District 8 Summary of Key Themes

NOE VALLEY, THE CASTRO, GLEN PARK, DIAMOND HEIGHTS, DUBOCE TRIANGLE, BUENA
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared by Bright Research Group on behalf of the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF).

DCYF contracted with Bright Research Group, an independent group, to produce this report. Founded in 2010 by Brightstar Ohlson, Bright Research Group is a community-centered design and research firm based in Oakland, California. Bright Research Group is a women and minority owned firm and certified small local emerging business in Alameda County. Learn more at www.brightresearchgroup.com.

We would like to extend a special thanks to Supervisor Rafael Mandelman and his Legislative team, San Francisco Unified School District’s Sanchez Elementary School, Mission Graduates, Intergraphics, Mestiza Catering, Alain McLaughlin Photography, and Katherine O’Toole.

Production of this publication was managed and supervised by:
Sarah Duffy (Project Lead), Dori Caminong, Emily Davis, Michelle Gallerza, Colin Kimzey and Celeste Middleton.

Authors

Brightstar Ohlson, MS
Kristina Bedrossian, MPP
Vanetta Thomas, MPH
Holly Joshi, MA

Suggested Citation: Ohlson, B. et. al (2019) “District Summaries”. Prepared by Bright Research Group for the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families.

Comments, questions, and requests for additional information can be directed to:

Sarah Duffy, Data and Evaluation Manager
San Francisco, Department of Children, Youth and Their Families
(415) 554- 8416
sarah.duffy@dcyf.org
D8 (NOE VALLEY, THE CASTRO, GLEN PARK, DIAMOND HEIGHTS, DUBOCE TRIANGLE, & BUENA VISTA HEIGHTS)

On October 17, 2019, the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) convened a family summit in District 8 to hear about the needs of children, youth, and families. The goal of the summit was to hear feedback from the community in District 8 and learn about the lived experience of families in the district, including the greatest pain points in their daily lives, what is working, what could work better, and how the City and County of San Francisco should improve their quality of life. The summit began with opening remarks from Supervisor Rafael Mandelman and DCYF staff. Participants listened to a presentation about DCYF and the Community Needs Assessment process, then engaged in breakout table discussions, facilitated by Bright Research Group, for approximately 55 minutes.

PARTICIPATION IN THE FAMILY SUMMIT

A total of eight family members, four transitional age youth, and nine providers participated in the breakout table discussions. One family group was facilitated in Spanish, one in English, and one in Chinese. Two provider groups were facilitated in English. All family members were raising children in San Francisco. Four of the participants sitting at the provider table were TAY-age youth who were program participants for one DCYF provider organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 1: Ethnicity of D8 Attendees (n=29)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/ Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 2: D8 Attendees by Home Zip Code (n=29)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data in figures includes all community members who registered at the summit. Some participants did not register. Some attendees did not participate in the breakout discussions. Registrants were asked to select all applicable race/ethnicity categories.

Bright Research Group analyzed data by key theme. DCYF made the decision to redact the names of community-based organizations named by family members and youth as sources of support, out of concern that organizations have different levels of capacity when it comes to organizing their participants to attend community events.
KEY THEMES FROM THE FAMILY BREAKOUTS

A Day in the Life
Overall, families felt that the most stressful time of day for them was school drop-off and pickup times. All parents noted that the unreliability of Muni and school buses caused the most stress in their days. Parents reported that they were often late to work or had to switch their shifts at work to accommodate getting their kids to school when the bus is too late. This created financial challenges and hardships for family members. Parents also reported that they had to wake up their children very early because of the unreliability of Muni. One Chinese parent also wished that there were formal programs available at schools to care for children in the mornings for those parents who had to get to work before the school day begins. They reported that teachers were informally watching their kids in the morning and requested early-morning care. Other morning-time challenges mentioned by parents include preparing lunches. Some parents also wished that healthier food options were provided in schools.

Parents relied on after-school programs to care for their children after school, and some found travel to after-school programs that were not located at their school to be challenging. Parents felt that summers were the most challenging time of year because spots in summer programs are limited and fill up quickly. Parents recommended more affordable summer programs.

Needs of Families
After-school programs were a major area of discussions in the family breakout groups. Participants spoke about the importance of having safe and high-quality after-care programs. While Latin@ parents felt very fortunate for the variety of programs in this neighborhood that were appropriate for their children, Chinese parents did not feel that existing options were welcoming for their children or that staff were able to effectively communicate with the parent. Parents shared a number of recommendations for improving after-school programs, including: shorter wait lists and programs that are more affordable; improved training for after-school staff to be able to support children with disabilities/IEPs; and, more diversity in the types of after-school programs offered in after-school, such as creative arts, sports, cooking, and other holistic programs. When it came to after-school sports programs in, parents wanted more options beyond football. Latin@ parents felt that college prep programs had
helped ensure that their kids went to college. Without that support, they felt that they would not have been able to help their children with their college and career goals. Latin@ participants had a perception that after-school programs were more likely to accept boys and less likely to accept girls. They wanted after-school programs that were more attractive and interesting to girls.

