POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE OF BUFFALO

Summary Report

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation Grant

Introduction

The Police Athletic League of Buffalo (Buffalo PAL) has been in operation since the 1950s, providing City of Buffalo youth with enriching, recreational program activities that promote their development into successful adults. The goals of the Buffalo PAL program are:

Overarching Goal Aligned to all Buffalo PAL Programs: Youth build positive relationships with their peers and adults, especially PAL staff and Neighborhood Engagement Team (N.E.T.).

1   **Youth lead active, healthy lifestyles where they regularly participate in physical activity.**

2   **Youth develop social-emotional skills, building meaningful relationships with their peers, adults, and law enforcement mentors.**

3   **Youth are actively engaged in their Academic Achievement through building literacy skills.**

4   **Youth begin to explore career opportunities through workforce development (e.g., job skills, build networks, and gain certifications).**

To achieve these goals, Buffalo PAL offers a variety of enrichment, physical activity, and academic programs throughout the year. Buffalo PAL partners with community centers and schools to offer programming at convenient locations for participants in the greater Buffalo area. They also host events in local neighborhoods for opportunities to provide bike helmets and play equipment to children and families in the area. There were also drive-up giveaway events for families to receive free car seats.

Much of years 1 and 2 (2021 and 2022) for this project have focused on continually refining legacy data systems and tracking procedures. Buffalo PAL relies on multiple funders with different and specific reporting requirements. For example, Buffalo PAL must ask all the questions on the Client Characteristics Form to receive Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). In response, systems have been built to accommodate cumbersome (and not always the most meaningful) data reporting over the years.

With funding from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, Buffalo PAL has been working with Via Evaluation (VIA) since 2021 to refine data collection and review implementation data to prepare for a more robust program evaluation for 2023. VIA participated in board meetings between March 2021- March 2023 to gain insights about which data points were most valuable to board members and discuss program improvement recommendations. As Buffalo PAL began to formalize more procedures for program implementation independently, VIA was able to focus on providing more comprehensive quarterly reporting as well as Excel databases with robust quarterly data that could be parsed by Buffalo PAL staff.

Buffalo PAL has been primarily tracking and reporting "touchpoints" (i.e., how many instances of programming were accessed) for many years. VIA and Buffalo PAL have worked together to restructure and track data in a way that allows for reporting of individual-level participation as well, which is more challenging but essential to do outcome evaluation.

Data for 2023, the focus of this report, is more comprehensive and accurate than in previous years (which were also deeply impacted by COVID shutdowns). Activities have been more clearly categorized by goal in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Buffalo PAL Programming Aligned to Goals

Athletics & Active Lifestyles	Wellness & Social/Emotional Health	Academic Achievement	Workforce Development & Social Justice
Game Changers	Bike Helmets	Community Center Partnerships	Ford Critical Conversations
NFL Flag Football	Car Seat Programs	Literacy Star	Youth Opportunity Connect
PAL PLAYSTREETS	City of Buffalo/PAL Mentoring Program	Mayor Brown's Reading Rules	MSIP Workplace Development
Sports Camps & Clinics	Passport to the World of Cooking Class	School Partnerships	Lifeguard Certification
Sports Leagues	Summer Day Camp	Secure Detention Facility, Erie County	
Sports Sampling Saturdays			

Findings

The focus of this report is an annual summary of 2023 activities. Buffalo PAL formalized program operations, including data collection procedures, which allows for a more robust outcome evaluation. The following sections are separated by the 4 goals outlined at the beginning of this report: healthy lifestyles, wellness, academic achievement, and workforce development. This report also includes a summary of findings from all 3 years of the project, with the understanding that data collection procedures were not truly finalized until mid-way through 2022.

Each section of findings is categorized by the associated goal, including information about the topics below.

Participant Demographics

As described earlier in this report, Buffalo PAL collects a variety of demographics from youth as part of registration to address specific funder requests. This report focuses on three demographic categories: gender, age, race, as well as residence. Some Buffalo PAL programs are only offered to one gender; thus, it is important to display the gender differences in youth served by programmatic goals. There are also some Buffalo PAL programs only offered to certain age groups or are separated by age (e.g., sports leagues). Again, as staff look at programmatic goals, it is important to understand the age of who they are reaching. Race is included because Buffalo PAL implicitly aims to offer programming to underserved youth, namely Black and Brown individuals. Lastly, residence is included because Buffalo PAL programming is primarily in the city of Buffalo, but events are open to community members in the Greater Buffalo area.
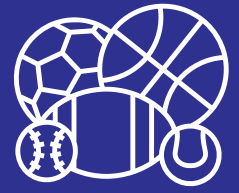
Program Touchpoints

The Police Athletic League of Buffalo offers several programs throughout the year with different funding sources and reporting requirements. Thus, their definition of youth served by programs differs from the traditional sense. Through partnership with VIA, Buffalo PAL defined participation as "program touchpoints" where session attendance at each activity is counted separately. For example, a youth who attended each of the 3 sessions for a 6-week Golf program would have 18 program touchpoints.

To capture the total program touchpoints for each activity, VIA created an attendance tracking database for Buffalo PAL administrative staff. Staff were able to list all the participants in each activity by location, division, and other differentiating factors. There were some activities in which youth could participate with multiple teams, such as in Basketball Leagues. In those instances, the youth's name would be entered in the database for each team.

Participant Feedback

Buffalo PAL and VIA collaborated to develop a youth feedback survey to gauge their experiences in Buffalo PAL. The survey included operations questions to determine youth satisfaction with programming as well as goal-related questions depending on the types of activities youth attended. Goal-related responses are included in their respective finding section and programmatic feedback is provided in the key findings section. A family feedback survey was also developed in a similar format aimed at caregivers, but no responses were received in 2023.

Athletic Programming

Youth lead active, healthy lifestyles where they regularly participate in physical activity.

Game Changers

Sports Camps/Clinics

NFL Flag Football

Sports Leagues

PAL PLAYSTREETS

Sports Sampling Saturdays

10,168
program touchpoints

Buffalo PAL, at its inception, provided programming to increase the physical health of youth in the community. Buffalo PAL offered many athletic programs, including Sports Leagues like baseball and basketball, PAL PLAYSTREETS, and golf. Different programs were offered, depending on the season.

Athletic Participant Demographics in 2023

There were 2,926 individual youth who participated in various athletic activities.

Some activities were only offered to boys, which explains some of the gender disparity (Figure 1).
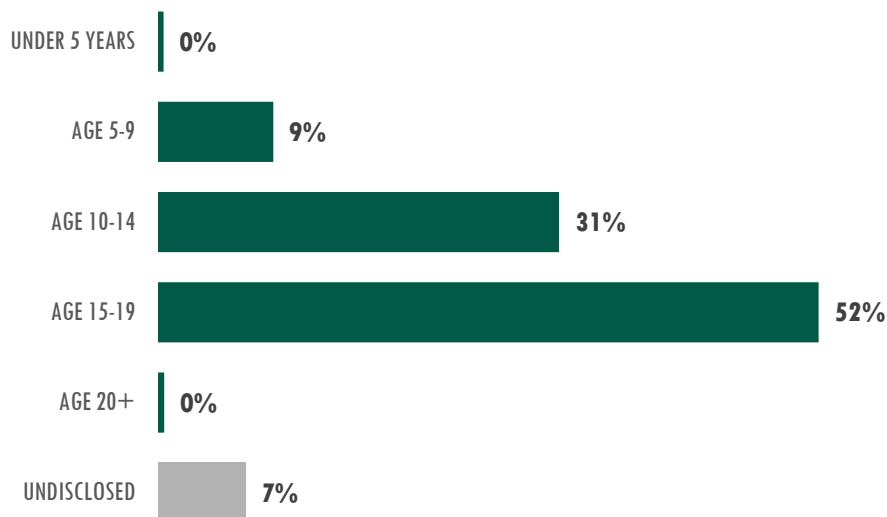
Figure 1

Gender Breakdown of Athletic Participants
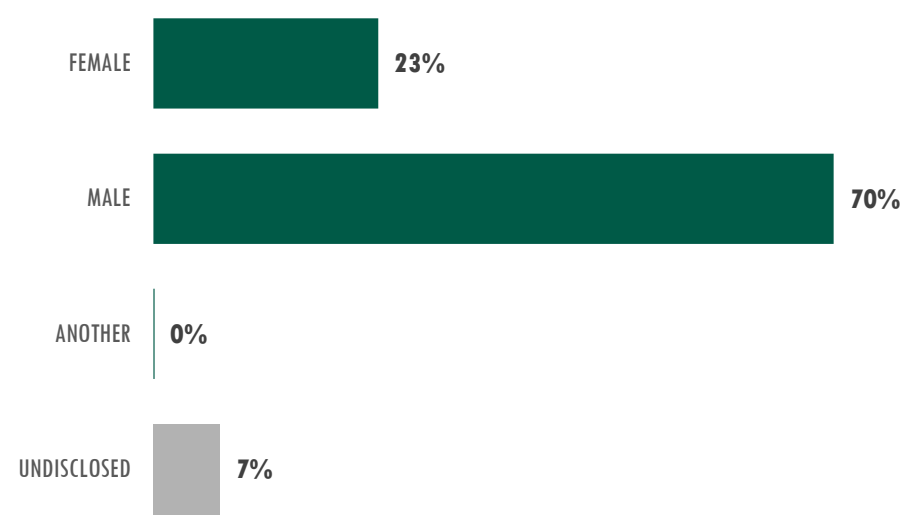
There were also some activities that were only available to specific age groups, thus showing the differences in who participated (Figure 2 on next page). Although Buffalo PAL programming primarily serves youth, there are some activities open to the entire community, which is why there are some participants over 18 in the program registration.
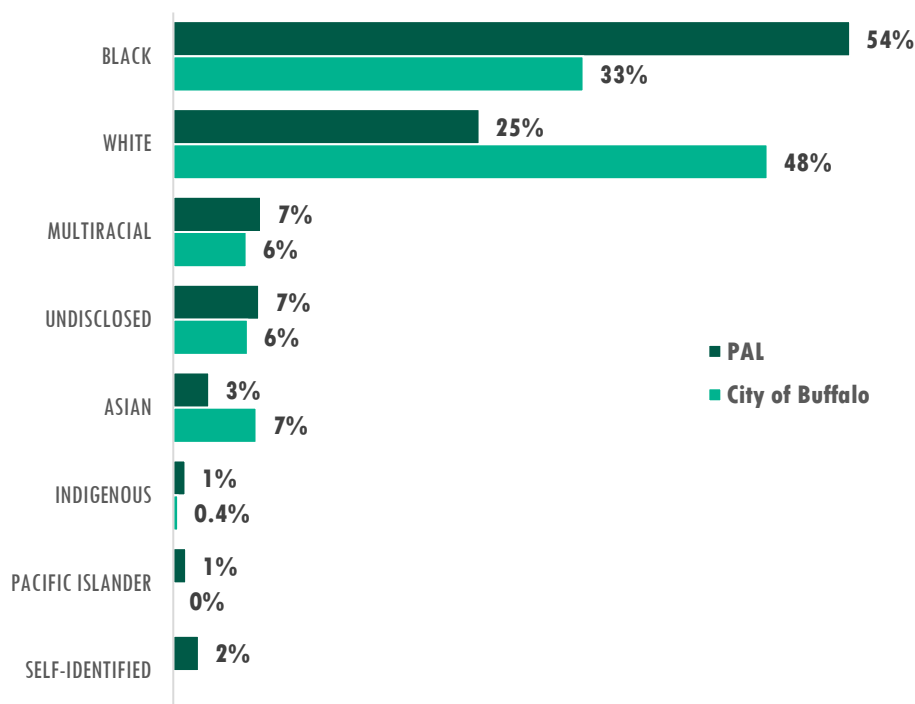
Figure 2

Age Breakdown of Athletic Participants

UNDER 5 YEARS	0%
AGE 5-9	9%
AGE 10-14	31%
AGE 15-19	52%
AGE 20+	0%
UNDISCLOSED	7%

According to most recent US Census data, the Buffalo PAL participant race breakdown is somewhat representative of the overall city (Figure 3). However, Buffalo PAL aims to primarily serve Black and Brown youth and so it represents a larger proportion of participants in those categories.

