

Volunteerism: The Link Between Academic Success and Well-Being

Robert Wm. Blum, MD, MPH, Ph.D.

William H. Gates Sr. Professor and Chair

Johns Hopkins University

Department of Population and Family Health Sciences

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Hypothesis:

Social Capital is one of the key protective factors in the lives of people and volunteering is a route to acquiring social capital.

Social Capital

The sum of all the human bonds which result in a durable network of relationships.

Social Capital

- Fosters sense of belonging**
- Fosters trust among people**
- Facilitates information transfer**
- Establishes and enforces norms of behavior**
- Creates opportunity**
- Improves citizenship**

Coleman's Family Social Capital

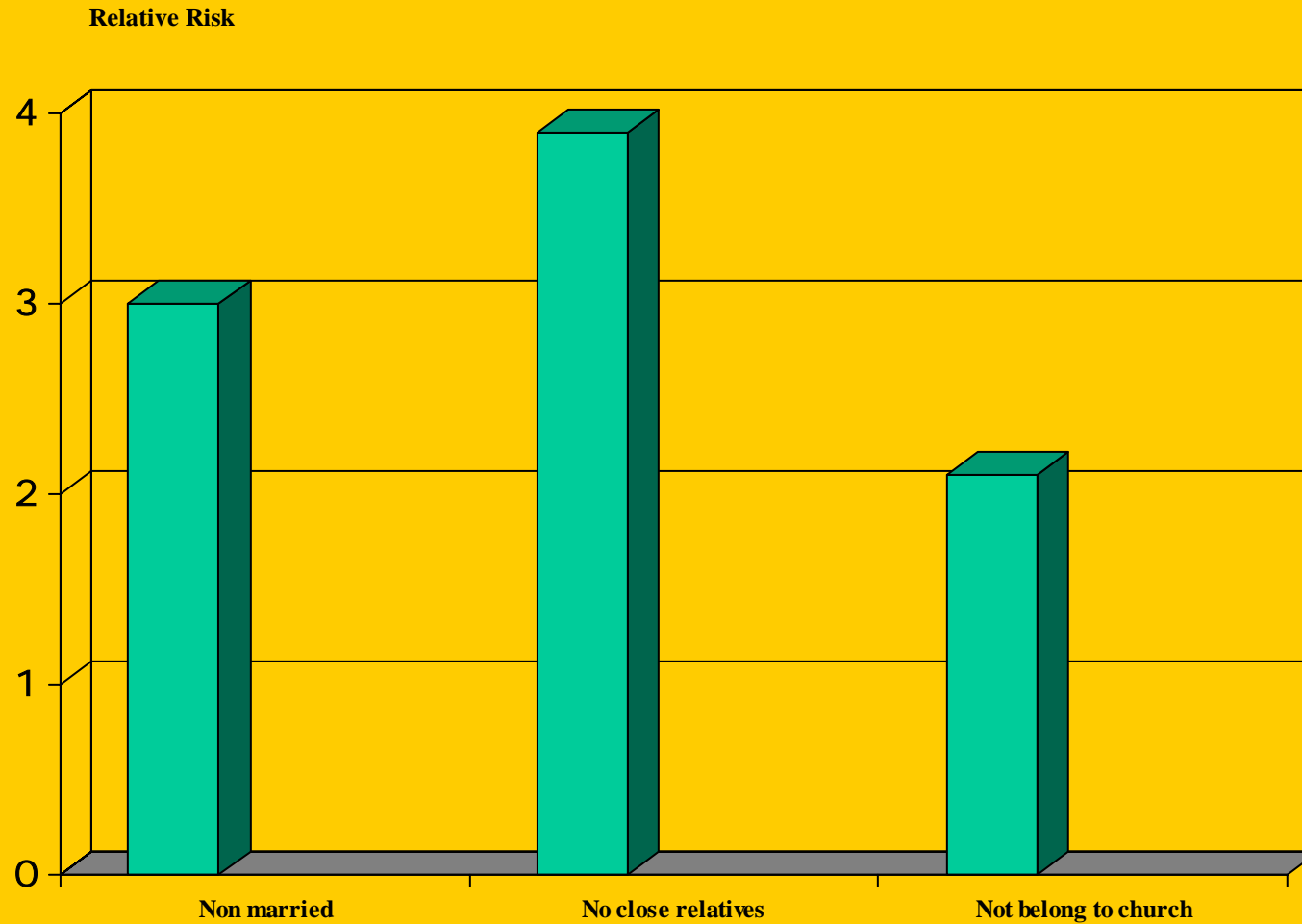
- **Parent's presence in the home;**
- **Family mobility**
- **Church attendance**
- **Number of children in the home**

