DCYF Final

Evaluation Report

2000-2001

Prepared by JMPT Consulting

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over ten years ago, San Francisco voters ratified the Children's Fund, which is financed through a percentage of local property tax dollars. Since the passage of this legislation, an average of $20 million annually has been provided to local community-based organizations (CBOs) for services for children, youth, and their families. The fund is coordinated and managed by the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF).

The Children's Fund has dramatically changed the landscape of children and family services in San Francisco. The number and types of services have increased, as has the number of children served. The services funded through the Children's Fund range from early childhood and family support programs to teen leadership development and youth employment initiatives. Funded programs focus on after-school enrichment, neighborhood-linked services, special populations, juvenile justice and family violence prevention, youth employment, youth initiated projects, and a variety of other community-based organization programs and activities. The Children's Fund is also a linchpin of funding for the San Francisco Beacon Centers.

The Children's Fund also allowed for a greater coordination of complementary services. Instead of a fragmented, piecemeal collection of children and family services, the Children's Fund allowed for greater communication among advocates and city departments and coordination of a broader menu of services for targeted populations. There is still work to be done in this area, but it is important to acknowledge the progress.

The reauthorization of The Children's Amendment in November 2000 mandated the implementation of a program evaluation of funded services. For the year 2000-2001, DCYF embarked on a comprehensive evaluation process, contracting with JMPT Consulting to formulate, implement, and assess an outcomes-based program evaluation encompassing DCYF-funded programs. The evaluation also included a youth-led evaluation conducted by Youth IMPACT/Youth in Focus, and an assessment of "youth development supports and opportunities" by the Community Network for Youth Development/Community Action for Youth.

A central goal of this year's work was to develop an evaluation model for DCYF that can be used over time. All of DCYF-funded services are framed by the Quality of Life Benchmarks established by the City's Board of Supervisors and Mayor. The benchmarks include:

? ? Our city's children and youth are healthy

? ? Our city's children and youth are ready to learn and are succeeding in school

? ? Our city's children and youth live in safe, supported families and safe, successful, supported communities

? ? Our city's children and youth contribute to the growth, development and vitality of San Francisco

-from the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families website

All of the funded services contribute to at least one, if not more, of the above listed benchmarks. During the evaluation development process, many dialogues were held between JMPT, DCYF, CBOs, and key stakeholders. Early in this process, it was clear that services clustered around six key areas of focus. The six focus areas were more specific in nature than the broader benchmarks.

The six focus areas include:

- ?? Academic support
- ?? Enrichment
- ?? Youth employment
- ?? Early childhood
- ?? Family support
- ?? Health and Wellness

Within each area of focus, specific outcomes and performance measures were created through a series of dialogues and work groups with stakeholders. Once a standard template of outcomes and performance measures were established, CBOs chose from the template those outcomes and measures that most closely aligned with their services. Performance measures were defined and quantified in standard format across CBOs.

Data were collected through surveys of youth, parents, and staff. The surveys were administered once in each CBO program. The data represent a snapshot of participant outcomes. The findings will serve as a point of comparison for future CBO evaluations, and also will provide information to guide and assist DCYF decisions regarding service delivery.

Because CBOs self-selected their core outcomes from a standard menu, their choices reveal the overall pattern of DCYF-funded services citywide. Nearly three-quarters of CBOs chose to focus on Enrichment outcomes, and just over half targeted Academic Support outcomes. Thirty-five percent of CBOs chose Health and Wellness outcomes. The outcome areas chosen by less than 30 percent of CBOs include Youth Employment, Family Support, Early Childhood.

One of the main goals of the first year of the DCYF outcomes-based evaluation was to design and implement a standardized evaluation and build the technology to enable this evaluation system to be refined and re-used over time by DCYF. The evaluation this year accomplished these goals. Much of the first year was spent formulating the evaluation system and conducting a pilot implementation. Data was collected, and this report provides an overview of participant outcomes. Importantly, this report also provides lessons learned from the data.

This executive summary will briefly review the main highlights of each benchmark based on data from CBOs. More CBO-specific outcomes were analyzed in individual CBO reports, which were distributed to DCYF and each CBO directly. More detailed information about the evaluation development, methodology, analysis and discussion can be found in this full report.

Executive Summary for Benchmark 1: Children and Youth Are Healthy

DCYF funds a variety of programs and activities promoting children's health, including health education, prevention programs, resource and referral to primary care services, physical recreation, and mental health counseling. Together with other city departments, DCYF seeks to provide through these activities the opportunity for all children and youth to be healthy. The goal of this evaluation of Benchmark 1 programs was to establish a baseline level of children and youths' health attitudes and behaviors. Program performance measures were designed to assess self-reported attitudes and behavior, and particular health outcomes and health risks among children and youth participants. Questions also focused on the perceived health patterns of the friends of children and youth participants.

Nearly all children and youth participants defined themselves as healthy. However, there seemed to be a distinction between reported attitudes and reported behaviors. Key findings include:

- Roughly half of the children and youth surveyed reported that they rarely exercise.
- Half of youth respondents wanted to change some aspect of their health-related behavior.
- The overwhelming majority of respondents said their friends were fairly healthy. Despite this finding, nearly half of children and youth were not sure if their friends would support them if they made a choice to become healthier.
- Over half of the children and youth surveyed reported that they do experience high levels of stress with varying levels of coping. Around 20 percent of respondents said they experience stress and don't know how to handle it.
- The overwhelming majority of children and youth respondents said they have not been encouraged by their friends to engage in risky behaviors.
- Fewer than 5 percent of youth surveyed reported that they had engaged frequently in risky behaviors such as smoking cigarettes, taking drugs, carrying a weapon, and having sex.

These findings may reveal that youth participating in DCYF programs tend to be healthier or less prone to taking health risks than the general population. However, it is also possible that CBO programming is, in fact, promoting young people's healthy attitudes and behaviors.

Future research on DCYF activities in Benchmark 1 should focus on a particular health issue, such as stress, or substance use, and strive to determine the best and most appropriate strategies for addressing each one. Additionally, DCYF programs should examine the self-selection issue by increasing outreach to youth currently engaging in unhealthy behaviors.

Executive Summary for Benchmark 2: Children and Youth are Ready to Learn and are Succeeding in School

Based on DCYF's commitment to supporting children's learning, the Department funds afterschool educational and tutoring programs, homework assistance, activities promoting parent involvement, as well as an extensive array of early childhood education and development programs. In fact, the majority of DCYF-funded programs evaluated this year selected at least one outcome in this Benchmark area. Program outcomes and performance measures assessed students' baseline academic performance, the transferability of CBO skills to an academic setting, children and youths' attachment to school, and their academic expectations. Benchmark 2 performance measures also encompassed the contribution of parents, measuring the time spent teaching and reading with their children. Key findings include:

?? Over half of children and youth rated their grades from the previous year as above average, primarily consisting of As and Bs. Around 15 percent rated their grades as average, and only 3 percent said they mostly earned Ds and Fs.

?? The majority of respondents said they enjoyed school, with slightly more high school students compared to middle school students reporting enjoying school.

?? Nearly 50 percent of high school students were very confident they would finish high school. The remainder indicated they were having some trouble in school, but only 5 percent said it was very unlikely they would finish high school.

?? Over 60 percent of respondents said attending their CBO made them more comfortable about going to school.

?? Nearly 80 percent of students surveyed said they apply aspects of their CBO-based knowledge in school.

?? Sixty-eight percent of parent respondents with young children reported that since their child has attended a DCYF-funded early childhood program, he or she is more likely to try new things, and his or her communication has improved.

?? Only one-third of parents report reading to their child on a regular basis.

In general, children and youth attending DCYF-funded programs appear to be academically motivated and performing well. Again, it may be the case that young people who are attracted to CBO programs are already motivated enough to seek out extra, positive activities. However, DCYF academic support programs do seem to be desirable to students, and they do appear to be supporting the progression of young people through school.

The fact that high school completion appears to be doubtful for a portion of respondents indicates that academic support programs may be particularly needed at the high school level. In the area of early childhood programs, DCYF appears to be meeting parents' goals for their children's developmental gains. However, many parents seem to be falling short of the desired goal of reading to their children each day, indicating room for additional programming for parents in the area of preparing and supporting their children to learn.

Executive Summary for Benchmark 3: Children and Youth Live in Safe, Supported Families and Safe, Successful, Supported Communities

Although DCYF dollars are mandated for direct services to children, many programs also target parents and families with services in support of their children, and the family as a whole. DCYF's activities also make important contributions to the communities children live in, through child- and youth-led mural projects, juvenile delinquency prevention efforts, and community development projects involving youth, and often initiated by youth leaders.

Program outcomes and performance measures for Benchmark 3 were designed to assess the availability and adequacy of support for children, youth, families, and communities. The goal of the evaluation in this area was to establish a baseline of parents' perceptions of the support they receive from CBO programs, and city services in general, youth's perceptions of the connections between their CBO programs and their families, and youth's perceptions of the connections between their CBO programs and their broader geographic and cultural communities. Key findings include:

- Over 30 percent of parents said their main source of connection and support was family. The next most commonly reported source of social support was the CBO staff.
- Parents were next asked what improvements should be made in services. The main recommendation was more information and outreach about available services. Other common recommendations included providing multiple services in one location, providing services in the family's native language, and assistance in completing applications for services.
- Nearly 60 percent of youth said that CBO staff have never communicated with their parents.
- Over 60 percent of youth respondents said they had not participated in an activity or event that celebrated their cultural background at their CBO.

It is important to note that despite a significant number of parent surveys distributed, only a relatively small number were returned, so the findings of this evaluation regarding parents' attitudes should be considered in that light. However, for those parents who responded, CBOs do seem to be an important aspect of support, second only to family. There does seem to be a communication gap between parents and CBOs, at least from the vantage point of the youth. Future research with funded programs should examine this finding in more detail, and determine the practices and beliefs that lead to better CBO/family communication, provided this communication is a desirable asset for the CBO.

Executive Summary for Benchmark 4: Children and Youth Contribute to the Growth, Development, and Vitality of San Francisco

Benchmark 4 is an expression of DCYF's belief that children and youth are assets to the communities they live in, and the city as a whole. In addition to providing programs that support young people's health, education, safety, and security, DCYF funds a number of efforts to enable youth to work, volunteer in the community, participate in performing and visual arts, and bring their leadership to bear on neighborhood and city issues. Program outcomes and performance measures in this Benchmark area assess youth's leadership skills, establish a baseline level of youths' sense of empowerment, and also examine youths' employment experiences, as well as their enrichment activities. Key findings include:

?? Of all teenagers responding to the evaluation survey, 40 percent reported that they are currently working, and 33 percent said they currently volunteer.

?? Close to 40 percent of teens in youth employment programs said they could "write a resume on their own", compared to close to 50 percent who said they would need assistance either from the CBO or a teacher or relative. (These data do not include MYEEP Agency data).

?? Over 60 percent of teens placed in paying jobs by DCYF-funded youth employment programs remained in those jobs for over 3 months.

?? Approximately half of youth respondents said they have the opportunity to collaborate with adults at their CBO. Around 15 percent of youth respondents said they were sometimes asked for their opinions, but not very often.

?? Half of the young people surveyed reported that they had led a meeting at their CBO, and the other half reported that they had not had that chance. Twelve percent of respondents said they had led a meeting more than 5 times over the last 3 months.

?? Around 60 percent of respondents said they want to keep doing things for their community after they leave the CBO. The majority of youth responding said that being at their CBO programs makes them feel like leaders.

DCYF is the only city department with funding earmarked for the types of programs and activities provided in pursuit of Benchmark 4. A majority of CBOs evaluated chose one or more outcomes in the area of Benchmark 4, illustrating the breadth of DCYF's work in this arena. In general, participation in DCYF CBOs seems to support the development of youth leaders, and appears to contribute significantly to youth employment in the city.

Final Evaluation Report

This final evaluation report for the initial year (2000-2001) of DCYF's evaluation process includes:

- ?? an **introductory** chapter, describing the citywide context of DCYF, the purpose, and scope of this evaluation, and the particular choice of a standardized, outcomes-based evaluation this year
- ?? a **methodology** chapter, outlining the framework for the evaluation and the process used to develop and implement the study
- ?? a **findings** chapter, with basic findings in each of the four Benchmark areas, and demographic and "dosage"-related findings
- ?? a **discussion** chapter, with a review of the utility and shortcomings of our approach, specific discussion around each Benchmark area, and an overview of key future research questions. The discussion chapter also includes two special sections on youth-led evaluation, and the youth development model.
- ?? a **recommendations** chapter, with a brief overview of next steps for upcoming evaluations.

Next Steps for Evaluation of DCYF and Its Grantees

DCYF's mission is to provide critical funding for needed children and family services, to advocate for the preservation of adequate levels of funding citywide for children's services, and to provide technical assistance and training to community-based organizations, so they can improve their work with children, youth, and families. The establishment of an outcomes-based evaluation system this year is the first step in building the capacity of the department and of each grantee to know whether or not they are achieving the goals they set out to achieve.

Outcomes-based evaluation is not an easy process, but it has proven to be tremendously rewarding to community programs, the clients they serve, and the institutional funders behind the scenes. The challenges of outcomes-based evaluation lie in writing realistic, attainable, measurable outcome statements, and translating those into data points that can actually be collected efficiently and repeatedly. The benefits of this type of evaluation are the requirement that programs take an active role in determining what they will hold themselves accountable for, and the hard evidence that is generated about the results of their work.

Significant progress was made this year towards the creation, implementation and utilization of an entire system to track outcomes across CBOs within the framework of desired citywide results, or the Benchmarks. The system will

continue to generate knowledge if it is used on an ongoing basis by grantees and DCYF staff alike. DCYF has, therefore, made a commitment to refine the first-year tools and process, and to integrate the evaluation system into the day-to-day work of the department. Over time, evaluation results generated by the outcomes-based system will inform the development of funding initiatives, and the direction of technical assistance dollars to CBOs to refine their models and practices.

Introduction

Evaluating from Program to Population

INTRODUCTION: EVALUATING FROM PROGRAM TO POPULATION

This chapter provides an overview of the conceptual framework of the comprehensive evaluation commissioned in 2000-2001 by the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families (DCYF), including a youth development evaluation, a youth-to-youth evaluation, and a standardized outcomes-based evaluation. The design of this study is offered as an essential strategy for linking program evaluation data to overall population-level change.

The Evolution of Evaluation Methodology: Accounting for Context

The field of evaluation has evolved continuously over the last twenty years, and has changed dramatically in the last ten. Early evaluation focused on quantitative methodology, emphasizing discrete measurements and experimental design. This perspective is based on the premise that empirical science can uncover truths about human life.[1] Along with the related disciplines of mainstream social science, the field of evaluation today is more comprehensive in nature – including both a qualitative and a quantitative emphasis on the "landscape" of targeted participants, organizational partners, and the community as a whole. Understanding context – multiple, often competing influences on a person or group -- has become an indispensable component of research on social change.

The work of community-based organizations providing services to children, youth, and families is completely contextualized – each intervention attempt with a client coexists with a multitude of other influences on that person's attitudes and behavior. As the field of evaluation has matured, its capacity for embracing the "messiness" of real world research contexts has expanded, although it remains one of the most challenging issues for the field. The very nature of "process" evaluation implies that, unlike the controlled experimental designs possible in the university research setting, the implementation quality or rigor of an intervention program in a community organization or school can vary tremendously from site to site, or from year to year. Another emerging evaluation methodology, "empowerment evaluation," makes the case that researchers and practitioners (the people being evaluated) may have very different conceptions about what data is even relevant to assessing program quality. Given the potential – in fact, the *likelihood* – of uncontrollable variation by site, competing assumptions by stakeholders, and unattributable causality of results, evaluation is sometimes regarded as a less rigorous social science, and the field of practice as an undesirable context for conducting research.

[1] Chambers, Wedel, and Rodwell. 1992. *Evaluating Social Programs*. Allyn & Bacon: Needham Heights, MA

Yet, the potential also exists for rigorous, contextualized evaluations of social programs to generate deeper and more powerful understandings of individual and organizational change than could a host of controlled, empirical research designs. Just as when learning language, an experience of total immersion can be highly disorienting, yet also highly effective, learning about individual and social change also requires a certain level of "immersion" in the total complexity of human experience. Rather than conduct evaluations with the ever-elusive goal of determining a fixed notion of "causality," perhaps a more useful end would be to become fluent in the dynamics of person and context.

As a language teacher would be quick to point out, there is a diminishing value to immersion experiences as there is a decrease in the explicit *structure* of learning opportunities. If one knows nothing of a language, it is unlikely that she will ever learn to comprehend by listening only to a radio program in that language, no matter how long, or how frequently. Without the appropriate cues to filter the cascade of sounds into meaningful categories, immersion quickly becomes confusing and alienating, rather than helpful. However, as in any teaching context, good "scaffolding" can allow for the capture and retention of new information that might otherwise be missed.

To realize the full potential of program evaluation for knowledge generation, the field must continue to build the right scaffolding around evaluation attempts. The first step is an appreciation and willingness to grapple with the "noise" inherent in a fully contextualized research setting. Next, the field's conceptual frameworks and methodologies must attempt to immerse themselves in context, to take as many variables into account as possible, even if this is simply acknowledging that they are there. Finally, evaluators must develop a coherent and *common* set of tools to filter the resulting data, so that everyone is learning to speak the same language of human growth and development.

Well-accepted concepts and assumptions serve the role of coherent tools in many content areas, such as early childhood development. Decades of research, largely in communities of practice, have yielded tremendous, reliable knowledge about the components of a "quality" early childhood learning experience, and these concepts about "best practices" have become the standards in the field. Researchers, practitioners, and many parents alike are aware of the importance of low staff turnover, high levels of caregiver-child interaction, and the importance of early literacy activities, for example. Evaluation of early childhood care settings is now aided greatly by the presence of published criteria of "quality," including standard measurement scales. Rather than having a reductionistic effect on actual beliefs and practices in early care settings, such tools actually serve to validate and promote awareness of the most vital and intangible features of these programs, the bonds between children and adults. By making the intangible tangible, and the implicit knowledge of expert practitioners explicit and accessible to learners, the tools of rigorous program evaluation make possible a meaningful dialogue on social change.

The Accountability Gap

As the concepts and methods of evaluation have evolved, the research questions it is called upon to answer have also expanded. The 1980's saw the advent of the "community change initiatives," a series of major funding initiatives by the largest national foundations targeted at specific neighborhoods. The thought was that an infusion of dollars, intellectual capital, and a renewed sense of empowerment in a particular place would lead to significant progress on social indicators, such as poverty, disease, and education level. Community-change initiatives were, indeed, a kind of "immersion" program for the foundations that invested in them. As a result of the need to assess the validity of this type of approach, the 1990's brought a call for the "accountability" of social systems and institutions. What evidence is there that any type of change initiative is having its desired effects?

Conceptual models emerged at both the population and the program level. At the population-level, the "results-based accountability" approach has gained favor with many public agencies and foundations nationwide, and especially in California. But there are only a handful of examples of the fruition of this model; many implementation attempts have derailed under political or bureaucratic pressure. Others are underway, but slow to generate compelling evidence of the results they seek.

At the program level, a significant innovation in evaluation methodology has taken hold, and, in some cases, picked up where results-based accountability left off. *Outcomes-based evaluation* asks programs to articulate clearly and concisely the measurable changes in people's lives that are reasonably expected to occur as a result of their interventions. This simple question provides a solid foundation for building the kinds of tools that will allow programs, and the evaluation field in general, to close the accountability gap, and, moreover, to generate the level and quantity of data that are the field's promise.

Institutional funders ranging from the United Way to Congress now mandate outcome research of grantees' programs. Beyond simply research, these organizations work to implement their findings, feeding information back into their contracting and technical assistance protocols, as well as, ultimately, their granting decisions. While outcomes-based evaluation is a relatively new practice, it is a powerful methodology that has the potential to make evaluation *both* more useful to program staff, and more meaningful and enlightening for program funders.

The History and Context of the 2001 DYCF Evaluation

In January of 1991, voters in San Francisco led the country in establishing a Children's Fund that secured funding for children and youth services. Since 1991, DCYF has granted up to $20 million a year to local community-based organizations (CBOs) for services for children, youth, and their families. These grants have supported existing programs and, in many cases, led to the creation of new ones. In less than 10 years, the percentage of San Francisco children

served by Children's Fund dollars has risen from 7% to 70% [2]. Early evaluation studies of funded programs focused primarily on small-scale qualitative inquiries. Since the inception of the Children's Fund, there has not been a comprehensive evaluation of the outcomes or effectiveness of DCYF-funded community-based programs.

The Children's Amendment was reauthorized in November of 2000 by an overwhelming majority of San Francisco voters. This measure, now entitled Proposition D, introduced a new focus on program evaluation as a central component of the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families. In the late spring of 2000, DCYF sought to design a comprehensive evaluation model for all of its funded programs, and conduct a pilot implementation of the model in order to gather information on program outcomes. It was expected that this information would serve as the baseline for comparison for future evaluations, now required every three years under Proposition D.

The Department wanted an evaluation design that would be relevant and useful to each funded CBO, as well as analyze the overall outcomes for participants of the Children's Fund. DCYF's vision was to measure individual CBO outcomes in conjunction with system-wide outcomes. This reflects a current perspective within the evaluation field - the ongoing assessment of client outcomes within a broader context of system-wide objectives. DCYF was interested in measuring individual-level client outcomes at the CBO level and aggregating these outcomes up to the DCYF system-wide level.

Two common types of evaluation are **outcome** and **process** evaluations. Outcome evaluations measure the achievement of program objectives, typically based on client change. Process evaluations examine the mechanisms of service delivery and the administrative structure that supports the service delivery.[3] In many cases, both types of evaluations are used to comprehensively evaluate a program. For this particular evaluation, DCYF commissioned an outcomes-based evaluation model.

The Purpose and Scope of the DCYF Evaluation

Alice O'Connor has suggested a framework for understanding evaluation programs in three ways: as a general form of "social learning," as an impact assessment of a particular program's efficacy, and as an informed and idea-generating method of "policy learning."[4] Regardless of the form of evaluation, these elements typically exist.

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[2] Harder and Company Community Research. June 2002. *Making a Difference for San Francisco's Children: The First Nine Years of The Children's Amendment*

[3] Gabor, Unrau, and Ginnell, Jr. 1998. *Evaluation for Social Workers*. Allyn & Bacon: Needham Heights, MA

[4] O'Connor, Alice. 1995. *Evaluating Comprehensive Community Initiatives: A View from History.* New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives. Aspen Institute: Washington, DC

In addition to process and outcome evaluations, there are need assessments, cost-benefit analyses, and consumer satisfaction evaluations. These evaluation types are distinct, but not mutually exclusive, and it is common for an organization to implement several types of evaluations.

For the DCYF evaluation there were two underlying goals throughout the entire process: (1) identifying, articulating, and measuring specific, attainable program outcomes, and (2) building the capacity of the individual organization to continue evaluation activities independently, and communicate findings to the larger community.

The first year of the DCYF evaluation contains the components of understanding evaluation specified by Alice O'Conner: as a general method of learning about the social contexts in San Francisco, as an understanding of DCYF's impact, and as a policy learning tool– a way to inform future policy decisions.

DCYF decided to implement the most comprehensive evaluation possible within an 18-month time span, commissioning JMPT Consulting to take on this project. DCYF integrated a three-pronged approach to evaluation, including:

?? Outcomes-based evaluation

?? Strategic planning

?? Data tools to continually inform decision-making

By combining its evaluation, strategic planning, and technology practices into a tripartite effort, DCYF felt the Children's Trust would substantially contribute to San Francisco as one of the best cities in the country in which to raise children. [5]

The explicit goal of DCYF both in providing services and conducting an evaluation was to help San Francisco realize the vision of the Quality of Life Benchmarks adopted by the City's Board of Supervisors and Mayor.

Specifically, the benchmarks included:

1. *Our city's children and youth are healthy*

2. *Our city's children and youth are ready to learn and are succeeding in school*

3. *Our city's children and youth live in safe, supported families and safe, successful, supported communities*

4. *Our city's children and youth contribute to the growth, development and vitality of San Francisco*[6]

Furthermore, DCYF was interested in answering the questions:

?? What are the types of programs funded?

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[5] The advocacy group Zero Population Growth named San Francisco the fifth most "kid-friendly" city in America for its slow growth, air quality, and low infant mortality rate.

[6] San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families website, http://www.dcyf.org

?? What are the types of services delivered?

?? What are the characteristics of youth who are receiving these services?

?? Are funded programs reaching their intended objectives and goals?

?? Are these programs in unison contributing to the four benchmarks established by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Mayor?

Outcomes-Based Evaluation

Outcome evaluations are based on the premise that success can be measured. “Success” is defined according to the program's measurements and outcomes. It is crucial that the stakeholders and staff agree on the definition and operationalization of success for the evaluated program. A vague or ill-fitting definition of the measurements and outcomes can present challenges in evaluating a program.

The Results-Based Accountability (RBA) model pioneered by Mark Friedman of the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute provides for the development of program “performance measures,” distinct from population-level “indicators.” This RBA model posits that program-level evaluations should be designed with a larger city, county, or statewide results-based planning effort in mind. In this case, the citywide San Francisco Children's Fund supports children and youth throughout the city through a variety of methods, all of which should derive meaning and work in conjunction with a citywide framework. Compatibility between the local program's efforts and the citywide planning and policy efforts is critical to the success of both. The outcome evaluation commissioned by DCYF followed this structure, encompassing several levels of analysis, including clients, neighborhoods, organizations, areas of focus and DCYF benchmarks.

The services provided must directly link to the program's measurements and outcomes. A CBO may provide very useful and popular services, but unless the services are closely aligned with the program's objectives, measuring outcomes may prove difficult. As will be described later, evaluators worked with the individual CBOs to finalize a logic model detailing the connections between goals, activities, units of service, and client outcomes.

The DCYF citywide evaluation was modeled after current “cluster evaluations,” in which a funder examines the results of a set of grantees in relationship to each other, and/or to a particular geographical area. The innovation of the DCYF model is the standardization of outcomes and performance measures across programs, and the creation of a “menu” for evaluation, from which programs can chose areas in which they will hold themselves accountable.

Three Integrated Evaluation Methodologies

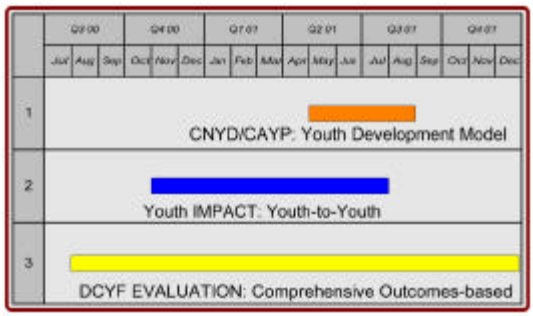
DCYF integrated three evaluation models in this year's project design.

?? A theoretically-based youth development evaluation model.

?? A teen youth-to-youth evaluation design and implementation.

?? A standard outcomes-based evaluation, comprehensive in scope, including all CBOs funded for the 2000-2001 year.

These models were conducted simultaneously, with the outcomes-based evaluation assessing all funded programs, and the youth development model and the youth-to-youth model each sampling a subset of programs. An overview of each program is provided.



(See **Appendix A, Timeline of 2000-2001 Evaluation** for a full timeline of all three integrated methodologies.)

Theoretically-Based Youth Development Evaluation Model

Gambone and Connell's youth development model has helped move the field of children and family services from a “deficit” model to an “asset-based” model. In a deficit-based model of services, youth programs focus on “fixing” problems - such as teen pregnancy, school dropout, drug addiction, and joblessness. Alternatively, asset-based youth programs provide opportunities and skills to help children prepare for future decisions and challenges. The asset-based model assumes that young people are their own best resource.

Gambone and Connell’s youth development framework has been operationalized in a youth-friendly survey, used in this year’s evaluation. Survey questions assess five developmental experiences, including:

?? relationship building

?? safety

?? youth participation

?? skill building

?? community involvement

As a brief overview of the youth development evaluation process, facilitated by the Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD), CBOs were identified that fit the criteria of the CNYD evaluation model. The criteria included the need for the program to be delivered

primarily in the English language in regular meetings groups of 20 or more. Evaluators were trained to deliver the CNYD survey and multiple-choice surveys were administered to CBOs in a read-aloud format. Data were collected and tabulated. CNYD's findings are available in the Findings chapter. The CNYD evaluation provides insight into how San Francisco youth programs fit into a nationally recognized model.

Youth-to-Youth Program Evaluation

The youth-to-youth program evaluation, led by Youth in Focus (formerly Community Lore), was an effort by DCYF and its partners to engage youth in a self-led and self-implemented evaluation of CBOs. Youth in Focus works to strengthen youth-serving organizations and enhance youth leadership capacity. Youth in Focus also works to build the capacity of the youth-serving institutions, like DCYF, in integrating and sustaining youth leadership. Through a program named Youth IMPACT, the teenage participants identified key research questions, developed research instruments, collected data using focus groups, observations, and questionnaires, analyzed data, produced the final product, and, presented their findings. Youth IMPACT's findings are available in a special section of the Findings chapter.

DCYF's Standardized Outcomes-Based Evaluation

Out of a wide range of outcomes that CBOs reported, a standardized, yet customizable template was developed around six main focus areas:

- ?? Academic Support
- ?? Youth Enrichment
- ?? Early Childhood
- ?? Health and Wellness
- ?? Family Support
- ?? Youth Employment

These six focus areas were aligned to the four previously-established DCYF benchmarks.

The standardized, yet customizable template was chosen so that DCYF could look at funded programs as a whole and identify key concepts and core issues that affected programs citywide. The standardization was helpful in allowing DCYF to discover trends in the programming and in the data from all enrichment programs across the board. The customizable aspect of the template allowed programs that truly did not align with one of the standardized performance measures to write in their own.

The next chapter will provide an overview of the research design, logic models, and methodology of this evaluation.

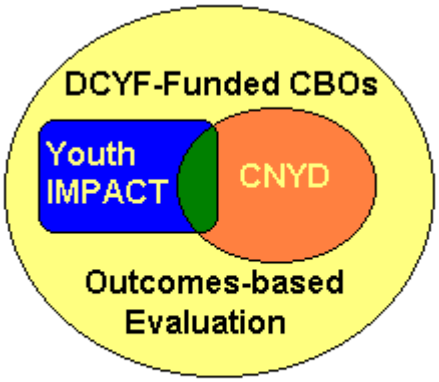
Methodology

A Menu of Outcomes

METHODOLOGY: A MENU OF OUTCOMES

This chapter reviews the seven key steps in designing and implementing the DCYF standardized outcomes-based evaluation, organized and managed by JMPT Consulting.

In August of 2000, The Department of Children, Youth and Their Families contracted with JMPT Consulting to conduct a large-scale evaluation of all the community-based organizations currently supported by the San Francisco Children's Fund, created by a charter amendment passed as Proposition J in 1991, and renewed as Proposition D in 2000. This project marks the first comprehensive program evaluation process undertaken by the Fund's administration during its 10-year life span. This year's evaluation efforts contributed to learning and capacity-building in results-based accountability at the individual CBO level and to a broader strategic planning process for the Children's Fund. Not only will the data that has been collected be used to document the positive impact that the Children's Fund has made on the communities of San Francisco, but it will be used to outline service delivery challenges and gaps in programming. The information gleaned from this evaluation will serve as baseline data for up-coming comprehensive evaluations required by the Proposition D legislation every three years.