Figure 3

Race Breakdown of Athletic Participants

	PAL	City of Buffalo
BLACK	54%	33%
WHITE	25%	48%
MULTIRACIAL	7%	6%
UNDISCLOSED	7%	6%
ASIAN	3%	7%
INDIGENOUS	1%	0.4%
PACIFIC ISLANDER	1%	0%
SELF-IDENTIFIED		2%

Buffalo PAL offers programming in several areas of the city to promote accessibility for participants. PAL PLAYSTREETS is a program that brings free sporting equipment directly to communities on the street. As evidenced by Figure 4 on the next page, athletic participants lived in neighborhoods all around the city. The two most common zip codes were 14220 in the South District and 14211 in the Masten District.

Figure 4

Heat Map of Athletic Participant Zip Codes by Buffalo Council District
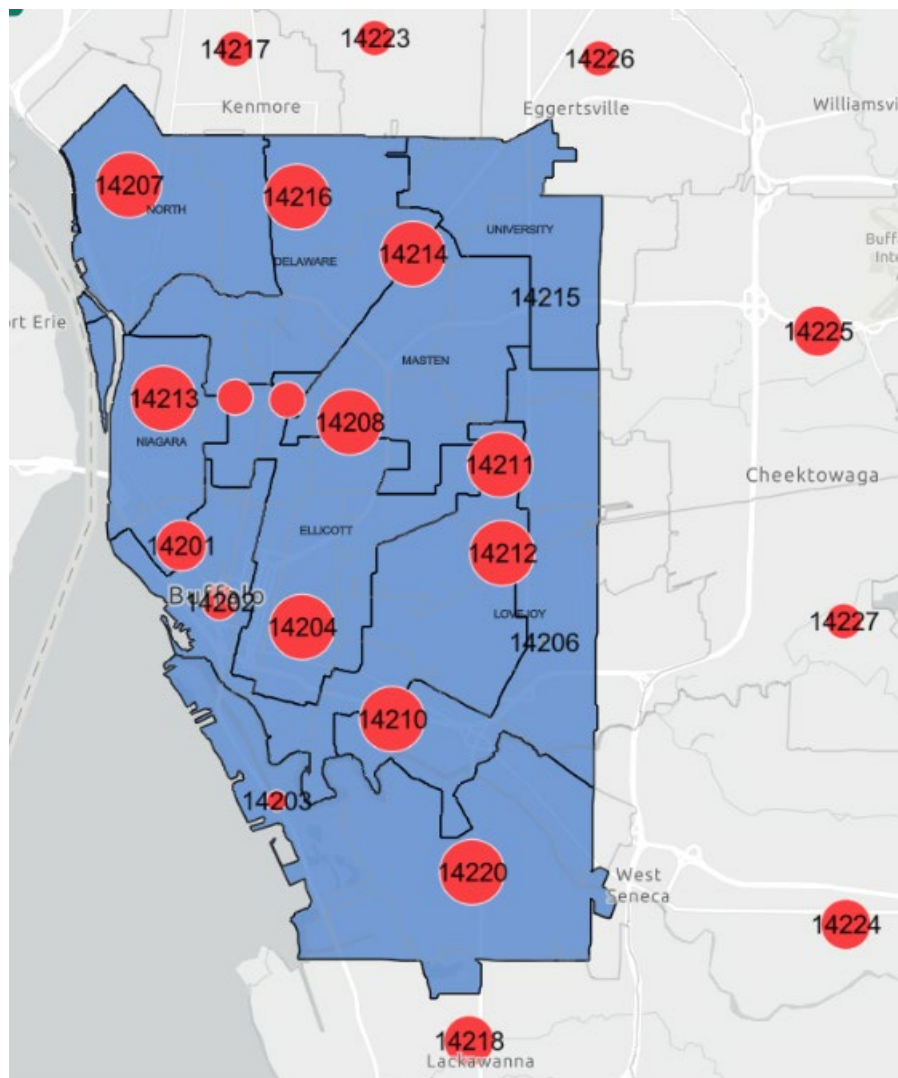
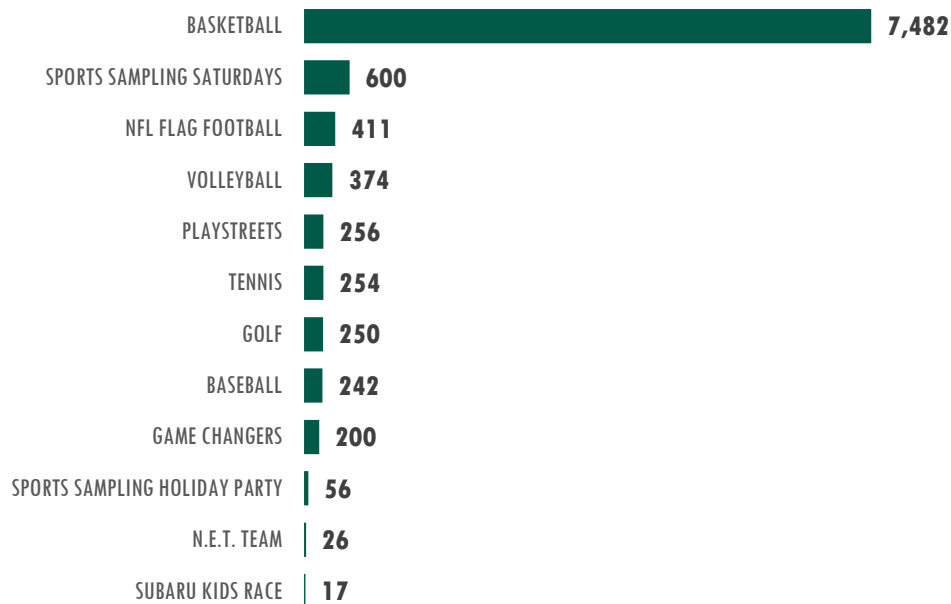
Athletic Program Touchpoints in 2023

Athletic Buffalo PAL programming involved multiple activities such as sports leagues and sports sampling Saturdays. For this report's purposes, some categories are further divided, such as sports leagues into baseball and basketball leagues, to capture the difference in program touchpoints based on the specific sport.

Basketball had the highest number of program touchpoints because there were multiple leagues and divisions throughout the year (Figure 5). The N.E.T. Team program touchpoints are also included in the figure, where Buffalo PAL staff tracked how many Buffalo PAL officers attended athletic programming. This information was only

tracked from October – December 2023 and so it does not represent the full year total of N.E.T. Team program touchpoints.

Athletic Programming Touchpoints by Activity

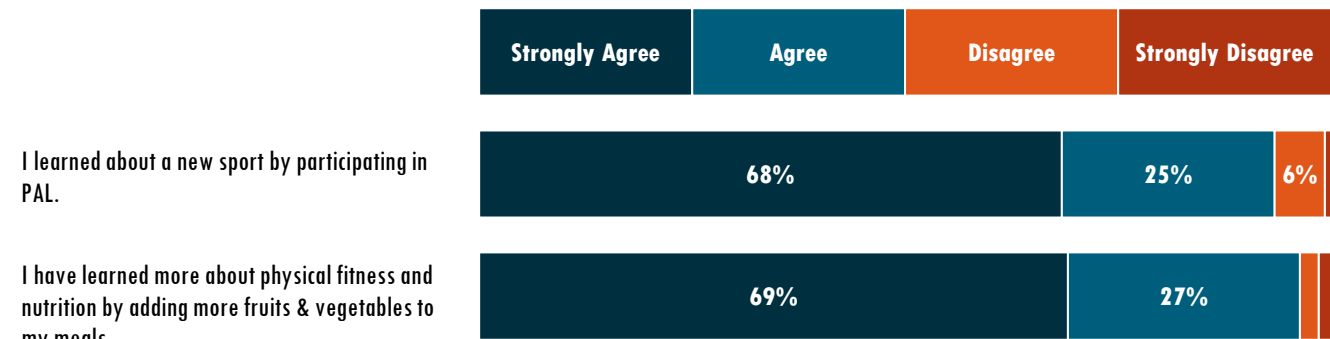| Activity	Touchpoints
BASKETBALL	7,482
SPORTS SAMPLING SATURDAYS	600
NFL FLAG FOOTBALL	411
VOLLEYBALL	374
PLAYSTREETS	256
TENNIS	254
GOLF	250
BASEBALL	242
GAME CHANGERS	200
SPORTS SAMPLING HOLIDAY PARTY	56
N.E.T. TEAM	26
SUBARU KIDS RACE	17

Athletic Participant Feedback in 2023

Participants were surveyed at the end of each program, to gather feedback about their experience. For athletic programs, Buffalo PAL staff were interested in whether participants had changes in their habits as they relate to physical health and nutrition. In general, most survey respondents agreed that learned about a new sport (93%) and learned about healthy living (96%; Figure 6 on the next page). Of note, this chart only includes the 138 responses of youth that stated that they participated in athletic programming in 2023. There were another 405 respondents, not included, who said that they did not participate in athletic programming but still answered 1 or both of the questions.

Figure 6

Athletic Programming Feedback

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

I learned about a new sport by participating in PAL.

| 68% | 25% | 6% | |

I have learned more about physical fitness and nutrition by adding more fruits & vegetables to my meals.

| 69% | 27% | | |

Wellness & Social-Emotional

Youth develop social-emotional skills, building meaningful relationships with their peers, adults, and law enforcement mentors.

Bike Helmets

City of Buffalo/PAL Mentoring Program

Summer Day Camp

Car Seats Program

Passport to the World of Cooking Class

4,770
program touchpoints

As Buffalo PAL adapted its programming, the organization began to offer other types of activities for youth. With an understanding that wellness and social-emotional development is an important facet of healthy living, more intentional programming was incorporated. Some of the programs offered include Bike Helmets Giveaway, Passport to the World Cooking Class, and City of Buffalo Mentoring.

Wellness & Social-Emotional Participant Demographics in 2023

There were 1,369 individual youth who participated in various wellness and social-emotional activities.