Putnam's Community Social Capital

- **Links to societal institutions;**
- **Civic engagements;**
- **Membership in clubs;**
- **Political activism.**

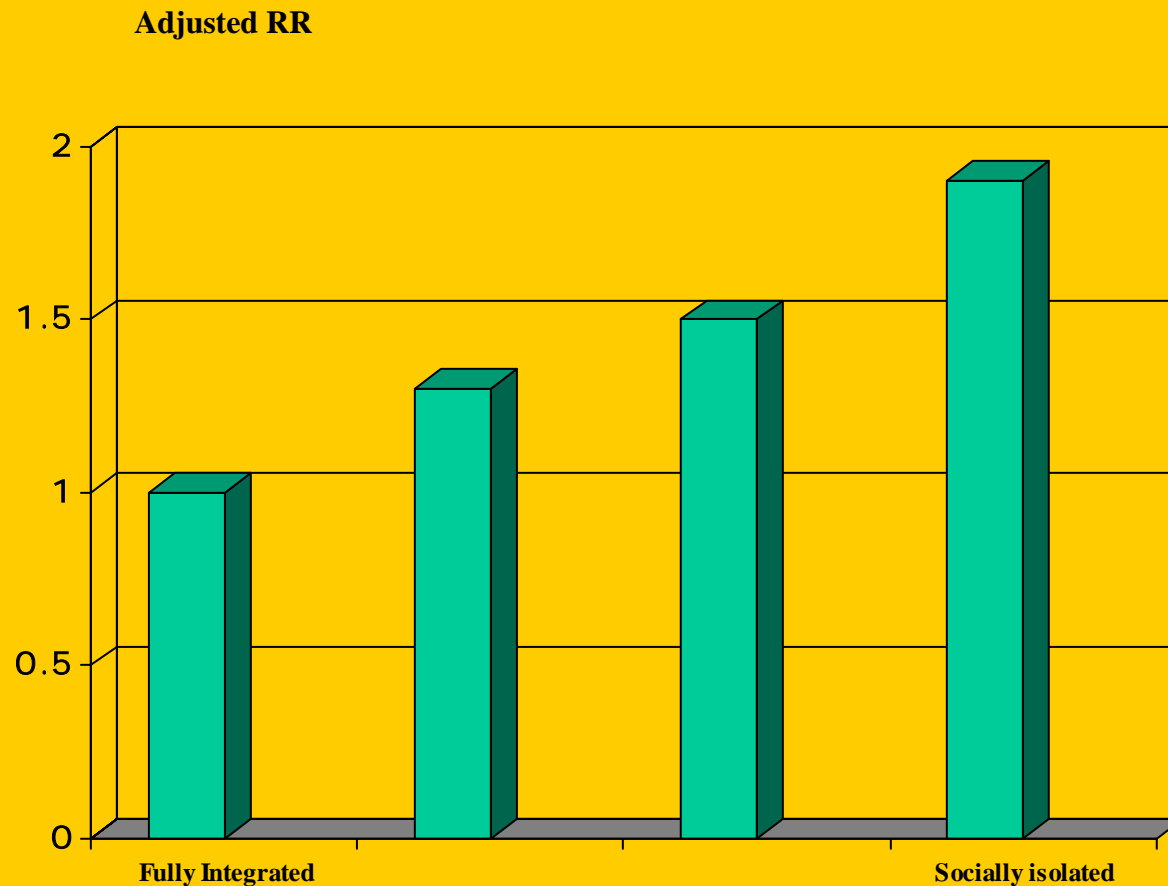
**What is the relationship between
social connections and health?**

Social Connections and Relative Risk of Traumatic Death and Suicide among Men



Source: Kawachi et al. *J Epidemiol Comm Health* 1996 (50) 245-251.

