WHITE PAPER

Yondr in Education: An Examination of Academic and Behavioral Outcomes

This white paper explores the impact of phone-free schools on students, faculty, and staff, presenting findings from independent research focused on the Yondr Program. This study is the first of its kind in the United States.

INTRODUCTION

Educators and policymakers are increasingly embracing the shift towards phone-free schools. Research from Spain[1] and the United Kingdom[2] demonstrates that phone-free policies lead to significant improvements in educational outcomes; this echoes a rising trend in the United States, where schools are adopting measures from complete bans to more flexible policies.

While the primary justification for these bans is to reduce distractions, the advantages extend beyond mitigating interruptions. Implementing a comprehensive campus-wide approach that removes phones for all students encourages deeper engagement with instructional content, greater participation in classroom discussions, and improved social interactions. With more educational systems recognizing the benefits of such initiatives, phone-free schools are likely to become a standard practice.

Since 2014, Yondr has provided a solution and guidance on creating engaging, phone-free schools around the world. The independent research in this paper tested the efficacy of the Yondr Program and its ability to enhance educational outcomes.

Key Research Findings:

- After implementing Yondr, student academic success rates increased up to 6.27%.
- Students in Grades 11 and 12 saw the highest potential for academic improvement, with a 38% increase in the probability of passing grades in academically focused classes. Grades 6–12 overall experienced a 14.9% increase.
- Yondr positively impacts behavior, showing a 44% decrease in average monthly behavioral referrals.

The study reveals that school personnel overwhelmingly agree that Yondr has positively impacted nearly all aspects of their school, including a reduction in classroom disruptions and an increase in student participation.

ASSESSING YONDR'S IMPACT ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The study examined over 37,000 final course grades before and after the implementation of the Yondr Program for students enrolled across middle and high schools in three different parts of the United States.

The data show a significant increase in academic performance following implementation.

1 P. Beneito, & Ó. Vicente-Chirivella (2022). Banning mobile phones in schools: Evidence from regional-level policies in Spain. *Applied Economic Analysis*, *30*(90), 153–175. https://doi.org/10.1108/AEA-05-2021-0112.

2 L.P. Beland and R. Murphy (2016). Ill communication: technology, distraction and student performance. *Labour Economics*, *41*, 61–76. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2016.04.004.

After the Yondr Program was introduced, a 14.9% increase in the probability of earning a 'C' grade in academically focused classes was observed. This indicates the Yondr Program has a positive impact on student academic performance.

Table 1. Results from Multilevel Logistic Regression Model — Grades 6–12

	Estimate	Std. Error	Z value	Pr(>|z|)
Intercept	2.28431	0.0932	24.509	<.001
Yondr	0.13913	0.02717	5.12	<.001
Academically Focused Classes	-0.78809	0.14928	-5.279	<.001

Students in Grades 11 and 12, a crucial phase in their preparation for college and career, saw the highest potential for an increase in academic achievement. The study found that after Yondr was introduced, there was a significant increase in improved grades. Before Yondr, 88% of students in Grades 11 and 12 received a 'C' or higher. After Yondr, this number increased by 38% to 91%.

Table 2. Results from Multilevel Logistic Regression Model — Grades 11–12

|	Estimate	Std. Error	Z value	Pr(>|z|)
Intercept	2.0296	0.127	15.987	<.001
Yondr	0.3245	0.0684	4.744	<.001
Academically Focused Classes	-0.5506	0.213	-2.585	0.01

A chi-square test of independence was performed for each grade to further investigate the results from the multilevel logistic regression and the impact of Yondr on the probability of earning a letter grade C or higher, as shown in Table 3 and Figure 1.

Table 3. Results from Chi-Square Test of Independence

Category	Before Yondr Success Rate	After Yondr Success Rate	Percent Change	Success Rate X2	Significant at p < .05
Total Population	80.24%	82.39%	+2.15%	p <.001	Yes
Grade 6	81.75%	84.34%	+2.59%	p = .010	Yes
Grade 8	77.67%	80.17%	+2.50%	p <.001	Yes

Grade 10	75.81%	80.23%	+4.42%	p <.001	Yes
Grade 11	77.91%	84.18%	+6.27%	p <.001	Yes
Grade 12	83.93%	88.71%	+4.78%	p <.001	Yes

