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High schools are a great place to start educating children about how to handle their lives once they graduate

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Childhood Social Programs Effective into Maturity

The Seattle Social Development Project turned children into responsible adults

A school-based program that was underway in Seattle in the 1980s proved to have far-reaching effects, showing a great influence on adults 24- and 27-years old, as well as on their parents and relatives. The Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP) was meant to teach unfavored children how to function properly in and out of schools, so as to offer them a chance for a better life.

Now, surveys on the 598 former program attendants revealed that the teachings they benefited from all those years ago helped them develop a better education, get good jobs, have a very good mental health, and do better than their peers, who lived in similar conditions, but failed to enlist when the program kicked off.

In order to ensure that all conclusions drawn from the study were "clean" and untainted by ethnic or socioeconomic factors, in the first place, the researchers formed the group with precise proportions of both genders and all ethnicities and races, as well as from various socioeconomic backgrounds. Dr. J. David Hawkins, the lead researcher for the current survey, said that the results he and his team gathered thoroughly supported this type of programs being implemented in schools throughout America, especially in those attended by people coming from poor neighborhoods and living conditions.

"The study shows that with training and coaching in the project methods, everyday teachers and parents in urban settings can significantly improve their children's futures," the researcher told Reuters. About 33 percent of adults who attended the program as children had associate degrees, as opposed to only 22 percent of their peers. Also, the rates of drug use and unplanned pregnancies were lower in the SSDP group.

The scientist also noted that there was a very low incidence of depression and anxiety among former SSDP participants, which meant that their education made them less susceptible to influences from their environments. Hawkins says that these advantages alone should be sufficient to prompt federal authorities to give such a program another chance.