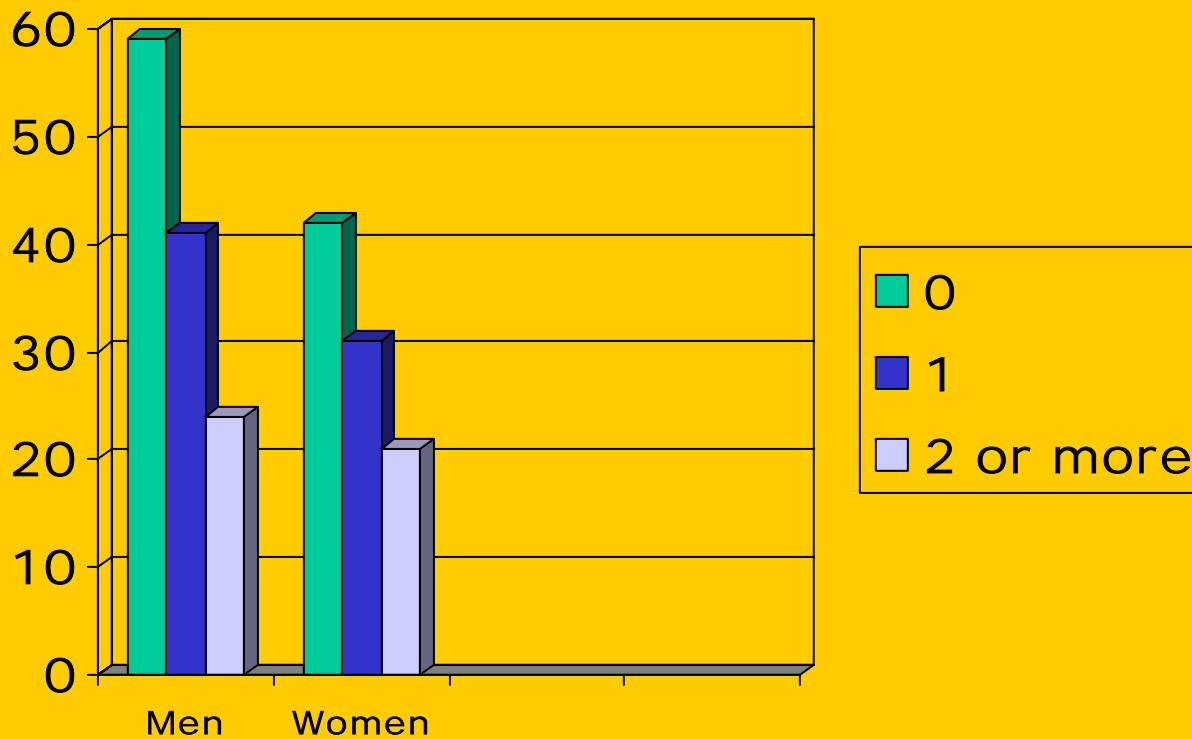
Social Networks and Cardiovascular Disease Incidence in Men



Source: Kawachi et al. *J Epidemiol Comm Health* 1996 (50) 245-251.

