



# Our Children, Our Families Council



## Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) 18-24 Focus Group

*Held Friday Nov. 6, 2015*

*Facilitated by: Laurie Scolari, Our Children, Our Families*

*Participants: 17 TAY*

### **What does success look like to you?**

- First, what do you mean by “success?” We want to define it for TAY.
- Easy access to higher education
- Clear career paths
- Accessible organic gardens
- Addressing historical trauma
- Well rounded health services including mental and physical
- A sense of community
- To be happy as TAY community, unit.
- Effective transportation
- Free education in higher education, including scholarships, stipends
- Community participatory budgets, where we get to have a say in budgetary decisions that affect our TAY community
- Accountability for ourselves
- Accountability for our government to serve us better
- Expanding opportunities for skills beyond a BA, such as entrepreneurship.
- Supportive members of society
- Supportive spaces for TAY
- Education courses for the “oppressors” of “ill-informed” of how society judges us

### **What are the barriers that make it difficult for you to be successful?**

- Most services are not open after people get out of work
- Gender specific and gender non conforming services
- Barriers to path to citizenship
- Clearer definition of Citizenship
- Bureaucracy in accessing city services
- Education requirements with youth works overbearing
- Too few job opportunities
- Government agencies and social service providers need to create on-going forums for TAY to hear what systems/services they are currently in need of, as the needs constantly change

- Existing mental health spaces are not always healthy – you can feel the stigma of needing mental health services so there is hesitancy to participate in them
- Existing mental health services are not for reaching enough
- Language barriers and translation services are needed for outreach on ballot measures. Police need to have better access to translation services so they can communicate better with non-English speaking communities

**What are the barriers that make it difficult for you to be successful? *(Continued)***

- Cost of living is the largest barrier – agreed upon by the group
- San Francisco has this legacy of being accepting of disenfranchised groups but that is slipping away with the influx of new wealthy corporations and wealthy families moving into our city. You can feel a real sense of judgment from them especially for non conforming and transgender folks
- Our city is becoming more and more unwelcoming to TAY and people of color. How can our city be intentional about ensuring new incoming wealthy families are culturally competent?
- More thoughtfulness as a city on the issue of the school to prison pipeline. How are we combatting this?
- Drugs, gangs
- How are we addressing youth who are high-risk as a collective city?
- We need a better plan for how to systemically assist foster youth when they age out of the system
- What is the city doing to address issue of human sex trafficking?
- SFUSD teachers need some sensitivity training for teachers around how to identify students who are suffering from sexual abuse to refer them to services
- Police harassment/racial profiling
- There is no space for meditation, a quiet space to heal. We need a place to develop a sense of community.

**What strengths, assets, and resources that exist in your community that are allowing you to be successful?**

- Culturally competent case managers and those who are from the community that understand us
- Physical spaces to allow for training, mentoring
- Ethnic studies more intently brought into SFSU, CCSF and SFUSD
- Culturally competent professors
- SF youth are more privileged and resource rich than other cities, we need to appreciate that more
- More community gardens
- Connection to our indigenous communities
- More youth empowerment/youth leadership opportunities
- Youth-led initiatives, decision making opportunities
- Mentoring programs
- Transitional housing programs

- Arts programs
- Supportive adults who are willing to help mentor in upward mobility of TAY
- Radical young leaders
- Funneling more money to organizations that represent the community
- Specific programs that we like that should be expanded: Poder, Horizons Unlimited, Roadmap to peace, CHALK, BACR, Enterprise for high school students, Dimensions Clinic, Ethnic Studies, Causa Justa, Larkin Street, Young Women Freedom Center, CARE Program, Five Keys

**If I could change one thing to make things better for TAY, what would that be?**

- Cost of living
- Intentional spaces for youth to feel empowered
- More access to higher education
- Police, schools and retail should stop profiling of TAY youth, youth of color, especially African American youth.
- Supportive opportunities without judgment or negative expectations
- Affordable and safe transportation
- Address issues of intersectionality/holistically
- Service providers and police officers could be more culturally competent
- The mayor -Divestment from corporate investment into youth-led spaces

**Survey Results:**

- 17 people attended but only 9 completed the survey
- Gender: 3 Female, 2 Male, 4 Other (Gender Fluid, non-conforming)
- Zip Code:
  - 94115
  - 94103 Lower Mission
  - 94107
  - 94112 (2)
  - 94134 Portola
  - 94110 Mission (2)
  - 94114 Castro
- Ethnicity:
  - Multiracial (1)
  - Hispanic/Latino (5)
  - Other (1)
  - African American (2)
- First Language:
  - English (4)
  - Spanish (1)
  - Both English and Spanish – Bilingual home (4)
- Have you ever been in the foster care system?
  - Yes (2)
  - No (7)
- What is your highest level of school completed so far?

- Some Middle School
  - Some High School
  - HS diploma
  - GED (1)
  - Some college (4)
  - Associates degree (3)
  - Bachelor's degree (1)
  - Industry certificate
  - Graduate degree
- Have you ever participated in a special education program?
  - Yes (2)
  - No (7)
- Have you or anyone in your family been in juvenile detention, jail or prison?
  - Yes (6)
  - No (3)
- Are you currently employed?
  - Yes, part time (4)
  - Yes, full time (3)
  - No (2)