The gender disparity was slightly smaller between girls and boys for wellness programming (Figure 7). In fact, Passport to the World Cooking Class was attended by more girls than boys in 2023.
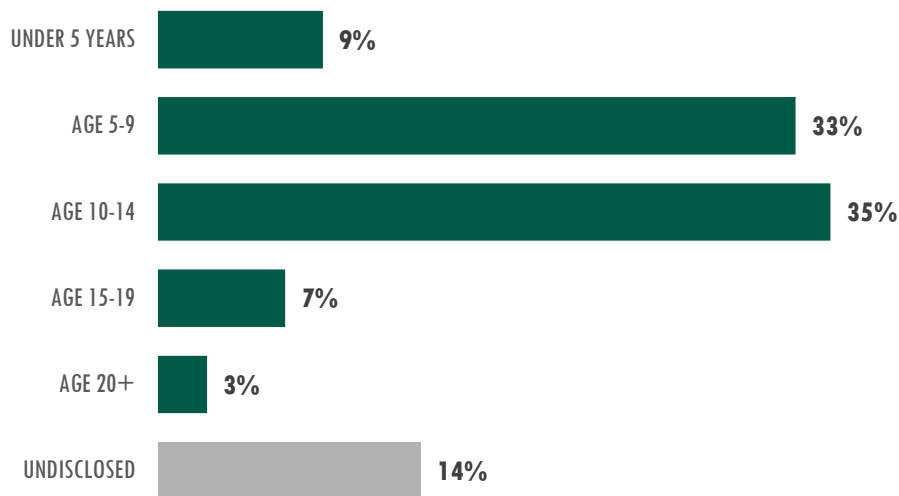
Figure 7

Gender Breakdown of Wellness & Social-Emotional Participants

Category	Percentage
FEMALE	33%
MALE	45%
ANOTHER	1%
UNDISCLOSED	20%
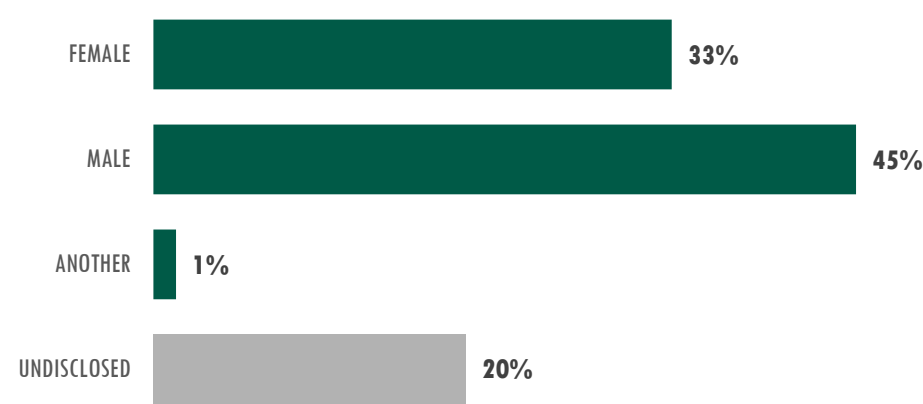
Due to some of the programing offered, such Car Seats Giveaway for parents of young children, there was a larger portion of younger participants than in other programming types (Figure 8). However, there were more participants missing demographic data due to Bike Helmets Giveaway having less of a registration structure than other activities.
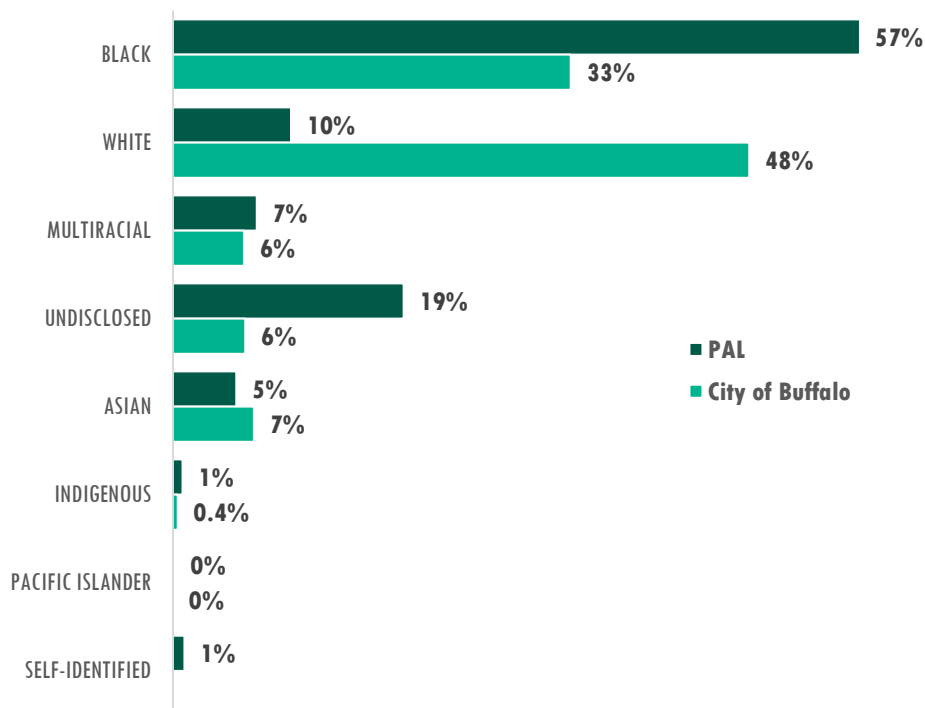
Figure 8

Age Breakdown of Wellness & Social-Emotional Participants

Black youth represented the largest group of wellness & social-emotional participants (Figure 9).
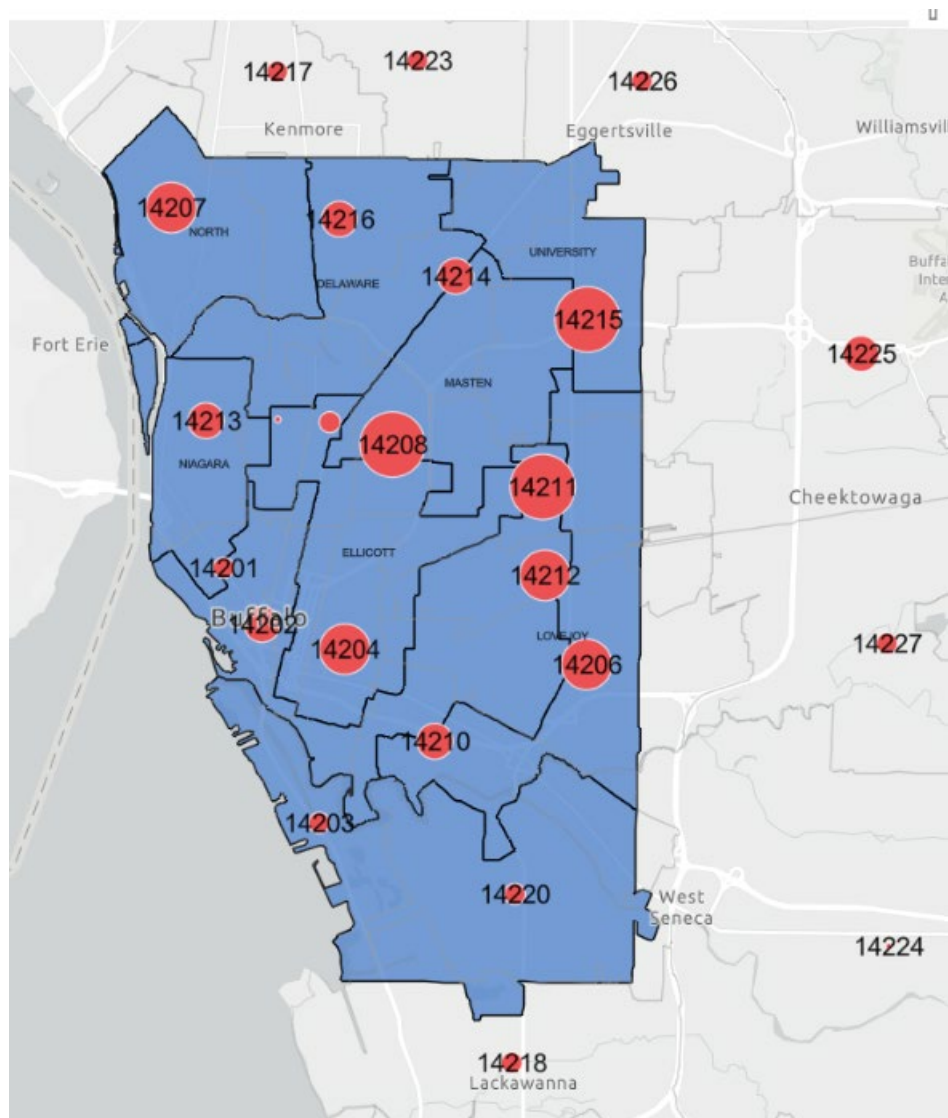
Figure 9

Race Breakdown of Wellness & Social-Emotional Wellness Participants

The largest number of wellness & social-emotional participants came from 14215 in University District and 14211 in Masten District (Figure 10).

Figure 10

Heat Map of Wellness Participant Zip Codes by Buffalo Council District
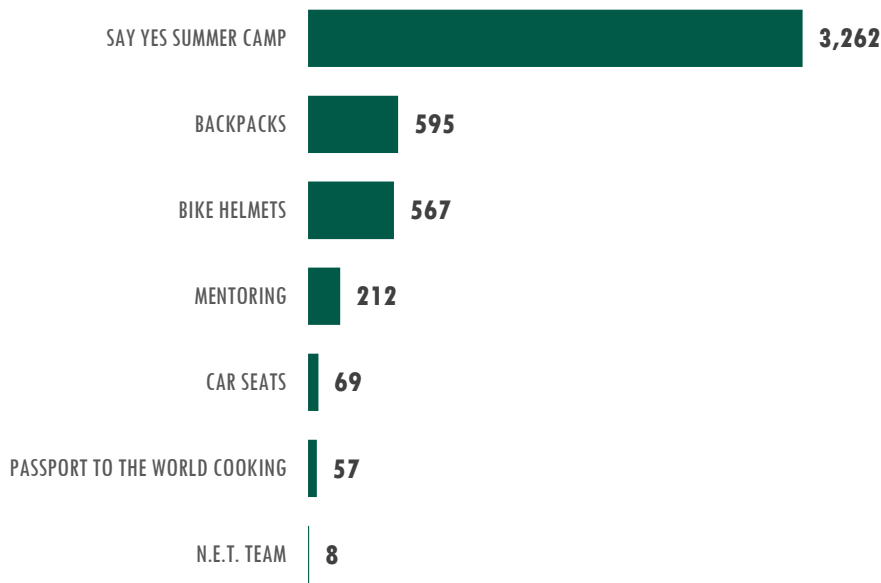

Wellness & Social-Emotional Program Touchpoints in 2023

There were 4,770 program touchpoints for wellness & social-emotional activities. Say Yes Summer Camp had the highest attendance because it was offered 5 days a week for 6 weeks (Figure 11). N.E.T. Team attendance was only tracked during the final quarter of 2023.