6-Month Survival after Heart Attack, by Level of Emotional Support

Percent Died

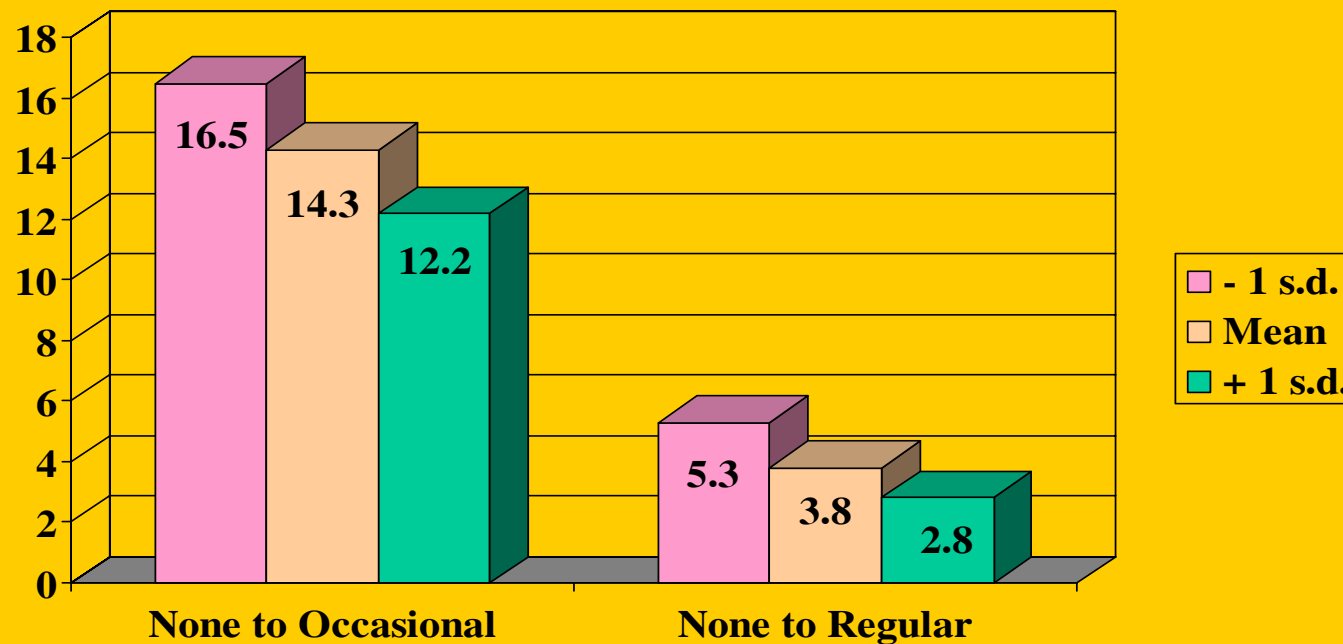


Source: Berkman et al. *Ann Intern Med* 1992 (117): 1003-9.

What is the evidence of social capital for youth outcomes—the relationship between school connectedness and risk behaviors

