

Our Children, Our Families Council
Summary of DCYF Youth Advisory Council

April 3, 2015

Goals of the Effort

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC) is comprised of various youth leadership groups that work with city departments. The council exists to:

- Bring together youth leaders to advise DCYF staff on policies and grant-making that impact youth ages 13-24,
- Recommend and advance citywide youth policy and initiatives,
- Foster collaboration between youth bodies across the city,
- Increase youth impact within various city departments, and
- Build members' leadership and advocacy skills.

Focal Population of the Effort

The Youth Advisory Council represents the voices of San Francisco youth age 14 to 24.

Impact

The YAC provides feedback that is integrated into DCYF initiatives. For example, DCYF funds wellness centers at high schools and the YAC provided direct advice as to what services should be accessible and free to students at these centers and suggested that wellness centers should be quiet places for students to think.

The YAC is strengthened by the diversity of voices it brings to the table. The youth involved represent various challenges and privileges, from formally homeless youth to young people with private school education.

Challenges

One challenge the YAC faces is that the organizations represented on the YAC are not often aligned in their timelines for appointing representatives, so youth cycle in and out at different times throughout the year. Also, because DCYF's initiatives often run on a longer time frame than individual youth serve, often the youth do not see the direct impact of their feedback on DCYF's work.

Origins of the Effort

San Francisco committed to youth empowerment and leadership by setting aside a minimum of 3% of the San Francisco Children's Fund to serve as the Youth Empowerment Fund. DCYF created the Youth Advisory Council in 2010 to model the city's commitment to youth empowerment by inviting youth voice into the departments direction and decisions.

Leading the Effort

The YAC is led by Prishni Murillo, Senior Program Specialist at DCYF, 415-934-4840, prishni.murillo@dcyf.org. Her position is funded by DCYF.

Members of the Effort

The YAC is comprised of representatives each from:

- the Youth Commission,
- Student Advisory Council of SFUSD,
- the Youth Empowerment Fund Advisory Board,
- Transitional Age Youth SF,
- the Juvenile Probation Advisory Council, and
- youth members of DCYF's Citizens' Advisory Committee.

As each organization can have two representatives, the council usually has 12-14 members. Members serve for a maximum of one year and are selected by the organizations they represent.

Structure of the Effort

The Youth Advisory Council meets once a month and often achieves around 90% attendance. The group communicates via email or text, and members receive a stipend for their participation on the council.