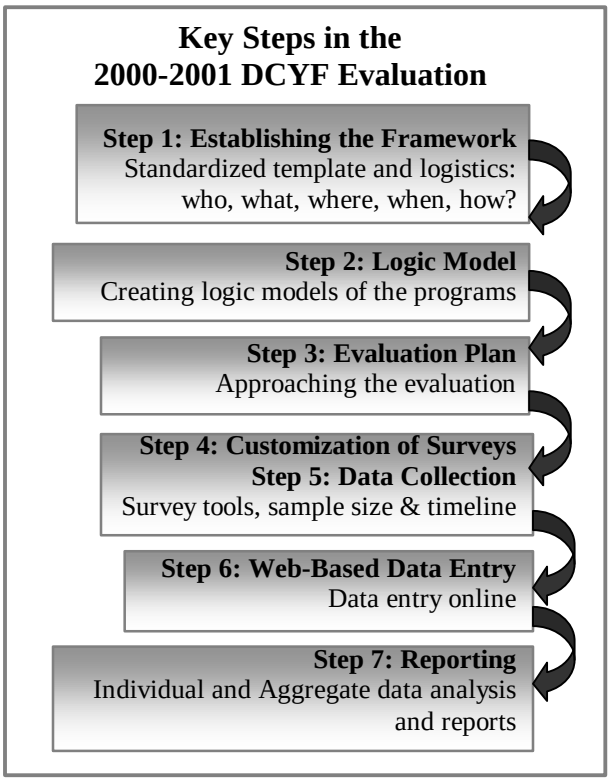
Comprehensive Evaluation 2000-2001

Under the auspices and organization of DCYF, three main organizations worked to create the comprehensive evaluation of the Children's Fund set of services. As reviewed in the previous chapter, there are three parts of the 2000-2001 DCYF comprehensive evaluation: the Theoretically Based Evaluation Model (CNYD's contribution), the Youth-to-Youth Evaluation Model (Youth IMPACT's contribution with Youth in Focus's guidance), and the Standardized Outcomes-Based Evaluation (JMPT Consulting's contribution). While this methodology section deals strictly with JMPT's work, CNYD, Youth IMPACT/Youth In Focus methodologies and analyses are included in this report in the Findings chapter.

A Standardized, Outcomes-Based Evaluation Approach

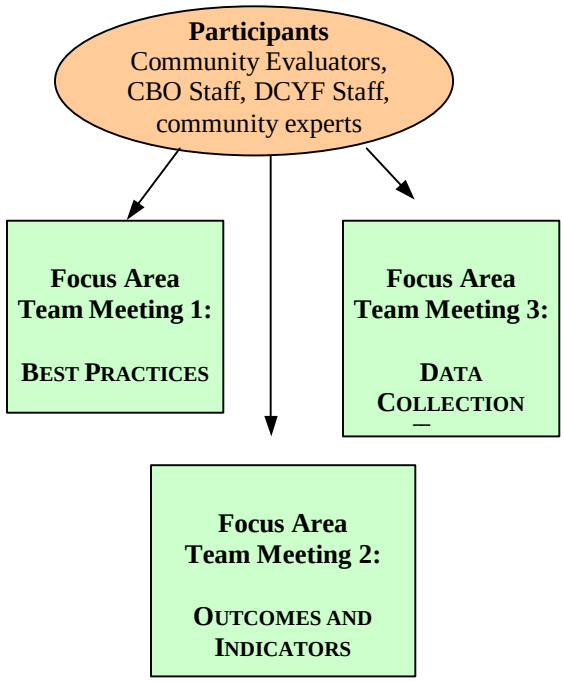
The central goals of this year's evaluation were to:

- ?? Define and develop an evaluation model that can be used on an ongoing basis
- ?? Establish a baseline data set for programs.



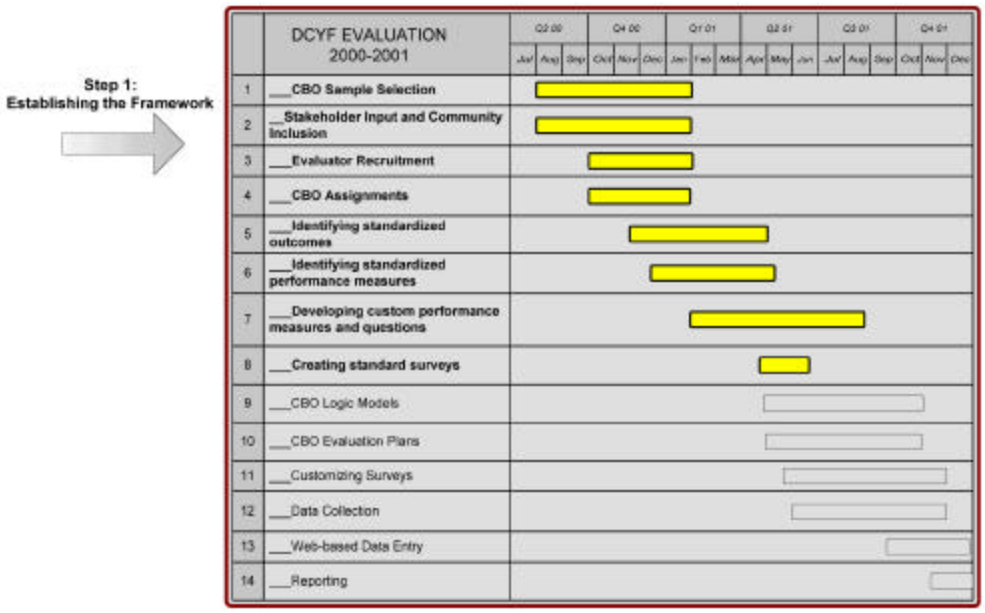
A main priority for this evaluation was the development of a meaningful model and functional tools for DCYF, CBOs and the community.

Research has documented that evaluations created "in a vacuum" or without the input of stakeholders can be ineffective and less applicable to the programs being evaluated. Unless funders, participants and staff provide feedback and suggestions during the development of the evaluation, it is unlikely they will "buy into" the process. It is also less likely that participants and funders will use the evaluation data to its' fullest potential when there is scant involvement of the stakeholders early in the process.



Thus, input was needed from stakeholders to define and develop the evaluation model, in order to develop a realistic and useful evaluation model. The evaluation design therefore began with an intense development period that included a process of community/stakeholder input.

CBOs, individual community evaluators, DCYF staff and community experts in the field were consulted and asked to participate in the development of all evaluation tools. The creation of the outcomes-based evaluation template, in particular, included input from a number of different documented resources, small forums and "Focus Area Teams" comprised of CBO staff, recruited community evaluators, DCYF staff and several experts from the community.



Step 1: Establishing the Framework for the DCYF Evaluation

CBO Sample Selection

Initially, the evaluation design included all DCYF-funded programs. As the evaluation progressed, however, DCYF and JMPT decided there were approximately 40 programs that should be eliminated from the evaluation for a variety of reasons. The excluded programs fell into one or more of the following categories:

?? Beacon Centers, already undergoing an evaluation designed by Public Private Ventures (P/PV) and Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD)

?? Newly created Beacon sites, because it was expected that the start-up activities would be fairly taxing on the staff

?? Programs under the organizational umbrella of other city/county departments or agencies

?? Programs facing organizational or staffing difficulties during the 2000/2001 time frame

?? Several programs serving a “sensitive” youth population, bringing legal/ethical concerns regarding confidentiality. In future years it will be important to incorporate appropriate methods and tools for these types of programs

The CBO sample included organizations receiving full or partial funding by DCYF.

Most organizations funded by DCYF receive support from several different sources, including other city government departments/agencies. In some cases, a lead agency acts as a fiscal agent by receiving funds and subcontracting service delivery to another agency. In these cases, the subcontractor was included in the evaluation.

In the case of programs with multiple satellite sites, an evaluation was conducted of all the DCFY-funded sites. In the cases where programs had a large number of satellite locations (usually with six or more), a sample of sites was selected for participation. Samples were required to represent the overall program, i.e., if the program has five school-based sites and five neighborhood-based sites, two of each type of site would be selected.

Stakeholder Input and Community Inclusion: Focus Area Team Meetings

A series of Focus Area Team Meetings were held to train evaluators and providers in outcomes-based evaluation. Working groups were organized around the following focus areas: academic support, youth enrichment, early childhood, health and wellness, family support, and youth employment. Attendance was mandatory for all community evaluators. Each participant selected the focus area team that most closely matched his or her expertise. An open invitation for these meetings was sent to all program staff following their introduction to the evaluation process and framework at a general DCYF quarterly meeting in late November 2000. DCYF staff as well as numerous invited guests and "experts" in the field also participated alongside the community evaluators, CBO provider staff, and interested community members.

The small work groups contributed to the development of all the evaluation tools. The process included three meeting sessions covering "Best Practices" in the each of the direct services, the development of a standard set of program outcomes, the writing of program performance measures and the creation of data collection tools.

Evaluator Recruitment

The hiring of additional staff also occurred around this time in the evaluation process. JMPT Consulting decided that each CBO would need an individual evaluator to assist in the development, implementation, and analysis of evaluation activities. Each evaluator was to be assigned two to four programs, depending on the size of the programs. The role of the evaluator was to assist in creating a logic model, filter information from JMPT and DCYF to the CBO, lead the survey development and collect data. Their final tasks were to include entering the data via a website and write a report for each CBO they were assigned. Evaluators were to be hired on a contract basis.

Evaluators were recruited through a number of different channels, web-based non-profit postings, the DCYF website and a number of different formal and informal networks throughout the Bay Area. Efforts were made to recruit a diverse group of evaluators representative of the youth served by DCYF-funded organizations. Primary criteria included direct experience in evaluation or work within the non-profit community in San Francisco and/or Bay Area.

Evaluators were selected by JMPT from the applicant pool after reviewing their qualifications and assessing each potential evaluator's experience in particular areas of work representing the "Focus Areas" of the evaluation. The goal was not only to ensure that qualified individuals were hired, but that the evaluators understood the work of their assigned programs. For this reason, the majority of individuals selected had direct experience working in community-based organizations. Approximately a third of the selected evaluators had direct evaluation experience. Large portions of those hired were independent consultants.

CBO Assignments

Evaluators were assigned to CBOs using the following criteria:

- ?? Evaluators' expressed interest in particular program focus areas (academic support, youth enrichment, early childhood, health and wellness, family support, or youth employment)
- ?? Evaluator's work experience and educational background
- ?? Program activities categorized by focus area
- ?? Program size (used to determine workload)
- ?? Important factors affecting programs (organizational difficulties, etc.)

Because they had intimate knowledge of programs, DCYF program officer staff were consulted when making final evaluator CBO assignments. Evaluators were assigned between two and four programs depending on program size. Evaluators, on average, had an average of three programs as part of their caseload for the entire evaluation.

The Standardized Evaluation Template: Identifying Outcomes

The evaluation model presented by JMPT Consulting (incorporating methods designed by The Evaluation Forum) was characterized by an outcomes-based approach. This means that instead of asking organizations to count service units or report on how money was spent, programs were asked to select a few client outcomes (from a standard "menu" of client outcomes) to represent the core changes in participants' behavior, attitudes, knowledge or practices that their services were intending to affect. Focusing on core client outcomes encourages a shift in program planning *towards* realistic, attainable results (i.e. maintain or improve the mental health of children and youth) and *away from* more intangible, long-term targets (i.e. violence prevention). On the funding side, this type of focus helps to clarify funders' expectations and to create a culture of honest partnership with grantees.

The process for the identification of a standardized set of program outcomes began with a list of outcomes articulated by the organizations in their 2000-2001 DCYF work plans. DCYF-funded CBOs were required to report their progress on these self-decided program outcomes on a quarterly basis to DCYF. Outcome statements on this list ranged from precise

outcomes to very general statements. Many were well-written outcomes adequately depicting the work of programs. However, some outcomes instead reflected data collection methods or broad community goals as outcome statements. Whereas broad community goals can direct a program, they are impossible for programs to be held accountable to achieving.

The outcomes on the list clustered around six key areas:

- ?? Academic Support
- ?? Youth Enrichment
- ?? Early Childhood
- ?? Health and Wellness
- ?? Family Support
- ?? Youth Employment

The Standardized Evaluation Template: Identifying Performance Measures

JMPT drafted a preliminary list of performance measures following the completion of the standardized set of program outcomes. Often termed "indicators," these measures are specific statements describing how outcomes are being met. Measures were based on current literature in the field as well as data taken from program work plans. After a training session on outcomes and performance measures, draft lists of each were submitted to the appropriate focus area working groups. Using their direct knowledge of the focus areas and programs being evaluated, each team was asked to review the drafted outcomes and performance measures for their focus area, making changes, suggestions and additions to the preliminary list. This second list was then reviewed, refined and finalized by JMPT staff, who narrowed down outcomes for each specific area into a standardized template. Each outcome on the standardized template was linked to a set of performance measures. Created by a combination of public process and staff research, these performance measures ranged from purely quantitative measures:

% of children and youth seeing an on-site counselor

to more qualitative measures:

% of children and youth who report a sense of belonging at school.

Because outcomes were attached to concrete performance measures, the evaluation could begin to assess the impact of CBO services, rather than the CBOs process or units of activity.

This process created a standardized template of outcomes and performance measures. A major challenge during this stage was identifying outcomes and measurements that reflected the diversity of all 104 programs being evaluated, while ensuring that data could be compared across organizations. Thus, the participation and feedback of CBOs in developing outcomes and performance measures was instrumental during this phase.

Approximately one to six performance measures were identified per outcome. Performance measures represented the variety of programmatic approaches to

achieving the corresponding outcome, creating a menu of options for programs to choose from. An example of an outcome and performance measure is:

> **Outcome:** *Increase children and youths' understanding and valuation of other cultures.*
>
> **Performance Measure 1:** *% of children and youth that report knowledge of cultures other than their own*
>
> **Performance Measure 2:** *% of children and youth who report having friends of another cultural group*

The menu of options can act as a guide to programs in providing different measurement options representing various programmatic approaches to one outcome.

> ***Outcome****: Maintain or improve the mental health of children and youth.*
>
> ***Performance Measure 1:*** *Percent of children and youth referred to counseling*
>
> ***Performance Measure 2:*** *Percent of children and youth seeing on-site counselor*
>
> ***Performance Measure 3:*** *Percent of children and youth participating in peer support groups*

Programs selecting this outcome during the logic modeling process could choose only Performance Measure 2 if they offered on-site counseling services, or they might select Performance Measures 1 and 3 if they provided each of these services.

Developing Custom Performance Measures and Questions

A unique aspect of the Evaluation Template is its ability to be customized. Not only can programs select the outcomes, performance measures and data collection tools from the standardized template, but they can also, with the assistance of their evaluator, generate new measurement tools when the list of standardized tools is not sufficient.

DCYF and JMPT Consulting recognized that not all programs would be fully captured by the template. In these cases, programs had the opportunity to create program specific performance measures and survey questions and, in extreme cases, customized outcomes. While not recommended, once all other options were exhausted, program staff and their evaluator embarked on a joint process of developing customized measures and tools. Having been trained in creating outcomes, performance measures and data collection tools, evaluators were equipped to lead program staff through the process of generating program specific tools. Final approval rested with JMPT.

Creating the Standardized Surveys

Once performance measures were selected, JMPT created standard questions for each performance measure. All programs choosing a specific performance measure were to be surveyed with the same survey question.

For example, all computer-related CBO programs engaging in computer and Internet-related activities could choose a desired outcome "Increase children and youths' computer literacy." It was decided

that a performance measure for this outcome would be "% of children and youth who know how to access the Internet." All CBO programs choosing this performance measure would use the survey question "Have you ever used the Internet or world wide web?"

Desired Outcome: Academic Support: 5) Increase children and youths' computer literacy
Performance Measure
5.1 % of children and youth who know how to access the Internet
Data Collection Tool
Youth Survey
Question
"Have you ever used the Internet or world wide web? (YES or NO).

The model allowed degrees of customization to meet each unique CBO program, while the standardized measures across multiple programs allowed DCYF to look at trends among the children, youth, parents and staff participating in DCYF funded services. The standardized approach was useful in implementing a citywide outcome evaluation and reinforced the idea of one CBO taking responsibility for a small piece of the work in conjunction with others taking on different pieces of that same work.

Survey questions were initially drafted during the final Focus Area team meeting. Working groups were equipped with sample survey questions and final lists of performance measures. The group developed draft questions for all survey and interview tools. Tools from various evaluations were consulted in the development phase of all surveys. **(Appendix B: List of Surveys)**.

JMPT put questions into a final format after editing. Survey tools originally included three youth surveys, a parent survey, a staff survey, an employer survey and a home caregiver survey.

Youth Surveys

The original set of youth surveys included the following: a youth survey for participants ages 5-7, a youth survey for participants ages 8-12, and a youth survey for Middle/High School. The age ranges were structured to accommodate common age ranges among program participants as well as appropriate youth development stages.

During 2000-2001, much of the youth survey was dedicated to the collection of baseline demographic data. Prior to this evaluation, minimal data existed on youth served by these organizations. This broad-based evaluation provided an opportunity to create a holistic picture of youth participants based on data. Therefore, questions included in every survey included general demographic information (age, race/ ethnicity, gender, sexuality, location, etc.), family status, educational status, and participation in school and community-based programs.

Surveys were field-tested prior to dissemination. It was at this time that the Youth Survey ages 5-7 was dropped from the evaluation plan. The Youth Survey ages 5-7 proved to be inappropriate during pre-test for the represented age group. Therefore, it was eliminated from the data collection process. In the future, data from this age group could be collected via a focus group, a shorter survey or through a staff survey.

Members of Youth IMPACT screened the Middle/High School Youth Survey, determining the approximate length of the survey and commenting on particular questions and language used. These

suggestions were reflected in the final draft of this youth survey.

Parent Survey

The parent surveys collected baseline demographic data from the parents and their perception of their children's experience with the CBO.

Staff Surveys

Staff data originally included a staff survey and staff interview tool. However, through the development process, surveys were deemed an adequate source for collection of all necessary data, lessening the data collection burden on both program staff and evaluators. Evaluators did conduct interviews with program staff during logic model development, prior to data collection.

The staff survey relied on archival data from various program sources, such as data files and case records. Staff members were asked to describe various activities and programs. The staff survey supplemented participant survey responses.

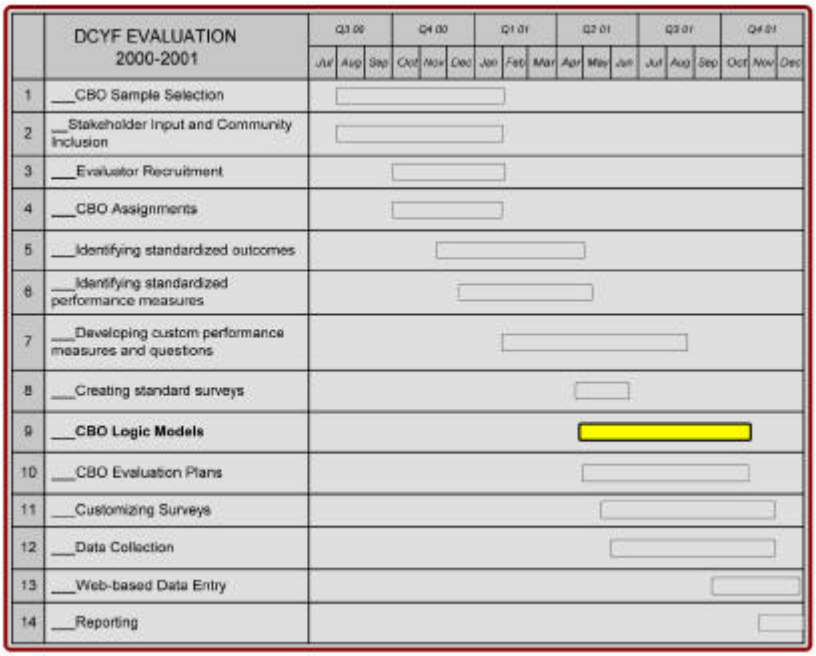
Employer and Home Caregiver Surveys

To thoroughly evaluate the chosen outcomes, input was also needed from employees and home caregivers (staff employees offering programs out of their home, e.g. at home-based child care centers).

The employer survey was used for youth employment programs. Brief in scope, this survey asked critical questions about youth participants, including an assessment of the employment skills of participants.

The home caregiver survey was used for programs providing services and training to in-home child-caregivers. The home caregiver survey focused on outcomes of child participants and tailored to the unique structure of home-based childcare programs.

Step 2:
Logic Models



Step 2: Logic Models

Jane Reisman and Judith Clegg of the Evaluation Forum stress that a common struggle occurs when programs have one set of explicit goals in mind when they conceptualize formal evaluation, and an entirely different set of implicit goals in mind when they carry out their work with communities. In order to understand what change a community-based organization *actually produces*, rather than what they believe is expected of their organization, this evaluation began with the collection of program "logic models."

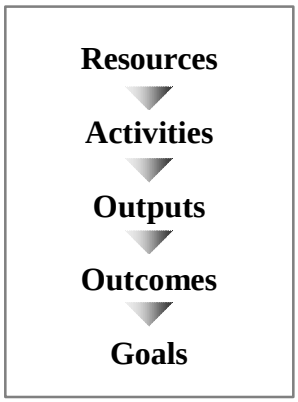
The logic modeling process primarily took place during an in-person site visit by an evaluator; however, some evaluators successfully completed the logic modeling with remote sites through the Web.

Creating the Logic Models

The logic models, as developed by the evaluator and CBO staff, outlined the relationships between a program's resources, activities, outputs, and outcomes. The conversations that led to an adequate logic model, whether virtual or in-person, were often the best doorway into identifying program best practices and key outcomes. Often, powerful indigenous theories of change were revealed when program staff members were set free from their assumptions about "what the funder wants," for example, the only worthwhile or measurable change is whether or not their kids' grades and scores went up.

One of the main advantages to defining specific client outcomes are that programs are focused on manageable, measurable outcomes among clients rather than changes within the broader community or population. Additionally, this type of focus

helps to clarify funders' expectations and to create a culture of honest partnership with grantees. The logic models were necessary to establish the DCYF comprehensive evaluation, but the process of creating a logic model could also be useful to a CBO for internal development and strategy.



Evaluators worked closely with program staff, often a program director or the executive director, to develop the logic model. The flow of the logic model from resources to goals forced programs to think about each step of the program.

Resources documented not only the physical space/location of programs, but also program participants, program staff and other funding sources.

Activities were described with minimum detail and often were categorized according to type of activity, (e.g. "outreach and training" or "youth services and parent services)". In the case of year round programs, activities were broken into "school-year program and summer program." The development of such categories was helpful in understanding the full scope of the program work and also helped to facilitate the development of program surveys and the data collection process.

The next step was the documenting of activity "dosage" or **outputs**. The goal was to list, as detailed as possible, the units of services received. "How many, how often, over what duration?" Each activity therefore had to have an output depicting how many times a day/month/year such activity was provided, the number of hours, and the number of participants:

> *- Two one hour art workshops, twice a week for fifteen children.*

Evaluators then worked with programs to identify realistic and attainable **outcomes** and to select them from the "menu" of items on the standardized template. With the template as their guide, program staff and evaluators selected appropriate outcomes for each activity from the standardized template.

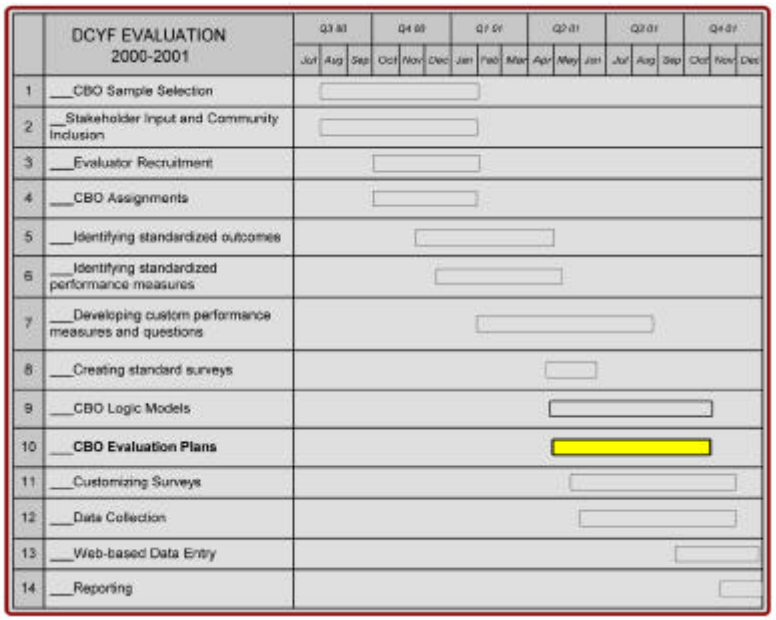
Many programs in the past often selected outcomes that were both unrealistic and unattainable, confusing broad community goals with program-specific outcomes. It was important therefore for evaluators to assist programs in distinguishing between the two. For example, if programs are providing homework and study skills assistance 45 minutes a day, five days a week, they are not realistically able to hold themselves accountable to "increasing school grades or test scores" because they have no impact on the numerous factors that determine school grades and test scores, school setting, hours devoted in the classroom for preparation, etc. What they can hold themselves accountable to is "Increasing Children and Youth's homework completion."

This was perhaps the most challenging portion of the evaluation process. In almost every case, programs had already identified a set of outcomes for their

program. In working through the logic model, programs did not want to lose their specificity through selecting standardized outcomes that often did not reflect their unique qualities. Many wanted to include their own often carefully developed outcomes.

The final step of the logic model was to place the work of the program in the context of DCYF's broader community **goals**. Outcomes and performance measures were aligned to the overall DCYF citywide benchmarks: Children and youth are healthy, Children and youth are ready to learn and are succeeding in school, Children and youth live in safe, supported families and safe, successful, supported communities, and Children and youth contribute to the growth, development and vitality of San Francisco.

Step 3:
Evaluation Plan



Step 3: Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plans assisted in formalizing the evaluation process. This tool documented the surveys used, individuals to be included in the data collection, and the frequency of data collection.

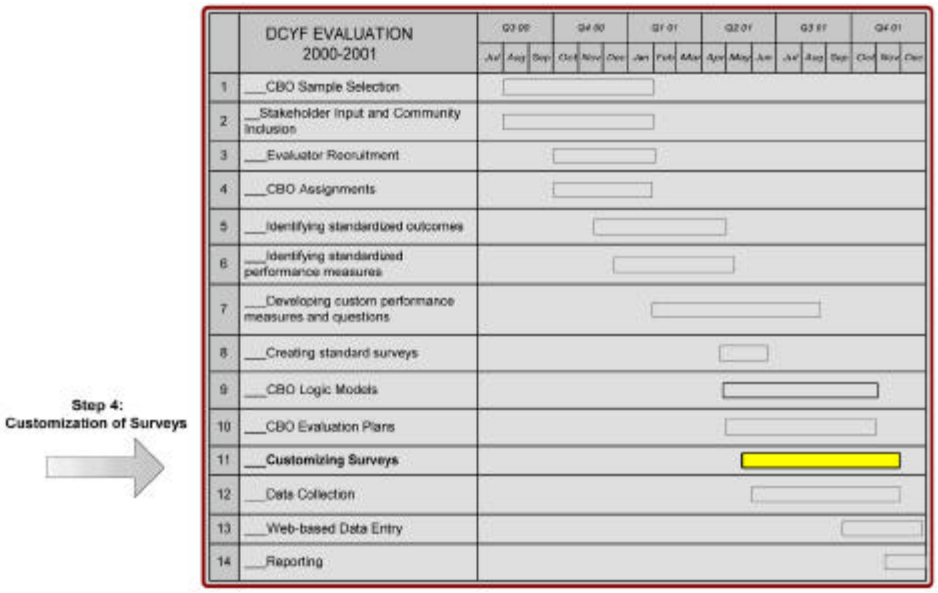
Creating the Evaluation Plans

Working from information gathered in the Logic Model, programs were required to select program specific measures per outcome from the standardized evaluation template. Programs were asked to select realistic performance measures that reflected program activities. Sets of complementary performance measures were selected per outcome, for example:

- ?? the number of homework assignments completed in a homework assistance/tutoring session
- ?? % of homework assignments completed in a homework assistance/tutoring session.

In certain cases, when no measures appropriately matched the activities of program, evaluators and CBO staff created program-specific performance measures. However, the development of specific measures was kept to a minimum so that data would be comparable across various programs.

Chosen performance measures dictated specific survey questions. The standardized template also included data collection guidelines broken down by school year, year- round and summers-only programs. Each program planned to survey once; however, year-round programs planned to survey twice (during the school year and the summer).

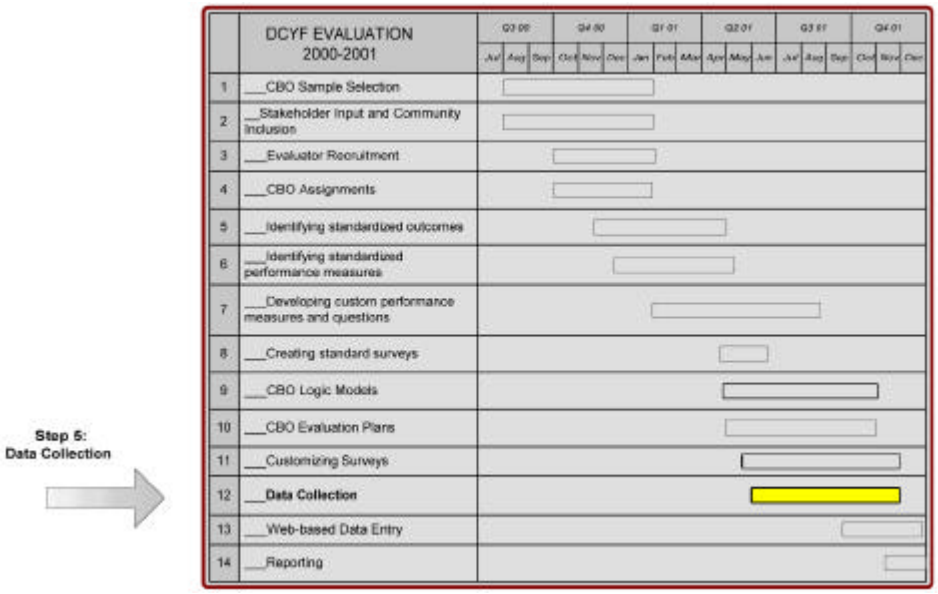


Step 4: Customization of Surveys

After the completion of the Logic Model, the Evaluation Plan and the sampling strategies, requests for surveys were submitted to JMPT by the individual CBOs. Surveys were then customized "in-house" by JMPT staff to ensure survey integrity.

Programs were asked to submit requests for surveys that included the names of the organization and the various programs included in the evaluation as well as the number of different surveys needed. In some cases, only one of the organization's programs was being evaluated, however, in a multi-service agency, various programs were included in the overall evaluation. Therefore, surveys had to reflect the diversity of programs. In the simplest of cases where different students attended different programs, several surveys were created. In the case of most multi-service agencies, youth participate in more than one program. In order to account for this overlap, one survey was developed and youth were asked to select the programs that they participated in at the organization.

Surveys were further customized according to performance measures selected. The evaluation plan was the primary guide during this portion of survey customization. The standardized survey (comprised of all survey questions for all performance measures) was tailored for each program to reflect their selected performance measures.



Step 5: Data Collection

Earlier steps in the evaluation included gathering stakeholder input, defining and operationalizing objectives and measurable outcomes. After completing survey development, the next step was data collection. This section will review how data were collected and when the data were collected.

Identifying the data collection strategies and sample size

Data collection methods included 1) informal interviews with program staff during the development of program Logic Models and 2) survey tools used for the measurement of outcomes and performance measures. This section will review the creation of surveys and the collection of data.

Four typologies were generated to assist evaluators in developing their specific data collection strategies. **(See Appendix C: Survey Sampling Strategies)** These typologies provided evaluators with a standard set of guidelines for developing their plan. The typology was based on four different categories of programs under which all evaluated programs could be classified.

The four typologies are as follows:

1. *School-year-only programs*
2. *Summer-only programs*
3. *Both School year and summer programs: Programming may differ slightly between the school year and summer. There may be an overlap in youth served in the summer versus the school year, however new youth often enter during the summer.*

4. *Year-Round programs - Programming remains essentially the same throughout the year.* [7]

The evaluation design required the use of a stratified sampling method in order to obtain the most accurate sample for data collection, separating participants into groups of similar individuals and selecting a random sample from each group. [8]

Incorporated into the evaluation template were standard sampling guidelines for the various data collection of each survey type. These standard sampling guidelines were taken from the work of the Evaluation Forum. These standards are as follows:

Participants	Youth Survey	Parent Survey	Staff Survey
0-50 participants - 100% of participants surveyed	0-50 youth - 100% youth	0-50 parents - 100% parents	75%-100% of staff
50-100 participants - 75-100% of participants surveyed	50-100 youth - 75-100% youth	50-100 parents - 75-100% parents	
100-200 participants - 50-75% of participants surveyed	100-200 youth - 50-75% youth	100-200 parents - 50-75% parents	
200+ participants - 25-50% of participants	200+ youth - 25-50% youth	200+ parents - 25-50% parents	

Once the number of participants to be surveyed was identified using the above guidelines, evaluators then grouped program participants (parents and youth) into the following: 1) school-year-only participants, 2) summer-only-participants, and 3) both school-year and summer participants. Within these groupings, participants were then organized according to age, gender and race/ ethnicity followed by limited English proficiency, youth with disabilities, etc. A random sample was then drawn from each of these groups to obtain the required amount of participants for the sample.