Initiated Cigarette Use

Predicted Percent at Three Levels of Teacher Support

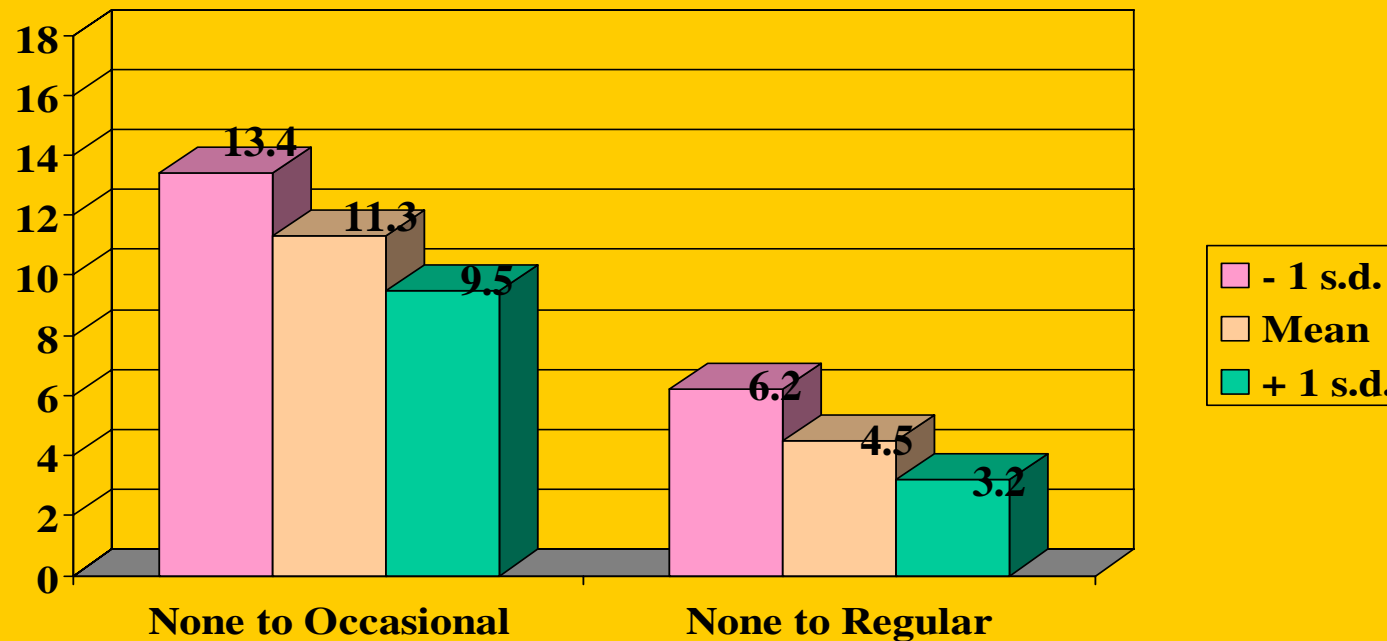


Multinomial logit models adjusted for social belonging, race/ethnicity, income, gender, family structure, emotional distress, relationship with parents, hx of peer suicide, hx of family suicide

McNeely, C and Farci, C. 2006

Initiated Getting Drunk

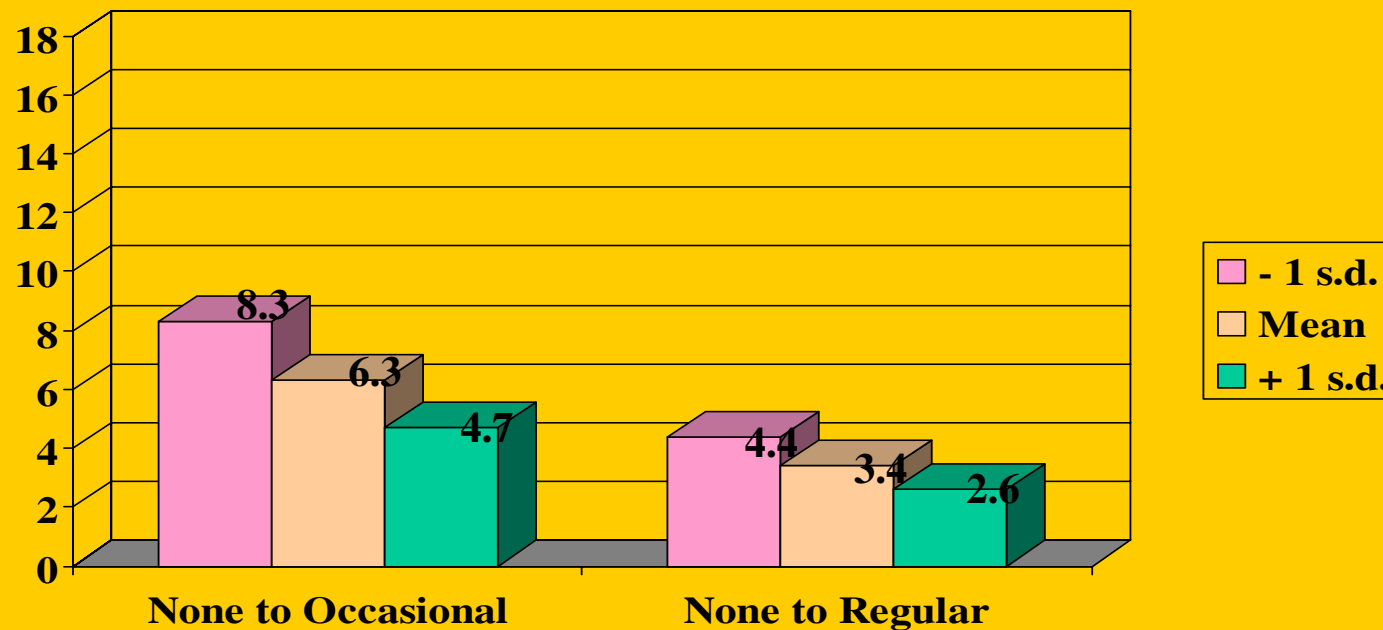
Predicted Percent Three Levels of Teacher Support