Figure 11

Wellness & Social-Emotional Program Touchpoints by Activity

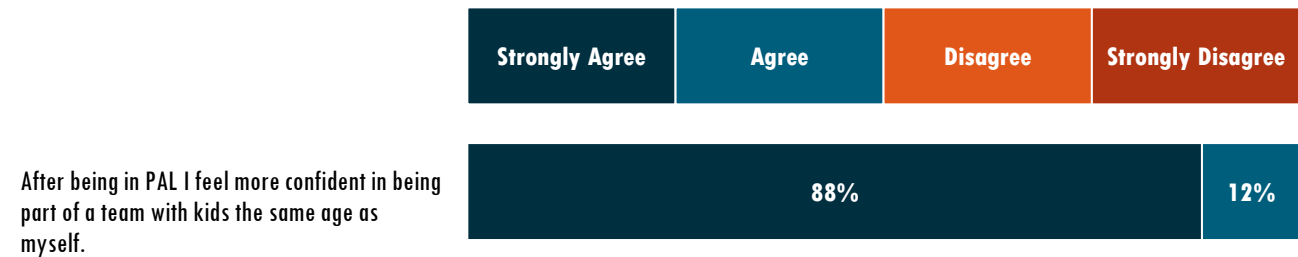| Activity	Value
SAY YES SUMMER CAMP	3,262
BACKPACKS	595
BIKE HELMETS	567
MENTORING	212
CAR SEATS	69
PASSPORT TO THE WORLD COOKING	57
N.E.T. TEAM	8

Wellness & Social-Emotional Participant Feedback in 2023

Figure 12 below includes feedback from 84 respondents. There were an additional 424 respondents who said that they did not participate in any of the activities but still responded to the question. In general, respondents felt more confident in being part of a team with kids the same age (100%).

Figure 12

Wellness & Social-Emotional Programming Feedback

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

After being in PAL I feel more confident in being part of a team with kids the same age as myself.	88% 12%

Academic Achievement

Youth are actively engaged in their Academic Achievement through building literacy skills.

Community Partnerships

Literacy Star

School Partnerships

Mayor Brown's Reading Rules

Secure Detention Facility, Erie County

29,755

program touchpoints

Buffalo PAL built partnerships with several schools in Buffalo to provide programming in their buildings for youth. Some of the partners were West Hertel Academy, Lorraine Elementary, PS 33 Bilingual Center, PS 53 Community School, Elmwood Village Charter School, Lovejoy Discovery School, Riverside High School, Buffalo Collegiate Charter School, Highgate Heights, and Dr. Antonia Pantoja Community School of Academic Excellence.
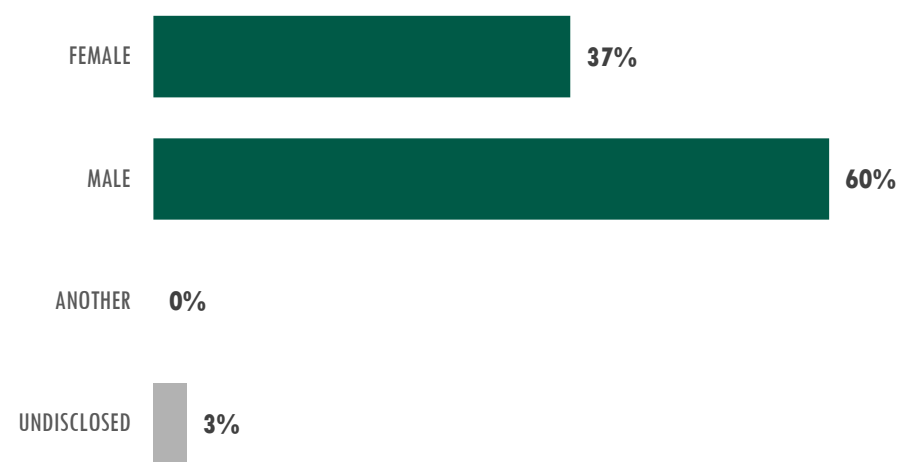
Academic Achievement Participant Demographics in 2023

There were 896 individual youth who participated in academic achievement activities.

There were more boys (60%) who attended programming compared to girls (Figure 13).
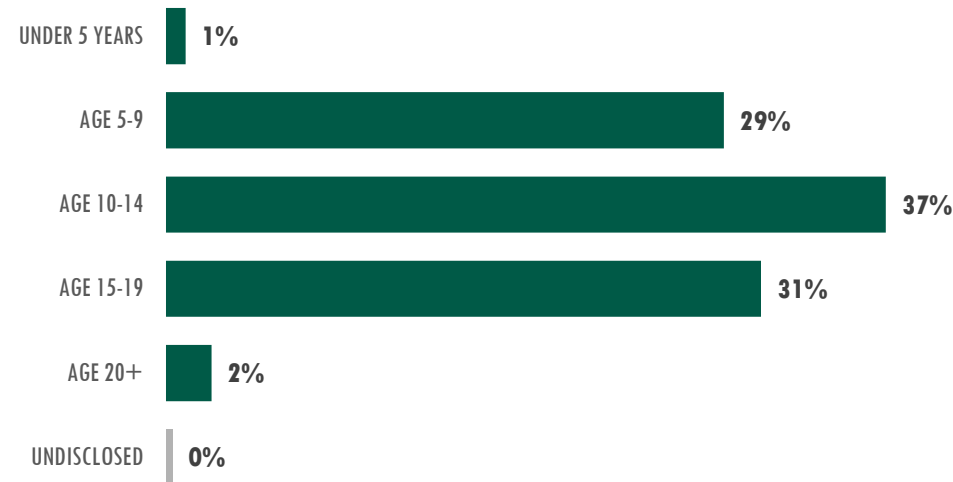
Figure 13

Gender Breakdown of Academic Participants

Category	Percentage
FEMALE	37%
MALE	60%
ANOTHER	0%
UNDISCLOSED	3%

Most academic participants were between ages 5 and 14 (66%; Figure 14).

Figure 14

Age Breakdown of Academic Participants

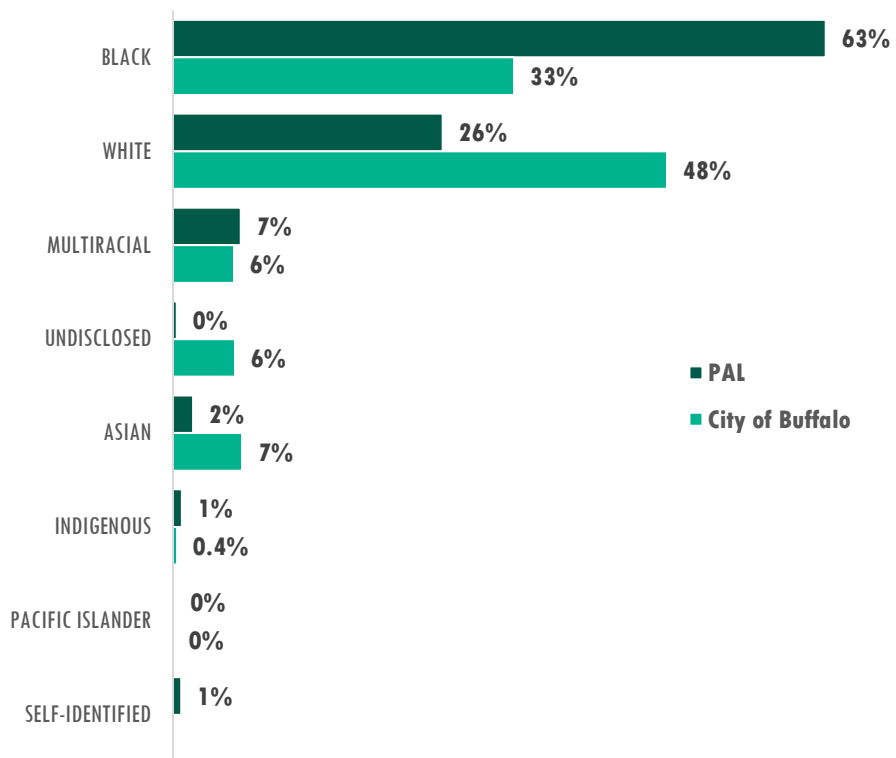| Category	Percentage
UNDER 5 YEARS	1%
AGE 5-9	29%
AGE 10-14	37%
AGE 15-19	31%
AGE 20+	2%
UNDISCLOSED	0%

The race breakdown of academic participants varied much more than other programming types. More than three-quarters of participants were Black (80%; Figure 15).
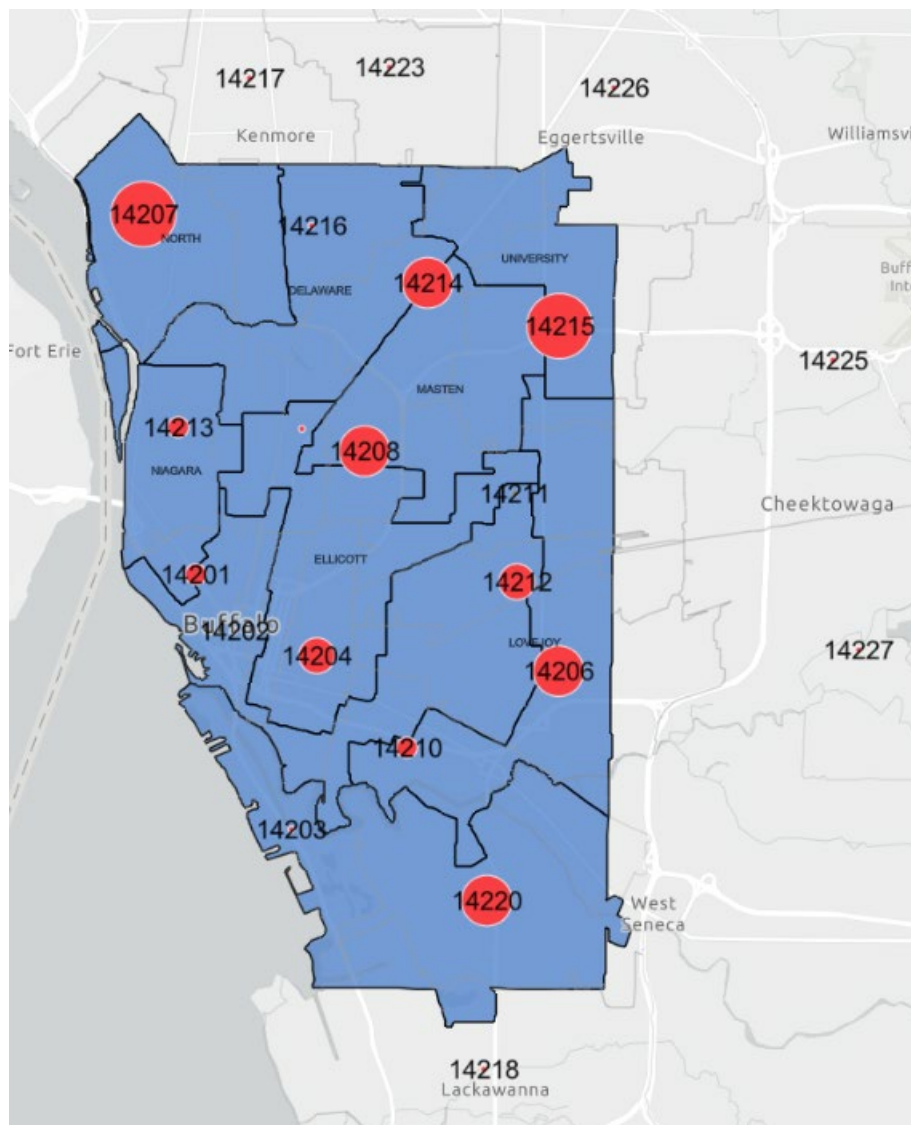
Figure 15

Race Breakdown of Academic Participants

The largest number of academic participants came from zip code 14207 in North District and 14215 in University District (Figure 16 on the next page).