Survey Administration Plan

The next step was the identification of a data collection plan. Based on information from program staff, evaluators assessed the days when the most youth were present, the time of day when most youth attended, and whether there were any major events during which the survey could be administered. Evaluators also asked whether the survey would need to be translated or read aloud to the youth.

As part of the administration plan, evaluators identified dates and times for survey administration, the appropriate survey distribution process, translated

[7] NOTE: While Beacon programs technically were categorized as school year and summer programs, due to the relationship with subcontracting agencies, they necessitated a specific set of data collection guidelines.

[8] Reisman, Jane, Ph.D. and Judith Clegg, MSW. *Outcomes for Success: 2000 Edition.* Evaluation Forum (p.49).

surveys (if needed), and dates for survey collection.

Survey Administration Plan ***Sample Evaluator Notes***	
School Year	**Summer**
Best Days to Survey: Mon., Wed. **Best Time to Survey:** 2:30-5pm **Major Events:** End of Year Talent Show **Languages:** Cantonese, Spanish	**Best Days to Survey:** Any Weekday **Best Time to Survey:** 9am-4pm **Major Events:** Camping Trip **Languages:** Cantonese, Spanish
School Year Survey Schedule	**Summer Survey Schedule**
Survey/Date: JMPT Focus Area Survey: Monday, April 23rd Youth Development Survey: Wednesday, May 2nd **Distribution Process:** Program staff will distribute surveys to youth participating in various activities. Staff will be present to answer questions youth might have. **Collection Date:** May 4th	**Survey/Date:** JMPT Focus Area Survey:Camping Trip, Aug. 3rd Youth Development Survey: Thursday, July 26th **Distribution Process:** Program coordinator will administer the JMPT Focus Area Survey to entire group of youth prior to leaving for the camping trip. **Collection Date:** August 6th

Evaluators entered the field to collect data from April 2001 to October 2001. Dates for data collection were chosen in order to capture the maximum number of program participants. The majority of programs took place during the school year; thus, a large number of programs were surveyed during the months of April and May. The month of August was also a dense month, with participants being surveyed at the close of summer programs. A small number of school year programs only take place during the early fall months (particularly sports programs), therefore some data collection for these programs occurred during this time.

The types of services rendered at each site were different, as well as the way in which services were provided to program participants. Therefore, tailored methods were needed for data collection. JMPT and CBOs had to confront issues of confidentiality, the need to maintain the integrity of mentor/youth relationships, drop-in programs, one time visit centers and talklines, and multi-service agencies. The result was three general structures that were followed during data collection for all types of surveys. They are as follows:

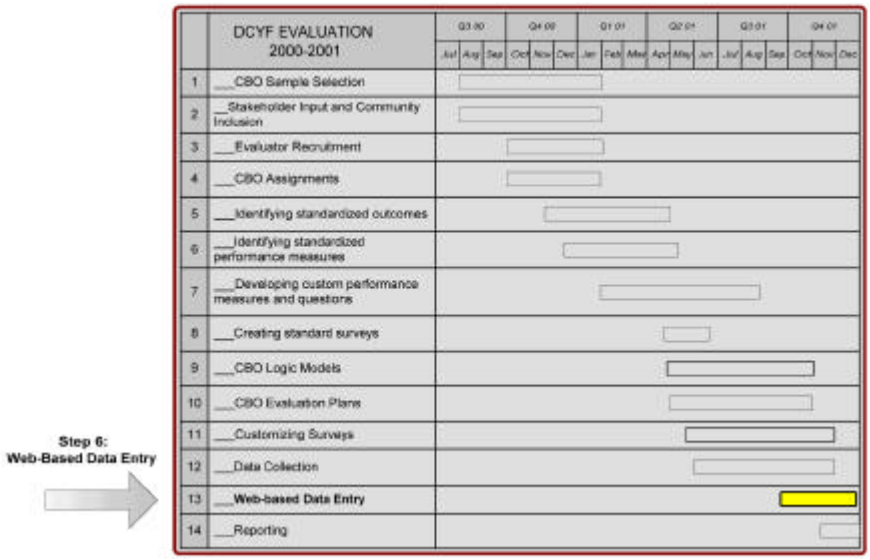
?? **Standard Group Dissemination:** Surveys were administered to a large group of program participants at one point in time. The survey administrator either read survey questions aloud (in the case of youth participants) or the administrator was present in order to answer any clarification questions.

?? **Distribution via Mail:** Surveys were mailed directly to the participants. This was primarily used in

mentoring or counseling programs. This method was used to maintain a certain degree of confidentiality, and was also necessary for programs that did not meet in groups with its program participants.

?? **Hand Outs to Program Participants:** Drop-in centers in particular used this method for survey dissemination. Surveys were either handed out to program participants at various intervals or surveys were kept in a common area and program participants were directed to complete the survey.

Evaluators and program staff assisted in data collection either alone or collaboratively, depending on their time resources and constraints.

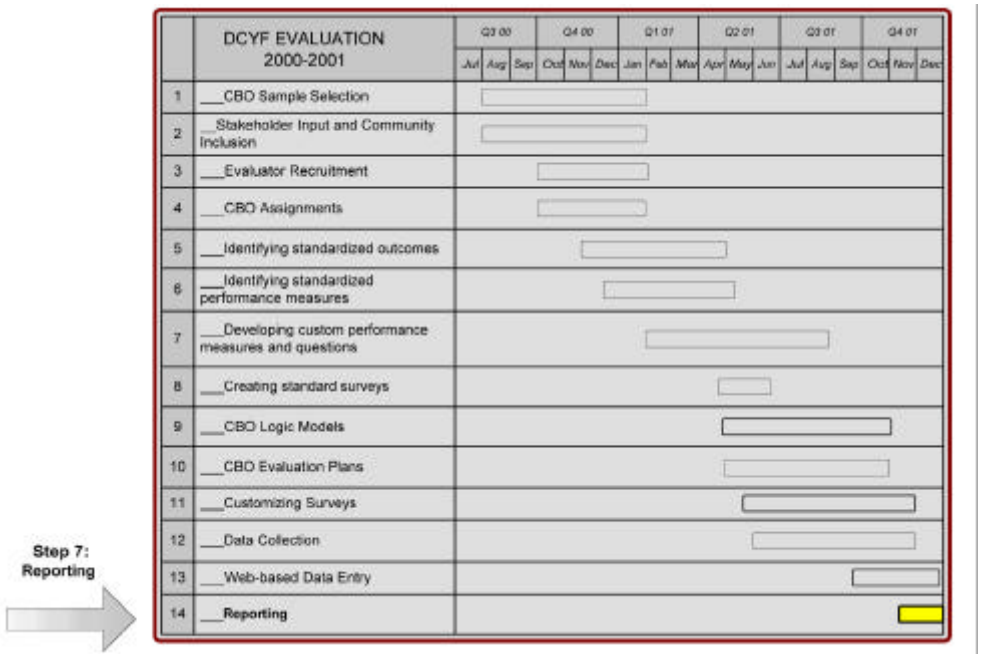


Step 6: Web-based Data Entry

Surveys were placed on an online system constructed by JMPT staff. Once a customized survey was created for an evaluator, staff inputted these surveys to an online, password-protected web site. Data entry on completed surveys was then inputted by a combination of community evaluators, JMPT staff, and data entry technicians. The web-based system facilitated the process of data entry for the evaluator and also made data more accessible for data analysis.

All survey data, including Youth IMPACT surveys, were entered using the web-based data entry system. Each evaluator entered the system via a secured site on the world wide web. Evaluators could access the system any computer with internet access. Security was protected via a log-in ID and password. Evaluators accessed the set of customized surveys for their programs to input each of their surveys one at a time.

Each completed survey was entered individually. Individual surveys could be identified, and data across programs could also be identified and aggregated. The system saved each survey as it was entered to lessen the chance that large amounts of data would be lost if a connection to the system was lost. Overall, the web-based system automated the data entry process.



Step 7: Reporting

Data Analysis for Individual CBO Reports

Evaluators' final responsibility included writing individual reports for each of the programs that they had evaluated. Evaluators were asked to write a project narrative, findings and discussion of the data from their programs, and recommendations for future evaluation for this baseline report for each CBO.

Due to the delays in data collection and the availability of data analysis tools, some of the final work was taken over by JMPT staff. A web-based tool provided graphs and charts of findings. Reports included discussion of the data. For those organizations whose survey return was 30 or more, the data provided valuable and meaningful results. For other organizations, the data were not as valid; however, the potential of these tools is invaluable.

Aggregate Queries and Final Reports

The findings were organized within a results-based accountability framework, aligning outcomes and performance measures within each benchmark area. Then, approximately twenty to thirty overall statistical questions (queries) were developed for each benchmark, organized by outcomes and performance measures. Also of particular interest was the variance in outcomes by "dosage" a term referring to the breadth (participant's variety of exposure to programs) and depth (participant's time spent at a particular program). Additional statistical questions were created to understand effects of dosage on program impacts. JMPT staff took responsibility for writing a final synthesized report.

Challenges to Implementing the Methodology

This section addresses some of the challenges associated with this year's evaluation methodology.

The central goals of the 2000-2001 DCYF evaluation were

- Define and develop an evaluation model that can be used on an ongoing basis
- Establish a baseline data set for programs

These goals were met; however, the implementation process revealed significant challenges that must be addressed as the evaluation model develops.

In general, many organizations found the logic model to be a highly useful tool. The process of articulating activities and core outcomes helped staff to clarify the program and their own roles, and also aided staff to distinguish what was core about their program and what was important implicitly, but not yet institutionalized as a central program offering. Logic models also proved very useful in training new staff, or managing a transition from one administration to another. The logic models completed for the DCYF evaluation can be used to complete grant proposals or communicate with other funders as well.

This year's survey tools, on the other hand, were judged to be too long and in some respects, inadequate for certain populations. Program staff agrees that there is a need for ready-made tools, such as youth surveys, so staff members don't have to spend the time creating them. Survey revision should be a major part of future evaluation work conducted by DCYF. Although some programs already had rigorous evaluation processes in place, most organizations welcomed the opportunity to learn about evaluation and build their internal capacity to self-assess.

Another challenge in designing the evaluation was the timing of the evaluation activities and service delivery. In most cases, services were already being delivered when the evaluation was implemented. This is a common challenge in evaluation research. In an ideal setting, the goals, objectives, measurable and services are established into a comprehensive picture, reflecting the funder's priorities, *before* service delivery begins. The entire picture of goals and objectives is painted by the funder and/or evaluator and then disassembled into puzzle pieces or specific services. In this case, the puzzle pieces or individual services were chosen and then attempted to merge into one comprehensive picture. This challenge became especially evident when the goals and objectives of a few CBOs did not clearly fit into the established benchmarks. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of services was still adequately evaluated, but it is more challenging to create a comprehensive evaluation in this sequence of events.

Data collection was a challenge in many program sites. While many programs see a large-number of youth over the course of a year, only a very small number are available for data collection at any given

point. Citywide, the data were sufficient to trace patterns and trends in the DCYF participants; however, the data from many individual organizations turned out to be too small to generalize response patterns or trends.

Factors Contributing to Low Numbers of Completed Surveys

Survey administration happened late in the school year, when many programs had no time for "extra" activities, or in the summer, when many programs have fewer participants.

Evaluators noted that program staff overestimated (sometimes drastically) the numbers of children and youth who would be available to take a survey on a given day. Evaluators would show up at programs with 100 surveys to be filled out, and leave with 20 completed. Subsequent attempts to collect the balance of the surveys would fail to yield even half of the amount originally expected. The exact cause of the frequent disparity between expected and actual numbers of youth present at CBOs is unclear. Future evaluations must determine a method of reaching as many program participants as possible.

Challenges arose in the staffing of the evaluation, most notably a high turnover rate for the independent evaluators. The independent evaluators were contracted to work on 2 to 4 programs each for a relatively small stipend (versus an hourly rate) over the course of 18 months. Many of them dropped out of the evaluator pool in favor of full-time or better-compensated work. Not only did this create a situation in which work had to be repeated, but also a close working relationship between evaluator and program staff was not realized. Future evaluations should identify means of hiring fewer evaluators for full-time positions or training existing program staff to collect data as a routine part of intake or case closure activities.

Future Research Design

The goal of the first year of this evaluation process was to establish the model, collect pilot data, and determine a process for refining the evaluation for future implementation.

Challenges to this year's DCYF evaluation process must be addressed in future years for continuous improvement to the model and the methodology. See the Recommendations chapter for more detailed suggestions.

DCYF plans to refine the standard outcomes template in the coming year, and revisit the evaluation process in the 2003-2004 grant cycle.

Findings

Key Areas of Analysis

FINDINGS

This chapter presents information about the number of CBOs completing data collection and the distribution of CBOs choosing each outcome measure. The chapter next presents demographic findings from the survey. Main findings are reviewed according to the four benchmarks established by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and Mayor, and concludes with a review of outcomes based on demographic groups.

Sample Size

Of the 104 DYCF-funded CBOs in 2000-2001 that participated in the evaluation, 94 are included in this analysis. Surveys were not developed for some CBOs[9] because of a variety of issues, including timing and staffing challenges.

Distribution of Outcomes Chosen by CBOs

As described in the previous chapter, the performance measures articulated by stakeholders in the evaluation development clustered around six major areas. The outcomes chosen by CBOs are listed below.[10] CBOs could overlap in the number of outcomes they chose per focus area, thus, the distributions do not add to 100%.

- **Enrichment** Outcomes were chosen by 72% of CBOs
- **Academic Support** Outcomes were chosen by 54% of CBOs
- **Health and Wellness** Outcomes were chosen by 35% of CBOs
- **Youth Employment** Outcomes were chosen by 30% of CBOs
- **Family Support** Outcomes were chosen by 27% of CBOs
- **Early Childhood** Outcomes were chosen by 21% of CBOs

Similarly, a CBO could overlap in choosing performance measures within an outcome. For example, a CBO could choose two of four performance measures to document their efforts in Youth Employment. The comprehensive data of

[9] Surveys were not developed for the Filipino American Council of San Francisco, Korean American Women Artist & Writers Association, SAGE Project, Inc. San Francisco Educational Services, Inc., San Francisco Neighbors Resource Center, San Francisco Study Center, Inc., and Third Baptist Church.

[10] Based on 94 CBOs completing evaluation activities.

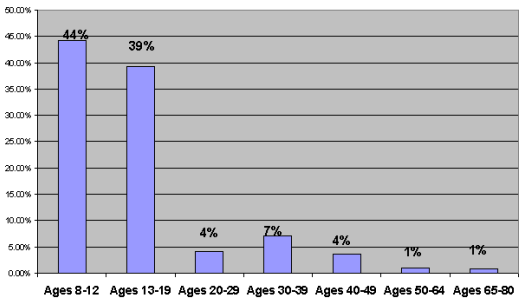
the overall counts of performance measures are located in the Appendix **(Appendix D: Total Counts for Outcomes, Appendix E: Tables of Chosen Outcomes, Appendix F: Total Counts for Individual Performance Measures)**

Demographic Composition of Sample

This section of the analysis will present various demographics of individuals in the sample. It is important to note that the data for age, race/ ethnicity, and neighborhoods include survey data for children, youth, parents and staff.

Age

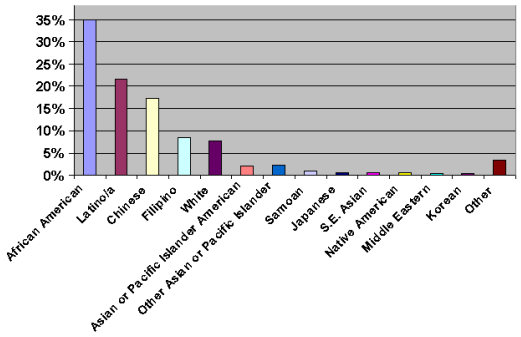
Table 3.1 Age Distribution of Respondents at Intake (N=1944)



The majority of individuals completing surveys were under the age of 20. There were slightly more respondents who were ages 8-12 than 13-19 years old. Less than 20 percent of the respondents are over the age of 19. This is somewhat expected, as most of the benchmarks and services target children and youth. Most of the respondents over the age of 19 are likely to be staff or parents.

Race/ Ethnicity

Table 3.2 Self-Reported Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Respondents (N=1678)



For race/ ethnicity, respondents were able to identify with one group or multiple groups. It was preferable to include this option, but analysis of the multi-racial/ethnic categories was challenging. For those respondents choosing only race/ ethnicity, 35 percent of respondents were African American, followed by 22 percent of respondents identifying themselves as Latino/a. 17 percent of respondents who identified one race/ ethnicity were Chinese. Filipinos and White respondents each make up 8 percent of this group. Asian or Pacific Islander American comprise 2 percent of these respondents, as are other Asian or Pacific Islanders. Six other groups are also represented among this group, as demonstrated in the following table.

Table 3.3 Distribution of Respondents Identifying More than One Race/Ethnic Category (N=336)

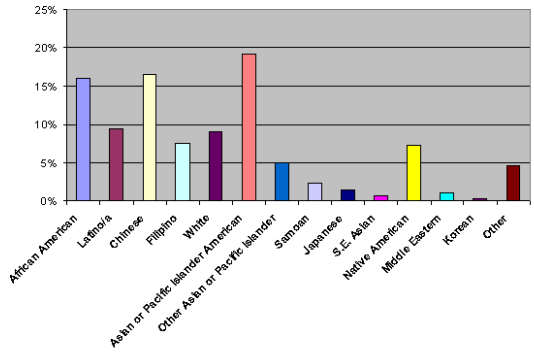
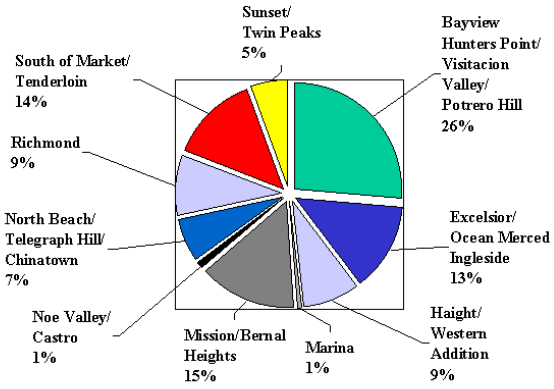


Table 3.2 does not include multi-racial respondents. 336 respondents identified with more than one racial group, as seen in Table 3.3. Respondents could check as many race/ ethnic categories as they desired, thus, there is overlap in the categories. The data in Table 3.3 represent the percentage of these respondents who identified with two or more of the race/ ethnic groups. For example, 16 percent of multi-racial respondents said part of their race/ ethnicity was African American. Measuring race and ethnicity is an important and complicated task, as recently experienced by the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau. While the measures in Table 3.2 and 3.3 are sufficient, improvements of these measures are still needed. Despite these limitations, the data reveal a very diverse sample. In many ways, the sample reflects the diversity found in the city of San Francisco.

Neighborhoods

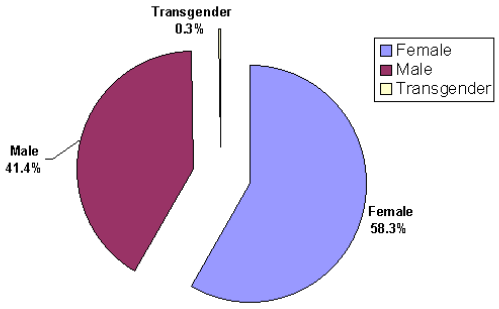
Table 3.4 Distribution of Respondents by Neighborhood



Over one-quarter of respondents reside in the Bayview Hunters Point/Visitacion Valley/Potrero Hill neighborhoods. Roughly 15 percent of respondents are from the Mission/Bernal Heights area, as well as from the South of Market/Tenderloin areas. The fourth most represented neighborhood was the Excelsior/Ocean Merced Ingleside areas. Less than ten percent of the sample was derived from the Haight/Western Addition neighborhoods and another nine percent originate in the Richmond area.

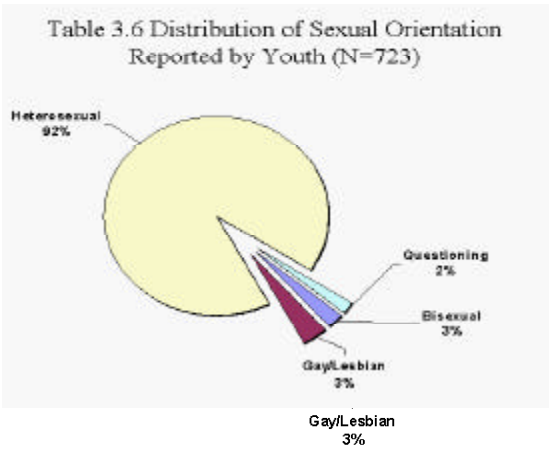
Demographics of Youth Participants

Table 3.5 Gender Distribution of Youth (N=1982)



The next two tables consist only of data for youth respondents ages 12-18. Table 3.5 depicts the gender distribution of youth respondents. Nearly 60 percent of youth participants were female and around 40 percent were male. 6 youth respondents identified themselves as transgender.

Table 3.6 reflects the self-reported sexual orientation of youth respondents. Of the 723 youth respondents, the overwhelming majority identified themselves as heterosexual. 3 percent said they were gay/lesbian and other 3 percent identified themselves as bisexual. 2 percent of respondents said they were unsure of their sexuality at this point.



These demographics begin to paint the picture of the individuals served during the 2000-2001 year. Although the benchmark findings will reveal a more in-depth and interesting story about the 2000-2001 DCYF funded CBOs; the demographics indicate who actually received services. The next section of this chapter is organized around the four benchmark areas. At the end of the chapter, additional analyses are provided stratifying outcomes by demographic groups.

Basic Benchmark Findings

Each benchmark is defined precisely by specific outcomes and performance measures. The findings are based on the data from the performance measures captured through survey data. The findings are grouped along key research questions, primarily to assist in reviewing the data.

Findings for Benchmark 1: Children and Youth are Healthy

DCYF established Benchmark One to highlight the importance of basic health issues in the development of young people. CBOs were contracted by DCYF to provide direct health and wellness-related services to children and youth. Services included one-on-one psychological counseling, peer support groups, health education, and prevention programs targeting teens at risk for pregnancy and/or drug abuse. As reviewed in Chapter 2, stakeholders engaged in a collaborative process, led by JMPT, to establish outcomes. The outcomes clustered into six focus areas and throughout this chapter outcomes and performance measures will reference one of the focus areas. For example, stakeholders decided that when targeting Benchmark 1, the outcomes should be derived from both the Health and Wellness and the Enrichment areas of focus. The following are the outcomes chosen for Benchmark 1:

?? Maintain or improve the mental health of children and youth[*] *Health and Wellness Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' knowledge of healthy behaviors* *Health and Wellness Outcome*

?? Increase the capacity of children and youth to promote their own health through their decisions and behaviors* *Health and Wellness Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' access to primary and preventive health care services, including immunizations, well baby care, check-ups, etc. *Health and Wellness Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' awareness of pregnancy prevention and STD-prevention services *Health and Wellness Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' utilization of pregnancy prevention and STD-prevention services *Health and Wellness Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' competencies in team or individual athletics *Enrichment Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' sense of belonging to a caring community* *Enrichment Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' participation in

[*] Represents the most chosen outcomes in the two area(s) of focus.

physical exercise*
Enrichment Outcome

Most of the outcomes from the Health and Wellness focus area list were not chosen as often by CBOs compared to outcomes from other focus areas, such as Enrichment or Academic Support. Of the CBOs who did choose these focus areas, three Health and Wellness program outcomes and two Enrichment Outcomes were consistently chosen. These are marked with an asterisk in the above list.

The most popular program outcomes provide insight into the health-related goals and objectives of the CBOs. Using the performance measures associated with the above three Health and Wellness outcomes, the analysis of Benchmark One outcomes is organized around the following three research questions:

Benchmark 1, Research Question 1: ***Are youth taking good care of themselves?***

Benchmark 1, Research Question 2: ***Do children and youth feel emotionally supported by their CBOs?***

Benchmark 1, Research Question 3: ***Are youth exposed to and engaging in risky behaviors?***

The remainder of this section will be organized around each research question, the related performance measures, and corresponding survey data.

Benchmark 1, Research Question 1: Are youth taking good care of themselves?

Some aspects of health are genetic or randomly occurring, but other aspects of health and well-being are within an individual's control. An individual's health is related to their individual choices, ranging from nutrition, exercise, and risky behaviors. Indeed, social and medical services typically include corrective services, but preventive services are documented as more cost-effective and useful. Thus, the earlier children acknowledge the power and responsibility they have over their own health and choices, the more likely they are to have better health and wellness outcomes. The first major research question focuses on data that elucidates youth attitudes and behaviors as indications of the choices they are making about their physical and mental health.

To answer the question "are youth taking good care of themselves?" the following performance measures were analyzed:

?? Health and Wellness 6.4: Percent of children and youth who report that they have thought about living a healthier lifestyle.

?? Health and Wellness 6.6: Percent of children and youth who are able to recognize healthy decision-making in others.

?? Health and Wellness 4.4: Percent of children and youth reporting a manageable level of stress.

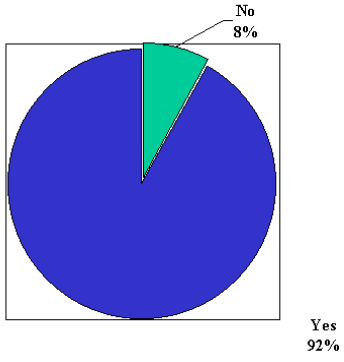
?? Health and Wellness 4.5: Percent of children and youth who can identify resources and strategies to cope with stress.

?? Enrichment 10.1: Percent of children and youth who report exercising vigorously 3 or more times per week.

See the Appendix for a comprehensive list of all the outcomes and performance measures **(Appendix G, Standardized Template).**

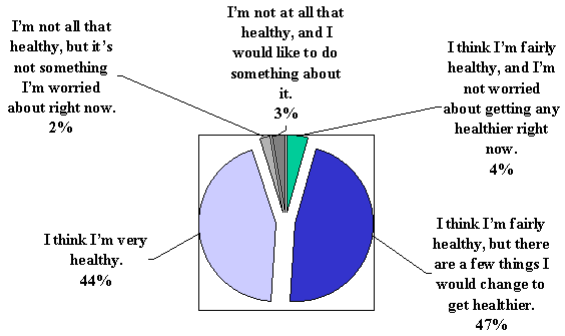
Youth Perception of Their Own Health and Desire to Live a Healthier Lifestyle

Table 3.7 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Do you think you are healthy right now?



Youth participants were first asked to describe their health (Table 3.7) A general question, "Do you think you are healthy right now?" was posed to children participants ages 8 to 12. An overwhelmingly majority of the 138 children answered "yes," that they thought they were healthy when surveyed.

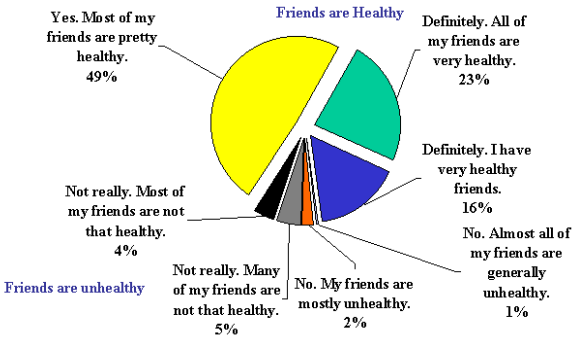
Table 3.8 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: How healthy do you think you are right now?



Youth ages 13-18 were asked the same question, but were offered a broader range of answers. To the survey question, "How healthy do you think you are right now?" youth indicated a more complex perception of their general health. Out of a total of 143 respondents, nearly half of youth reported they were "very healthy". Roughly another half of teen respondents said they were fairly healthy but wanted to improve their health. This finding is encouraging because it indicates that almost half of youth respondents who identify as healthy also have a desire and interest in changing aspects of their health. Less than 5 percent of respondents said they were not healthy and would like to change. Around 4 percent of respondents said they were not worried about their health because they were fairly healthy now. Two percent of respondents said they were not that healthy, but they were not particularly concerned at this point.

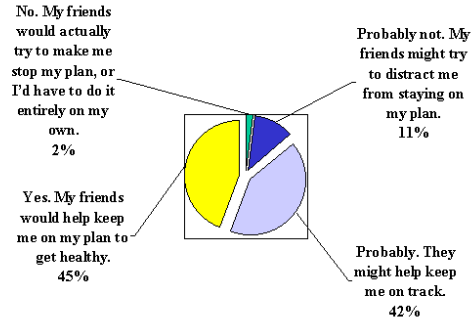
Youth Assessment of Friends' Health and Support

Table 3.9 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Do you think your friends are healthy?



The first question for this benchmark examined youth's perception of their own health and desired changes. As research has documented, peer pressure is an important influence during a youth's development. The second question examines youth respondent's assessment of his or her friends' health and behavior. Youth were asked, "Do you think your friends are healthy?" Of the 303 youth respondents, the overwhelming majority responded that their friends were healthy. Around 10 percent felt that some, most, or all of their friends were unhealthy. This distribution nearly mirrors the youth's assessment of their health. In sum, most of the youth respondents would describe themselves and their friends as healthy. While this is interesting data, later findings in this chapter reveal more variation in "healthy" behaviors.

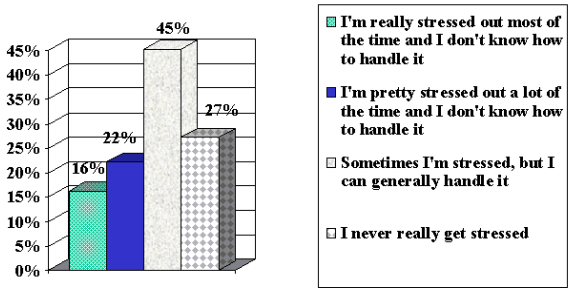
Table 3.10 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Do you think your friends would help you out if you decided to work on getting more healthy?



Youth respondents were next asked how their friends would respond if the respondent decided to make healthy behavior changes. When asked, "Do you think your friends would help you out if you decide to work on getting more healthy," 44 percent of youth responded positively, that their friends be supportive of their plans. Around another 40 percent weren't as certain, responding that their friends might support their efforts to become healthier. Twelve percent said their friends might dissuade the respondent from changing his or her behavior. A small percent felt their friends would definitely undermine efforts to become healthy.

Youths' Attitude towards Stress and Ability to Manage Stress

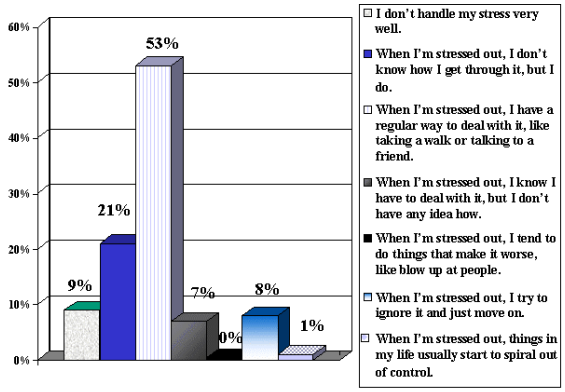
Table 3.11 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: How often do you feel stressed?



Stress is a common aspect in the lives of urban children and youth. A recent publication by Girlsource, a DCYF-funded project, indicated that stress is a number one concern of teenage girls in San Francisco. Youth can learn to manage their stress, and CBOs play a role in helping youth learn stress management skills. Stakeholders were interested in both the current state of youth stress and the ability of youth to handle stress.

Youth were asked, "How often do you feel stressed?" One-third of respondents said they rarely experience stress. The remaining two-thirds of respondents said they experience stress, although there were differences in the frequency of stress and coping mechanisms. 16 percent of respondents described an extremes situation, experiencing consistent stress and an inability to handle their stress. Another 22 percent said they experienced stress "a lot of the time" and "sometimes" didn't know how to handle it. The majority of respondents said they sometimes experienced stress but were able to cope.

