



Junior Achievement Program Increases Financial Capability of Middle School Students, Study Shows

Houston, TX- Junior Achievement USA[®] announced today that, sponsored by KPMG, research conducted by the independent RMC Research Corporation and the JA Education Group shows that the combination of *JA Finance Park's* financial literacy curriculum and experiential learning program increases the financial capability of middle school students who participate. The [executive summary](#) of the study and the [full report](#) are available online.

JA Finance Park reaches more than 9,600 greater Houston area students at the JA of Southeast Texas capstone facility each year, in addition to more than 8,000 students who participate in the program's virtual format. Capital One sponsors the local mobile format of the program, which allows for increased reach to students who cannot travel to the central facility.

The findings of the evaluation show that *JA Finance Park* increases students' financial capability, defined by the Center for Financial Inclusion as “(T)he combination of attitude, knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy needed to make and exercise money management decisions that best fit the circumstances of one's life, within an enabling environment that includes, but is not limited to, access to appropriate financial services.”

The evaluation results include:

- Students who participated in *JA Finance Park* demonstrated more financial literacy knowledge than comparison students.
- The average effect size for financial literacy knowledge gain was “moderate-to-large” at .75, indicating a meaningful gain in knowledge by participating students. While statistical significance informs us of the likelihood that the findings are not due to chance factors, effect size tells us the relative magnitude of the difference obtained. In education, effect sizes of .30 or higher are often considered meaningful.
- Students who participated in *JA Finance Park* demonstrated positive attitude changes across all dimensions of interest.
- Students, teachers, volunteers, and JA staff all affirmed the value of *JA Finance Park*.



“The combination of financial literacy curriculum and real world scenarios students are presented with in the *JA Finance Park* experience serve as a real ‘wake up’ call to students who go through the program,” said Joe Thomas, Ph.D., Vice President – Evaluation and Research for Junior Achievement USA. “This evaluation shows that students not only gain a better understanding of financial concepts as part of this program, but will be more inclined to exhibit financially responsible behavior in the future.”

“We are proud to have offered the *JA Finance Park* program to local students for 9 years,” said Rick Franke, President of JA of Southeast Texas. “As educators’ demand for the program continues to grow, these evaluation results reaffirm the vital impact of the program in developing the leaders, workers, and consumers of the future.”

The *JA Finance Park* program is composed of 13 required teacher-taught, in-class lessons. It culminates in a hands-on budgeting simulation that is implemented either at a *JA Finance Park* facility, mobile unit, or virtual site. Visit [here](#) to see *JA Finance Park* in action.

About Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas

Junior Achievement of Southeast Texas is the greater Houston area’s largest organization dedicated to inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy. Through a dedicated volunteer network of nearly 13,000 adult role models, JA of Southeast Texas provides in-school and after-school programs for students in grades K-12 which focus on entrepreneurship, work readiness and financial literacy. Today, JA of Southeast Texas anticipates reaching 310,000 students in more than 950 schools this school year. For more information, visit www.jahouston.org.

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