



Value of Developmental Assets and Data
to Student Well-being

Developmental Assets and PA Youth ...

The more you get to know them, the more you appreciate them – as a group and individually



Don't miss the *trees* for the forest...

Earlier in the presentation, the value of the 41 Developmental Assets – the overall picture – *the forest* - was revealed.

A photograph of a dense forest with tall, thin trees. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect on the forest floor. The ground is covered in fallen leaves and small plants. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

There are some beautiful individual questions on the DA survey that are easy to overlook...

and miss the beauty revealed in our students' responses

“It’s quite or extremely important to me to:

- Help other people (90%)
- Reduce hunger & poverty in the world (71%)
- Make sure all people are treated fairly (88%)
- Speak up for equality (all should have the same rights & opportunities) (85%)
- Get to know people of a different race or ethnic group than mine (71%)
- Stand up for what I believe, even when it’s unpopular to do so (85%)
- Accept responsibility for my actions, even when I make a mistake or get in trouble (85%)
- Tell the truth , even when it’s not easy... (71%)”

Just asking those questions was a positive intervention – requiring students to pause and consider their beliefs and attitudes.

Revealing how other students responded is an even more powerful intervention.

What if students never heard how their peers responded?

Student surveys can actually do harm...

IF the results are never shared.

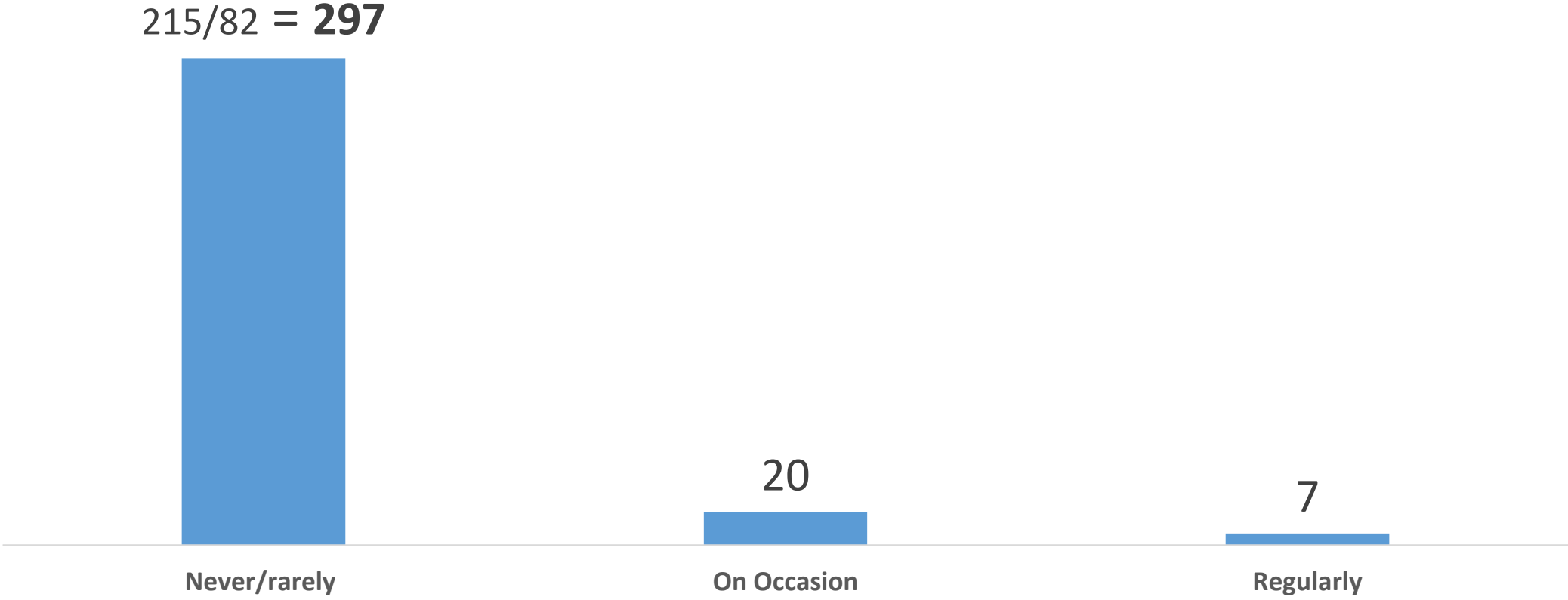
If student voices aren't part of "the story" being told, & retold - at school, at home, on social media, in the community...

misperceptions, negative stereotyping - and increased risk – can and do result.

Living Skills class interactions show that students overestimate their peers' involvement in health risk behaviors – AND - underestimate the healthy and caring attitudes that exist on their campus.

AND that survey results are “rarely or never” shared.

How frequently have you received the results from school-based student surveys? N = 324, Summer 2017



Student surveys can be immensely helpful to student health...

IF the results are shared.

Giving students their survey results - with all the complexities of strengths, vulnerabilities *and* risk behaviors:

- Respects their contribution and sharing
- Provides an honest reflection of themselves and their peers
- Helps correct misperceptions
- Increases recognition of caring peers *and* students in need
- Et cetera...!

Involving youth in *developing & communicating key findings* from their survey data is even more powerful.

My hope... at a minimum:

Commit to share all major survey data with students (DA, CHKS, PARCS)...

... or consider a Board Policy to ensure follow-through.

My hope... ideally:

involve students in the development *and communication* of key findings – of their “story” ...

...alongside school, parent and community partners – so that more accurate reflections of student health inform Palo Alto’s everyday culture & conversations, strategic efforts, and policies.

Thank you for reading along...