Figure 16

Heat Map of Academic Participant Zip Codes by Buffalo Council District
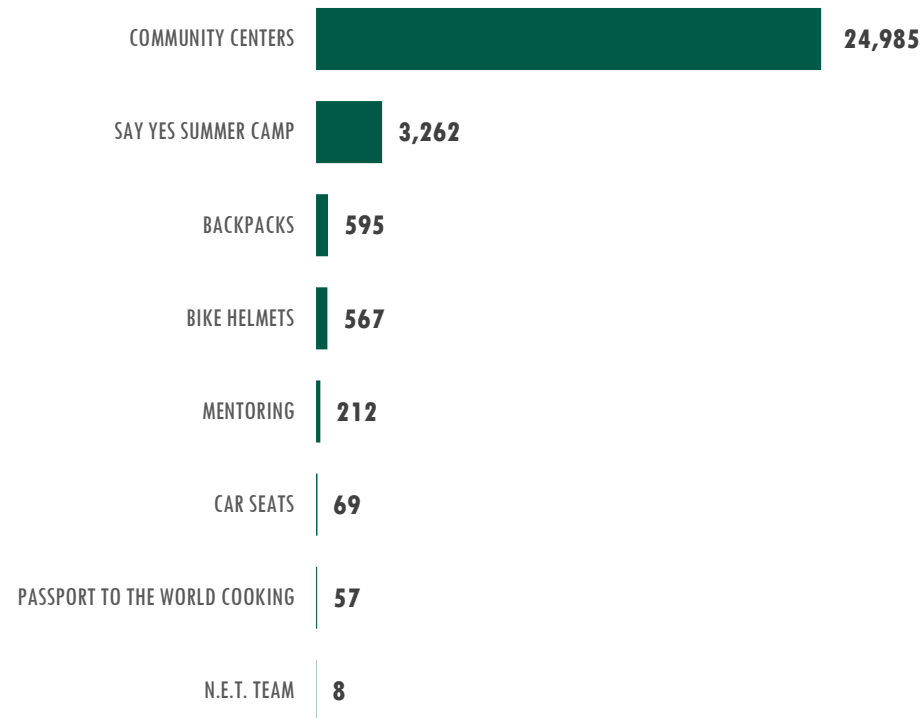

Academic Achievement Program Touchpoints in 2023

There were a total of 29,755 academic achievement program touchpoints in 2023. Persistence Prep Academy in Figure 17 on the next page refers to one of the Buffalo PAL school partnerships, where the largest number of program touchpoints occurred. There were 6 N.E.T. team program touchpoints recorded between October and December 2023.

Unlike all other programs, Community Center Partnerships do not have a standardized attendance tracking system. Several community centers either do not have internet or computer access to use the shared attendance tracking system created by Buffalo PAL. Community centers provide attendance data to Buffalo PAL staff via running totals rather than individual-level attendance. For this reason, the evaluators cannot accurately measure program touchpoints and impact with existing data.

Figure 17

Academic Program Touchpoints by Activity

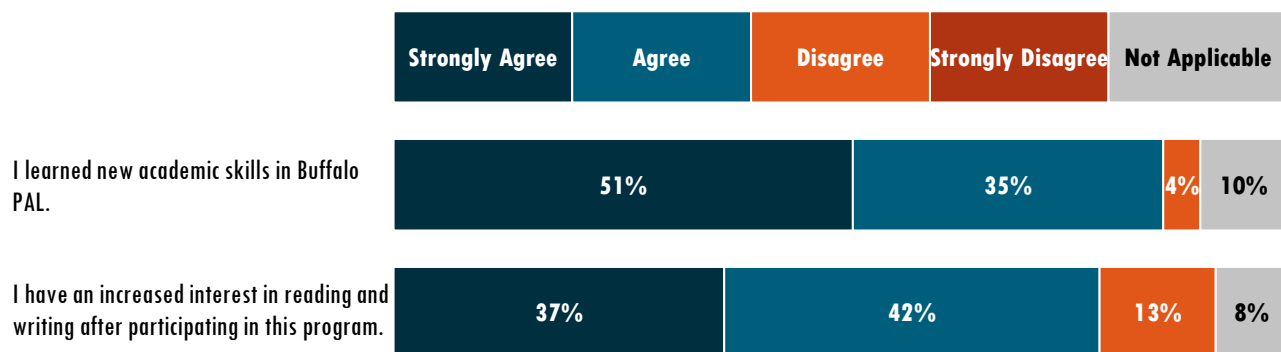| Activity	Touchpoints
COMMUNITY CENTERS	24,985
SAY YES SUMMER CAMP	3,262
BACKPACKS	595
BIKE HELMETS	567
MENTORING	212
CAR SEATS	69
PASSPORT TO THE WORLD COOKING	57
N.E.T. TEAM	8

Academic Achievement Participant Feedback in 2023

Figure 18 below includes responses from 72 youth. There were an additional 447 participants who responded to 1 or more of the questions but stated that they had not participated in academic programing. Most (79%) youth had an increased interest in reading and writing after participating in Buffalo PAL.

Figure 18

Academic Programming Feedback

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
I learned new academic skills in Buffalo PAL.	51%	35%	4%		10%
I have an increased interest in reading and writing after participating in this program.	37%	42%	13%		8%

Workforce Development

Youth begin to explore career opportunities through workforce development (e.g., job skills, build networks, and gain certifications).

Ford Critical Conversations

Lifeguard Certification

MSIP Workplace Development

Youth Opportunity Connect

1,331
program touchpoints

Buffalo PAL Workforce Development programming is one of the newest goals incorporated at the organization. Programs such as Ford Critical Conversations offered the opportunity for young adults to meet with police officers to have important conversations about the community. These programs were geared towards teens and young adults due to the mature subject matter.

Workforce Development Participant Demographics in 2023

There were 104 individual youth who participated in various workforce development activities.

Like with other program types, boys represented the largest proportion of participants (57%; Figure 19).
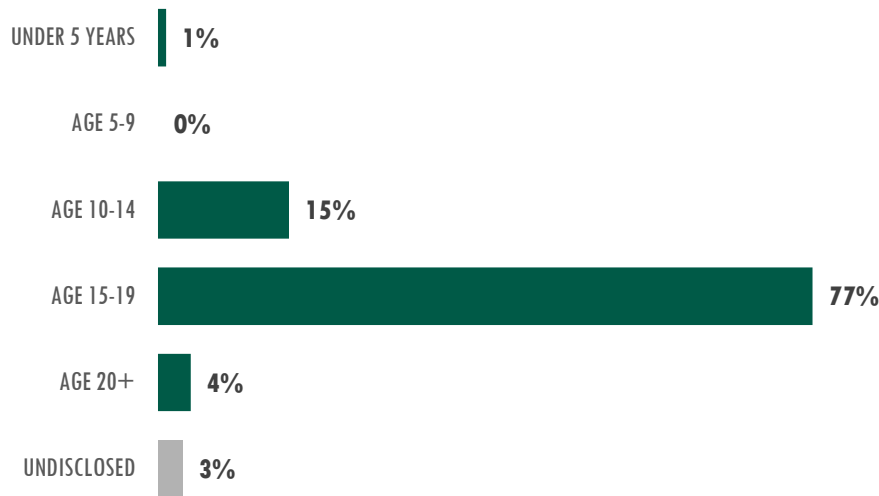
Figure 19

Gender Breakdown of Workforce Participants

FEMALE	40%
MALE	57%
ANOTHER	0%
UNDISCLOSED	3%

Based on the programming, it makes sense that most youth were between ages 15-19 (Figure 20 on the next page). Some of the age discrepancies (e.g., the 1% of registrants under 5 years of age) are likely due to errors in program registration. The electronic form requires registrants to enter the full date of birth, including year. It is likely that all of those in that younger age bracket are due to registration errors.
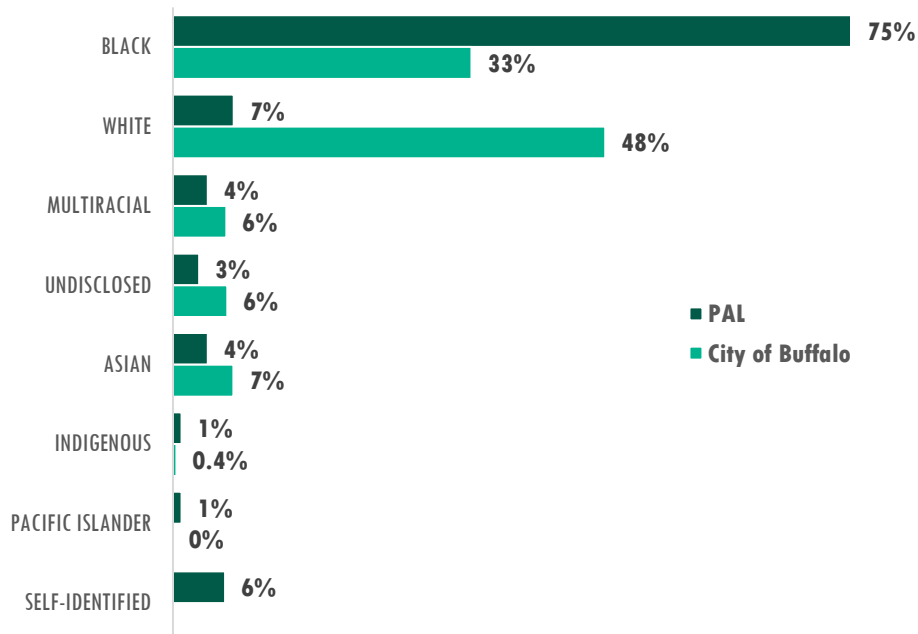
Figure 20

Age Breakdown of Workforce Participants

Age Group	Percentage
UNDER 5 YEARS	1%
AGE 5-9	0%
AGE 10-14	15%
AGE 15-19	77%
AGE 20+	4%
UNDISCLOSED	3%

Black youth continued to represent the largest population of workforce development participants (Figure 21).

Figure 21

## Race Breakdown of Workforce Participants

Race	PAL	City of Buffalo
BLACK	75%	33%
WHITE	7%	48%
MULTIRACIAL	4%	6%
UNDISCLOSED	3%	6%
ASIAN	4%	7%
INDIGENOUS	1%	0.4%
PACIFIC ISLANDER	1%	0%
SELF-IDENTIFIED	6%	

Due to the smaller population size of workforce development participants compared to other program types, the heat map in Figure 22 on the next page has relatively smaller circles. The two most common zip codes were 14213 in Niagara District and 14215 in University District.