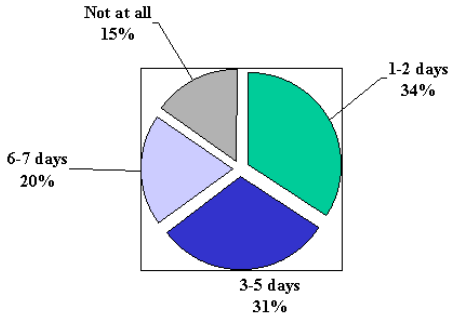
Table 3.12 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: How do youth handle their stress?



Youth were prodded to think about their coping mechanisms in another question. Youth were asked, "How do you handle your stress?" and given several coping mechanisms as responses. Over half of youth described a specific mechanism to respond to stress, such as walking or talking with a friend. Another 21 percent said they could not articulate their specific coping mechanism, but were aware that they did, in fact, cope. Around 7 percent of respondents said they were cognizant that they had to face the stressful situation, but were not sure how to handle it. Nine percent of respondents said they do not handle stress well, and one percent of respondents said they have unhealthy coping mechanisms. Around ten percent of respondents said they do not face their stressful situations.

Exercise Patterns of Youth

Table 3.13 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Exercise doesn't only mean playing sports. In the past week, how many days did you do any exercise for at least 20 minutes?



Exercise is both an illness-preventing activity and stress-coping mechanism. In the previous question, as many as half of youth respondents said they use exercise to combat stress. Youth were asked to describe their exercise patterns over the last week. Most respondents reported at least 1-2 days of exercise in the previous week. The majority reported exercising 1-2 days for at least 20 minutes. Roughly a third of respondents reported they exercised 3-5 days in the previous week, while around 20 percent of respondents said they exercised nearly every day in the previous week. 15 percent of respondents said were inactive during the previous week.

Benchmark 1, Research Question 2: Do children and youth feel emotionally supported by their CBOs?

Two key concepts emerged as critical in the mental health of youth during conversations with stakeholders:

1. *Relationships that support sharing*
2. *Structures that reduce stress*

In order to determine the extent to which children and youth feel emotionally supported by their CBOs, survey data were used from the following performance measures:

?? Enrichment 7.1: Percent of children and youth who identify a peer at the CBO that they would turn to in a time of need

?? Enrichment 7.2: Percent of children and youth who would identify an adult at the CBO who they would turn to in a time of need

?? Enrichment 7.3: Percent of children and youth who believe that a friend in trouble could turn to CBO staff for help

?? Health and Wellness 4.4: Percent of children and youth reporting a manageable level of stress.

?? Health and Wellness 4.5: Percent of children and youth who can identify resources and strategies to cope with stress.

Sense of Trust between Youth and CBO Community

Four survey questions examined whether trusting relationships were developed at CBO programs between participants, adults and their peers. Used as a proxy for the above Enrichment measures, youth were specifically asked

1) Who can you ask for basic help or advice?

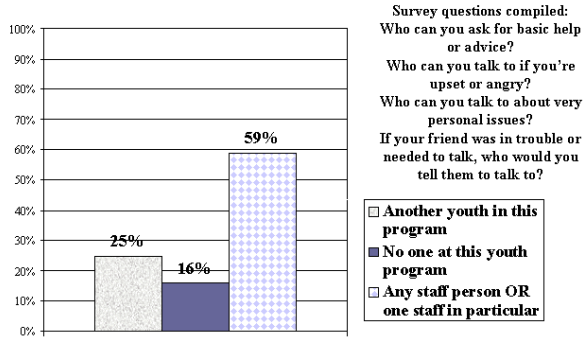
2) Who can you talk to if you're upset or angry?

3) Who can you talk to about very personal issues?

4) If your friend was in trouble or needed to talk, whom would you tell them to talk to?

There were four responses for each question: another youth in this program; any staff person at this youth program; one staff person in particular; no one at this youth program. Youth could pick more than one choice for each question. The responses were aggregated for all four of these questions to represent a composite measure of youth trust. This set of data represents respondents who selected one or more choices to each question.

Table 3.14 Distribution of Composite Measure of Youth Trust.
Question: Who do youth trust?

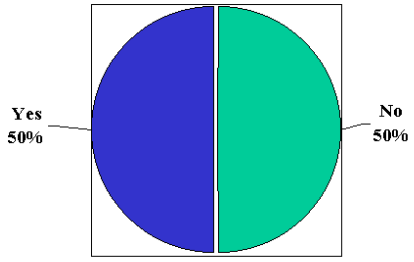


Approximately 59 percent of 700 youth indicated that they would feel comfortable talking to any staff person in their youth program or at least one staff person in particular. A quarter of respondents reported feeling comfortable talking to another youth at their program. An even smaller percentage of youth reported that there was no one at their youth program that they would felt comfortable talking to.

Among respondents who selected only one answer to each question, the data actually matched the figures above, with one exception. 35 percent of respondents said they would not talk to anyone at their youth program about very personal issues.

CBO Contribution to Reducing Youth Stress

Table 3.15 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Has this program helped you deal with your stress? (N=96)



The two Health and Wellness performance measures related to this benchmark assess whether or not CBO programs have helped youth to reduce their stress, in addition to assessing how youth manage stress.

When asked whether the CBO program helped the respondent deal with stress, respondents were nearly equally divided. Roughly half of respondents said yes, while the remaining indicated no, the program had not helped them cope with stress.

Youth were asked to select the mechanisms that helped them reduce their stress from a list of 10 choices and rank their selections in their level of helpfulness. The choices were: talking to peers, playing sports talking to staff at this program finding out what they needed to know, talking to a counselor, having a safe place to be, going on a field trip, getting help with school, doing art/music and an open-ended response category.

The most common coping mechanisms for stress included talking to peers, playing sports and talking to staff at the program. Less common mechanisms included talking to a counselor, having a safe place to be, going on a field trip and doing art/music.

The largest number of rankings of "2" included choices "playing sports," "talking to a staff at this program" and "going on a field trip."

Qualitative responses included writing, discussing it with their mother or grandmother, spending time alone, playing play station, relaxing, watching movies at the CBO and exercising. All of these responses demonstrate healthy coping behavior.

Benchmark 1, Research Question 3: Are youth exposed to and engaging in risky behaviors?

In terms of influence, peers are arguably as important to an adolescent as their parents. Measuring youths' attitudes and self-reported behaviors in decision-making will provide an assessment of the role of "peer pressure" and appropriate interventions. Additionally, the San Francisco Unified School District contracts with CDC to implement the Youth Risk Behavior Survey every two years, thus, it will be possible in the future to make interesting comparisons across the two datasets.

Data from the following performance measures were used to assess youth risk-taking behavior:

? Health and Wellness 6.2: Percent of children and youth who believe they could resist peer pressure to do something risky or unhealthy

? Health and Wellness 6.3: Percent of children and youth who report resisting peer pressure to do something risky or unhealthy

Youth Response to General Peer Pressure

Table 3.16 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Youth response to peer pressure
Survey question: If you were hanging out with your friends and they suggested something that you didn't want to do, what would happen?

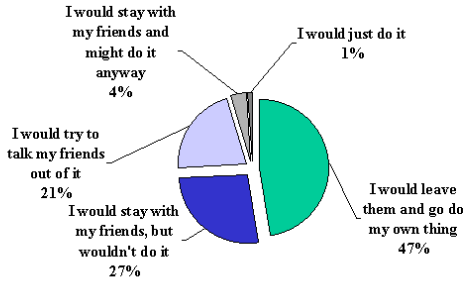


Table 3.16 summarizes how youth said they would react if something occurred they weren't comfortable with. Nearly half of youth respondents said they would leave and "go do their own thing." Just over 25 percent of respondents said they would stay with their friends, but wouldn't participate. Roughly twenty percent of respondents said they would try to persuade their friends not to continue. A small minority said they possibly or definitely participate.

Youth Reaction to Pressure to Smoke, Drink, Do Drugs and Take Other Risks

Table 3.17 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to smoke cigarettes by your friends?

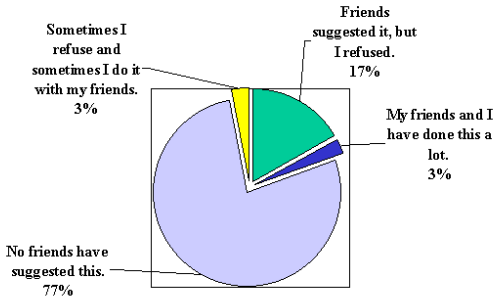


Table 3.18 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to drink alcohol by your friends?

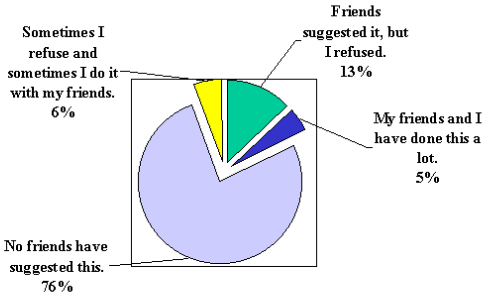
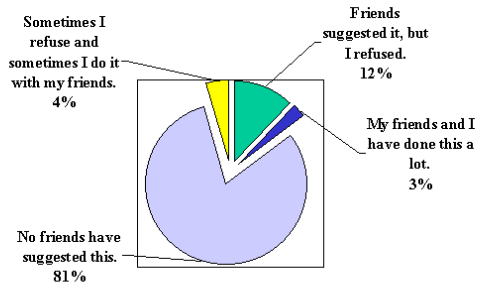
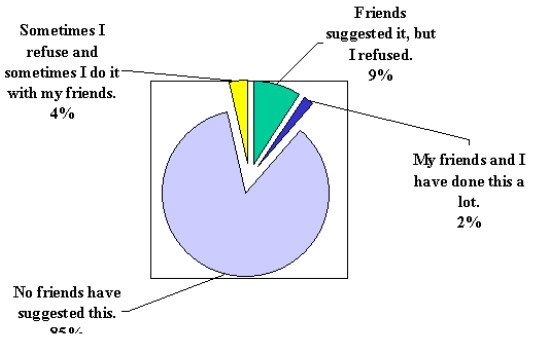


Table 3.19 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to take drugs by your friends?



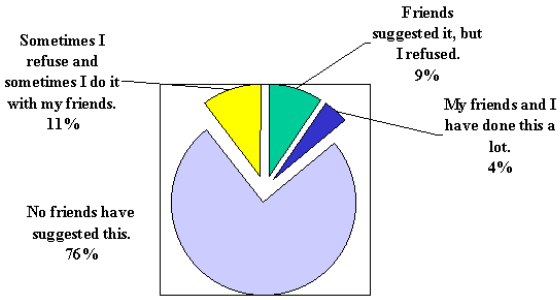
Youth were next asked a series of questions about their decisions when pressured by peers to participate in risky behaviors, such as smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, carrying weapons, and taking other risks with their health. The results were fairly consistent across the risky behavior. For all behaviors surveyed, at least three-quarters of respondents said their friends had not suggested these activities. Around seventy-five percent of respondents said that their friends had not suggested they smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, or take other health risks. At least eighty percent of respondents said their friends had never asked them to take drugs or carry weapons.

Table 3.20 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to carry weapons by your friends?



While these are encouraging numbers, there is still room for some concern. A notable portion of youth said that their friends had suggested risky behavior. Around ten percent of respondents said they were asked, but declined to take drugs, carry a weapon or take other risks. While these respondents were firm in their rejection of these activities, there were a portion of respondents who had participated. Between 3 and 5 percent of respondents said they sometimes participate in risky behaviors and other times decline.

Table 3.21 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to take other risks with your health by your friends?



With the exception of riding with someone who was drunk, between 2 and 5 percent of respondents said they had engaged in risky behaviors with their friends "a lot." This included smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, carrying a weapon, and engaging in other risky behaviors. Thus, while the majority of respondents said they resist pressure to partake in such activities, a notable portion of respondents said they participate sometimes or often.

Teen Response to Peer Pressure to Have Unprotected Sex and Ride with a Drunk Driver

Table 3.22 Distribution of Teen Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to have unprotected sex by your friends?

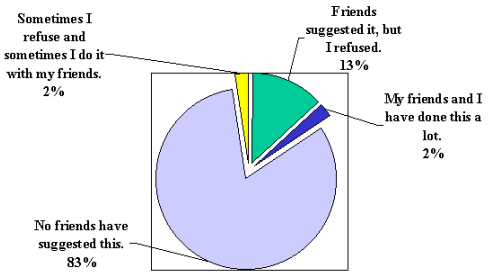
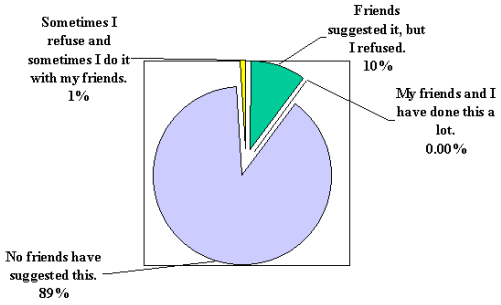


Table 3.23 Distribution of Youth Responses to Health and Wellness Measure.
Question: Have you been asked to ride with a drunk driver by your friends?



Teenage youth were asked to respond to two additional serious health risks -- having unprotected sex, and riding with a drunk driver.

The overwhelming majority of teens said they resisted pressure to engage these activities. Thirteen percent of teens said they had been pressured, but declined to have unprotected sex, compared to ten percent of teens who said they had been pressured to ride with a drunk driver. No teen respondents said they had traveled with a drunk driver, but nearly 3 percent of respondents said they had unprotected sex "a lot." This data indicates areas for future interventions. The dangers of drinking and driving appear to be countered by teens, but less for the dangers of unprotected sex.

Findings for Benchmark 2: Children and Youth are Ready to Learn and are Succeeding in School

DCYF established Benchmark Two to emphasize the importance of education as a fundamental contributor to achievement in many areas of life. Educational attainment is well documented as a predictor of future earnings and employment. In addition to formal education, exposure to culture and arts can stimulate a child's creativity and understanding of the world. Several CBOs contract with DCYF to provide assistance to youth in tutoring, mentoring, and group classes. Additionally, CBOs have supplemented the school system by providing arts and culture workshops for the young people of San Francisco. The following outcomes were chosen to indicate the readiness of children and youth:

?? Increase children and youths' attachment to school[*] *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' capacity to navigate and succeed in the school system. **Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' academic skills in reading and writing *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' academic skills in math and/or science *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' computer literacy *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' homework completion *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' English-speaking skills *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Increase parents' capacity to participate in their children's education *Academic Support Outcome*

?? Maintain and improve the social and emotional development of children ages 0 to 5* *Early Childhood Outcome*

?? Increase parents' knowledge and skills in early childhood

[*] Represents the most chosen outcomes in the two area(s) of focus.

development* *Early Childhood Outcome*

As indicated by the footnotes, most of the CBOs identified their programs and goals as targeting social and emotional progress and parental knowledge of early childhood outcomes, as well as children and youth's attachment and success in school. Using the performance measures associated with the above Academic Support outcomes, the analysis of Benchmark Two is organized around three major questions:

Benchmark 2, Research Question 1: ***How do youth feel about school?***

Benchmark 2, Research Question 2: ***Do CBOs provide measurable academic support?***

Benchmark 2, Research Question 3: ***Are young children getting the support they need to be ready for school?***

The remainder of this section will be organized around each research question, the related performance measures, and corresponding survey data.

Benchmark 2, Research Question 1: How do youth feel about school?

Much of the ability to navigate the school system relies upon a child's sense of comfort and confidence in the school setting. Another key factor in academic success is whether a child feels she or he has the support of adults should any problems arise. Clearly, a student's academic performance is related to their level of comfort or confidence in the school setting, although this is not necessarily a causal relationship. It was important to understand the academic performance of youth in CBOs to better understand the performance of the clients. To assess how children and youth perceive school and their confidence in negotiating the system, this benchmark focused on Academic Support outcomes. To answer the question of how youth feel about school, the following performance measures were used:

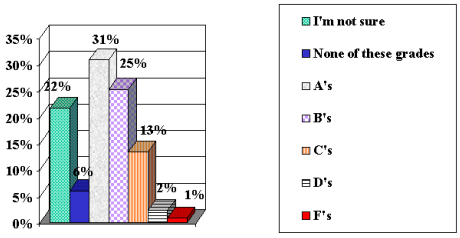
?? Academic Support 1.1: Percent of children and youth who report a sense of belonging at school

?? Academic Support 2.2: Percent of children and youth who demonstrate an understanding of what is required to progress successfully through school

?? Academic Support 2.3: Percent of children and youth who can identify at least one adult who would advocate for them in a school related matter

Youth and Their Grades: Academic Performance

Table 3.24 Distribution of Youth Responses to Academic Support Measure.
Question: During the past year, what kinds of grades did you get in school? (N=1023)

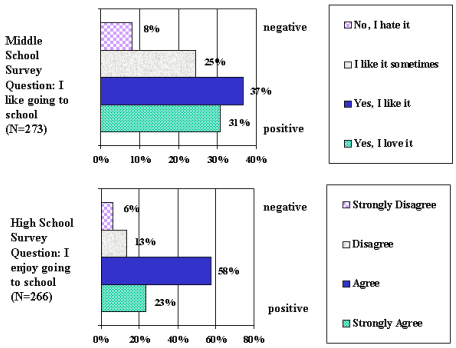


Youth participants ages 8-18 in all CBO programs were asked to describe their grades during the past year. Over half of the respondents said they earned above average grades, stating that they received primarily A's and B's during the previous year. Around 13 percent of youth reported that they received average grades. Less than 5 percent were either failing or close to failing. Surprisingly, nearly a third of youth said they were not sure of their grades or their grades were not on a traditional A-F grading scale.

Children and Youth Feel They Belong at School

Attachment to School

Table 3.25 Distribution of Youth Responses to Attachment to School Measure.



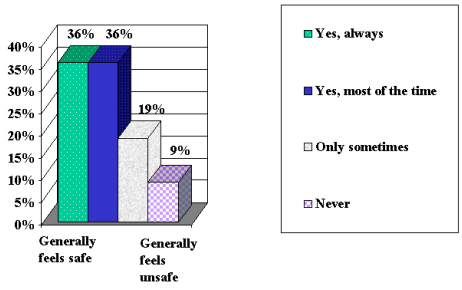
Literature has documented that a child's sense of belonging in a particular school affects their motivation to succeed. Therefore, youth participants were asked to rate their attitudes about attending school. Surveys for children aged 8-12 included the statement *"I like going to school"* and asked to indicate whether they love, like, like it sometimes or hate going to school. Surveys for youth respondents aged 13-18 included the statement *"I enjoy going to school"* and were asked to rate their level of agreement with this statement.

The majority of children ages 8-12 expressed a positive sentiment about attending school. Less than 10 percent of children said they hated attending school. The remaining majority of children said they liked school, liked school sometimes, or loved attending school. These data may be considered a benchmark to be used when assessing measures in upcoming evaluations. Youth respondents were also overwhelmingly positive about attending school. Over 80 percent of youth respondents expressed positive feelings about school. Less than 20 percent said

they disagreed with the statement "I enjoy attending school."

Safety at School

Table 3.26 Distribution of Youth Responses to Attachment to School Measure.
Question: I feel safe at school. (N=540)



Another performance measure of attachment to school is the level of safety felt by students. Fortunately, San Francisco has not experienced a major violent incident in its schools, as have other U.S. cities. Due to the widespread publicity of such events, it was important to discover the level of safety perceived among children and youth participants. Participants were asked to respond to the phrase "I feel safe at school." Nearly three-quarters of respondents feel safe always or most of the time. Nearly 10 percent of respondents indicated they never felt safe at school.

Navigating and Succeeding in the School System

The second outcome focuses on increasing children and youths' capacity to navigate and succeed in the school system. To measure their capacity in these areas, the stakeholders articulated that academic goals and resources were essential to capture.

?? Academic Support Measure 2.2: Percent of children and youth who demonstrate an understanding of what is required to progress successfully through school

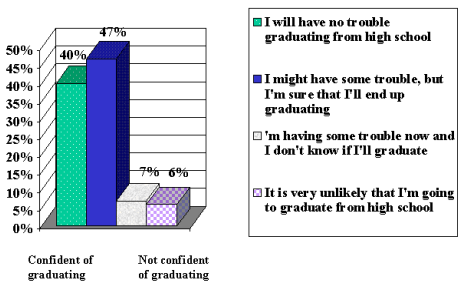
?? Academic Support Measure 2.3: Percent of children and youth who can identify at least one adult who would advocate for them in a school related matter

Expectations of Academic Achievement

There are many standardized measures of children and youths' level of achievement in school. Recent research has documented that a child's expectations of their own academic outcomes are a strong determinant of their subsequent achievement.

Graduating from High School

Table 3.27 Distribution of Youth Responses to Academic Support Measure. Question: How sure are you that you will graduate from high school? (N=126)



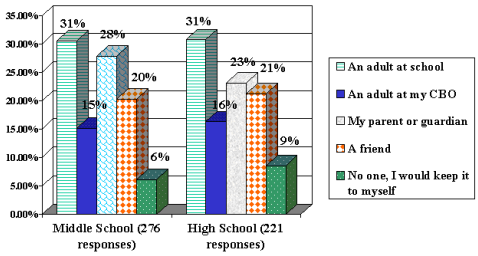
Respondents from the age of 12-18 were asked to assess the likelihood that they would complete high school. The data indicate that the overwhelming majority of youth that are involved in a CBOs

academic support program are confident they will graduate. Nearly half of youth respondents were certain they would experience no problems in finishing high school. Another 40 percent expressed they might have some trouble completing high school, but were optimistic they would still graduate. Roughly 7 percent of respondents were uncertain if they would graduate and 5 percent were very doubtful they would complete high school.

These data are useful for several reasons. The data provide insight into the current academic expectations of the youth respondents. Also, the data serve as a guide for services needed by youth respondents. Clearly a majority of respondents may benefit from some college preparation activities. A notable portion of respondents also may benefit from focused, intensive academic intervention with the goal of salvaging the youths' expectations and attainment of a high school diploma.

Asking for Help

Table 3.28 Distribution of Youth Responses to Academic Support Measure.
Question: If you had any problems at school, like being assigned to the wrong class, getting a wrong grade, or getting into trouble for your behavior, who would you ask for help?



The next performance measure captured the perceived resources of children and youth ages 8-18. The respondents were asked whom they would seek assistance from if they experienced problems at school. Of the five possible responses, an overwhelming majority of all respondents said they would ask someone for help, either an adult at school, at the CBO, parent or guardian, or a friend. Only a minority of respondents in middle or high school said they would keep their problems to themselves. Around 15 percent of respondents at both the middle and high school level said they would turn to an adult at the CBO. Nearly 20 percent of all respondents indicated that they would turn to a friend before they would turn to an adult, thus underscoring the important role played by peers.

Benchmark 2, Research Question 2: Do CBOs provide measurable academic support?

Several CBOs targeted academic outcomes for youth participants. Thus, it was important to measure whether the academic efforts of CBOs were affecting children and youths' feelings about school and their overall learning. In order to determine the extent to which CBOs provide academic support, the following performance measures were used:

?? Academic Support Measure 1.1: Percent of children and youth who report a sense of belonging at school

?? Enrichment Measure 11.1: Percent of children and youth who report positive exposure to new experiences and/or other cultures in the last three months through a CBO

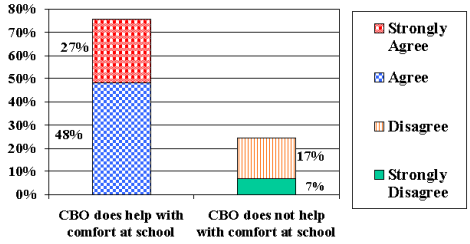
CBOs and Respondents' Feelings about School

The Academic Performance Measure 1.1 also asked about whether the respondents applied what they learned at the CBO at school, and to what extent CBOs supplemented school education through exposure to new things. Youth were asked to respond to the following statements:

1. *going to this program makes me feel more comfortable going to school*
2. *I learn things in this program that I use in school and*
3. *My youth program gives me the chance to learn things I don't get to learn anywhere else.*

Going to this program makes me feel more comfortable going to school.

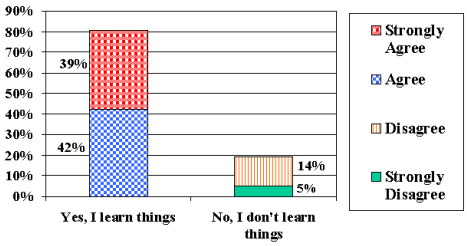
Table 3.29 Distribution of Youth Responses to Academic Support Measure.
Question: Going to this program makes me feel more comfortable going to school. (N=263)



Respondents ages 8-18 years old were asked to assess their agreement with this statement on a scale of 1-4. Over three-fourths of respondents felt that the CBO was helping them feel more comfortable at school, compared to 20 percent who felt that the CBO did not provide help or comfort at school.

I learn things in this program that I use in school.

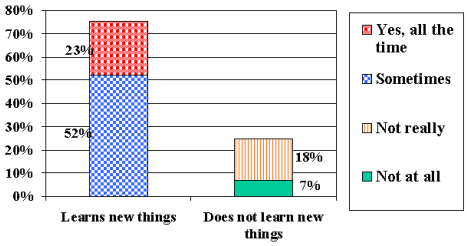
Table 3.30 Distribution of Youth Responses to Academic Support Measure.
Question: I learn things in this program that I use in school (N=505)



Respondents were asked to rank their agreement of whether the lessons from the CBO were applicable to school. Over 80% of the respondents felt they could apply CBO learning to school. Nearly 20 percent did not agree that they could apply CBO experiences and knowledge to their formal education.

My youth program gives me the chance to learn things I don't get to learn anywhere else.

Table 3.31 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: My youth program gives me the chance to learn things I don't get to learn anywhere else. (N=174)



Over three-fourths of respondents ages 8-18 felt their CBOs provided them with unique learning opportunities. 23 percent felt that they consistently learned new things through the CBO while an additional 53 percent said they sometimes learned new things. One-quarter of respondents felt they weren't exposed to new ideas or skills through their CBO.

Again, these data are useful in assessing the respondent's satisfaction with CBO services, as well as targeting future services.

Benchmark 2, Research Question 3: Are young children getting the support they need to be ready for school?

Research has shown that a young child's success in school is significantly dependent upon their social and emotional development. Additionally, literature indicates that parental reinforcement of skills learned outside the home are critical to a child's success in school. In order to determine the extent to which CBOs provide early childhood development support; parental survey data were analyzed from the following performance measures:

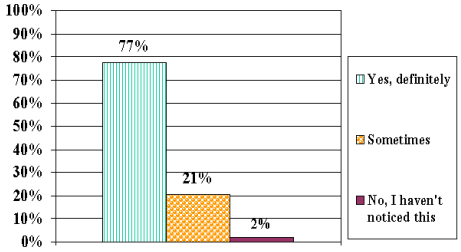
- ?? Early Childhood Measure 2.2: Percent of parents reporting that their children are learning new social skills in the early care setting
- ?? Early Childhood Measure 8.2: Percent of parents who read to their child everyday
- ?? Early Childhood Measure 8.3: Percent of parents who report knowing how to support and teach their child in his/her current developmental stage

Social and Emotional Development of Children Ages 0-5

Early childhood development is crucial to later emotional, social, and intellectual developments. Additionally, the transition into a school setting can be significant if the child is not adequately prepared. Two parental survey questions captured the attitudes of parents and guardians about observed changes in their child since beginning preschool or day care.

Since my child started preschool/day care, he/she is more likely to try new things.

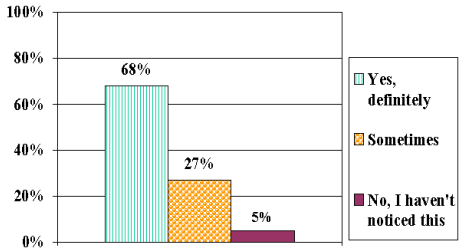
Table 3.32 Distribution of Parent Responses to Early Childhood Measure.
Question: Since my child started preschool/day care, he/she: …is more likely to try new things. (N=102)



Parents and Guardians were asked to respond to this statement. Over three-quarters of parents and guardians felt their child was more open to new experiences and exploration since attending preschool/day care. Another 20 percent believed their child had sometimes tried new things after beginning preschool/day care. Less than two percent of parents and guardians responded that they had not observed a change in their child exploring new things.

Since my child started preschool/day care, he/she communicates better with adults.

Table 3.33 Distribution of Parent Responses to Early Childhood Measure.
Question: Since my child started preschool/day care, he/she: …communicates better with adults. (N=100)



Once children begin to interact with non-family members, it is reasonable to expect their communication may change or improve. Thus, parents and guardians were asked to rate whether their child's communication had changed since his or her enrollment in day care/preschool. A majority of parents felt that their child's communication skills had improved since enrolling in preschool or day care. Nearly 70 percent of respondents said they definitely noticed better communication from their children. Less than 30 percent noticed an improvement in communication sometimes. 5 percent of respondents said that they had not noticed an improvement in their child's communication.

Parents' Knowledge and Skills in Early Childhood

Consistent reinforcement of lessons learned in a preschool environment is critical in childhood development as well as parental involvement. Parental survey data were analyzed from the corresponding Performance Measures:

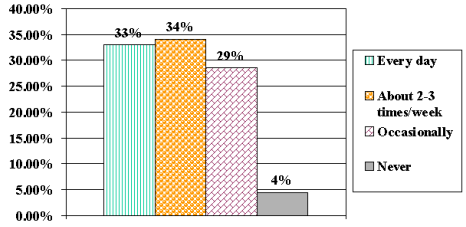
?? Early Childhood Measure 8.2: Percent of parents who read to their child everyday

?? Early Childhood Measure 8.3: Percent of parents who report knowing how to support and teach their child in his/her current developmental stage.

Three parental survey questions assessed the frequency of parents' involvement in their child's education, as well as assessing the parental education level.

How often do you read to your child?

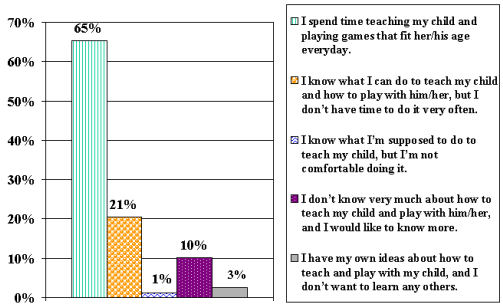
Table 3.34 Distribution of Parent Responses to Early Childhood Measure.
Question: How often do you read to your child? (N=91)



Parents and Guardians were asked to estimate how often they read to their child. CBOs targeting this outcome previously established a benchmark of parents reading to their children every day. Among parents in this survey, just over 30 percent of respondents indicated that they read to their child every day. The majority of parental respondents read to their child about 2-3 times per week. Roughly 30 percent of parental respondents read occasionally read to their child and less than 5 percent reported never reading to their child.

Self-Reported Measure of Parental Involvement.

Table 3.35 Distribution of Parent Responses to Early Childhood Measure.
Question: Which of the following statements is the MOST true for you? (N=78)

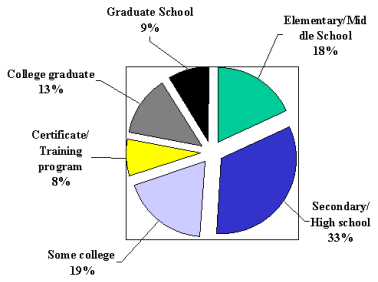


Parents were next asked to rate their own level of involvement in their child's learning outside of day care or preschool. They were asked to choose one of several statements as the "most true" of their parental involvement.

Parents overwhelmingly report being knowledgeable and spending time with age-appropriate ways of teaching and playing with their child. Another 20 percent express the same level of confidence in their ability to teach age-appropriate tasks to their child, but are constrained by time limitations. Around 2 percent of respondents admit that they are not comfortable teaching their child, although they know what tasks are appropriate. 10 percent report they don't know what to teach their child but expressed interest in learning. Around 3 percent report they have their own ideas about how to teach and play with their child.

Educational level of Parents and Guardians

Table 3.36 Distribution of Parents'/Guardians' Responses to Level of Education.
Question: What is the highest level of education you have completed? (N=312)



If a goal of some CBOs is to emphasize parental involvement with their children's academic development, it is useful to understand the supports possibly needed by parents. Parents and guardians were asked about their highest level of completed education. One-third of the parental and guardian respondents had completed high school. Around 20 percent had not completed high school. Roughly another 20 percent completed some college, and less than 10 percent finished a certificate or training program. 12.5 percent of respondents had completed college, and another 10 percent completed a graduate degree.