When it comes to success in school, new immigrant parents want their children to be able to access tutoring or homework help through after-school programs or school-based programs. New immigrant parents, especially Chinese parents, felt that they could not help their children with school and wished that there was a family-navigator role at schools who could help them support their children academically.

Neighborhood safety was another common theme, with many parents concerned about their quality of life due to the large number of car break-ins and the prevalence of homeless people with untreated mental illness who were living on the street.

Finally, parents also wanted increased access to one-on-one counseling or therapy for their children at school. Latin@ parents did not feel that group therapy was adequate for their children and wanted more bilingual individual therapeutic options made available to their kids. Parents also wanted support in helping manage their children’s use of technology. Many parents were concerned about their children being addicted to their phones.

**Key Themes from Provider Break-Outs**

Most participants in the provider groups worked for one provider organization that focuses on services for LGBTQ youth. Key themes during the provider breakouts were primarily centered on the lived experience and needs of LGBTQ youth and transition-age youth (TAY).
**Common Needs of TAY**

Providers appreciated that DCYF has started to fund TAY programs in recent years. Providers felt that DCYF should continue to increase funding for TAY given that many TAY are homeless and are contributing to that major social issue in San Francisco. Providers urged DCYF to support housing and jobs for TGNC (transgender and gender-nonconforming) youth, with a special focus on safe and inclusive housing for queer and transgender youth who have been incarcerated. Current housing programs are not safe for these youth. Front-desk staff in housing complexes need training on how to speak with TGNC youth.

Providers emphasized that TGNC youth need support with entering and navigating the workforce. Providers also want to ensure that employment agencies and other employment-training providers know how to create inclusive spaces for TGNC youth, e.g., by addressing them by their chosen name instead of the name on their ID. Providers emphasized that they play a critical role teaching TAY how to advocate for themselves and how to navigate systems. These life skills are essential especially for TNGC TAY, who may be disconnected from family and community. Youth workforce development is an area that needs particular focus for TAY. Providers wanted DCYF to provide more one-on-one support for services for youth workforce development for TAY, indicating that a group model does not work well for this population.

Transportation is a challenge for TAY. Providers wanted to Muni to be free for TAY youth. Providers give TAY Muni tokens so that they can get from home to school, to work, and to programs they participate in.

When it comes to mental health and overall well-being, providers identified a lack of mental health counselors who specialize in supporting TGNC youth and understand their unique needs and high Adverse Childhood Experiences scores, which can be life-saving support when provided to TNGC youth who are in middle school. Providers noted that healing is missing from the common-needs list. Violence is normalized for many youth in the LGBTQ community, and healing-centered youth organizing is a need for this population.

Providers felt that neighborhood safety was a concern, noting that the Castro and the neighboring neighborhoods were not welcoming to youth. Navigating these spaces can be difficult because they are often centered on drug or alcohol use or lead to exposure to cigarette smoke/use. Providers felt that there needed to be more safe outdoor and indoor spaces that were youth friendly and allowed youth to be loud, boisterous, and safe.

**TAY Services and Workforce-Development-Provider Collaboration**

Providers offered additional recommendations regarding the collaboration between providers who work with TAY in San Francisco and DCYF’s role as a convener. They suggested that DCYF support and strengthen the Youth Employment Coalition and the TAY Collaborative so that organizations working on these issues can become more coordinated and aligned. Providers want access to professionalized referrals to programs that they can trust to be safe and reputable, and they see these collaboratives as an opportunity to facilitate these referrals and connections between agencies. Specifically, providers want to create a TAY collaborative that is as well-organized as the San Francisco Childcare Planning and Advisory Council (CPAC) is in the childcare space. These
collaboratives should help providers collaborate on direct service and also identify a shared policy agenda, especially in the space of youth workforce development. Providers wanted DCYF to support networking opportunities for agencies to connect and leverage resources across strategy areas; offer problem-solving among nonprofit peers; and share cross-organizational resources or referrals. Providers want DCYF to connect their services and programs so that they can fill each other’s gaps in services.

Providers shared a number of recommended changes to DCYF funding. They felt that DCYF should provide funding for outreach and drop-in programs, noting that some TAY aren’t ready to participate in case management or cohort programs and that providers need time to get folks ready to be actual program participants. Providers requested stand-alone flexible funding for wraparound, responsive services instead of specific program enrollment.

**Participant Quotes**

“*The neighborhoods are not youth centered—they’re alcohol centered / drug centered. You need to be 18 or over to get involved in anything.*”

—Provider, D8

“*My family is a chosen family, but because we are a non-normative family, there are a lot of services we cannot get.*”

—Youth, D8

“*Muni creates a daily anxiety of ’Am I going to be at work on time?’ It’s four miles...it doesn’t make sense.*”

—Parent, D8

“*San Francisco is becoming a city for the elite...and that’s not what you want. You want it to be diverse.*”

—Family Member, D8