Figure 22

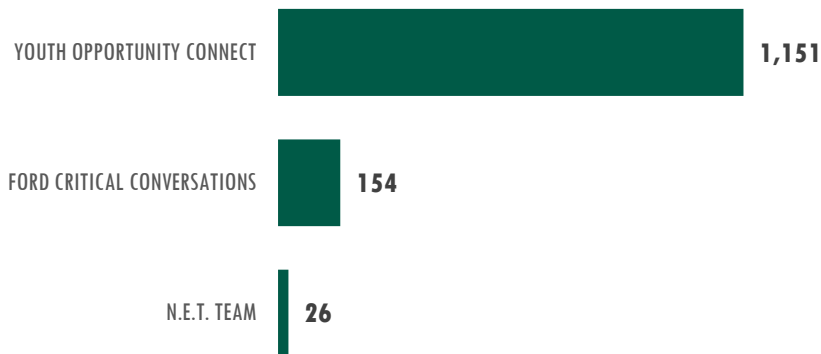**Heat Map of Workforce Development Participant Zip Codes by Buffalo Council District**
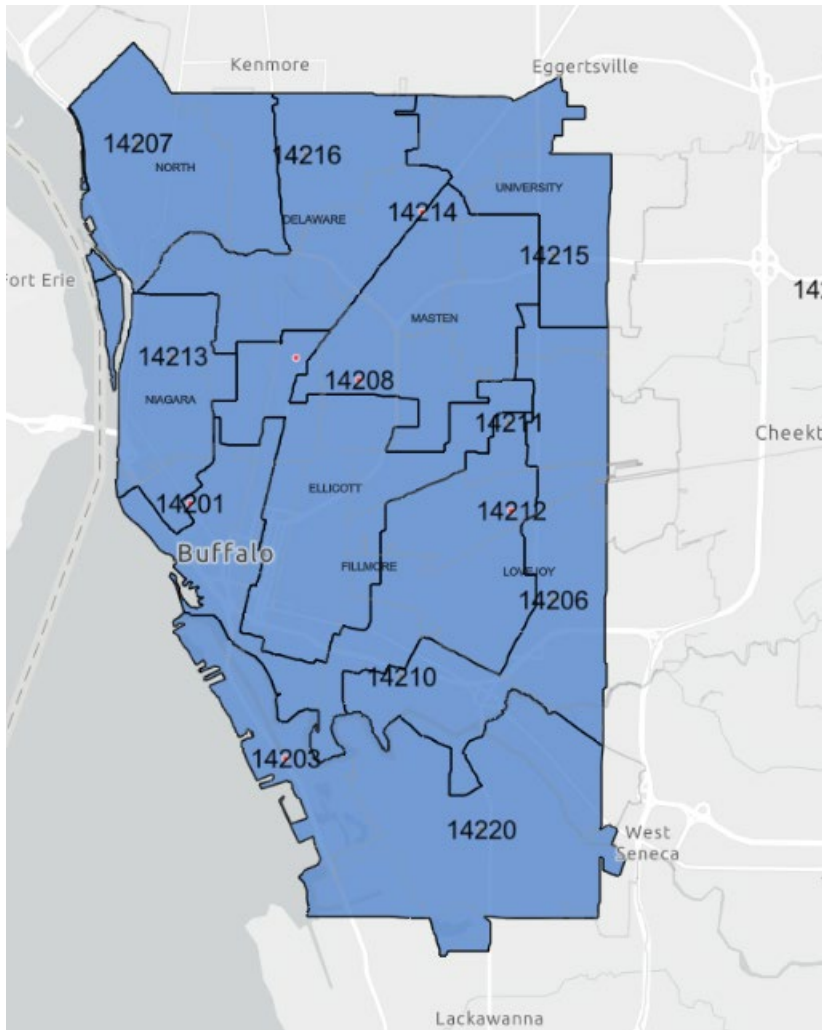
Workforce Development Program Touchpoints in 2023

Youth Opportunity Connect had the highest number of program touchpoints (Figure 23 on the next page). There were 26 N.E.T. Team program touchpoints recorded between October and December.

Figure 23

Workforce Program Touchpoints by Activity

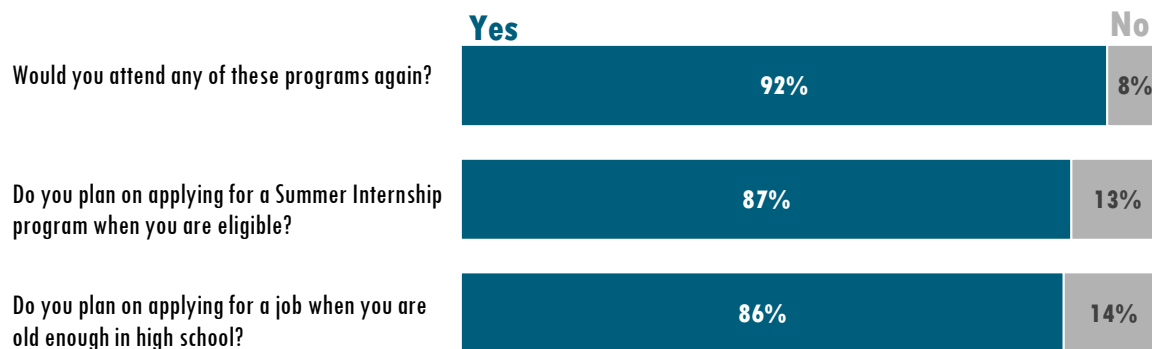| Activity	Touchpoints
YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CONNECT	1,151
FORD CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS	154
N.E.T. TEAM	26

Workforce Development Participant Feedback in 2023

The questions for workforce development varied the most on the feedback survey. This is due to different funder requirements for those specific programs. Figure 24 below includes data from 70 survey respondents. An additional 485 youth responded to at least one question although they stated that they did not participate in any workforce development programming.

Figure 24

Workforce Development Program Feedback

|	Yes	No
Would you attend any of these programs again?	92%	8%
Do you plan on applying for a Summer Internship program when you are eligible?	87%	13%
Do you plan on applying for a job when you are old enough in high school?	86%	14%

Key Findings

At the end of each project year, Via Evaluation provided Buffalo PAL with an annual summary report of data for all programs. This section summarizes key findings of their most recent project with a focus on 2023 but with some comparisons to previous years.

Participant Demographics

The number of individual participants increased over time, as Buffalo PAL continued to add more programming each year. Between 2021 and 2023, Buffalo PAL served 10,734 individual youth. The year 2023 had the highest number of served youth, 5,089 (Figure 25).
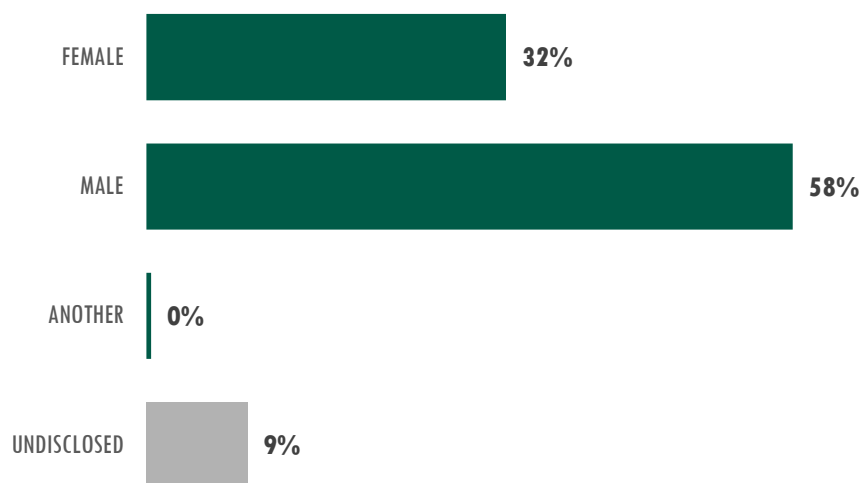
Figure 25

Total Individual Youth by Year, 2021-2023
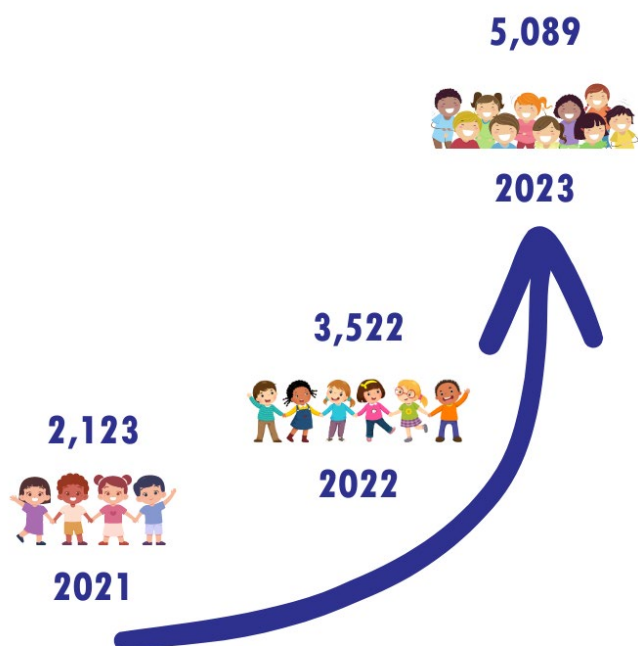
Overall, more boys attended Buffalo PAL programming than girls in 2023 (Figure 26 on the next page).
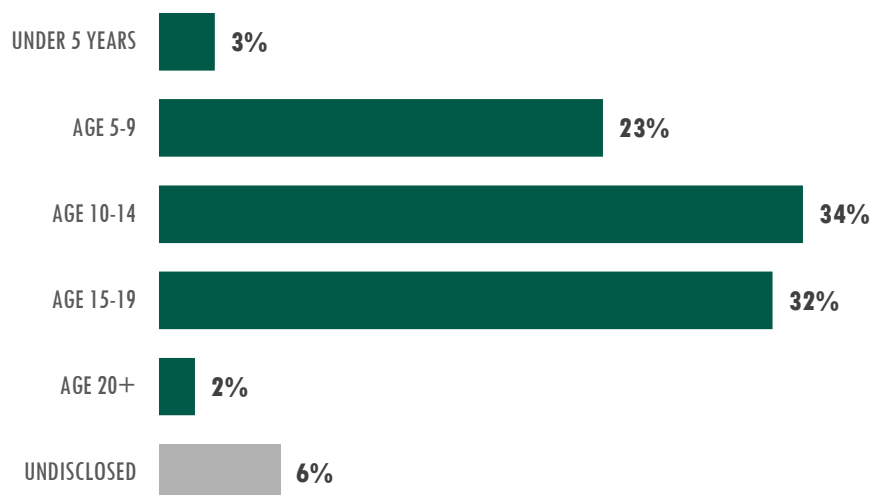
Figure 26

Gender Breakdown of Buffalo PAL Participants, 2023

FEMALE — 32%

MALE — 58%

ANOTHER — 0%

UNDISCLOSED — 9%

There was an even spread of age groups in Buffalo PAL programming (Figure 27). Although there were some younger youth under 5 and older participants over 20, the majority were between age 5 and 19. Any registrants with dates of birth listed as 2023 were changed to Undisclosed since it was likely due to entry error. There were also some incomplete registrations that did not include age information that are also noted as Undisclosed.

Figure 27

Age Breakdown of Buffalo PAL Participants, 2023

UNDER 5 YEARS — 3%

AGE 5-9 — 23%

AGE 10-14 — 34%

AGE 15-19 — 32%

AGE 20+ — 2%

UNDISCLOSED — 6%

Black youth represented the largest population of Buffalo PAL participants (58%; Figure 28 on the next page). When comparing to the overall Buffalo population, Buffalo PAL has succeeded in serving primarily Black and Brown youth.

