiences.

Engagement rates will be measured through increased attendance, decreased absenteeism, and transfer rates.