Findings for Benchmark 3: Children and Youth Live in Safe, Supported Families and Safe, Supported Viable Communities

DCYF established Benchmark Three to call attention to the need for children and youth to reside in safe and supported families and communities. To reach this benchmark, several areas must be addressed, including economic development, organization learning and comprehensive family support needs. To influence these areas, DCYF provides funding for food, housing, healthcare, counseling referrals, adult education, early childhood staff support, organizational support, child subsidies, adult counseling and direct service to youth. During the process of developing the evaluation, the stakeholders identified key outcomes to indicate whether children and youth live in safe, supported families and communities. The selected outcomes are as follows:

?? Decrease parents' level of stress *Family Support Outcome*

?? Increase parents' and families' access to basic support services, such as food programs, health care, employment, and counseling *Family Support Outcome*

?? Increase family functioning *Family Support Outcome*

?? Increase parents' sense of belonging in a caring community *Family Support Outcome*

?? Increase families' capacity to advocate for themselves and their children, and effectively utilize resources and services *Family Support Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' skills at working collaboratively with peers and adults *Enrichment Outcome*[*]

?? Increase children and youths' sense of belonging to a caring community *Enrichment Outcome**

?? Increase the continuity and consistency of childcare staff *Early Childhood Outcome*

?? Improve working conditions, level of support, and professionalism of child care workers *Early Childhood Outcome*

[*] Represents the most commonly chosen outcomes

?? Increase caregivers' knowledge and skills in early childhood development *Early Childhood Outcome*

?? Increase the capacity of programs to adequately care for children with special needs *Early Childhood Outcome*

?? Increase parents' knowledge and skills in early childhood development *Early Childhood Outcome*

?? Increase parent involvement in early childhood settings *Early Childhood Outcome*

?? Increase parents' access to early childhood programs *Early Childhood Outcome*

As indicated by the footnotes, organizations selected primarily Enrichment Outcomes. A smaller number of organizations selected Family Support Outcomes, and a very small number of organizations chose Early Childhood Outcomes. Because outcome selection rested heavily in family support and youth enrichment, the analysis of Benchmark Three is organized around the following research questions:

Benchmark 3, Research Question 1: ***Do families feel supported by CBO programs?***

Benchmark 3, Research Question 2: ***Do CBO programs help youth develop a sense of belonging?***

Benchmark 3, Research Question 1: Do families feel supported by CBO programs?

Stakeholders established early in the evaluation process that CBOs should assist families in a variety of ways. Various services by CBOs provide such assistance, and theoretically, all the services help provide safety and support to the families. To examine the level of comfort and connection, the following performance measures were used on the parent survey:

?? Family Support 4.1: Percent of parents who report feeling connected to other people and families

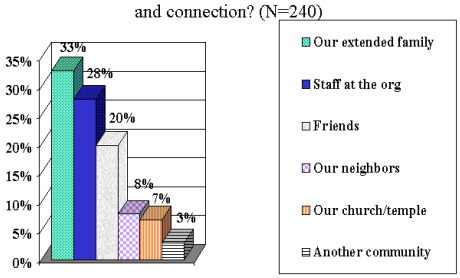
?? Family Support 5.1: Percent of parents who have successfully sought and acquired services

?? Family Support 5.2: Percent of parents who report that they know what to do and/or who to contact to overcome barriers to receiving services

Surveys were collected while services were ongoing or after services had been provided.

Parents' Connection to Other People and Families

Table 3.37 Distribution of Parent/Guardian Responses to Family Support Measure.
Question: What are your family's main sources of support and connection? (N=240)

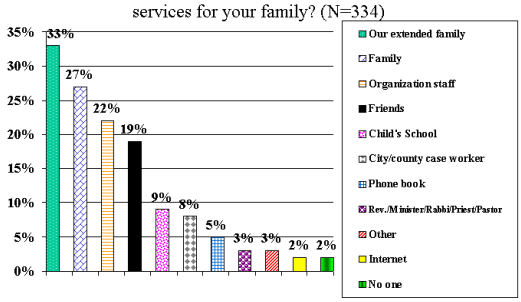


The first measure assesses the sources of assistance and connection reported by parents. One item on the parent survey asked respondents to list their primary sources of support.

Of the 240 respondents, extended family was the most recurring source of support. Over one-third of respondents said their extended family was the main source of support and connection. Close to 30 percent of parents said the staff at the CBO was a main source of assistance. Friends were reported as a primary connection for 20 percent of respondents, followed by neighbors and church/temple which each were identified by around 8 percent of the sample. A minority of parents said another community was a main source of support.

Parents' Search for and Use of Services

Table 3.38 Distribution of Parent/Guardian Responses to Family Support Measure.
Question: Where do you turn when you need support, help, or services for your family? (N=334)

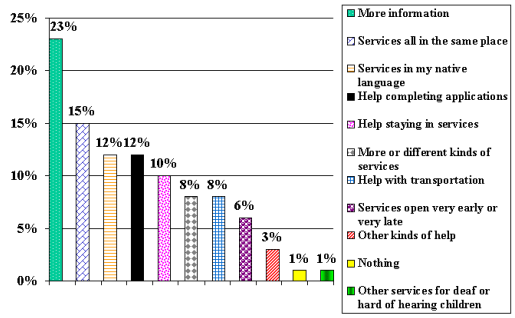


This question tapped into the general feelings of support and connection by parents and guardians. Respondents were next asked to identify specific sources of tangible assistance, in the form of support, services or help. The findings somewhat parallel the data in Table 3.37.

The majority of the 334 respondents said family, both immediate and extended, was their main resource for help. Just over 20 percent of parents said the staff at the CBO provided help or support when needed. Friends were the next most common resource for parents in times of need. Formal organizations were also listed, with 8 percent of parents stating that their child's school was a resource and 9 percent of parents identifying city/county case workers as sources of help. A minority of parents said they would find help in the phone book, through a church official, the internet or another sources.

Parents' Recommended Improvements

Table 3.39 Distribution of Parent/Guardian Responses to Family Support Measure.
Recommended Improvements to Programs



Part of the evaluation process is the feedback of information back into service delivery. Along these lines, parents were asked for recommendations about improvements to program services.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) were asked to specify which improvements would allow or encourage the parents to utilize services to a greater degree. Respondents could choose multiple options. The most common recommendation from parents was to increase the information about available services. Nearly one-quarter of parents said this was a needed improvement. The second most common recommendation was to consolidate the service delivery into one location. Fifteen percent of parents said they would recommend that services be offered at one location for all ages of their children.

The next two recommendations received an equal number of responses from parents. Just over 10 percent of parents specified that a noted improvement would be the provision of services in their native language. Nearly an equal number of parents said they needed assistance in completing the applications. Given the education level reported by a portion of the parents, combined with the extensive evaluation survey and application materials, this recommendation is significant. Around 10 percent of parents said they needed assistance in maintaining their children in the program. Further analyses should examine the reasons why participants do not complete services.

Eight percent of parents asked for a greater number and variety of services, and another 8 percent recommended providing transportation to CBO services. Six percent of parents said extended hours of service delivery would be a marked improvement. Suggestions made by less than 5 percent of respondents were 1) other kinds of help and 2) services designed for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Benchmark 3, Research Question 2: Do CBO programs help youth develop a sense of belonging?

Many services provided by CBOs intend to facilitate a child's sense of belonging in their community. The services aim to build connections between a child's home and the community organization, as well as help youth learn survival and socialization skills.

The following performance measures are proxies for a child's sense of belonging:

?? Enrichment 3.2: Percent of children and youth who participated in a culturally-relevant event in the last three months

?? Enrichment 7.4: Percent of children and youth who report that CBO staff

know their parents/caregivers

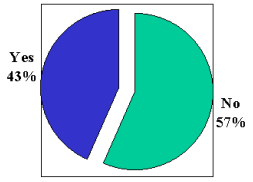
?? Enrichment 5.3: Percent of children and youth reporting a collaborative relationship with adults

?? Enrichment 8.1: Percent of children and youth that report being required or encouraged by CBO to "give back"

Cultural Acceptance and Education at Youth Programming

As found in the demographic analyses, the majority of youth respondents are racially/ ethnically diverse. Only 8 percent of children and youth identify themselves solely as "white" (Table 3.2).

Table 3.40 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: In the last 3 months have you participated in an activity or event at this youth program that celebrated or taught you more about your cultural background?



Staff offered events that celebrated the cultures of the participants, especially if the child's home culture was not a dominant part of the culture at the organization. It was hoped that such activities would educate all participants about new cultures, assist in the acceptance of the child's culture at the CBO and possibly even to help the child to understand their own culture.

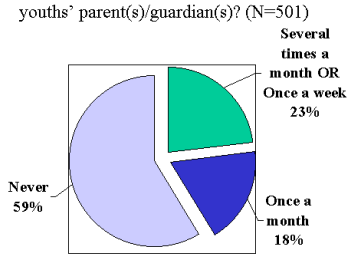
Youth were asked whether they had participated in an activity at the CBO that focused on their cultural background. Nearly 60 percent of youth answered they had not attended such an activity, whereas 44 percent of youth said they had.

Benchmark 3, Research Question 1: Do families feel supported by CBO programs?

Connection Between Youth Program and Youths' Family

Youth benefit when various aspects and individuals in their life are overlapping and coordinating for the youth's best interest. In conjunction, staff and parents can contribute to a youth's sense of belonging and being cared for. Youth were asked to assess the frequency of communication between CBO staff and their parents.

Table 3.41 Distribution of Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: Do people at the youth program communicate with youths' parent(s)/guardian(s)? (N=501)



The majority of respondents said their parents and CBO staff never communicate.

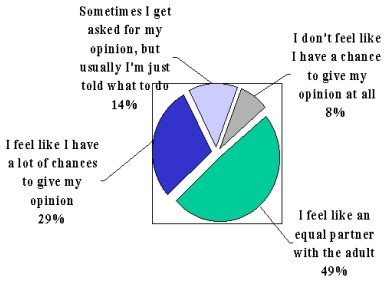
Almost 60 percent of youth respondents said there was no communication between

the two entities. Nearly one-quarter of the 501 respondents reported frequent communication between CBO staff and their parents, ranging from several times a month to once a week. Nearly 20 percent of respondents said the CBO staff and their parents communicate once a month.

Youth Experience of Collaborating with Adults

A clear indication of youth possessing a sense of belonging is the sentiment that an adult will listen and believe in them. This signals to the youth that they have other resources in the community and that their opinions are valued.

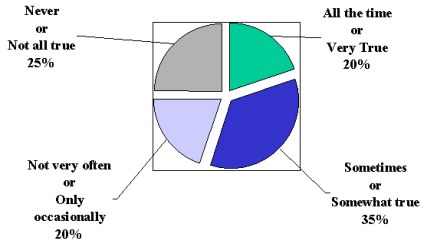
Table 3.42 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: When you work together with adults at this program, what best describes how you feel?



To measure youth's perception of collaboration, a survey question asked youth to describe their interaction with adults at the CBO. Half of the respondents said they feel like an equal partner with the adult. Another 30 percent expressed that they are given many opportunities to express opinions. Less than 15 percent said their opinion was periodically asked but typically they were directed what to do. Eight percent of youth respondents said they did not feel their opinions were welcomed.

Youth Being Encouraged to Give Back to Their Community

Table 3.43 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: At this program I am asked or expected to spend time with youth younger than me."



In addition to listening to youth, another key task of CBOs was to encourage youth to contribute back to their community. This conveys an adult's confidence and trust in the youth, as well as a sense of responsibility to others.

Youth were asked to rate how frequently they were encouraged to interact with younger children. Twenty percent of respondents said they were encouraged consistently to spend time with younger children, and another 35 percent said they are sometimes asked to spend time with younger children. Around 45 percent of respondents said they were either occasionally or never asked to interact with younger participants.

Findings for Benchmark 4: Children and Youth Contribute to the Growth, Development, and Vitality of San Francisco

DCYF established Benchmark Four to highlight the skills and experience developed in young people through employment and community service. Employment and community service allows young people to develop human capital, in the forms of experience and knowledge. Young people also develop social capital, in the form of mentors and professional contacts in the community. Both human and social capital are documented as important in educational and occupational attainment. DCYF contracts with CBOs to provide leadership development, employment placement, skill development and community service opportunities for children and youth.

Both Youth Employment and Enrichment outcomes were selected by CBOs to reflect the ability of youth to contribute to growth, development, and vitality in San Francisco. The following outcomes correspond with this Benchmark:

?? Increase job readiness skills of youth *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Increase skills in high demand by employers of youth (e.g. communications, computer skills, literacy) *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Increase job-seeking skills of youth* *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Increase youths' awareness of career pathways *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Increase jobs available to youth in San Francisco *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Increase rate of youth employment* *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Maintain youth in their jobs* *Youth Employment Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' capacity for leadership *Enrichment Outcome*

?? Increase children and youths' sense of responsibility to themselves and other members of their community *Enrichment Outcome*

The footnotes identify the outcomes most selected by CBOs as affecting youth's ability to contribute to the vitality, growth and development in San Francisco. Using the performance measures associated with

* Represents the outcome measures most chosen

the above Youth Employment and Enrichment Outcomes, the Benchmark 4 analysis is arranged around the following three research questions:

Benchmark 4, Research Question 1: ***What are children and youths' current levels of involvement in their community?***

Benchmark 4, Research Question 2: ***Are youth receiving the necessary employment and job support?***

Benchmark 4, Research Question 3: ***What contributes to developing a desire in youth to give back to their communities?***

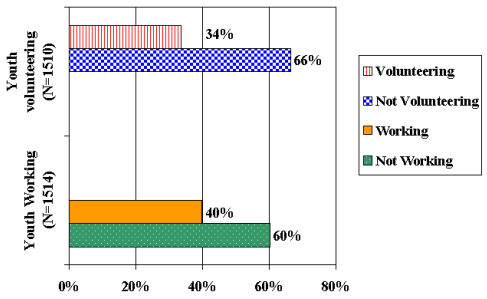
This section will be structured around these research questions, the corresponding performance measures, and survey data.

Benchmark 4, Research Question 1: What are children and youths' current levels of involvement in their community?

Working and Volunteering

To determine the level of youth employment, children and youth aged 8-18 were asked if they were either working for pay or volunteering.

Table 3.44 Distribution of Youth Responses to Youth Employment Measure.



Over one-third of the 1514 respondents indicated that they were currently working. One-third indicated they were volunteering (individuals could be volunteering and/or working at the same time).

These data include all young people, regardless of whether they were involved in employment or community programs through a CBO. The data gathered exclusively through Youth Employment programs were insufficient to make generalized observations. However, these findings provide a baseline assessment of the current involvement of young people in their community as workers or volunteers.

Benchmark 4, Research Question 2: Are youth receiving the necessary employment and job support?

Many CBOs provide job skills training and job placement to youth. Data from the following performance measures address the research question whether youth are receiving the necessary employment and job support:

?? Youth Employment 3.1: Percent of youth with a résumé

?? Youth Employment 7.1: Percent of youth placed who keep their jobs for 3 months

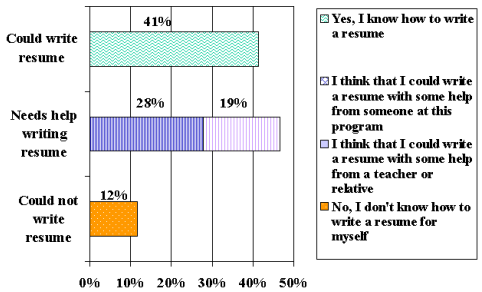
?? Enrichment Measure 6.1: Percent of children and youth who have facilitated or led a group discussion in the last three months

?? Enrichment Measure 6.3: Percent of children and youth reporting feeling supported by their CBO in their leadership and initiative

?? Enrichment Measure 8.1: Percent of children and youth who report being encouraged by CBOs to give back to their community

A Measure of Job Readiness: A Résumé

Table 3.45 Distribution of Youth Responses to Youth Employment Measure.
Question: If you were asked to write your own resume without help, do you think that you could? (N=223)

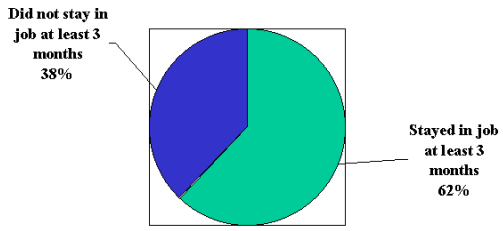


Determining whether youth have a résumé is useful for several reasons. First, it provides insight into whether youth have seriously considered employment before. It also could provide information about a possible service that could be served by CBOs.

Youth ages 13-18 were asked if they could write a résumé without any assistance. Just over 40 percent of the respondents said they could write their own résumé. Approximately another 30 percent of respondents said they could write their résumé with some assistance from an adult. Around 12 percent of the youth respondents were not able to write a résumé, even with assistance from an adult.

Maintaining Employment

Table 3.46 Distribution of Youth Responses to Youth Employment Measure. (N=154)



Youth job retention was measured by the percent of youth placed by a CBO who remained in their employment for 3 months. This information was useful for several reasons. Retention rates indicate whether placements were an appropriate fit between employer and employee. CBOs could assess their services based on the retention rate. The retention rate may also allude to the youth's level of job preparation prior to employment.

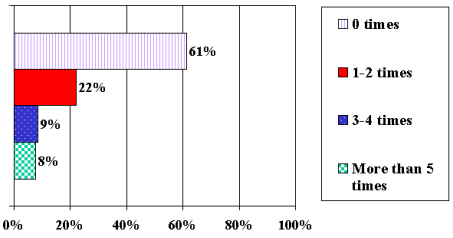
Nearly two-thirds of 154 youth respondents said they remained in the job placement position for at least 3 months.

Facilitation and Leadership Skills

Public speaking and facilitation skills are valuable assets in today's workplace. Benchmark 4 encompasses not only employment, but also a general standard of youth involvement in the community. For this reason, the development of leadership skills was examined both inside and outside the job setting.

Leading Meetings

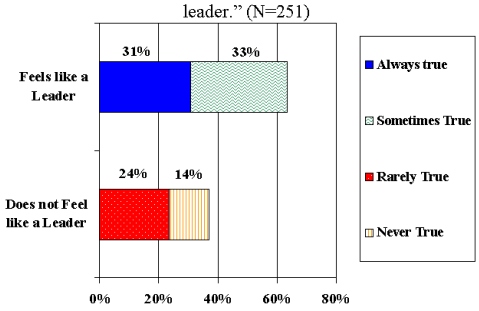
Table 3.47 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: "I have led a meeting." (N=282)



In the survey, youth were asked if they had led a meeting in the last 3 months. Respondents were fairly split, half indicated they had not led a meeting in the last 3 months and the remainder said they had. Some respondents had considerable experience in leading groups. Twelve percent of the sample said they had led a meeting more than five times over the last 3 months. Another 8 percent said they had led a meeting 3-4 times over the last 3 months, and another 25 percent led a meeting once or twice during this time frame. The survey question did not ask if meetings were a regular part of CBO activities or not.

Children and Youth who Feel Supported by CBOs in their Leadership

Table 3.48 Distribution of High School Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: "When I am at my youth program, I feel like a leader." (N=251)

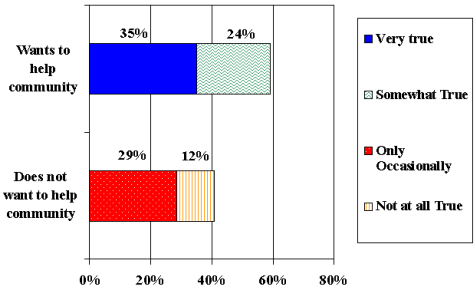


A goal of the CBOs is to encourage leadership among participants. To assess the progress toward this goal, youth participants ages 12-18 were asked if they felt like a leader at their CBO program.

Over 60 percent of youth respondents felt they either always or sometimes felt like a leader at their CBO. Approximately another quarter of youth respondents said they did not often feel like a leader. Fourteen percent of youth respondents said they never felt like a leader.

Youth Giving Back to their Communities

Table 3.49 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure.
Question: "After I leave this program, I want to keep doing things to help my community." (N=565)



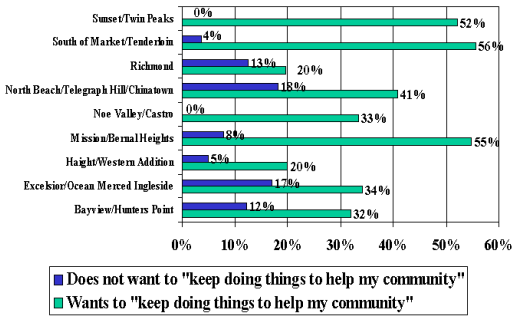
Children and youth were asked whether they were compelled to give back to their community after completing their involvement with the CBO.

Nearly 60 percent of respondents said they did want to continue contributing to their community, with around 35 percent of respondents saying this was a very true statement and another quarter responding that the statement was somewhat true for their lives. In contrast, around thirty percent only occasionally agreed they would be interested in continuing to help their community, while around 13 percent were certain they would not continue after leaving the CBO.

Giving Back to Communities, Neighborhood by Neighborhood

To further our understanding of the impact of CBOs' work throughout the city, youth's interest in continuing in community work was stratified by neighborhoods. (Please note that the data for this question were originally collected by using a four-point scale, but this graph reports only the high and low ends. Therefore, percentages do not add to 100.)

Table 3.50 Distribution of Youth Responses to Enrichment Measure by Neighborhood.
Question: "After I leave this program, I want to keep doing things to help my community." (N=396)



South of Market/Tenderloin[11] had the greatest percent of youth interested in continuing to work with the community, but statistically, this percentage represents only a few young people. However, youth in Mission/Bernal Heights reported a more reliable high percentage of interest in continuing to "give back" to the community they grew up in. Nearly half of the 51 respondents from this area expressed a continuing interest in community work. Two other neighborhoods were also noteworthy in their youth's commitment to remain involved with community work. 35 percent of youth respondents from Excelsior/Oceanview/Merced/Ingleside and 32 percent of youth respondents from Bayview/Hunters Point were very interested in giving back to the community. Response in the Richmond was evenly distributed, with around 20 percent of youth respondents indicating that they definitely wanted to return to help their community, and 12 percent indicating that they would not.

Benchmark 4, Research Question 3: What contributes to developing a desire in youth to give back to their communities?

Of particular interest was whether the youth who identified themselves as leaders also expressed an interest in returning to assist their community. Approximately 112 youth aged 12-18 stated they always felt like a leader in their CBO program. 98 percent of these youth wanted to continue to help their communities after their program was complete. Perhaps more

[11] Of the neighborhoods who had enough respondents to complete the analysis.

striking, all of the respondents who identified themselves as leaders wanted to continue to help their communities once they had finished their program. While causality cannot be established, it is safe to postulate that among youth respondents in the CBOs, there is a relationship between leadership and the desire to give back to their community.

issue will be discussed more in the Recommendations chapter of this report.

Analytical Findings: Demographic Comparisons

This portion of the Findings chapter begins with a brief discussion of the limitations of the data analysis. The section continues with a review of differences in outcomes, organized around key research questions between different neighborhoods, genders, and race/ ethnic groups in the DCYF sample.

Limitations

There were several limitations with this data analysis. The final data were adequate for the analyses in this chapter, however, some statistical techniques were not possible because of the size of specific sample sizes within certain focus areas. As a result, the comparative findings are useful as baseline data, but differences in the outcomes cannot be inferred to the broader population. Differences can be considered to have practical significance, but not to be statistically significant. This

Neighborhood-Level Differences in Outcomes

For city-wide strategic planning, geographic distribution is an important factor. A variety of survey data was stratified by neighborhoods to analyze a series of four research questions.

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 1: ***Are youth in all neighborhoods learning things that they apply in school?***

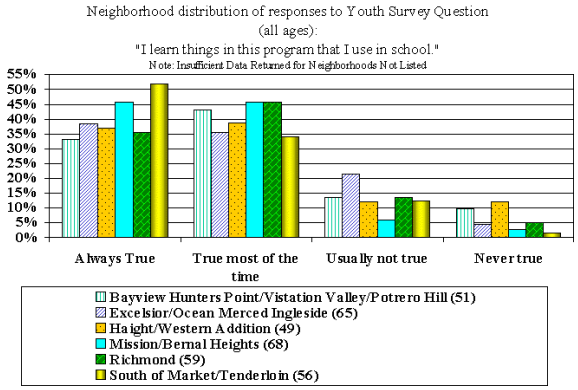
Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 2: ***How do youth in different neighborhoods experience the adults at their CBOs?***

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 3: ***Are youth in all neighborhoods learning employment skills?***

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 4: ***What is the education level of parents in different neighborhoods?***

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 1: Are youth in all neighborhoods learning things that they apply in school?

Table 3.51 Are youth in all neighborhoods learning things that they can apply in school?



This question focuses on whether neighborhood differences exist in the utilization of CBO-based knowledge and experiences in school. When examining the applicability of CBO learning to school, little significant variation is found from one neighborhood to another. Over 85 percent of respondents in nearly every neighborhood report they always or mostly learn things in the CBO program that can be used in school.

In the Excelsior/Oceanside/Merced and Ingleside neighborhood, roughly a quarter of youth said they usually do not or never apply their CBO-based knowledge in school. Such a finding should be viewed with caution, however. There were only 65 respondents from this neighborhood and it remains unclear whether the services at these locations are even teaching skills or knowledge that are applicable to a school setting. In sum, it is encouraging that such a high percentage of youth across

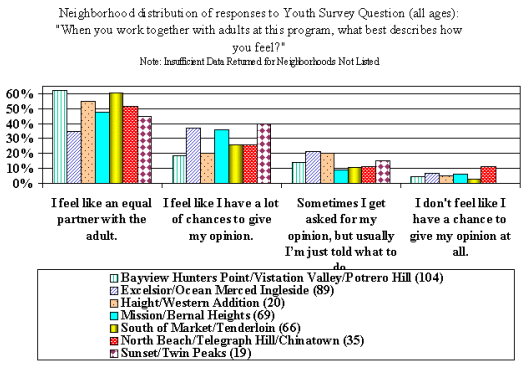
neighborhoods report their CBO based knowledge does transfer to their school setting. Skills that are non-transferable to a school setting may be equally useful and valuable as well.

It is important to note that the data are small due to the constructs of the evaluation. For these analyses, outcomes are tracked according to the CBO programs in which a particular youth participated. The overall sample size is impressive, with over 1000 youth receiving services during the 2000-2001 year. However, for a specific outcome, only a portion of the respondents received the corresponding service. For example, résumé writing is only tracked for those CBOs that targeted the job readiness skills of youth. This is part of the reason why the number of respondents varies by performance measure.

Two complications with the neighborhood analysis are that some youth travel to utilize programs in a location outside their own residential neighborhood such as for a specialized program or a program closer to their school. Secondly, results in some neighborhoods may come from just one or two CBOs and are indicative of youth at those few CBOs (rather than of the neighborhood as a whole).

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 2: How do youth in different neighborhoods experience the adults at their CBOs?

Table 3.52 How do youth in different neighborhoods experience adults at their CBOs?

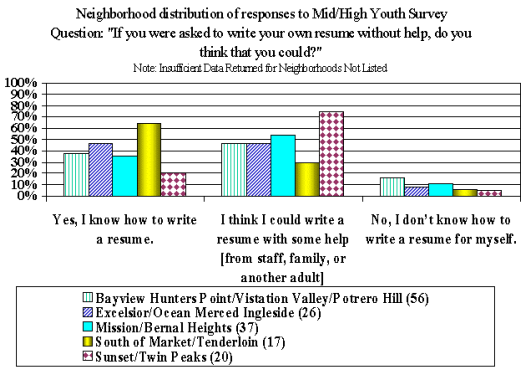


Consistently positive results are seen when investigating how youth feel they are treated by adults at their CBOs. Over 80 percent in nearly every neighborhood responded they either feel like an equal partner with the adult or they feel they have a lot of chances to give their opinion.

A very interesting result appears in two neighborhoods. In South of Market programs, around 30 percent more youth felt like an equal partner with the adult compared to the percent who said they have a lot of chances to give their opinion. In Bayview/Hunters Point, the difference is over 44 percent. While these data are based on a very small pool of respondents (66 for South of Market and 109 for Bayview/Hunters Point) further investigation is warranted to uncover the strategies for success in youth leadership development used by these particular programs.

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 3: Are youth in all neighborhoods learning employment skills?

Table 3.53 Are high school-aged youth in all neighborhoods learning employment skills?



For this analysis, résumé writing among Middle and High School youth was analyzed according to the different neighborhoods. The sample sizes for some of the neighborhoods were admittedly small.

A majority of youth felt that they could create their own résumé, but there was a wide variation in their level of independence in accomplishing this task. Respondents from Bayview/Hunter's Point, Excelsior/Oceanside/Merced/ Ingleside, and Mission/Bernal Heights neighborhoods were relatively evenly distributed between being able to independently write a résumé and needing assistance in writing a résumé.

In contrast, 64 percent of respondents in the South of Market/Tenderloin neighborhood felt they could write a résumé on their own, and 30 percent indicated they would help. On the other hand, the distribution was exactly opposite in the Sunset/Twin Peaks neighborhood. Three-quarters of Sunset/Twin Peaks respondents indicated that they would need some help writing a résumé, and around 20% indicated they could write a résumé on their own.

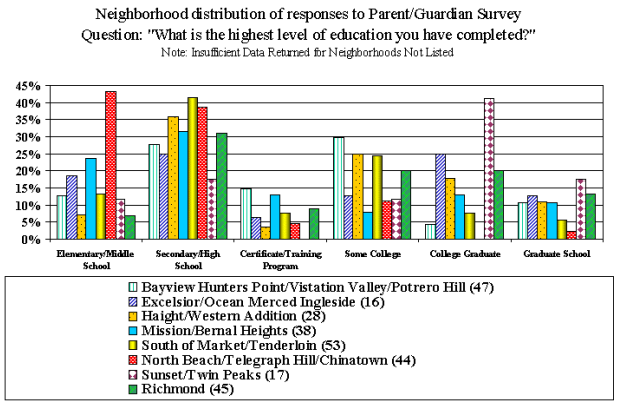
Again, the numbers reflect the patterns among respondents, but cannot be generalized to all youth in these particular neighborhoods. Also noteworthy is that data from the Mayor's Youth Employment and Education Program (MYEEP), the largest CBO funded through Proposition D addressing youth employment issues were not included due to timing constraints.

Neighborhood Level Differences, Research Question 4: What is the education level of parents in different neighborhoods?

Several implicit theories and perceptions about children and families emerged during the evaluation process. One example was the sentiment that parents have difficulties when their child begins learning subjects beyond the parents' own level of education. Parental education was examined by neighborhoods to examine the possible need for particular services in some areas. The results, while small in number, are suggestive of an educational gap between the level of parent/guardians' and youths' education within the CBOs surveyed.

The most startling result was that 43 percent of the parents in the North Beach/Chinatown area did not complete any education beyond Elementary/middle School. Around 40% of the remaining parents in North Beach/Chinatown have completed high school. 15 percent of parents in this neighborhood completed a post-high school certification program or more.

Table 3.54 What is the education level of parents in different neighborhoods?



The majority of parents from other neighborhoods completed high school. 41 percent of parents in Excelsior/Oceanside/ Merced/ Ingleside, 35 percent of parents in Haight/Western Addition, 31 percent in Mission/Bernal Heights, and 31 percent in the Richmond completed high school. In the Sunset/Twin Peaks district, 41 percent of the 17 parental respondents completed college and another 18 percent completed graduate school.

Responses, while low, might be of interest when combined with data from the DCYF Community Needs Assessment meetings held by DCYF in late 2001.[12]

[12] *Children's Fund Community Needs Assessment, Version One.* Prepared by the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families (San Francisco, 2002)

Gender Differences in Outcomes

Nearly 60 percent of respondents were female. There were fewer than 10 cases that identified themselves as transgender but they do comprise a large enough group to stratify separate outcomes. To investigate whether program outcomes varied by gender, the analysis is framed in the perspective that there is little to no difference in the way that males and females in CBOs experience either relationship building or skills training. Key survey questions around gender include:

Gender Differences, Research Question 1: ***How do youth of different genders experience working together with adults?***

Gender Differences, Research Question 2: ***Do youth of different genders differ in their sense of the impact of their actions?***

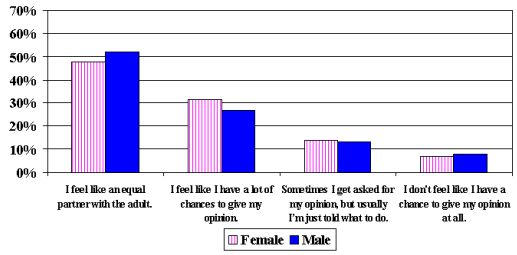
Gender Differences, Research Question 3: ***Are middle/high school males and females equally experienced with computers?***

Gender Differences, Research Question 1: How do youth of different genders experience working together with adults?