Figure 28

Race Breakdown of Buffalo PAL Participants, 2023
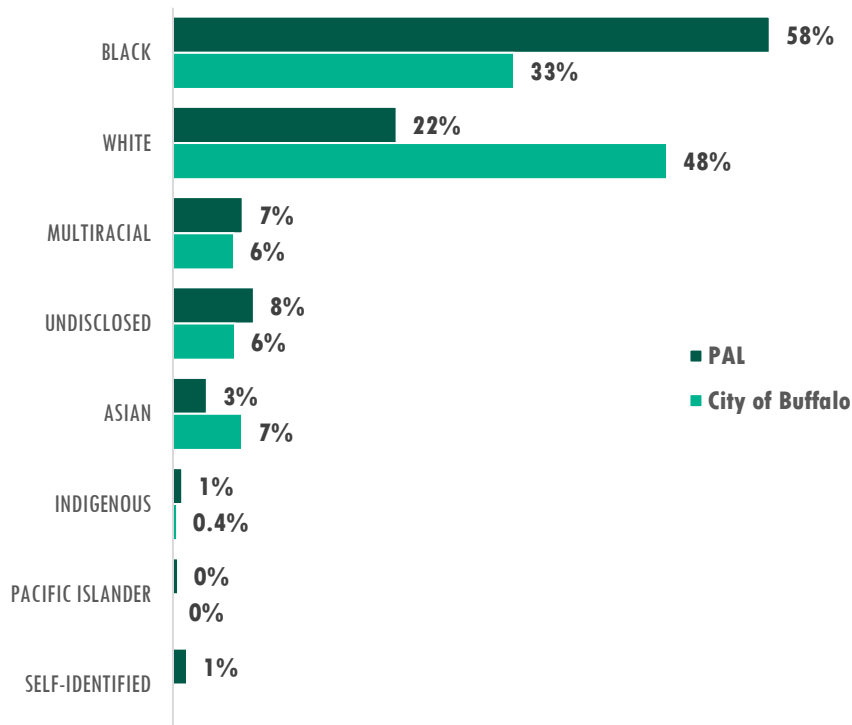
Most participants came from 14211 in Master District and 14215 in University District (Figure 29 on the next page). However, there were notably many participants that came from outside of the city to participate in Buffalo PAL programming.

Figure 29

Heat Map of Buffalo PAL Participants by Buffalo Council District, 2023
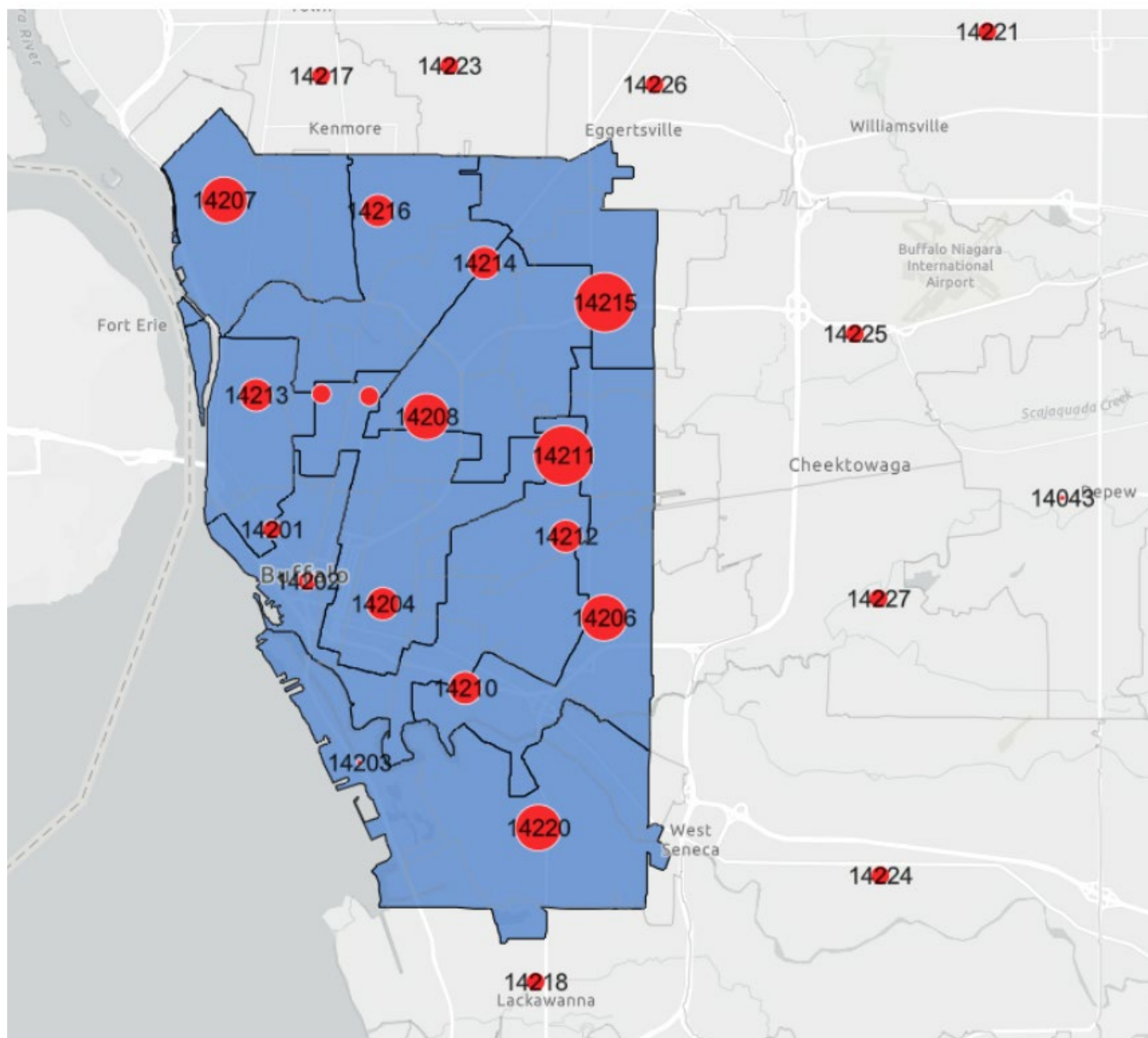
Program Touchpoints

Buffalo PAL and VIA refined attendance tracking procedures over the grant to ensure accurate capture of program touchpoints across activities. As these procedures were adopted by program sites, attendance data could be more accurately measured to determine program touchpoints. One continual area of concern is in relation to attendance at community centers. Although registration data is collected for all sites, attendance tracking is not uniform. Thus, only estimates can be provided at this time. Buffalo PAL hopes to improve attendance tracking procedures at community centers in the future.

The year with the most program touchpoints was 2022, at 60,006 (Figure 30). Of note, community center program touchpoints are difficult to capture due to different tracking methods at each site. The evaluators are unable to provide a true measure of this program attendance when including community centers.

Figure 30

Total Program Touchpoints, 2021-2023

60,006
2022

49,880
2023

28,397
2021
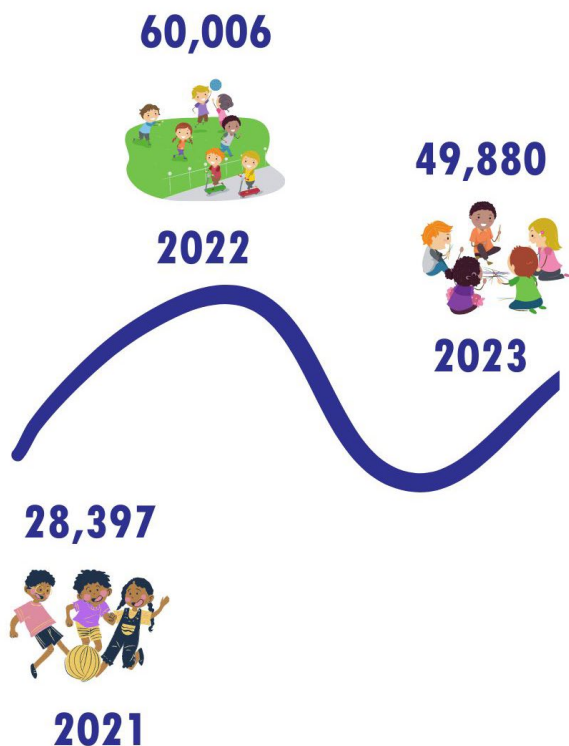
Participant Feedback

Over time and as new programs were added, Buffalo PAL and VIA collaboratively updated feedback survey questions. Thus, it is difficult to compare all the questions now to previous years. However, there were some questions that were present 2021-2023 that still capture the essence of Buffalo PAL goals.

Feedback was generally positive for the entirety of the grant, although there was no feedback from youth in 2022 (Figure 31 on the next page). Almost all (99%) agreed that they enjoyed spending time in Buffalo PAL and had fun participating in Buffalo PAL in 2023. Of note, there were more responses to the survey in 2023 than in 2021, 686 and 62 respectively.

Figure 31

Participant Feedback on Buffalo PAL from 2021 and 2023

I enjoyed spending time with Buffalo PAL

I had fun participating in Buffalo PAL

- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

2021: 31% Agree, 66% Strongly Agree
2023: 41% Agree, 58% Strongly Agree
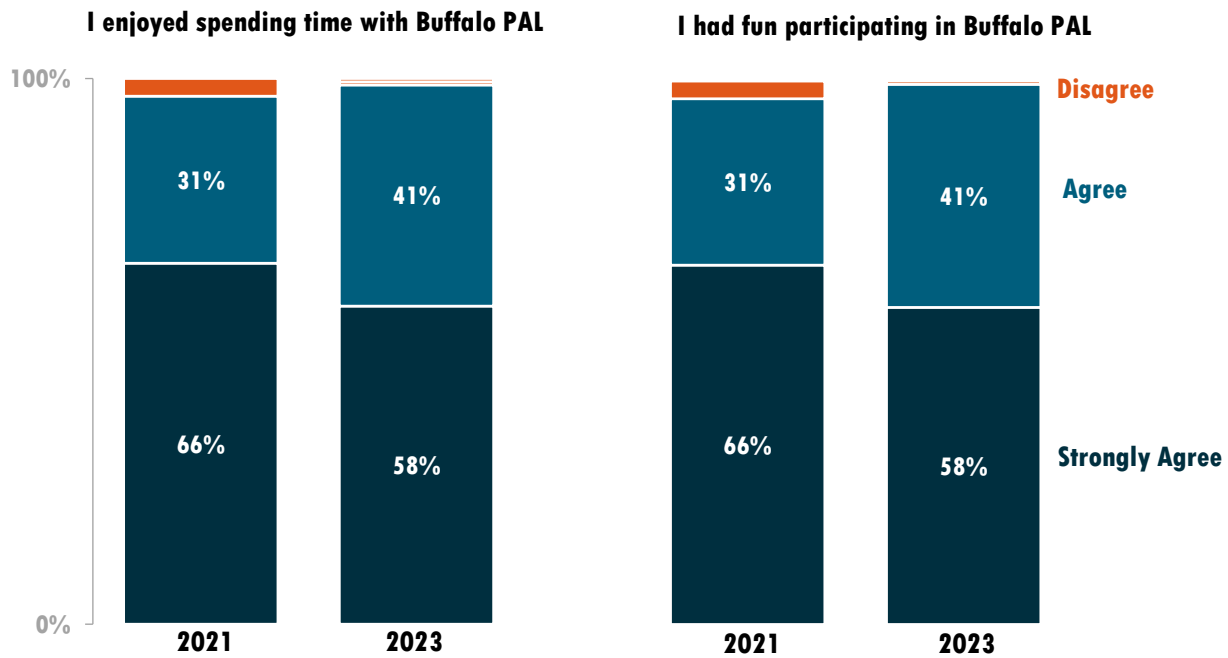
Additionally, positive feedback increased from 2021 to 2023 in terms of relationship-building. Most (96%) participants stated that they made new friends and that they (99%) had positive relationships with the Buffalo N.E.T. Team (Figure 32 on the next page).