Multinomial logit models adjusted for social belonging, race/ethnicity, income, gender, family structure, emotional distress, relationship with parents, hx of peer suicide, hx of family suicide
McNeely, C. and Farci, C. 2006

Initiated Marijuana Use

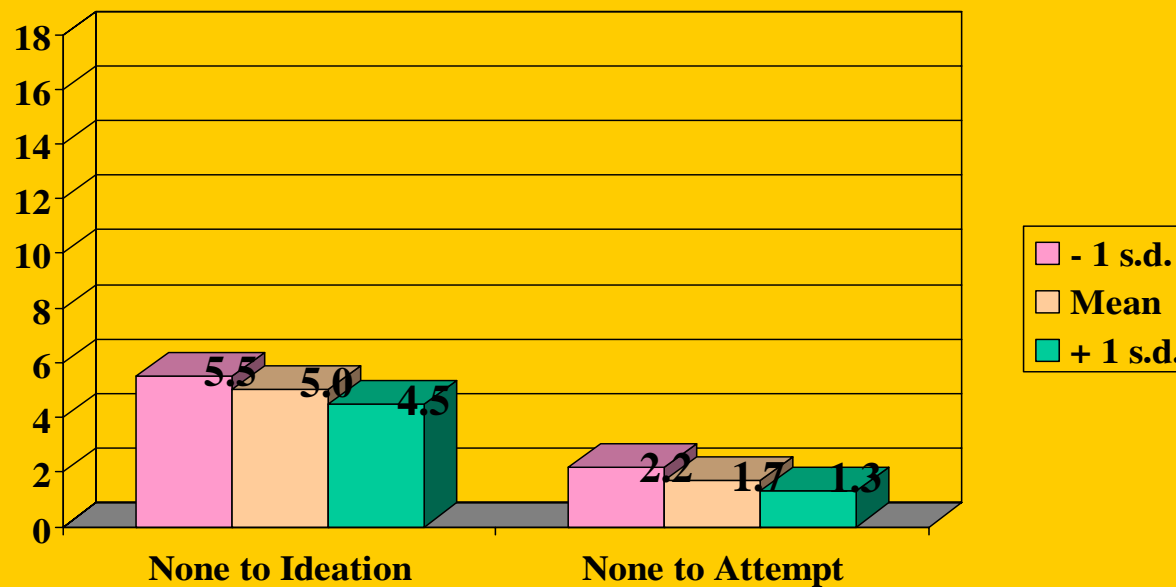
Predicted Percent at Three Levels of Teacher Support



Multinomial logit models adjusted for social belonging, race/ethnicity, income, gender, family structure, emotional distress, relationship with parents, hx of peer suicide, hx of family suicide
McNeely, C. and Farci, C. 2006