Table 3.55 How do youth of different genders experience working together with adults?

Distribution of youth responses. When you work together with adults at this program, what best describes how you feel? (N=545)

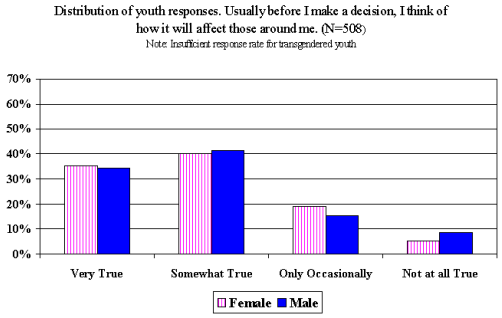
Note: Insufficient response rate for transgendered youth



In general, the responses were virtually equivalent for males and females across all the key questions. 51 percent of males compared to 47 percent of females felt like an equal partner with adults at the CBOs. A slightly higher percentage of females than males, 31 percent compared to 26 percent, indicated they had a lot of chances to share their opinion. In terms of outcome measures, only a few CBOs chose to affect the collaborative relationship between youth and adults. Nonetheless, it is useful to examine gender differences for this measure. The data provide insight into the experiences of both males and females with adults at CBOs.

Gender Differences, Research Question 2: Do youth of different genders differ in their sense of the impact of their actions?

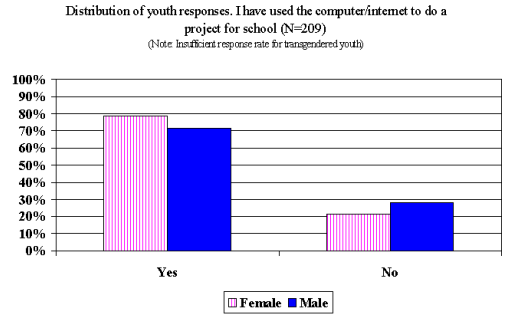
Table 3.56 Do youth of different genders differ in their sense of the impact of their actions?



There is virtually no difference between the males and females in their assessment of how their decisions will affect others around them. Of 508 responses, 35 percent of females said they do consider how their actions will affect others, while 34 percent of males responded the same. Around 40 percent of males and females said this was somewhat true. More males stated that they do not consider how their decisions will affect others compared to females.

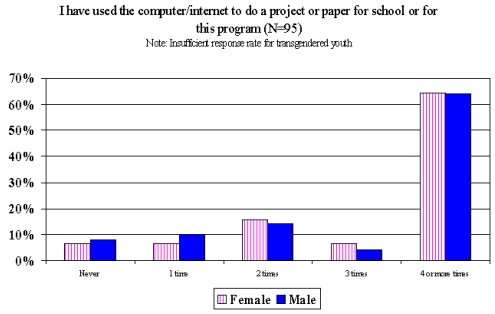
Gender Differences, Research Question 3: Are middle/high school males and females equally experienced with computers?

Table 3.57 Are elementary/middle school aged youth of different genders equally experienced with computers?



In assessing male and female exposure to information technology, youth were asked whether they had used the computer or internet for a school project. Females are slightly more experienced with computers at both levels. Of the 209 respondents aged 8-12, around 80 percent of the females said they had used the computer or internet for a school project. This is slightly higher than the 71 percent of the males who gave the same response.

Table 3.58 Are middle/high school aged youth of different genders equally experienced with computers?



Among Middle and High School students, the difference is negligible, with 64 percent of the females and males saying they had used the computer/internet for a school project.

Race/Ethnicity Differences in Outcomes

Survey data were examined by race/ ethnic categories across several outcomes.

Race/Ethnicity Differences, Research Question 1: ***Are middle/high school aged youth of different race/ethnicities equally experienced with computers?***

Race/Ethnicity Differences, Research Question 2: ***Who do youth of different races/ethnicities trust with "very personal issues"?***

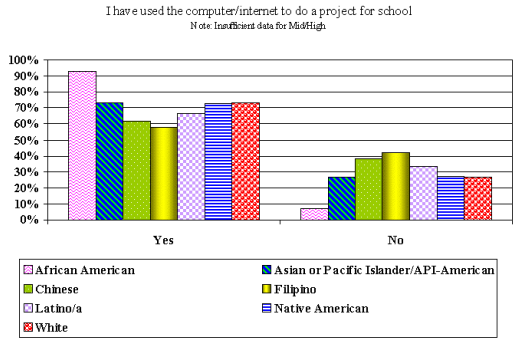
Before embarking on a discussion of differential outcomes by race/ethnicity, it is important to recognize a limitation of the categorization scheme.

Specifically of concern is with the Asian/Pacific Islander populations, which comprise a significant percentage of youth in San Francisco CBOs. To get a thorough picture of the population, a general response option, " Asian or Pacific Islander/A&PI American" was presented, as well as subpopulation response options (e.g. Chinese, Filipino, Japanese). Respondents were instructed to choose to any that applied. Asian and Pacific Islander respondents chose to mark both " Asian or Pacific Islander/A&PI American" and the specific sub-population(s) with which they most closely identify. Others selected only the sub-population(s). Still a third group selected only the more general classification. As a result, it is not possible to determine the level of overlap between the respondents, and therefore not possible to identify the true number of Asians, Pacific Islanders, and A&PI Americans who responded to this survey.

The information presented below makes a distinction between the general classification and the sub-populations when warranted and appropriate.

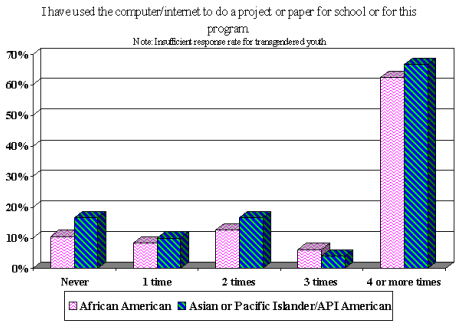
Race/Ethnicity Differences, Research Question 1: Are elementary/middle school aged youth of different races/ ethnicities equally experienced with computers?

Table 3.59 Are elementary/middle school aged youth of different ethnicities equally experienced with computers?



Despite this caveat, interesting information appears between races/ ethnicities. The data from the 8-12 year old respondents were sufficient to break down into separate race/ ethnic categories, but the Middle and High surveys did not. This measure was selected by 21 of 94 CBOs.

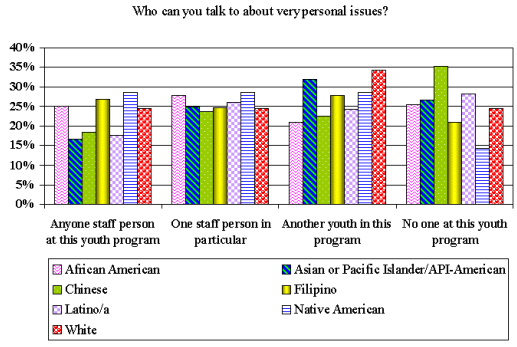
Table 3.60 Are middle/high school aged youth of different ethnicities equally experienced with computers?



Overwhelmingly, African American youth responded that they have used computers/internet to complete a project for school. Filipino youth were the least likely to use a computer or internet to complete a project, with 57 percent indicating that they had used the computer/internet to complete a project for school. Around 60-75 percent of other races/ ethnicities report using computers or the internet for a project. It is not possible to ascertain in this evaluation whether certain programs that targeted a particular race/ethnicity caused higher usage of computers.

Race/Ethnicity Differences, Research Question 2: Who do youth of different races/ethnicities trust with "very personal issues"?

Table 3.61 Do youth of different ethnicities feel they have someone they can trust at their CBOs?



Youth are encouraged to form relationships with CBO staff and youth. This section of the analysis examines whether there is a difference in these types of relationships for different races/ethnicities. 32 of 94 CBOs targeted the enrichment outcomes of trust among CBO youth and staff. Thus, it was possible to break down between different race/ethnic groups.

Youth were asked whom they could trust regarding personal issues. Respondents were given the option of selecting more than one answer. Asian/Pacific Islanders and Whites were the most likely to identify another youth in the CBO program in their answers. Latino/as and Asians/Pacific Islanders were somewhat more likely to trust one particular staff members rather than all staff members.

In general, a majority of all youth at CBOs expressed trust of staff and/or fellow youth. Again, causality cannot be established in this evaluation. Youth who need to find someone to talk to may be more likely go to a CBO, and perhaps may be more likely to stay involved if they find someone to trust. It is reasonable to conclude that CBOs are very successful in forging bonds between their youth participants, regardless of their races/ethnic backgrounds, and their staff is also adept at gaining the trust of youth participants.

Analytical Findings: Role of "Dosage" on Client Outcomes

This portion of the Findings chapter investigates the findings and discussion around the question of "dosage" of a program for youth clients: which matters most, the breadth of activities or depth of activities?

The 1997 *Safe Havens* report from Public/Private Ventures reported that the more time youth spend in certain community-based youth organizations, the more likely they are to report certain positive outcomes related to their activities at that organization.[13] However, it is too simplistic to conclude that the key factor in better youth outcomes is time spent, for a number of reasons. First, many programs that are only available to youth one or two days a week may be just as effective as programs that are open five days a week. Second, youth may self-select into programs, and into higher levels of participation based not on the program, but on individual characteristics, such as motivation or extroversion. The causality of time spent in a program is called into question when it seems possible that youth who will tend to report better outcomes will also tend to be the ones who come more often or participate more heavily in a youth program. Finally, youth may come to a program everyday, but not be participating in the program fully, or they may not be receiving the kind of high quality programming that will support their development.

Because of these issues, we explored a program's "dosage" based on two different factors:

- (1) how many days per week a youth comes to the CBO, or frequency, and
- (2) how many activities they participate in at that CBO, or depth.

We defined "low frequency" participation as a youth reporting that they come to the CBO 1 to 3 times per week. "High frequency" participation was defined as youth reporting that they come to the CBO 4 or more times a week. However, "broad" participation in CBO programming was defined as youth who reported participating in 4 or more *activities* at a CBO (such as a Beacon Center that offers multiple, concurrent activities and programs), whereas "deep" participation was defined as youth who reported participating in only 1 activity at their CBO. This framework is based on the assumption that the more activities a youth participates in at a given CBO, the less focused he or she will be on any one of those activities, and perhaps the less consistent or continuous a relationship he or she will have with any one CBO staff member. Given these dual definitions of dosage, we are analyzing youths' responses on various outcome measures across the following levels of comparison:

[13] Connell, J. P., Gambone, M. A., and Smith, T. J. (2000) Youth development in community settings: Challenges to our field and our approach. In Public/Private Ventures' *Youth development: Issues, challenges and directions.* Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.

1. *Youth who attend 1 to 3 days/week and participate in 4 or more activities (low frequency/broad participation)*

2. *Youth who attend 1 to 3 days/week and participate in only 1 program (low frequency/deep participation)*

3. *Youth who attend 4 or more days/week and participate in 4 or more programs (high frequency/broad participation)*

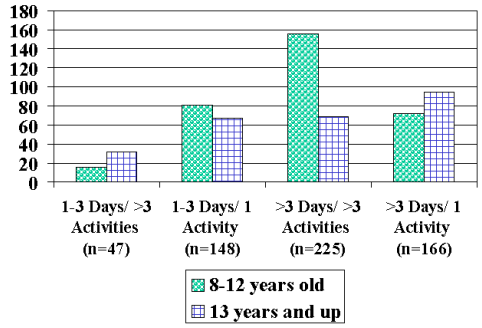
4. *Youth who attend 4 or more days/week and participate in only 1 program (high frequency/deep participation)*

	Low Frequency	**High Frequency**
Broad Participation	Youth who attend 1 to 3 days/week and participate in 4 or more activities **(low frequency/ broad participation)**	Youth who attend 4 or more days/week and participate in 4 or more programs **(high frequency/ broad participation)**
Deep Participation	Youth who attend 1 to 3 days/week and participate in only 1 program **(low frequency/ deep participation)**	Youth who attend 4 or more days/week and participate in only 1 program **(high frequency/ deep participation)**

We sought to determine the relationships between frequency, breadth, and depth of participation, and a variety of outcomes: outcomes related to academic skill development, the development of trust and sense of belonging at the CBO, the likelihood that a young person will continue to be involved in his or her community, and a young person's sense of empowerment within the CBO.

Dosage by Age

Table 3.62 Dosage by Age of Youth



First, we assessed the distribution pattern of participants' ages across the four dosage categories. Perhaps not surprisingly, there is a difference in participation patterns between children and youth.

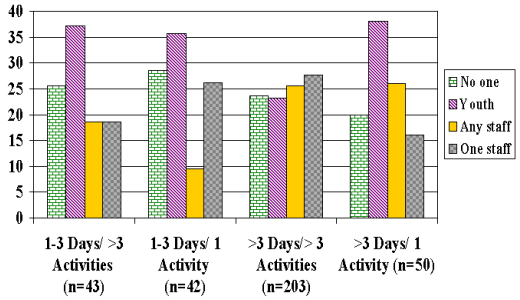
The most common pattern of participation for young people ages 8 to 12 is high frequency/broad participation. In other words, younger children are more likely to come to their CBO programs more than three days per week and sign up for more than 3 activities than their teenage counterparts. They are also almost twice as likely to participate in their CBOs according to this pattern than the other dosage patterns.

Teenage participants in CBO programs have more varied patterns of participation,

with as many youth in the low frequency/deep participation category as are in the high frequency/broad participation category. However, teenage youth seem more likely to participate in only one activity at a CBO than in multiple activities. By far, the least common pattern of participation for any age youth is low frequency/broad participation, or, in other words, attending 1-3 days per week, and participating in more than 3 activities. The most common pattern, because of the high numbers of elementary age children in this category, is high frequency/broad participation.

Effect of Dosage on Children and Youths' Relationships with CBO Staff

Table 3.63 Effect of Dosage on Who Youth Would Turn to For Support with Various Issues

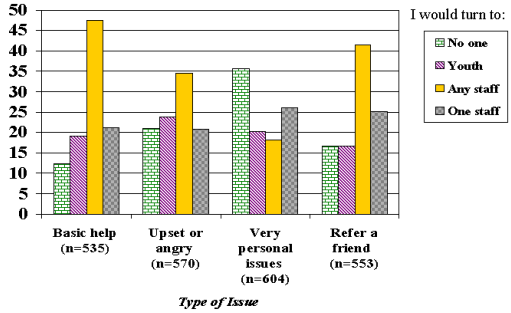


Next, we explored the relationship between the various categories of dosage and Enrichment Outcome #7, *Increase children and youths' sense of belonging to a caring community*, hypothesizing that more time and/or more intense involvement in a program might lead to stronger relationships between youth and adult program staff. Building off of the Benchmark One finding that youth are less likely to talk to program staff about a "very personal issue," than other issues, we decided to analyze this question against dosage. Sample sizes for this query pose a challenge to generalizability; an adequate sample size (n=203) of respondents was present only in the category of high frequency/broad participation.

The findings for this group, which we know is made up largely of 8 to 12 year olds, were mixed, with 47% of these young people reporting that they would either talk to another youth, or to no one at the CBO about very personal issues. Fifty-three percent of these youth reported that they would turn to any staff member, or one staff member in particular to receive support for very personal concerns.

The other three dosage categories had far fewer respondents, but the sample sizes were comparable to each other, providing at least some basis for comparison of these three data sets. In each of these other cases, low frequency/broad participation (n=43), low frequency/deep participation (n=42), and high frequency/deep participation (n=50), significantly more youth would turn to other youth than to CBO staff or no one at the CBO. Taking into account the greater preponderance of teenagers in these other dosage categories, it is possible that this finding reflects teenagers' tendency to confide more in each other than in adults.

Table 3.64 Distribution of Responses of Who Youth Would Turn to For Support with Various Issues



A notable finding is the **higher likelihood of low-frequency youth to turn to staff when they are involved in only one activity at the CBO**, as opposed to more than 3 activities. In other words, when a young person attends a CBO only 1 to 3 days a week, they are more likely to turn to staff for help with a very personal issue if they are focusing their time at that CBO in one activity, and perhaps interacting with only one adult staff member.

When a young person participating in only one activity increases their participation from 1 to 3 days to more than 3 days a week, he or she increases the likelihood that he or she will reach out to any staff (as opposed to only one staff member) person at the CBO for help.

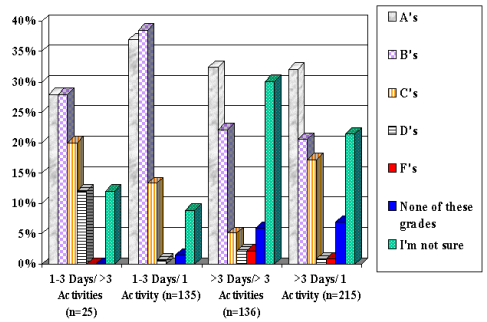
Effect of Dosage on Learning Academic Skills

We explored the influence of dosage on the absorption of the academic content of CBO programs, or, in other words, the skills and knowledge developed by youth at their CBOs that they believe is relevant to the work they do at school.

For this analysis, we were limited to students' self-report data, because most programs did not have a "program-specific assessment" tool to assess reading, math, or science skills objectively. (These tools were not part of method development this year.)

Dosage and Self-Reported Grades

Table 3.65 Effect of Dosage on Grades

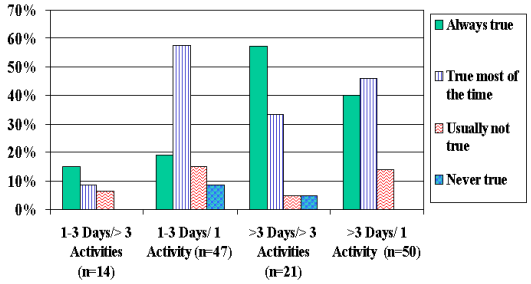


We examined dosage levels against two survey items. First, we determined if different patterns of participation in CBOs correlated at all with students' self-reported grades in school. Consistent with our previous dosage analysis, too few students (n=25) fell into the dosage category of low frequency/broad participation to provide usable data. However, the other dosage categories provided sufficient data to run analyses, and the findings do reveal differences in patterns of self-reported academic achievement. Young people coming to CBOs 1 to 3 days per week for only one activity (low frequency/deep participation) are the highest academic achievers among all CBO attendees. They report earning significantly more A's and B's than children and youth in other dosage categories, and they also tend to report that they "don't know" their grades far less frequently. Young people who participate more than 3 days per week in more than 3 activities report the highest numbers (although small) of D's and F's, and fully 30% of these children and youth (again,

recall that these students tend to be 8 to 12 years old) report that they are "not sure" of their current grades.

Dosage and Applying CBO-Learned Skills

Table 3.66 Effect of Dosage on Learning Academic Skills:
Question: "I learn things in this program that I use in school"

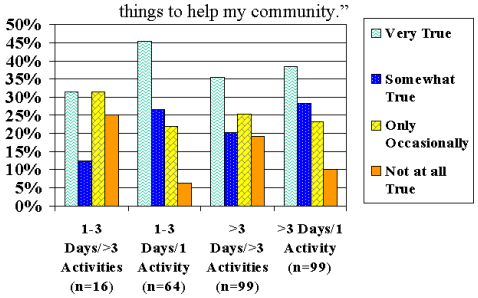


The low numbers of young people who responded to the question "I learn things in this program that I use in school" made a dosage analysis of this issue difficult. None of the sample sizes for any dosage category were high enough to lay the basis for generalizable results, but we present the data below to illustrate a possibly interesting trend, if supported by additional data.

It appears that the on-average highest academic achievers (low frequency/deep participation) report different results than the other dosage categories. The likely high academic achievers tend to report that they learn relevant academic skills "most of the time" in their CBOs, whereas a very small sample (n=21) of the high frequency/broad participation young people, who on average report lower academic achievement in school, are more likely to report that they "always" learn relevant academic content in their CBO programs.

Effect of Dosage on Learning Community Involvement Skills

Table 3.67 Effect of Dosage on Desire to Continue Helping One's Community:
Question: "After I leave this program, I want to keep doing things to help my community."



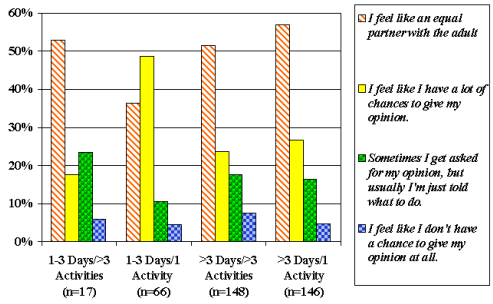
In addition to examining the effect of CBO participation patterns on academic skill learning, we also assessed whether children and youth participating in CBOs differently are learning skills related to continued community involvement in different ways. Young people who participated in only one program consistently reported that they "definitely" learned things at their programs about how to help other people, regardless of how frequently they attended. Youth who participated in four or more activities at their CBOs, regardless of how frequently they attended, consistently reported that they learned these things "a little" or "not really."

When we explored the relationship of dosage patterns to a related item, "After I leave this program, I want to keep doing things to help my community," we again found that the low frequency/broad participation category did not yield enough data for analytical purposes. However, the other three dosage categories provide sufficient data for analysis, and, consistent with the above finding, the dosage categories with the most young people

indicating that this statement is "very true" or "somewhat true" for them are participating in only one activity at their CBOs. Children and youth participating in CBOs with high frequency and in more than 3 activities tend to report that this statement is "only occasionally true" relatively more frequently than other responses. Again, it is important to note that there are likely age differences between the youth who fall into the low frequency/deep participation category and the children who fall into the high frequency/broad participation category.

Effect of Dosage on Children and Youth's Sense of Empowerment Within the CBO

Table 3.68 Effect of Dosage on Youth Empowerment
Question: "When you work with an adult at your CBO, what best describes how you feel?"



Finally, we assessed the relationship between dosage patterns and young people's perception of a collaborative relationship with the adult staff at their CBOs. In response to the question, "When you work with an adult at your CBO, what best describes how you feel?" young people across all dosage categories (again, low frequency/broad participation yielded insufficient data) were significantly more likely to report that they "feel like an equal partner with the adult," or "feel like they have a lot of chances to give their opinion" than that they are "usually just told what to do," or that they "don't have a chance to give their opinion at all." Dosage patterns did not appear to have a significant effect on children and youth's experience of collaboration and empowerment within their CBO programs.

Discussion

DISCUSSION

This chapter reviews the evaluation as a whole. Sections include a discussion of the utility and shortcomings of the standardized template, the inherent limitations of a standardized approach, a discussion of specific findings within the Benchmark areas and a key research question on the effect on "dosage" at DCYF-funded programs and the effect of dosage on client outcomes. The chapter concludes with two special supplementary sections on the Youth-led evaluation (Youth IMPACT) and the theoretical youth model evaluation (CNYD).

Utility of the Outcomes Template

Ability to compare different programs to each other, and to track a program's direction changes through time

Historically, agencies are evaluated primarily (or exclusively) against past performance, and against funders' expectations. These evaluations were conducted within an agency, testing just one methodology (the one in use at that agency). This "outcome evaluation" was effective at testing whether or not an agency fulfilled expectations. Such analyses are useful for program monitoring, but difficult to use for generating knowledge about best practices or effective social policy approaches, because it is usually impossible to meaningfully compare one study to another.

By having a standardized set of outcomes, and a standardized method of recording the resources and approaches used by any agency towards achieving those outcomes, it becomes possible to aggregate data from multiple program evaluations in order to analyze and comment on the overall effect of a particular funding agency, or set of approaches to a particular issue.

Enables CBOs to articulate how much is done with resources

A common reporting and tracking issue for CBOs stems from the overlapping funding and staffing resources which are frequently distributed across programs. By using a template to articulate all programs within an agency, regardless of funding source and reporting requirements, a CBO can more easily identify the amount of staff time and other shared resources distributed among programs. Additionally, CBOs can articulate which sections of a program are dependent upon another, and which segments accomplish certain outcomes independent of other parts of the program.

Helps CBOs understand that they are working together with other CBOs on common issues; that they take only a part of a larger problem

It is frequently difficult for a CBO, particularly a small CBO, to feel its impact on the wider society. When one works with fewer than 10 youth, for example, it

may be easy to feel a sense of accomplishment when examining the impact on those specific youth, especially on the (generally small) number of outcomes which are the goals of that particular program. However, it is very difficult to feel the impact a small program on the wide range of issues faced by any youth (most particularly a youth at risk), and very nearly impossible to get a sense of a single CBO's role in changing the face of a city.

When multiple CBOs identify that they are all working toward the same great benchmark, and that they are each working towards achieving certain specific outcomes that contribute to realizing that distal goal, then they are able to recognize their work as a piece of a larger puzzle. Without them, the puzzle would never be complete, but they are also released from the expectation that they would be able to be all the pieces of that puzzle on their own.

Enables broader (cross-agency) planning, on the part of legislators, funders, and providers

Strategic Planners, within private and government funding sources for example, use any available resource to identify how an individual program should be structured in order to achieve the best results for the clients that they serve. What has been missing from the available resources is a way to identify how programs at a number of CBOs should be structured, in order to achieve the best results for an entire population.

Builds on existing evaluations / reporting requirements

While standardizing across CBOs and city departments was a new idea, the basic template of outcomes was built on existing program goals, and the agencies' logic models were initially drafted using current workplans. By basing the evaluation on familiar measures, DCYF was better able to complete this large scale shift in a limited time frame. Additionally, many of the individual CBO's goals had been developed through time, and were therefore quite refined and accurate to a programs activities. The structure of using outcomes to articulate the full scope of a program's achievements had been introduced prior to the beginning of our evaluation, making the conceptual transition less difficult. Had programs exclusively conducted process evaluations prior to this broader framework, it would have been difficult or impossible to complete the transition in the limited time allowed.

Access to all outcomes from any focus area allowed programs to select outcomes based on what they really do

Most programs fit within traditional models, and, therefore, it is not complicated to identify a bulk of the knowledge- or skill-based outcomes that they would accomplish should their programs be successful. However, many programs have untraditional elements that have heretofore not been evaluated. It is interesting to note, for example, that a significant number of programs considered many of the relationship-building enrichment outcomes to be integral to their programs.

The process of identifying outcomes for a program's evaluation began with the evaluator getting a general (and usually verbal) description of what that program did. Through the interview, the evaluator could get past the basic description which generally accompanied grant applications and reporting so they could uncover what was a priority to the program staff. Additionally, the questions "how does this program work?" and "why does it work?" were critical to the completion of the Logic Model. Through this process, evaluators identified that many of the programs, for example, selected the outcome "Increase children and youths' skills at working with peers and adults." While this is frequently not included in general descriptions of these programs, it is an underlying tenet of the staff's approach to their work with youth. Therefore, they were interested in being evaluated on their work towards achieving this outcome. For our part, it was interesting to measure the effectiveness of this approach within programs in which this was a methodology more than an original goal of their program. The following quotes from providers illustrate these points:

> *"In order to fully capture the scope of the FAMCAN Childcare Subsidy Program, two program outcomes that were not listed in the Program's annual work plan were added in the logic model - "improve working conditions, level of support, and professionalism of child care workers" and "increase parents' and families' access to basic support services, such as food programs, health care, employment, and counseling."" – CAHEED, Family Child Care Network*

> *" Program literature, agency mission and values, and Staff Interview suggest that Booker T. Washington strives first and foremost to provide a sense of belonging for youth. Academic, cultural, and recreational activities all have impact but are just means of accomplishing this primary goal." – Booker T. Washington*

> *"This program clearly meets additional DCYF targeted outcomes and goals, particularly regarding Academic Support and Enrichment; however, these are considered to be benefits of program components integral to overall youth development as Jamestown focuses on their primary goal" – Jamestown Community Center*

Useful for well structured programs with matching outcomes

The majority of programs follow "traditional" models of service, e.g. mentoring, group recreational activities, referrals, cultural activity classes, skills training. For these, it was easy to select outcomes that accurately reflected their main activities, and to include additional

outcomes that portrayed some of the peripheral benefits to these programs, such as leadership development, increased sense of responsibility, and feeling supported by adults. Even complex programs with a multitude of activities (such as Beacon Centers) were generally able to clearly articulate all the benefits of their structure through using a template of outcomes. The logic model was additionally able to show clearly the resources necessary to carry out each individual activity, information which can easily be buried when one staff person is responsible for many activities, or when activities are the responsibility of a collaborative.

Shortcomings of the Outcomes Template

Selecting a population that sets a "standard" against which to measure

Nonprofits often target specialized cases, since they are frequently in greatest need of services, or least likely to find appropriate services in the government or commercial sectors. These populations can have extra needs as a result of immigration status, limited English proficiency, physical or mental disability, unstable or unsafe home environments, health issues, or sexual minority status, for example. Not unexpectedly, since these populations fall outside the "mainstream," services which cater to these populations have unique structures. This may be a result of the need to make the service feel safe, increase its accessibility, or simply to make it appropriate to the clients it serves. As a result, it can be difficult to fit an untraditional model into a "standard" description of programs.

It is similarly difficult to identify standards of success when dealing with a large and variant population. While for "mainstream" youth a certain level of physical, emotional, or intellectual progress may be expected in the course of a few months of participation in a program, for many youth with special needs, progress of the same significance may be accomplished within an entirely different timeframe or appear to be on a much smaller scale. The challenge here is to identify some way to measure success that is appropriate to the youth being evaluated, as well as relevant to the population as a whole.

Trying to standardize a data gathering method with non-standard populations can also prove to be a challenge. While trying to get the most accurate information about participants in all programs in order to have the best resources available for future strategic planning, it can be challenging for many with special needs such as disabilities or literacy issues to complete an extensive survey. While the choice in individual programs to conduct evaluations by doing verbal interviews, reviewing CBO staff notes, or other more sensitive and/or tailored evaluation methods does help to include these groups, these methods are either inefficient when dealing with larger programs or are simply difficult to compare directly with general surveys.

Requires familiarity with entire template on part of evaluator to be able to most accurately reflect program by drawing on areas outside the obvious

While the strength of using a template is the ability to change the standards against which a program is measured, the reality is that this is mostly possible only in situations in which the evaluator is truly familiar with all possible outcomes, the performance measures associated with those outcomes, and how those outcomes were determined (in order to assess if the outcome is appropriate for that program or not). For example, evaluators who are less familiar with all the possible outcomes may miss the "side comment" made by the staff that reveals an important peripheral benefit of the program. Additionally, an evaluator who is less confident about the

process of determining outcomes, or less clear about the final use of the evaluation, may end up tailoring too many outcomes, resulting in data collected about that program which cannot be correlated to the wider population or to other programs' methodologies.

On the other hand, if the evaluator can comfortably refer to the entire template of outcomes when discussing a program, it is usually possible to create a "tailored view" of the program without actually customizing the outcomes themselves. In this case, the CBO staff members feel that their program is represented accurately, while the data that is gathered is useful in the final analysis.

Program-specific language

Even more often, the language used by any program can have political significance. Frequently, this can be addressed by using language that is as inclusive as possible. However, sometimes programs differ in their definitions of the same words, their willingness to alter their language, and their willingness to be inclusive. For example, in some circles, it is mandatory that they refer to "Chicano/a" as well as "Latino/a"; for others, this is not appropriate and may be divisive or insulting. As another example, DCYF has adopted a standard of including "lesbian", "gay" and "bisexual" when discussing gather demographic data about sexual orientation and sexual activity; for some programs, the inclusion of these terms on surveys that were distributed to youth as young as 12 was considered inappropriate. For others, these terms have become outdated in favor of the more general term "queer" for teenage programs. In another case, the youth at one program were insistent that waiting until 12 years of age to ask about sexual activity was waiting too long, while parents and staff were absolutely unwilling to include any discussion of sexual activity or orientation on surveys for youth 8-12 years old (in this case, DCYF determined not to include sexual orientation or activity questions on the 8-12 survey).