Figure 32

Participant Feedback on Relationship Building from 2021 and 2023

I have made new friends at Buffalo PAL

	2021	2023
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	10%	
Agree	39%	41%
Strongly Agree	52%	55%

I had positive interactions with Buffalo PAL police/N.E.T. Team

	2021	2023
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	5%	
Agree	36%	42%
Strongly Agree	59%	57%

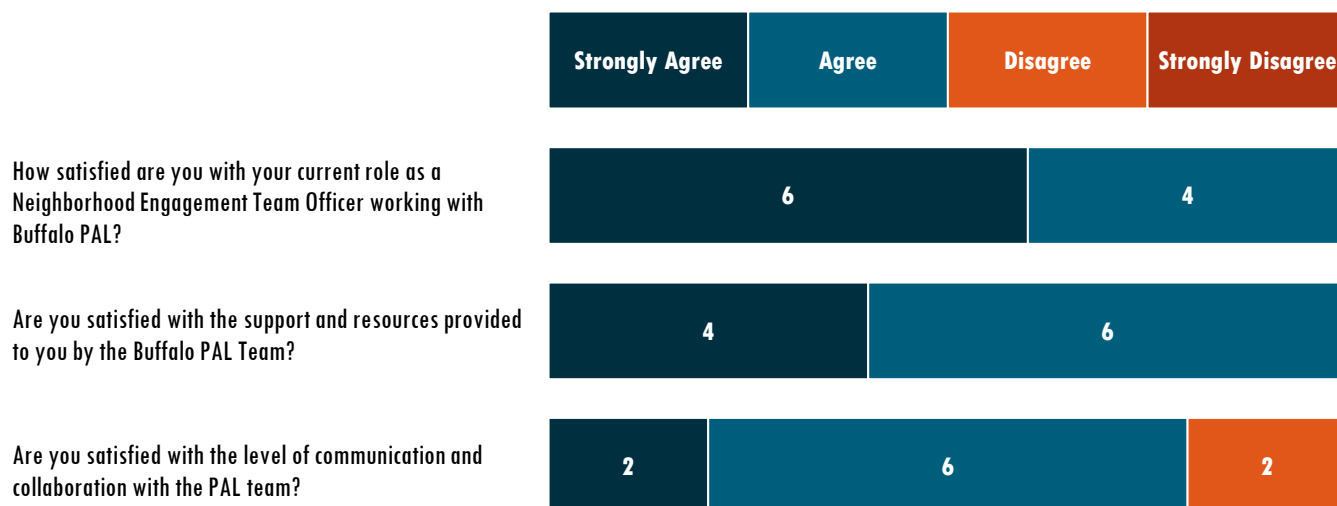Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Agree
Strongly Agree
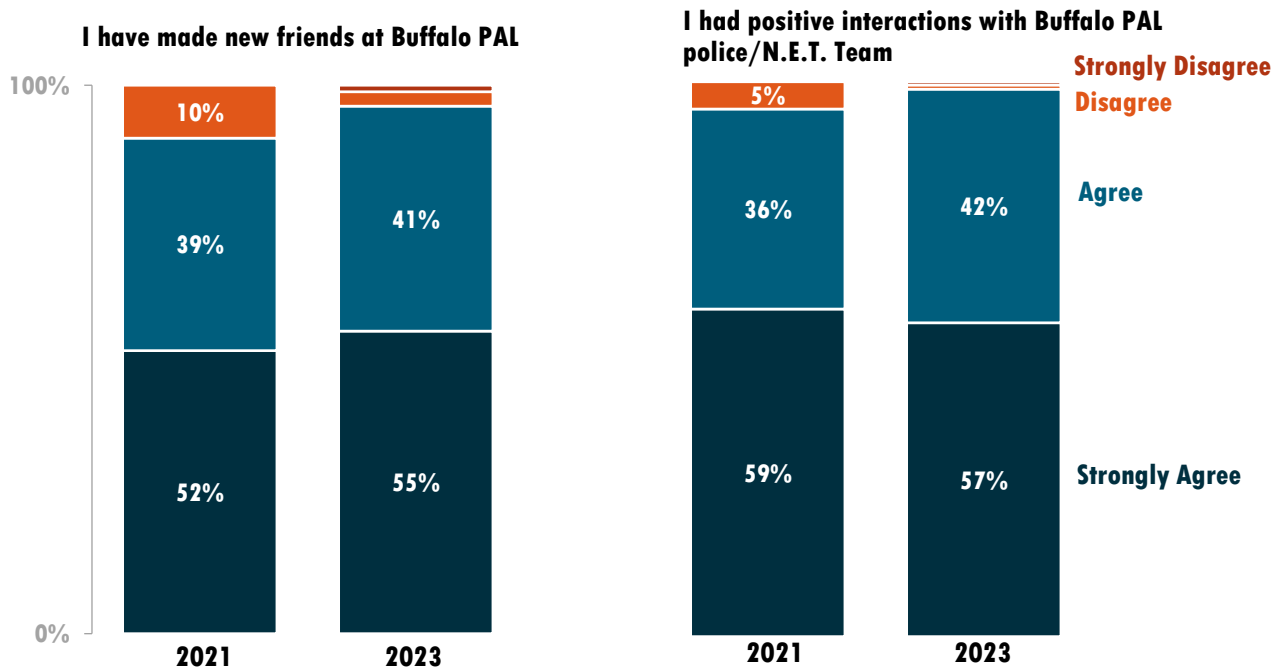
N.E.T. Team Feedback

In January 2024, Buffalo PAL and VIA collaboratively developed a N.E.T. Team feedback survey. The purpose of the survey is to assess the experiences of Buffalo Police officers that participate in Buffalo PAL. There are 10 N.E.T. Team members currently participating in Buffalo PAL, all of whom responded to the survey.

The N.E.T. Team shared positive feedback about their experience in Buffalo PAL. The only area of concern for some N.E.T. Team members related to feeling that they do not get enough communication from Buffalo PAL (Figure 33).

Figure 33

N.E.T. Team Feedback on Buffalo PAL Programming, 2023

|	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
How satisfied are you with your current role as a Neighborhood Engagement Team Officer working with Buffalo PAL?	6	4		
Are you satisfied with the support and resources provided to you by the Buffalo PAL Team?	4	6		
Are you satisfied with the level of communication and collaboration with the PAL team?	2	6	2	

Many of the N.E.T. Team members stated that they attended Buffalo PAL programming between 3-4 times a week (Figure 34). There were no members who stated that they attended fewer than 3 times per week.

Figure 34

N.E.T. Team Weekly Attendance at Buffalo PAL Programs, 2023

How often do you visit Buffalo PAL programs a week?

7 times	2
6 times	0
5 times	1
4 times	4
3 times	3
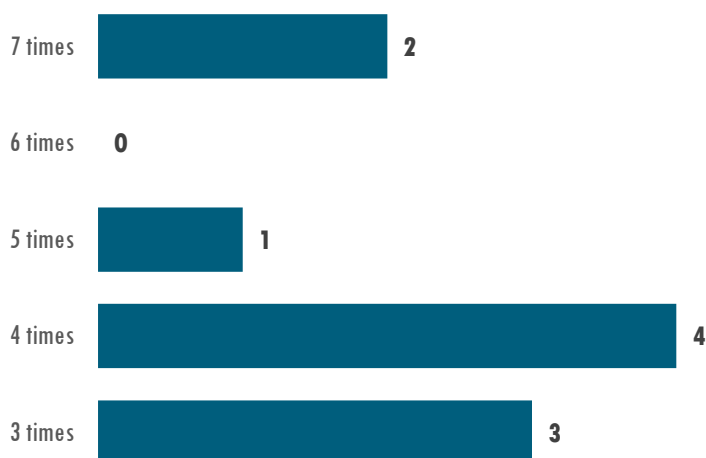
Buffalo N.E.T. Team members all stated that they feel valued by the youth in the neighborhood (Figure 35 on the next page). Buffalo PAL's overarching goal of "Youth build positive relationships with their peers and adults, especially PAL staff and Neighborhood Engagement Team" primarily focuses on the youth but it is important to also assess the experience of the N.E.T.

Figure 35

Buffalo N.E.T. Team Feeling Valued, 2023

Do you feel that your work is recognized and valued by the youth in the neighborhood?

Yes, a lot	Yes, a little	No

5	5

Conclusions & Recommendations

There were 5,089 individual youth served by Buffalo PAL programming in 2023. Each year, more youth have participated in programming since the beginning of Wilson funding in 2021. Buffalo PAL aims to serve primarily Black and Brown youth, which they achieved each year of the project based on demographic data collected.

Across the over 20 programs offered in 2023, Buffalo PAL made 49,880 program touchpoints. They offered several single day events such as Bike Helmets, Car Seats Giveaway, and PAL PLAYSTREETS. They also offered multiple-session programs such as Sports Leagues and Summer Day Camp. Additionally, between October and December 2023, Buffalo PAL began tracking N.E.T. Team program touchpoints whenever officers attended program.

Buffalo PAL identified 5 goals: 1 overarching and 4 goals associated with each type of programming offered. Youth and N.E.T. Team feedback was used to answer whether each of the goals was met. In general, feedback was positive and amounts to progress towards Buffalo PAL goals.

Overarching Goal Aligned to all Buffalo PAL Programs: Youth build positive relationships with their peers and adults, especially PAL staff and Neighborhood Engagement Team (N.E.T.).

+ **Youth lead active, healthy lifestyles where they regularly participate in physical activity.**

+ **Youth develop social-emotional skills, building meaningful relationships with their peers, adults, and law enforcement mentors.**

+ **Youth are actively engaged in their Academic Achievement through building literacy skills.**

+ **Youth begin to explore career opportunities through workforce development (e.g., job skills, build networks, and gain certifications).**

Recommendations

Revitalize partnerships with community centers to ensure uniform data tracking procedures.

Buffalo PAL staff have lamented that the major reason for the variability in community center data tracking is due to differences in technology at each site. Some sites do not have access to the internet to complete the online attendance tracking forms created by Buffalo PAL staff. Other community centers do not have computers to electronically record data at all. As Buffalo PAL builds partnerships with new funders and other entities, they should consider ways that they can aid low-technology community centers such as offering more iPads at sites or mobile hotspots.

Continue data collection from N.E.T. members engaged in Buffalo PAL.

Buffalo PAL only began tracking N.E.T. program touchpoints in October 2023. Complete data on their attendance at Buffalo PAL events provides an important piece of the puzzle when understanding how the N.E.T. Team influences youth and their families. Additionally, feedback should be assessed at more than 1 time point for N.E.T. Team as it

is with youth when they participate in multiple Buffalo PAL activities. Due to the small size of the N.E.T. Team, increasing the feedback points will provide more information about changes in behavior throughout the year.

Research alternate data systems for program registrations and/or attendance.

Buffalo PAL transitioned from paper registrations to online registrations through evaluation capacity building with Via Evaluation, their external evaluator. The use of SurveyMonkey helped to streamline registration for families by creating separate forms for each activity registration that was then linked to the Buffalo PAL website. However, this is not the purpose of SurveyMonkey and thus leads to cumbersome registration and attendance matching procedures for Buffalo PAL staff. There are more effective registration and attendance tracking tools used by other PAL programs such as Vision Member Tracking System. The use of such tools would also give Buffalo PAL a more independent ability to complete the various funding reports that are required across their programs. The cost of this tool could be built into registration fees for some programs. Also, the amount of staff time saved by investing in a new registration and roster management system would likely offset staffing and evaluation costs.