Figure 1. Success Rate Pre- and Post-Yondr
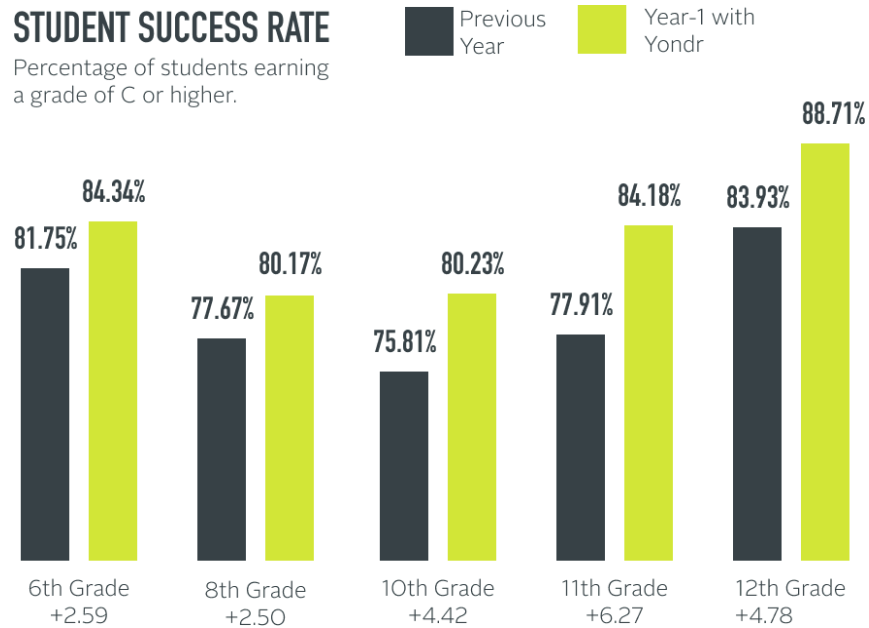
Students experience an increase in academic success rate with the Yondr Program. Notably, students preparing to make the transition to college, career, and life are seeing the greatest impact on their overall academic success.

THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF YONDR ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR

The data below reflect a comparison of two years, between the pre-implementation and post-implementation of Yondr, at a Grade 6–8 middle school that participated in the study. Behavioral referrals include instances in which a student violates a district behavior policy, resulting in school consequences. Researchers analyzed the number of average referrals by type per month. The results are in Table 4.

Table 4. Behavior Referrals by Month

Referral Type	2022–23	2023–24	Percent Change
Behavioral	302.4	170.2	-43.72%
Technology Use	45.6	24.9	-45.37%
Discrimination/Harassment/Bullying	37.4	24.4	-34.72%
Substance Use	4.0	2.2	-44.44%
Academic Integrity	3.6	2.9	-18.75%

In line with prior research, the study found a significant reduction in the average monthly general behavior referrals (-43.72%). There were also large reductions in the average monthly referrals for technology use (-45.37%) and discrimination/harassment/bullying (-34.72%).

SCHOOL STAFF PERCEPTIONS OF YONDR

The third aspect of the study aimed to explore school personnel's perceptions of the Yondr Program. The researchers conducted a 13-question Likert-style survey across four schools. Skip logic was used to tailor questions to respondents; teachers answered 11 multiple-choice questions, while other personnel answered four. Of the 217 respondents, approximately 71% were teachers, 13% were school staff, and the remaining 16% were school leaders.

Key findings:
- 77% of teachers agreed they noticed a reduction in classroom disruptions caused by phones after the introduction of Yondr.
- 75% of teachers agreed they noticed an improvement in academic performance.
- 74% agreed they perceived their students to be more attentive and actively participating in class.

CONCLUSION

The research revealed that schools that partner with Yondr see increased academic success and improved student behavior. Yondr fosters a more focused learning environment, promoting deeper engagement and creating stronger connections between students and educators. Removing phones from classrooms is a crucial step toward cultivating an educational atmosphere where students can truly thrive.

ABOUT YONDR

Founded in 2014, Yondr is the established industry leader in helping educators around the world create phone-free spaces, serving over 1 million students daily across 21 countries. The Yondr Program is a complete phone-free solution that proactively addresses phone-related challenges and improves student focus, social connection, and academic performance. Yondr was awarded the American Consortium For Equity in Education in 2023.

Learn more at www.overyondr.com.