Some CBOs feel pressure to say that they're doing a lot. Seeing the whole template can make some feel that they're doing insufficient work.

While the intention is to make CBOs feel that they are a piece of the puzzle and to feel positively about doing well on that piece, some CBOs seem to see the whole puzzle most of the time and feel that they should always be doing more. Or they feel that they will be judged if they are not doing more. Many evaluators and DCYF staff found themselves spending a lot of time talking CBO staff out of selecting an overwhelmingly large number of outcomes. [The intention of this evaluation was to get at the core of any program and to test its progress through time. It was felt that to include all outcomes would have been detrimental to the long-term usefulness of an agency's logic model. Additionally, the final evaluation might not reflect positively on the areas where they don't give great focus, or the results might dilute data about their true strengths.]

Data gathered with the intention of large-scale research will not always meet the precise data needs of the individual CBO

Regardless of how much a template is designed to be useful to a CBO, it cannot take the place of an evaluation designed specifically for that CBO with its unique clients, and unique pieces of work. Individual evaluations designed for CBOs can often go deeper than large-scale models and individualized tools can include "follow-up" information, and more time-intensive tools such as focus groups or multiple observations. Data from evaluations built specifically for one program ultimately has the potential to be much more meaningful in terms of data that might help programs to change practices and thereby improve.

Focus Areas were split between content and population

The template used by this DCYF evaluation reflected the current field of child and youth development. It was divided into six focus areas: Academic Support, Enrichment, Youth Employment, Family Support, Health and Wellness, and Early Childhood. Each focus area contained outcomes that were drawn from best practices in each field, as well as outcomes that were goals of DCYF, CBOs, and the community. The intention was to create a structure that could be adapted and used in other evaluations in other fields. While these divisions were initially useful at helping evaluators and CBO staff to locate outcomes that were relevant to their programs, the structural differences between them became evident when attempting to replicate the structure in other fields. These structural differences posed an issue both in the replication of the model, and in the final evaluation.

Four of the focus areas—Academic Support, Enrichment, Youth Employment, and Health and Wellness—included many outcomes that referred to educating or supporting the individual child/youth. The Family Support focus area primarily included outcomes related to increasing the family's access to services, or to helping to otherwise stabilize the family as a whole. Early Childhood included outcomes relating the best practices of stabilizing the childcare environment, as well as educating parents on helping the development of their young child.

When attempting to replicate the model in another area of community development, however, the focus area divisions had no universal structure to help guide the placement of outcomes under them. The greatest issues arose around the Early Childhood focus area. Some outcomes were related to the work environment of the childcare workers, some addressed individual development of the children, and others referred to supporting the parents in supporting their child's development. These separations meant that outcomes about increasing a parent's access to services were divided between Early Childhood and Family Support.

Lack of legal intervention outcomes

Another small, but growing, field of non-profit service is the provision of legal counsel directly to children and youth, and/or intervening on their behalf when issues of discrimination or civil rights violations arise. These activities occasionally involve groups, but are more often one-on-one and all information (including access to the youth) are

protected by attorney/client privilege. The original template had a noticeable lack of outcomes reflecting this type of legal intervention. For the purposes of this evaluation, customized outcomes were created which captured information about this work. In the future, more efforts must be made to accurately reflect the type and scale of work as well as to construct tools for evaluating progress towards these outcomes.

Lack of "community level" intervention outcomes

In the current economic climate, as well as to provide better services to clients, many CBOs decide not to provide some services themselves (e.g. medical screenings, legal counsel, housing, police protection), but to work with agencies that specialize in these services to ensure that they are sensitive to and inclusive of populations with special needs. For example, a program for physically disabled youth may work together with a job-training agency to increase both the employability of the youth they serve as well as the number of jobs available to them. Another agency may provide translation support to a legal or medical specialist. Still a third may educate many agencies and city departments about how to address issues of discrimination or violence when they arise between the youth they serve.

All these programs provide a valuable service, which dramatically increases the number of appropriate and available services for children and youth, without necessarily increasing the number of staff needed to provide those services or the creation of additional programs.

Still another type of program involves educating the community in general through marketing-type activities, such as a poster campaign to address domestic violence, or a television public service announcement about homophobia. These activities, while their referral power may be measured on intake forms and the like, are extremely difficult to quantify except as a process evaluation. However, research and intuition both support the sense that media is a powerful tool for education and for raising awareness. Still the fact remains that it is extremely difficult to attribute concrete change to a singular marketing effort.

Despite their known effectiveness, none of these efforts were reflected in the original template. Sometimes, these activities are critical to the staff, but are conducted beyond the scope of the funding and have therefore not been reported in the past. Other times, they are the core of the program and are specifically listed in their contracts, but somehow were missed during the outcome creation process. To address this need, JMPT created an additional focus area, Community Support & Resources, which included several outcomes originally designed as custom for programs conducting activities similar the ones outlined above. More work on capturing information about these large scale interventions still needs to be conducted in the future.

Allowing CBOs to choose outcomes results in unequal amounts of data across focus areas

Because CBOs were allowed to select the outcomes that pertained to them and leave other outcomes out, some areas of the template did not receive the amount of data necessary to substantiate analysis. Thus, the evaluation was not useful for

future decision-making in all areas of the template.

Benefits of Standardization

Measuring Collective Impact

Numerous studies have shown that children and youth benefit greatly from increased contact with a supportive adult. This is true in academic environments, where it has proven important to reduce the student-to-teacher ratio, as well as in social services, where the chance for bonding between an adult and a child increases as the ratio between caregiver and child decreases. In response to this, many CBOs have designed programs which are small, and which place significant focus on individual youth. When small programs are evaluated in a vacuum, it is hard to demonstrate the effectiveness of these programs in any statistically significant way.

> *" While the response rate represented a high percentage of active participants (71%), because the actual number is low (N=5), the answers are not statistically significant."*
> *-- Individual CBO Report, Family Service Agency, T-RAPP*

However when the results from numerous small programs are collected together, the effectiveness of this approach can be tested. The key to such data collection is the need to be comparing similar information. One significant obstacle in the past has been the dissimilarity of program structures, resulting in findings that are incomparable. When we move away from measuring simply "how a program runs" and begin measuring "what a program intends to accomplish" (i.e. the "why" of a program), then we see that programs with dissimilar structures may have similar goals, and can begin to collect their information about progress towards achieving that goal. This is great news for the many CBOs who realize that small programs are the most appropriate and effective for their population, who have discovered that there isn't a large enough market for their services, or who have learned that large organizations are perceived negatively by the population that they serve.

When taken together, CBOs can have the potential to impact an entire neighborhood or population sector (e.g. services tailored to a particular race/ ethnicity, language, disability, or sexual minority). The effects of their work can then be compared to the work with similar groups by other services in the area (e.g. schools, city government services). By using this evaluation to create a baseline, it is possible to see the effects in the future of adding and subtracting services in a neighborhood or for a population sector, even if they are not within the immediate scope of the CBO.

In the current system, funders send out Requests For Proposals (RFPs) which frequently outline the type of service or program they feel it is necessary to fund. Funders base this decision on many factors: available research on best practices, past successes with program formats, projected epidemiological or other demographic data. By increasing the ability to compare CBOs' work to each other, and take a more expanded view of available services in any area or with any population, funders can then be even more

strategic in their decisions. They will be able to look forward to identify deficiencies in services available to any neighborhood or population.

Similarly, policy makers on the government, private, and CBO levels will be able to be more strategic as they're looking towards the future. By measuring the impact of the network of factors which affect a neighborhood's or a population's outlook, all policy makers have a more realistic picture of the work that it will take to change that future.

Comparing strategies

Many agencies address the same issues (i.e. work on the same outcomes) with very different strategies and program structures. Two agencies who work on the same outcome may also understand their work very differently, with one agency making this outcome explicit, and the other one thinking of it as a by-product of the other targeted work that they do. This phenomenon is especially true in Enrichment Outcomes related to developing leadership, or to developing supportive relationships.

> *The Center is based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, and persistence to foster a sense of advocacy among participants as well as staff members and community supporters.*
> *--Individual CBO Report, Booker T. Washington, Western Addition Youth Action Center*

> *Jamestown strives to provide a safe haven with support from caring adults and peers to promote learning and healthy development.*
> *--Individual CBO Report, Jamestown Community Center, Jamestown Center Project*

Few programs address only leadership development in the abstract and even fewer focus exclusively on developing relationships between youth and a caring adult, despite the fact that these outcomes may be the most critical features of a program's work with youth. More frequently, such outcomes are components of a program, or a result of the particular approach to addressing a separate issue (such as learning job skills or physical fitness). In these cases, without a standardized evaluation model, it would be difficult or impossible to generalize the results on these outcomes that are explicit in one program, and implicit in another.

By comparing these different programs, we may uncover unpredicted reasons for the success of a program, particularly as related to a sub-population. This can be achieved by comparing the success of different styles of program which are working with the same population.

Creating A Model That Can Evolve

The work of standardizing an evaluation model is by no means a stagnant process. Our goal has been to create a model that reflects not only the programs which are currently in place, but that is also flexible enough to evolve with the programs and with the knowledge gained through key

research developments and policy changes. Towards this end, there are a number of key tenets that underlie the structure of this evaluation:

?? the process must be inclusive and collaborative in all phases,

?? a CBO's program structure must guide its evaluation,

?? the resulting data must be able to provide comparisons cross-program.

Additionally, this first year was considered to be setting a baseline, and, therefore, much of the evaluation was oriented more towards conducting formative research than designed to prove any program's "effectiveness." (In fact, CBOs were informed that this evaluation was specifically **not** going to measure their individual progress towards particular goals and would not affect their funding in any way.)

Inclusion of Many City Departments

Throughout the evaluation design and implementation, DCYF made a concerted effort to be as inclusive of diverse stakeholders as possible. [For full review of this process, please see the Methodology section.] A key component of this evaluation method was the involvement of many city departments in the articulation of outcomes towards which all services targeting children, youth, and their families are working. While DCYF took the lead on this phase of the evaluation, the hope is that other city departments will conduct their own evaluations which would intersect with the information found here and paint a more complete picture of the needs and successes of children and youth in San Francisco. By including other departments so early in the development of DCYF's evaluation standards, this shared future evaluation should be possible with significantly less effort than it would take to integrate entirely disparate standards.

Future evaluations would, of course, have to be tailored to the specific areas of work in which each department is involved, however, one can see how some outcomes are easily shared.

For example, DCYF's Enrichment Outcome 9: *Increase children and youths' competencies in team or individual athletics,* is clearly within the purview of the Department of Recreation and Park. The Department of Public Health also has done much work towards DCYF's Health and Wellness Outcome 2: *Increase children and youths' awareness of pregnancy prevention and STD-prevention services.* Indeed, there were some outcomes selected by DCYF which were selected by few CBOs, because the real work towards them lies in other departments. For example, the San Francisco Unified School District could most clearly affect most of the performance measures which would be associated with Academic Support Outcome 1: *Increase children and youths' attachment to school,* and the San Francisco Police Department has can define many outcomes which would fall under Benchmark 3: *Children and Youth Live In Safe, Supported Families, and Safe, Supported, Viable Communities.*

It is clear that many factors affect a child's or youth's experience as they develop. Until now, each department has independently attempted to improve those factors which fall within its domain, but had limited information about the overall effect that they were able to achieve. By standardizing the methods of evaluation across departments, we will be able to better understand what strategies are most effective at improving the lives of all the children and youth in San Francisco.

Involvement of General Community Members

A second key component in the identification of DCYF's outcomes and indicators was the involvement of general community members throughout the process. By doing this, DCYF learned new information about what the community thought was important, as well as how to prioritize different issues. Through this process of gathering information about what to evaluate, we also learned some things that we needed to do a more analytical read on.

In general, past efforts to evaluate were frequently conducted as an assessment of a program's progress towards achieving a funder's expectations. Because funders created their list of expectations (or "outcomes") based on research, best practices, and prior funded programs, this method was able to help create effective programs.

> *"In general, GIRLS 2000 staff seemed to find the process of developing the logic model helpful. At one point, the Executive Director commented that most evaluations in which she's participated ask questions to which* funders *want to know the answers (but that she often finds irrelevant or even invasive), whereas this particular evaluation actually asked questions to which* she *wanted to know the answers." – Urban Service Project, Girls 2000*

> *The nature of Huckleberry's crisis shelter, which provides very short term, crisis intervention to the majority of youth that come through its doors, did not fit well into the standard template. Simply, there were no appropriate outcomes for this service. To resolve this problem, a new outcome was added to the standard template: Health and Wellness 7, "Increase the safety and/or stability of children and youths' living situations." --Individual CBO Report, Huckleberry House and Larkin St. Youth Programs, SF Runaway and Homeless Youth Network*

Shortcomings of the Survey as an Evaluation Tool

Situationally Difficult or Inappropriate

The trusted or most-frequently contacted staff member was the primary person to distribute surveys. This posed a significant challenge for many services involving a therapist- or counselor-relationship between the staff person and the youth. In these situations, the staff person frequently expressed that to administer a survey, especially if they were expected to collect the survey at its completion, would run counter to the personal structure of the relationship between the staff and the youth. They argued that youth at risk were frequently in situations in which adults were likely to ask them to "fill out forms" in order to record them, and that these staff did not want to be associated with a generally cold and impersonal paper bureaucracy. There was also a perceived risk of tainting the survey data if the youth felt compelled to answer more positively than truthfully in situations in which they felt that they were of a small population who was being surveyed, and therefore confidentiality could not be assured. Additionally, the staff in one-on-one situations felt odd should they be expected to stay in the room with a youth who was completing a survey, but equally odd leaving the youth in an office to complete it alone, which would have been a radical break in their usual interaction structure. As a result, there was a significant lack of data from clients receiving services in a one-on-one setting.

"Because the relationship between the youth and Mentor is a key aspect of the program, there was concern that for some youth, having their Mentor ask them to fill out the survey may interfere in the trust-building needed in the relationship." – SF Youth Guidance Center, Volunteer Case Management Program

"For reasons of clinical confidentiality, it was deemed inappropriate to survey any youth who took advantage of the [Westside Mental Health Center Program] program, which is essentially an emergency service." – Morrisania West Beacon

"The only deviation from the standard template was the decision to use a staff survey rather than a youth survey to evaluate the therapy and related services provided by Huckleberry. This decision was made in consideration of the confidentiality requirements and general sensitivity of these services." – Huckleberry Larkin Youth Services

Programs which provide anonymous services and have a national contact line, such as a website or a toll-free phone number, have difficulty reporting their

usage and success rates for youth within a particular regional area. While this is incorporated into their reporting to individual funders, it proves a challenge when trying to include the impact of their work in a city-wide strategic planning process. As a result, we have little or no valid data for San Francisco residents who are participants in this program.

When a call is received at a crisis phone line, it generally falls into one of two categories: a) a request for information, or b) a situation requiring counseling. This proved to be a difficult situation in which to collect additional data using a survey for a number of reasons:

1. *calls were frequently too short to include a survey (one agency averaged 1-3 minutes per call);*

2. *counseling calls relied on personal contact, making it awkward to infuse them with a series of standardized questions;*

3. *the caller would have to report their answers to the listener, making it difficult to give honest answers to questions about the content or success of the call.*

As a result, we discussed options for gathering survey information, including requesting participation in a voluntary survey administered over the phone by a separate staff person at the end of the call, and the creation of a web-based survey to which callers could log on anonymously at their convenience. All approaches were determined to have marginal value, as they would necessarily contain data skewed by the opt-in nature of the data gathering methods. As a result, we have no data about the success rates of anonymous telephone-based programs.

Overlapping Profiles

When surveys were distributed, inherent assumptions about the discrete nature of the populations to be surveyed were revealed. This led to the discovery that we did not have specific instruments or even specific questions to uncover the issues of, for example, teen parents – who obviously were members of both the 12-18 target audience **and** the parent/guardian target audience. This particular population was the most significant omission in the instruments that were developed. As a result, we have limited information through field notes and interviews about teen parents, but little specific information about the effectiveness of general programs when working with teen parents.

Biases and Assumptions

As the surveys were administered in a greater variety of client populations than were originally available to test the instruments, it became apparent that there were many hidden assumptions in the survey which, when added together, became tantamount to an implicit insensitivity to the variations in home and family structures in which the youth found themselves. Some examples:

Biases and Assumptions: Neighborhoods

The question, **"What neighborhood do you live in?"** became problematic for programs which devoted themselves to working with homeless youth and/or families. This was a basic demographic data point, one identified as critical to examine the geographic distribution of funds and services throughout the city. Yet, obviously, it had little or no application to the clients of these homeless programs. Further, since the demographic

data collection was located near the beginning of the survey, there is a risk that the bulk of the survey was considered not applicable to the youth and/or families in question. Evaluators for these programs additionally found that staff at these programs were protective of their clients, worked in an atmosphere in which there were expectations of a lack of understanding or sensitivity on the part of outsiders, and were therefore frequently unwilling to administer the surveys. As a result, there is a significantly lower amount of data collected than was desired about homeless youth and/or families.

Biases and Assumptions: Living Arrangements

The question, **"With whom do you live?"** had some of the same issues articulated above for homeless youth. In addition to this, further distribution of the survey revealed an implicit bias towards stability in this question. Some youth receiving this survey were youth whose living situation changed frequently. This was particularly true in certain neighborhoods, and for certain programs. Causes of these living situation changes were numerous: divorced parents could share custody of their child, and the child considers themselves residing in both homes; youth whose parents were frequent recidivists would live with parents while they were out of prison, then return to another relative's home when they went back in; children whose parents were unable to care for them regularly could live part time at one or more relative's home on a rotating basis. In these situations, children and youth appeared to select more than one option. As a result, we have skewed or little data about youth who reside in more than one home.

Biases and Assumptions: Parenting Questions

There was significant resistance among CBO staff and some evaluators to the parenting questions designed to test levels of knowledge about parental involvement and infant/child development. For example, the question, "How often do you read to your child?" was perceived as having the potential to make a parent "feel guilty" if they did not read to their child regularly. Additionally, early childhood program staff felt that the questions seemed to ask more about individual knowledge and skills development than about the program's direct influence on parenting. Steps were taken to place questions asking directly about the program earlier in the survey in order to place the subsequent questions about parental involvement into a context in which the staff felt the parents would feel more that the CBO was being tested, and not the parents. [As an aside, JMPT staff noted that neither staff nor evaluators raised the issue of privacy and sensitivity for the youth. While adults were unwilling to pry into and/or question the behaviors of adults, they were comfortable asking far more intrusive and potentially embarrassing questions of youth.]

Biases and Assumptions: Educational Level of Parent/Guardians

While great care was taken to monitor the education level of the questions in the children and youth surveys, little or no efforts were made to tailor parent/guardian and staff surveys to elementary- or below-high-school reading levels. While most of the actual words used were not above high-school level, the layout and the sentence construction definitely assumed a slightly more elevated reading level. This

was recognized as a potential issue at two points:

1. *Staff at certain CBOs indicated that many of the parents of the youth in their program were unlikely to respond to written materials.*

2. *Survey data has shown that a significant percentage of the 312 parents/guardians who did complete the survey have only completed an elementary-level education (just over 17%), while fully 1/3 of the respondents have only completed as far as high school. Data from these surveys appears to be fairly valid, however one wonders if the reading level of the survey contributed to the overall low rate of return.*

Biases and Assumptions: Respondents with Disabilities

Many CBO programs are designed to help youth with a wide variety of disabilities. When distributing the DCYF survey to these programs, we ran into a few different issues:

The survey was not designed to include the needs and the reading abilities of youth with learning disabilities. For these youth, the survey (already fairly long due to its comprehensive nature) took, on average, up to 4 times as long to complete as compared to non-learning-disabled youth. Even when efforts were made to reduce this burden (e.g. having the survey verbally administered) it proved to be too difficult for many youth to complete. As a result, we have a significantly reduced amount of data on youth with learning disabilities.

> *"All of the children and youth served by this collaborating program were special needs children and were unable to fill out the survey at all due to the lack of development skills to read and write on their own." – California Lawyers for the Arts, Culture Core*

Biases and Assumptions: Drop-in Programs as "Safe Havens"

Many CBOs are designed to offer a "safe haven" for youth who are experiencing difficulties for a wide variety of reasons. A common program structure, developed in response to this desire, is the "drop-in" program. In this structure, CBO staff remain available at a given time in a given location and youth are invited to come by and get services or participate in various recreational activities. While staff at this type of program report great success at creating "safe havens", and many youth report being referred by friends to these types of drop-ins (which is assumed to indicate a positive experience for the referrer), the inability to predict levels of participation, the structure of a drop-in program, and the lack of follow-up with participating youth make assessment of drop-in programs difficult for a number of reasons:

1. *A paper or verbal survey can be perceived as antithetical to the desired relaxed, non-regimented structure of the program (which is perceived as a key to the program's success for youth at risk);*

2. *A one-time survey makes it difficult to obtain a representative sampling of clients, while repeating the survey causes an unpredictable number of*

repeat-respondents, as youth may or may not choose to return to the program any number of times;

3. *Due to the lack of a "start time" in a drop-in program, it is awkward for staff to have participants start a survey, and then have others arriving during this period.*

As a result, we may have potentially invalid or skewed data from drop-in programs.

> *"As mentioned before, the frequency of contact and the activities are determined by the individual mentor and are dependent on a number of variables: personal interests and skills of the mentor, interests and needs of the youth, age of the youth, etc. Because of the lack of any uniform activities within this program, it was difficult to determine the measures for which this program could be held accountable." – SF Youth Guidance Center, Volunteer Case Management program*

Discussion by Benchmark Area

In this discussion section, findings drawn from the more heavily selected outcome areas of enrichment and academic support are explained. The section contains key areas of potential further research.

The menu-driven approach utilized in this evaluation resulted in clear emphasis on certain outcomes and performance measures, and little to no emphasis on others. Thus, the areas of emphasis that were selected most frequently drove the majority of research into each of the four Benchmark areas, because the majority of data collected was linked to these most popular areas of work. The breakdown of outcomes selected by CBOs by focus areas follows.

?? Academic Support Focus Area: (51 of 94 evaluated CBOs) 54%

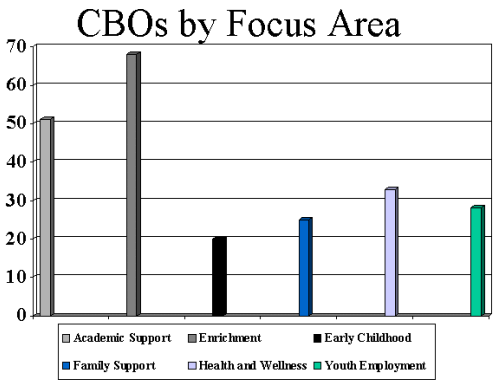
?? Enrichment Focus Area: (68 of 94 evaluated CBOs) 72%

?? Early Childhood Focus Area: (20 of 94 evaluated CBOs) 21%

?? Family Support: (25 of 94 evaluated CBOs) 27%

?? Health and Wellness: (33 of 94 evaluated CBOs) 35%

?? Youth Employment: (28 of 94 evaluated CBOs) 30%



Findings: CBOs by Focus Area

The areas of emphasis clearly demonstrate that **Enrichment** and **Academic Support** Focus Area outcomes comprise the core of desired program impact on children, youth and their families in San Francisco from the perspective of staff at these community-based organizations. Because these areas have more data than the others, the findings are more accessible.

Discussion for Benchmark One: Children and Youth are Healthy

Of the nine outcomes related to Benchmark One: Children and Youth are Healthy, only five were consistently selected by CBOs. We suggest that these outcomes highlight core areas of work at CBOs. The selected areas of emphasis included the following (in order of most frequently selected to least):

1. *Increasing the emotional connection of children and youth to their community through the context of strong relationships with staff and peers at a program [Enrichment Outcome 7: Increase children and youths' sense of responsibility to themselves and other members of their community]*

2. *Providing education on a variety of health issues and practices [Health and Wellness Outcome 5: Increase children and youths' knowledge about healthy behaviors]*

3. *Providing opportunities for youth to exercise regularly [Enrichment Outcome 10: Increase children and youths' participation in physical exercise]*

4. *Reinforcing healthy practices and decision-making in youth [Health and Wellness Outcome 6: Increase the capacity of children and youth to promote their own health through their decisions and behaviors]*

5. *Providing referrals to counseling, offering on-site counseling, and coordinating peer support groups [Health and Wellness Outcome 4: Maintain or improve the mental health of children and youth]*

6. *Supporting youth to cope with stress [Health and Wellness Outcome 4: Maintain or improve the mental health of children and youth]*

DCY CBO's identify with outcome focused on increasing children and youths' sense of belonging

The area of work most heavily selected by CBOs in health and wellness outcomes (almost doubling the other areas) is *Enrichment Outcome 7 – Increase children and youths' sense of belonging to a caring community.* The list of organizations and programs that selected this outcome range from youth employment programs (MYEEP) to traditional after-school enrichment programs (Hunter's Point Boys and Girls Club) to comprehensive youth service centers (Bayview Beacon Center) to programs focusing specifically on health issues (Teenage Resources to Achieve Pregnancy Prevention T-RAPP). Selected by a similarly wide range of type of programs were the areas of health work dealing with exercise, healthy practices and decision-making.

DCYF's funding appears to be less focused in the area of traditional health support.

The more traditional health foci— which included prevention workshops, education on a variety of health issues and practices, referrals to counseling, on-site counseling, and peer support groups—were selected by family support programs (Strengthening Family Support in the

Portola Neighborhood), or large-scale child care and special needs collaboratives (Quality Child Care and Mental Health Collaborative, LYRIC Youth Talkline/After School Program). Because these traditional health support areas were not chosen as often, and because the numbers of organizations working in these areas are much fewer in comparison to the amount and range of programs dealing with emotional connection, exercise, healthy practices and decision-making, DCYF's funding appears to be less focused in the area of traditional health support, or primary care.

Is DCYF equipped to fund more programs that choose these outcomes to be at the core of their work? Is that appropriate, or should DCYF focus solely on the types of health outcomes that are applicable to multiple program-activity frameworks? The underlying questions remain: What is DCYF's particular role within the context of citywide children and youth health services? What is the piece of the puzzle that will most effectively contribute to citywide progress towards high levels of health for all children and youth?

It appears that the strength of DCYF-funded CBOs' contribution towards progress under Benchmark One lies in DCYF's capacity to further understand and articulate the best practices and role that after-school academic support, enrichment and youth employment programs play in advancing the general health of children and youth. The discussion that proceeds, based on the research questions that follow should advance DCYF's knowledge and capacity to do so:

- ?? Are youth taking good care of themselves?
- ?? Do children and youth feel emotionally supported by their CBOs?
- ?? Are youth exposed to and engaging in risk-taking behaviors?

Youth attending DCYF-funded CBOs may be more aware of basic health and safety issues than the mainstream youth population.

Strikingly high numbers of young people surveyed indicate that they perceive themselves and their peers as generally healthy and responsible decision makers regarding health and lifestyle issues. Somewhat surprisingly, very few adolescents surveyed indicated that their friends have ever suggested trying alcohol or drugs, a percentage that is much lower than the indicator trend data on incidence of alcohol and substance use among middle and high school students from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. The discrepancy in this data suggests that the youth who attend DCYF CBOs may be more aware and more responsible around basic health and safety issues than the mainstream youth population in the city. However, causality is difficult to determine.

CBOs may be having a measurable impact on youths' beliefs and choices, but it is also possible that youth who attend CBOs are already proactive, responsible, healthy young people. The data becomes more meaningful in the context of determining the future degree and direction of supports and opportunities for children and youth in the areas of overall health and stress condition. Data linked to the various

questions on general health contained interesting inconsistencies. Although 92% of children and youth reported "yes," that they thought they were healthy to an initial, straightforward question, "Do you think you are healthy right now?" more than half of surveyed youth indicated through a follow-up question that their perception of their own health was more complex than a simple "yes." 52% of youth declared that they wanted to change a few things about their health, or that they were very aware of how unhealthy they were. This discrepancy suggests that, actually, youth are more concerned about their health than the simple 92% vote for "yes" indicates. If approximately half of the youth population in CBOs consciously perceives that they could be healthier, does DCYF believe that their currently funded set of services adequately addresses this need for supports and opportunities to engage in practices that would better a youths' health?

Youth and Healthy Decision-Making: DCYF-funded CBOs have an impact on youth stress.

Data concerning youth recognition of healthy decision-making in others yields a similar inconsistency substantiating a suggested need for supports and opportunities to help youth better their general health. While 90% of youth stated that their friends are healthy in an initial query, a follow-up question resulted in 56% of youth reporting that their friends wouldn't really help them to get healthier even if they had a definite plan to do so. Not only do half of the youth population at CBOs need information and opportunities to practice healthier behaviors, they also need help to deal with challenges on the road to better health like the lack of secure support from their peers and/or social group.

Further research might, first, clarify the health need, and, then, determine whether or not DCYF is currently adequately addressing this need. If 21% of surveyed youth declare that when they are stressed out, they "don't know how they get through it, but they do," is this a concern? Does this indicate a need? If so, a next step might be to look more closely at the activities and survey results of specific organizations that had selected this outcome. Survey results for the question, "How do you handle your stress," will vary from program to program. Comparing "adequate" and "inadequate" sets of responses to this question alongside the logic models of the programs may yield hypothesis around key infrastructure elements and best practices that contributed to the "adequate" set of results. An initial way to assess whether DCYF is currently adequately addressing the need for education and support for youth to identify resources and strategies to cope with stress might be to take these key infrastructure elements and hypothesized best practices and determine how many other organizations in the funded service set match up in terms of resources and practices. If few show similar models, perhaps DCYF is not currently addressing the need.

Further research could also set targets for impact results: What does it mean if 49% of youth report that they rarely exercise? Should DCYF provide more activities focusing on exercise – or is this figure independent of the opportunities for exercise that DCYF-funded programs offer?

Although a first glance at the data in the area of general health and level of stress indicates that the majority of children and youth currently involved in CBOs perceive themselves to be healthy and not too

stressed out, a closer look indicates that youth perceptions of their own health and stress level are more complex. The range of answers to follow-up questions in this area suggest that more supports and opportunities, or supports and opportunities of a different kind, might be needed.

Youth and Healthy Decision-Making: DCYF-funded CBOs have an impact on risky behaviors in youth.

Youth response to pressure to smoke, drink, do drugs, carry weapons, take other risks with their health, have unprotected sex, and/or ride with a drunk driver demonstrates striking absence of pressure to take risks. 75%-90% of responses by youth aged eight to nineteen fell into the category, "No friends have suggested this," for each type of risk. This data starkly contrasts with data collected by the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (administered by CDC to approximately 2000 youth at San Francisco Unified School District middle and public schools). YRBS data indicates that 40%-50% of middle school youth, alone, in 1999 have tried smoking cigarettes and alcohol. High school percentages are even higher by YRBS calculations for cigarette and alcohol use.[14] The differences between these two figures raise more questions than answers.

One area of inquiry includes survey context and validity of self report data -- do youth at schools feel more anonymous and therefore are more likely to report the truth, whereas in a small CBO community, are youth less at ease to report the truth?

Another area of exploration must take into account "selection bias"[15] -- do youth who are responsible and make healthy decisions self-select into after school enrichment and community-based programs? It is possible that CBOs strongly influence responsible and healthy decision-making behaviors, though the way in which CBOs may control a young person's environment so that it is free from average pressure to smoke cigarettes and/or drink is still unclear.

Although youth response to questions about taking risks demonstrates that the majority of youth in CBOs may not be exposed by their peers to risk-taking behaviors, much less be pressured to engage in these actions, a follow-up question makes the picture more complex by suggesting that youth at CBOs still feel peer pressure -- although it may not be to take the aforementioned risks. Answers to the survey question, "If you were hanging out with your friends and they suggested something that you didn't want to do, what would happen," resulted in a range of responses. The four response options were:

1. *I would leave them and do my own thing;*

[14] 1997 and 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, CDC. Middle School and High School Level Summary Report; SFUSD website.

[15] National Research Council Institute of Medicine (2000), *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Committee on Integrating the Science of Early Childhood Development. Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah A. Phillips, eds. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press. (pp. 72-74)

2. *I would stay with my friends but I wouldn't do it;*

3. *I would try to talk my friends out of it;*

4. *I would just do it.*

We decided that if a youth chose option #1, then their response was categorized as adequate. If a youth chose any of the remaining options #3, #4, #5, then their response was categorized as inadequate. The responses categorized as inadequate represent youth who capitulate to peer pressure or who put themselves at risk for further pressure and thus possible surrender. Just over 50% of surveyed youth fell into the latter – inadequate – category.