Seriously Considered or Attempted Suicide

Predicted Percent at Three Levels of Teacher Support

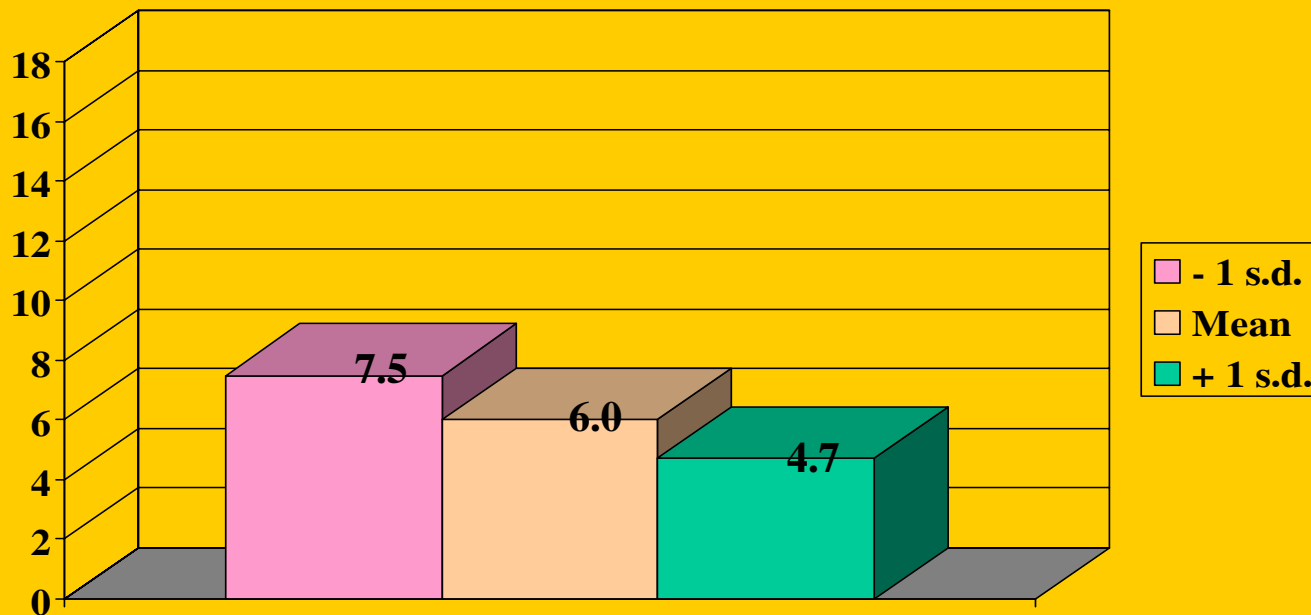


Multinomial logit models adjusted for social belonging, race/ethnicity, income, gender, family structure, emotional distress, relationship with parents, hx of peer suicide, hx of family suicide

McNeely, C. and Farci, C. 2006

Initiated Violence

Predicted Percent at Three Levels of Teacher Support



Multinomial logit models adjusted for social belonging, race/ethnicity, income, gender, family structure, emotional distress, relationship with parents, hx of peer suicide, hx of family suicide

McNeely, C. and Farci, C. 2006

If societal capital matters—how did you acquire it in college?

Why Should colleges care?

Education is only in part about knowledge acquisition—it is also identity formation.

Social Identity

Is formed through encounters with the environments within which we live.

Self-worth, self esteem is achieved by contributing to others and being recognized for those contributions.

Three components to effective contributions:

- Skills

- Opportunities

- Rewards

J. David Hawkins

A key to volunteering—*Recruitment*

**If you don't ask,
They won't come!**

What makes a difference?

- **Increasing opportunities to participate may improve participation;**
- **Linking volunteering with education may improve civic engagement;**
- **Involving young people in the planning may improve participation and success;**
- **Allowing participants time and a forum to process experiences may improve outcomes**

Long-term outcomes of volunteering:

- Improved grades and attendance;**
- Increased personal efficacy;**
- More community orientation;**
- Higher educational aspirations;**
- Greater political engagement.**

The Relationship between volunteering and social and emotional well-being

- More likely to hold civic leadership positions as adults;**
- More likely to volunteer as adults;**
- More positive attitude toward the future;**
- Less socially deviant behavior;**
- Less unplanned pregnancy;**
- More positive work orientation;**
- Less alcohol/drug use;**
- Better academic performance**

Child Trends, 2003

Political Activism on Campus shapes the political future of America

- 1930's: Young Communists**

- 1960's: Students for a Democratic Society**

- 1980's: Young Republicans**

As educational institutions strive to create life-long learners, so too should we strive to create life-long engaged citizens