When we look at information beyond the high numbers of youth who indicated that they aren't exposed to pressure to engage in risky behaviors, and explore the data drawn from a question on peer pressure in general, findings indicate the presence of vulnerable behaviors in youth to succumb to peer pressure. This data substantiates the need for work in this area and may suggest a need for even more supports and opportunities, or a need for professional development in best practices.

CBO impact on the areas of general health, stress reduction and youth resistance of peer pressure is difficult to determine. Because some data indicates that the majority of youth perceive themselves to be healthy, declare a low level of stress and indicate the lack of exposure to pressure to take risks, it appears that CBOs may substantially inform youth behavior as measured by the surveys, but it is also possible that healthy and resilient youth already self-select into CBOs. Other data, however, suggests that youth perception of their general health, their capacity to manage stress and their potential response to peer pressure is actually more complex than at first glance, and this data indicates that youth at CBOs may actually very much need the crucial supports and opportunities provided through these programs – if not even more support, as well.

Discussion for Benchmark Two: Children and Youth are Ready to Learn and Succeeding in School

Community-based organizations funded by DCYF are uniquely poised to supplement and support the school day of hundreds of young people in San Francisco. Of 94 CBOs that completed evaluation plans, 51 of them (54%) chose program outcomes in the area of academic support. In general, the data looks similar to the findings in Benchmark One: youth in DCYF CBOs seem to have a positive outlook on school, report higher levels of academic achievement than the general population, and feel that they have adults who would advocate for them in a school-related manner. Again, causality is unclear. It is somewhat likely that youth who involve themselves in CBOs may be more academically motivated than youth in the general population.

A closer look at several of the key issues, however, reveals more complexity than a general conclusion allows. In response to the question, "I learn things in this program that I use in school," most youth selected "strongly agree" or "agree" in a four point scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. However, this initial data provides no evidence that there is a correlation between being in an academic support program and youths' perception that they can use at school what they have learned at the CBO. This means that if we were to *increase* the "inputs" of an academic support program or change the nature of the requirements for participation, there would not necessarily be a significant change in youths' perception that the skills and knowledge learned at a CBO are also useful in school. We believe that this data, if supported through further analyses, may yield some of the most interesting conclusions of the evaluation. It is possible that there is a weaker relationship between the academic support activities that CBOs provide and youths' transfer of the skills and knowledge learned to a school context

Going to School: High school youth at CBOs have a more positive attitude, but Middle school youth at CBOs seem to be less connected.

While the DCYF evaluation used the qualitative measures, "I like going to school" and "I enjoy going to school," to provide an indication of whether or not children feel that they belong at school, a recent 2001 student satisfaction survey administered by the San Francisco Unified School District, asked students to respond to the statement "Overall, I am happy with my school." The results of the DCYF evaluation, as described in the findings section, found that 67% of middle school youth and 80% of high school youth enjoyed going to school. The student satisfaction survey, however, found just about the opposite. While 80% of fifth graders reported that they were happy with their school, only 53% of eleventh graders reported that they were happy with their school. On the one hand, high school youth at CBOs clearly have a more positive attitude towards their school than the general population. On the other hand, middle school youth at CBOs seem to be less connected to their school. This raises important implications for targeted programming. Academic programs targeted at younger youth might explore, more deeply, best practices in the area of increasing middle school youths'

connection to school. Current academic support programs appear to be structured suitably for high school students.

Data suggest that CBOs can be a front-line of defense against high-school drop-out rate.

Data suggest that CBOs can assess early indications of youths' expectations about graduating from high school.

Data resulting from the question – "How sure are you that you will graduate from high school?" -- offers another interesting comparison point to San Francisco Unified School District data. In answer to this question, 7% of youth 12-18 years old felt that it was "unlikely" that they would graduate. The 1999-2000 annual CDE estimate of SFUSD 4-year drop-out rate was 9%.[16] There is clearly no way to know whether the youth who, in their CBO context, declared that they were unlikely to graduate, are also the youth who end up dropping out. However, the fact that DCYF is able to assess early indications of low self-expectation to graduate from high school places CBOs in a powerful position to directly affect the high school drop out rate.

CBOs can assess frequency of parents reading to their children.

In addition to insight into possible programming for middle school youth and youth at risk of dropping out of high school, a third area of data elicited interesting results – the frequency at which parents read to their children. Surprisingly, only 1/3 of parents reported reading to their children every day. 2/3 of parents stated that they read to their children a couple of times a week, occasionally or never. These figures suggest a disturbingly wide range of school-readiness levels particularly in the area of early childhood literacy. Early childhood education, pre-school, family support and child care programs, however, have the opportunity to offset this disparity. The fact that this data can be collected is exciting news. Not only can program staff identify and target young children for additional early literacy support, but programs can design parent/caregiver activities to focus on early literacy around the schedules and specific conditions of their parent population that, for the many reasons, only occasionally or rarely read to their children.

[16] San Francisco Unified School District, *Summary of Performance Data*. Report to Board of Education, San Francisco Unified School District. September 4th, 2001.

Discussion for Benchmark Three: Children and Youth Live in Safe Supported Families and Safe, Supported Viable Communities

Findings in Benchmark Three highlight the potential of family support and enrichment programs (that work towards family and community support outcomes) to contribute even more powerfully to community support than they already are. Parents consistently reported that, second to family, they turned to staff at CBOs for help and information. This data reinforces the general finding that once parents get to the organizations, the programs do a good job of meeting their needs. However, data reported by parents about relevant changes, and results reported by youth around a sense of belonging suggest that CBOs could improve programming in a number of ways.

CBOs and program improvement suggestions.

Parents, first and foremost, called for "more information about available services." Traditionally, outreach and information has been a difficult area to improve. The fact that parents are still asking for more information indicates that a different and improved way of doing outreach and informing parents is still needed. 23% of responses to the survey item asking about recommended program improvements fell into this category. This percentage was double or triple the percentages that fell to all other response categories.

The next two recommended program improvements receiving a high level of marks included "services for all my kids in the same place" and "services in my native language." Not only do these results speak to the diversity of the population that DCYF serves, but they underscore the necessity of family support programming to be driven by a parents' perspective. Although, clearly, a program could not provide *all* services for *all* kids in one place, this recommended program improvement strongly supports the idea of fuller-serviced family support programs that might include child care, health services, and after school programs in one centralized location – perhaps, something like the current Beacon Centers. Though parents' logistical needs have always been taken into account, to some extent, within the creation of many family support programs, this information indicates that there is more out there that we could find out, and use. An important question that is raised, however, is how might family support programs include a wider array of services without getting away from best practices that smaller, more focused programs employ so well?

DCYF-funded CBOs addressing language challenges.

The recommended improvement, "services in my native language," indicates a clear request on the part of many parents to improve programming substantially by creating cultural and linguistic initiatives that speak to the needs of the populations that DCYF funded organizations serve. This would not only be an excellent area of further exploration for DCYF, but program staff would probably invest in

this research as well.[17] Parent surveys were created for most of these organizations in English, Spanish and/or Chinese if requested. Clearly, there are still many populations who needed translations that were left out entirely, including Vietnamese and Tagalog – at the very least. The fact that the need for more services in the native languages of the San Francisco communities arose through a limited surveying of a few sub-groups indicates that the need may be far greater than evidenced here.

Youth data, as well, supports the need for more culturally competent programming. When asked, "In the last 3 months, have you participated in an activity or event at this youth program that celebrated or taught you more about your cultural background," 56% of youth answered "No." 44% of youth answered "Yes."

With the largest source of flexible funding for children and youth services in San Francisco, and, clearly, a positive relationship with parents served, DCYF has the capability to address the cultural and linguistic needs highlighted in these evaluation results.

[17] The organizations that chose Family Support Outcome 5 follow: Child Care and Family Program, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth Project, Early Head Start Wrap Around, Family Child Care Network, Girls 2000, Homeless Children's Network, Homeless Family Support Center, In-Home Visitation/Caring for Asian Children Collaborative, Interagency Lifeline Collaborative, Jamestown Center Project, Open Gate, South of Market Teen and Family Center and Talk Line Family Support Center.

Discussion for Benchmark Four: Children and Youth Contribute to the Growth, Development, and Vitality of San Francisco

Community-based organizations provide a uniquely supportive environment for young people to understand and explore the potential impact that they can make on the world. CBOs throughout San Francisco invest in developing not only a young person's skills, but also their sense of confidence and the feeling that they are part of a community. Over one-third of all CBOs in all focus areas selected outcomes that indicated that they are working to develop leadership skills among children and youth. The majority of youth report that they feel like leaders at their programs. Causality is unclear. The youth who report feelings of leadership may also already possess a tendency towards leadership.

At the CBOs who are investing in Youth Employment efforts, a significant percentage of youth appear to be independent in their skills, and stable in their work. This may speak both to the appropriate level of employment education and placement by the CBOs, but may also be a result of selection bias. Youth who are motivated to work with an employment-oriented CBO may be, generally, more employment motivated. The most interesting finding in this area so far reveals that nearly all of the youth who feel that they have been encouraged to develop leadership skills appear to gain a parallel interest in helping their community, even after they have completed the CBOs' program.

Benchmark Four is particularly important in the field of youth development because of its focus on adolescents – "the hardest age group for which to generate positive public interest and support, and thus the group (unsurprisingly) for which the public and nonprofit sectors provide the least amount of support, opportunities and guidance."[18]

DCYF-funded CBOs and their role in developing youth leaders

Leadership development is a clear example of an area of youth development that the 1/3 of funded CBOs who selected outcomes in Benchmark 4 could work together to improve. Although over 60% of youth reported that they either "always" or "sometimes" felt like a leader at their CBO, almost 53.33% of youth indicated that they had never led any activity or workshop. Approximately 60% of youth had never led a meeting. Increasing the concrete opportunities for youth (who may *feel* like leaders and *want* to give back to their community) to practice basic leadership skills like planning and facilitating meetings, workshops and activities, could have major positive influences on the capacity of youth to adequately handle real-life leadership opportunities. If those 60% of youth who

[18] Public/Private Ventures, *Youth Development: Issues, Challenges and Directions*. Youth Development Direction Project. Editor: Natalie Jaffe. Design: Malish & Pagonis. Revisions: Jennifer Marquis. Production: Maxine Sherman, Communications Manager at Public/Private Ventures. 2005 Market Street, Suite 900; Philadelphia, PA 19103. 215-557-4400. www.ppv.org

declare that they want to give back to their communities are not given enough opportunities to practice the skills that they will need to do so, we lose. The first step, however, is to determine the best practices in this area. What are the most important leadership skills that youth can begin to master, not only as adolescents, but as elementary-aged children as well? What are the best types (including structure and frequency and staffing and materials) of activities to facilitate the development of these leadership skills? DCYF is uniquely poised to coordinate an effort to research and answer these questions, as well as fund programs on the basis of this research.

DCYF-funded CBOs and their role in developing youth leaders within specific neighborhoods

Another interesting area of analysis is the findings section reporting the percentages of youth from the top three residential neighborhoods who declared that they wanted to continue to help their communities after they left the CBO program. The top three neighborhoods (in respective order of decreasing percentages) were Mission/Bernal Heights, Excelsior/Oceanview/ Merced/Ingleside, and Bayview/Hunters Point. Richmond was the final neighborhood to appear on the scale – though the numbers for the youth who wanted to give back and the numbers who didn't were separated by a small percentage. Interestingly enough, the response rate of programs in the Tenderloin neighborhood was very low, yet DCYF funds a substantial amount of programs in the Tenderloin area of the city. Why are the numbers for Richmond so even? A key question that arises is -- what is the interpretation of this question by the youth who took the survey? What do they mean by "giving back" to their community.

The many factors influencing youths' perception of themselves as leaders and their desire to give back to the community including natural tendencies, programmatic influence and home-life, parents/community, and education cloud clear causal links. However, DCYF is in a perfect position to begin to fund more focused work in this area.

Discussion of Dosage Findings

We chose the concept of the intervention "dosage" received by children and youth participating in CBOs to illustrate a way of examining the possible relationship between a CBOs practices and structure and the outcomes attained by the children and youth served. While it may seem obvious that such relationships do exist, to date it has been very difficult, if not impossible, for a CBO or a funder to gather and track corresponding data. The evaluation model designed for DCYF makes this type of tracking and analysis possible, and we suggest that DCYF continue to analyze the definition of program dosage, as well as its relationship to client outcomes. The following discussion suggests issues that could potentially affect the way DCYF delivers services to youth.

Children and Youth Participate in DCYF Programs Differently

Children are, in general, less mobile than teenagers, and this may be an important reason that there are differences in the participation patterns among these age groups at DCYF-funded programs. The 8 to 12 year-olds who are reporting that they attend CBOs more than three days a week and participate in more than 3 activities may be more of a "captive audience" than their older peers, who are more likely to be involved in non-CBO extracurricular activities, work for pay, or simply spending time with friends. Many parents may be relying on CBOs as a safe, engaging place for their children to spend the hours between school and when they get home from work. Children attending CBOs everyday are available to participate in many activities, which may be offered on a drop-in basis precisely because of the need to provide a flexible variety of activities. Undoubtedly, CBO staff already observe differences in the way younger and older youth participate in their programs, and design programming accordingly. The age distribution of youth across the various dosage categories underscores the need for attention to the types of programming offered to different age groups. The role of a CBO for younger children may be as a generally positive and enriched developmental environment, whereas teenagers may be more likely to participate in CBOs as a means of learning a particular skill, or spending time with a particular peer group, or adult staff person. The nature of adolescent participation suggests that CBOs seeking to engage teenagers should structure programs that are focused around one core theme, and require less than daily participation.

Adult Staff Can Serve as a "Hook" for Getting and Keeping Youth Connected

Youth attending CBOs 1 to 3 days a week for one activity are much more likely to say that they would turn to "one staff member in particular" for help with "very personal issues." When youth increase their dosage of that one activity to more than 3 days per week, the likelihood that they would turn to "any staff member" for the same type of support dramatically increases. While the present study does not reveal the mechanisms by which a youth might move from low to high frequency participation, it does suggest that even youth who seem to be participating at a

relatively low level of program dosage feel strongly connected to the adults in their programs, as well as the other youth. Findings reported previously in the Benchmark One section also indicate that children and youth would readily ask a CBO staff member for general advice or help, would refer a friend in need to CBO staff, or would turn to a staff member if they were upset or angry, all indications that children and youth at DCYF-funded CBOs feel confident about their relationships with the adults who work there. It is also notable that across dosage categories, young people reported that they feel high levels of empowerment to voice their opinions, and play equal roles with adults in the daily workings of CBO programs. In general, our findings regarding trust and connections present between CBO staff and youth mirror the findings from the youth development supports and opportunities survey conducted by the Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD) that CBOs are doing a good job of building strong, caring relationships between adults and youth.

Unclear Relationship Between CBO Programming and Academic Support

Further research is needed to tease out the relationship between the types of academic support activities, such as afterschool tutoring, provided by CBOs, and the academic performance of young people in the classroom. This year's survey included general attitude questions, rather than objective measures of reading, writing, and science skills, which will be developed by programs in the next round of evaluation. Therefore, our conclusions from the current research findings should be understood as youth's self-reported school-related outcomes, rather than as objective data such as grades or test scores.

We asked children and youth to respond to a variety of questions about how they feel about school in general, and about the connections they make between what they do in community-based programs and what they do in school. By breaking out responses to these items by dosage levels, we examined the relationship between frequency and type of participation and school attachment. The dosage-related findings in this area, however, may have more to do with the differing ages and stages of the young people in each dosage category than they do with the level of intervention. For example, the young people who are attending CBOs between 1 and 3 days a week for only one activity may be making a very deliberate choice to participate in their CBOs at that dosage level, because they are busy youth juggling school and multiple extracurricular activities. These youth may fit the mold of a high school "over-achiever," and over-achieving youth who make top grades in school may be more likely to participate in CBOs deeply rather than broadly. At the other extreme, the younger youth in the high frequency/broad participation dosage category may not be self-selecting to participate at this dosage level so much as they are being placed in these settings by their parents or, perhaps, school staff to give them something safe and constructive to do from the time school lets out to when their parents can pick them up. In the next round of DCYF evaluation, it would be appropriate to develop a set of reusable assessments for measuring actual improvements in academic skills.

Deep Participation in CBOs Contributes to Leadership Development

Children and youth who participate in only one CBO program, regardless of frequency, tend to report higher levels of skill and interest in being involved in their communities than their peers who participate more broadly in many activities. This finding suggests possible differences in the tone and content of the types of activities that youth tend to be involved in singly, and the types of activities they tend to be involved in concurrently with other activities. In other words, the number of activities a young person participates in may not be solely dependent upon the number of activities offered at a given CBO. Causality is difficult to determine; it is possible that a young person who is already very "community-minded" will be more likely to participate deeply in one program at a CBO that is oriented around leadership or service, rather than select multiple activities. However, it is also likely that activities that build and reinforce community-mindedness in youth are structured to require the kind of deep participation from young people that would preclude or discourage them from adding additional activities to their list. It is important to note, however, that age may also be a factor in a young person's self-selection into a singular activity. Older youth are the ones who tend to participate deeply in CBOs, and older youth may be more developmentally ready to take on the ideals and practices of community service than their younger counterparts.

An alternative explanation for this finding may be that when young people participate in multiple activities, these activities tend to be more recreational than service-oriented in nature. For example, a typical constellation of multiple activities for a young person might be tutoring, art, and soccer, none of which are particularly oriented around "giving back to the community." It would be useful to conduct additional analyses of the data to determine typical groupings of activities, and the tendency of different age groups to select different types of activities.

As DCYF's evaluation methodology evolves, it will be important to develop further understanding of the role of both frequency and intensity of youths' participation in CBO programs. Depending on the goal, more may not necessarily be better. Further analysis may reinforce our preliminary finding that if the program goal is more specific than general enrichment, such as in the case of a leadership development program, then focus is more important than frequency.

Further Discussion: Key Research Questions for Further Analysis

This section outlines two different research questions to inform any upcoming evaluation process, including a review of "dosage" and a review of "leverage points."

The standardized evaluation system designed this year has the potential to yield a tremendous amount of data on client outcomes and best program practices over time. Planners and analysts will have ongoing access to the data through the Children's Portal, and will be able to construct their own queries of archived and current data sets, based on their research needs. A review of pilot data collected in 2001 suggests a number of research questions that can be addressed each year using the system. In the section that follows, we highlight two such research questions, and recommend an approach for continuing to analyze these issues over time.

Discussion Question: How Much is Enough? Does Quality Matter if Quantity is Low? Intervention "Dosage" at DCYF-funded Programs and the Effect of "Dosage" on Client Outcomes

As outlined in the previous section, different programs provide differing levels of involvement and engagement to participating youth. While there is certainly no one "right" way to structure a program, there probably are likely effects of varying dosage levels on child and youth outcomes. More targeted research on the effects of dosage is warranted. For example, DCYF could choose a sample of programs whose youth tend to participate frequently and deeply, and another sample of programs whose youth tend to participate frequently and broadly, and assess differences in the outcomes reported by different ages and types of youth participants. Also, it would be interesting to track individual youths' patterns of participation over time. What are the characteristics of youth who enter a program to pursue only one activity versus youth who pursue multiple activities? Do youth change their participation patterns over time? Do younger children tend to have different participation patterns than older youth? Answers to all of these questions would prove useful to CBOs designing programs around certain desired outcomes, or the needs and interests of certain age groups.

Although not a finding supported by hard data from this evaluation, it is an informal observation of the evaluators participating in this study that there is a striking discrepancy between the numbers of children and youth projected to attend CBO programs, and the actual numbers of children and youth who filled out surveys, or were informally observed at program sites. The current evaluation was not designed to assess the actual numbers of participating youth, however, we recommend, based on these repeated observations, that DCYF conduct further inquiry into the actual numbers of youth served by their grantees. An accurate count of participants is vitally important to determining the actual cost of providing

services to children, youth, and families, as well as valid models of practice.

Discussion Question: Leverage Points: Are Organizations that Target Families, Schools, and Whole Communities More Effective at Individual Change than Organizations that Target Individuals?

The field of evaluation has traditionally attempted to examine whether or not there is a direct relationship between a program's "inputs," (or their interventions and activities), and their organizational "outputs," (or measures of productivity), or, alternatively, between their program inputs and client outcomes. The more that the field of evaluation has researched programs' contributions to client outcomes, the more questions have been raised about causality. Because CBOs are not environments of controlled scientific study, it is very difficult to determine if an observed or reported change in a participant is the result of the CBO's programming, or some other aspect of that individual's environment. As with almost any study of human behavior, scientific or contextualized, it will never be possible to absolutely ascribe causality to a singular factor. Rather, it is the most likely scenario that human behavior is determined by a multitude of interrelated factors both within and outside of the person. For this reason, an accurate evaluation of a program's impact must take extra-program variables into account. We believe it is essential to understand the *ecosystem* within which a program and client function to be able to determine the relative contribution of that program on that client.

In fact, the national evaluation field is attempting to develop new tools to take more and more of the context surrounding individuals and organizations into account. For example, the Aspen Institute is developing tools and methods to assess a neighborhood's or an individual's social capital, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation sponsored a 1999 conference on evaluation, entitled *Transforming Neighborhoods into Family-Supporting Environments*. A key topic explored at this gathering was the effect of contexts like poverty and neighborhood crime on family and individual development, as well as the effect of community-based organizations not just on individuals living in neighborhoods, but on the neighborhoods themselves.

Such a focus on the ecosystem of individual development implies that a CBO might broaden its potential influence on a client by targeting not just the individual youth, but also the family the youth relates to, the other institutions, like school, the youth interacts with, and the neighborhood in which the youth lives. CBOs taking an "ecosystemic approach" to their work with children, youth, and families might emphasize connections between program staff and parents, might make a concerted effort to link their academic support program staff to their participants' regular school teachers, or might take on a neighborhood-watch safety campaign. These types of activities weave the community-based program (its staff, and its ideals) throughout the contexts the child interacts with everyday – home, school, community – in a way that cannot occur if the CBO is isolated from these other pivotal settings within the overall ecosystem.

We first noticed the importance of these issues in DCYF's programming when the Youth IMPACT program created the following survey questions that investigated the relationship between a CBO and youths' families and communities:

- This program involves families in its activities and programs.
- This program makes a difference in this community.
- Are you and your family supported by this program?
- Do you feel this program has helped you and your family become a part of your community?

One of the 41 CBO programs studied by Youth IMPACT, the Extended Family Home Project of Glide Memorial Church, was profiled as exemplary in their final report specifically because the youth in this program reported such a strong belief that the program involves families in its activities and programs.

Despite its appeal to youth as a "best practice," keeping up a close relationship with families does not seem to be commonplace among most DCYF CBOs, as evidenced by the finding that almost two-thirds of youth surveyed report that their CBOs have never been in touch with their parents or families. We recommend that DCYF explore an "ecosystemic" approach to services as a best practice. The first step of this approach would be to identify a sample of CBOs using this approach in their work with youth and families, and then develop criteria to match a parallel set of CBOs who take a more individual approach in their work, and compare child and youth outcomes between these two types of programs.

Special Section

Youth IMPACT:

The Challenges and Opportunities of Youth-led Evaluation

2000-2001

(attached as separate document)

Special Section

Examining the Quality of Youth Experience in DCYF Funded Organizations 2000-2001

(attached as separate document)

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides recommendations for a continuation of the evaluation process, starting with specific recommendations on how to improve the evaluation model and concluding with a proposed timeline. Specific unmet needs revealed by this pilot round of data collection are highlighted.

Specific Recommendations

This report thus far has reviewed the methodological framework, data collection and analysis. The Discussion chapter included aspects of the successes and challenges of the 2000-2001 evaluation. Several recommendations emerged based on these challenges.

Build Evaluation Into the RFP Development and Grant-Making Process

Based on this baseline evaluation, DCYF may decide to prioritize funding strategies and targeted outcomes, and DCYF has the option to fund specific services that reflect those priorities.

This recommendation is broad-based and addresses several challenges of the 2000-2001 evaluation. The funding priorities were based on the general needs of San Francisco children and youth, along with the framework of the four Benchmarks established by the Board of Supervisors and Mayor.

DCYF-funded services originated ten years ago and encompass a wide range of services and populations. DCYF's funding strategy has typically adhered to allocating 25% of total dollars to each benchmark area. Although this general principle drove the creation of the outcomes menu, a wide range of outcomes were chosen, not necessarily reflecting an equal distribution across benchmark areas. The result was a diverse patchwork of services. This strategy allowed CBOs to creatively develop strategies for a wide range of social problems and needs. The challenge emerged in attempting to coordinate and merge all services into a comprehensive model of services for children, youth, and families.

DCYF has the option to define its topical priorities, and use the outcomes menu to shape programs' work in the *design* phase, when programs are responding to RFPs and contracting with the department. Input can be derived from stakeholders, community members and data to shape the specific substantive priorities. DCYF, based on this feedback, could articulate a menu of outcomes and then seek services to fulfill these outcomes. A majority of the outcomes chosen by the 2000-2001 CBOs were Enrichment outcomes. DCYF did not have as much input in which CBOs chose outcomes, in part, because services were already being provided. In future years, DCYF could align their priorities of funding and desired outcomes before funds are awarded and services are being provided. This could still allow for flexibility by including a handful of broad-based outcomes. This sequence of events would allow CBOs to shape their proposals and services around the broader goals of DCYF. A standardized

outcome evaluation could more clearly reflect the services because the services would be coordinated within this specific framework. CBOs would enter into service delivery understanding the alignment of their services, and broader goals and thus, may be more comfortable with an evaluation.

Additionally, by implementing an evaluation plan before service delivery, there are more options for research designs. If surveys are designed before services begin, it is possible to capture "pre-test" outcome data from respondents. This could easily be collected as part of intake or initiation of programs and services. The same outcomes could measured again at the end of service delivery or commonly referred to as "post-test." This data would provide insight as to the actual changes that occurred during service delivery. Causality is still nearly impossible to establish, but this method would allow for a more precise analysis of outcome data.

Continue to Integrate Evaluation into the Culture of DCYF and CBOs

Implementation of the first recommendation would undoubtedly affect the level of comfort felt by CBOs about the evaluation process. The framework, priorities, and outcome measures would be clearly coordinated before services were being delivered, thus CBOs could enter into future evaluations with a better understanding of where their organizations fits into the broader scheme.

Utilizing first year data will also affect the level of comfort CBOs have with future evaluations. If the data are interpreted in a punitive manner or bring quick fiscal consequences based on one year of outcome data, CBOs may view this process warily or with skepticism. CBOs often viewed the evaluation as an assessment of the quality or effectiveness of their particular staff and services. It is hoped that several years of outcome data will provide substantive insight into patterns and trends of participants. However, one year of data is just the beginning. Thus, the recommendation is to interpret the data broadly across outcomes and as a feedback to improve services.

Streamline Data Collection

Data collection was one of the more difficult aspects of this evaluation methodology. Surveys need to be refined, shortened, and formally validated and published, so they can be reused with confidence from year to year. To create a more streamlined, efficient method of collecting survey information, participants can, in the future, enter their surveys online. Based on the technological capacities of specific CBO sites, this recommendation may be challenging to implement but will ultimately cut down on the time necessary to harvest data.

Restructure Role of Evaluators

As mentioned in the Methodology chapter, several "adult evaluators" were hired on a contractual basis to serve as the liaison between JMPT and the

CBOs, as well as provide technical assistance and data collection. Turnover within these positions were high, leading to problems in collecting and analyzing data.

Several options may alleviate this problem. One alternative would be to hire fewer evaluators, but employment would be on a full-time basis. Another possibility is to shift some of the evaluation tasks, such as data collection and entry to a CBO employee. The CBO employee could, in turn, work with the evaluator. This would build capacity of the CBO staff. These are simply two alternatives to the previous model utilizing adult evaluators. The recommendation is simply to assess and restructure some evaluation tasks and the role of the adult evaluator.

Continue to Refine the Template: Incorporating Feedback and Creating Better Outcomes and Performance Measures

As reviewed in the first recommendation, there were some services that did not fit into the final standardized template. Media campaigns, mental health services, legal services, and collaborations across organizations did not clearly fit into the standardized template. These services are critical and needed; thus, the recommendation is simply for JMPT to continue to work with DCYF and these CBOs to define outcomes within the broader framework of goals, thereby refining the standardized evaluation template.

Capitalize on Opportunities to Tailor Services

In addition to administrative and evaluative recommendations, several general programmatic recommendations can be offered as well. These recommendations are based on the needs emerging from the data collection. These needs are not necessarily more important than current services, but merely represent areas of need. The areas of need appear to be:

Opportunity: Healthy decision making of youth in responding to peer pressure.

Although only a minority of youth reported being offered risky behaviors, there is an opportunity to teach healthy decision making.

Opportunity: Recruit at-risk youth for programs.

In addition to teaching preventative services, it appears that there may be a need to target at-risk youth for programs teaching health decision making.

Opportunity: Academic Support.

Despite positive grades and attitudes toward school, only a minority of youth said they expected to graduate from high school without any problems. This represents a need for academic tutoring and troubleshooting.

Opportunity: Conflict Management Programs.

40 percent of youth reported being involved in at least one physical altercation during the last 3 months. This finding represents a need for anger

management and conflict resolution among this age group.

Opportunity: Distribute Program Information.

The most commonly recommended improvement by parents was the need for more information about programs. One solution would be to create a comprehensive, user-friendly brochure or web page outlining all information for all services at CBOs.

Opportunity: Consider changes in service delivery.

Two other common recommendations by parents included providing services in one location for children of all ages and providing services in native languages. These ideas may be difficult or unrealistic to implement unilaterally across CBOs, but it is important to consider whether some part or aspect of these requests could be implemented.

Opportunity: Increase communication between home and CBO

Over 60% of youth reported that the CBO they attend never or very rarely contacts their parents. While in some cases, communication with parents and family may be unwarranted, or even intrusive, there are likely other programs whose support of youth could be strengthened with more regular contact between family and CBO staff.

Recommendations: Future Evaluation Timeline and Key Project Phases

Feb.-May 2002	**Create an Outcomes-Based Standardized Evaluation Plan for DCYF Staff and CBO Providers for the next 3-5 years**

DCYF has invested in a powerful infrastructure to measure large-scale impact on low-income children and youth in San Francisco, and the potential of this newly created system to drive city-wide decisions around funding best practices rests on DCYF's continued implementation of an outcomes-based, standardized evaluation model. CBOs are looking to DCYF to provide clear guidelines as to future evaluation requirements, processes and resources. DCYF needs to assess the resources that are available to put into on-going evaluation and to determine the amount of work possible within resource limits.

This plan should answer, at a minimum, the following questions:

?? Purpose: What are the differences in goals, breadth and depth of the three-year evaluations required by Prop.D and annual evaluations that DCYF is requiring of CBOs? What are the differences in products?

?? Structure: Based on the evaluation findings and determined cost of evaluation, should annual outcomes-based, standardized evaluation be required of all CBOs or a set group?

?? Structure: If annual evaluations do not include the fully funded service set, should a group of CBOs be selected based on --
1) areas of exploration deemed important areas for future exploration to aid targeted RFP development and/or to explore more fully areas of information reported in the Final Evaluation Report that appear most meaningful, or
2) random selection of the appropriate number of organizations regardless of where they fall within the template (in this case data analysis would have to wait until the full number of organizations were evaluated, i.e. if half of the programs were selected for evaluation in one year and the other half were selected in another year)?

?? Structure: How will DCYF incorporate key research questions into the annual evaluation design? (i.e. What is the role of dosage on skill acquisition?)

?? Structure: To what extent will evaluation management be folded into existing DCYF units, processes and structures?

?? Resource Priorities: To what extent will DCYF commit resources to on-going data analysis and findings?

?? Resource Priorities: Will further research be done with the information on the logic models? How might this fit into an overall evaluation plan?

?? Resource Priorities: What type of data would DCYF most like to invest in over the coming years (including parent, youth, staff survey data; focus group; observation)?

?? Resource Priorities: How will DCYF use technology to support evaluation both within the department and at CBOs?

Feb.-May 2002	**Engage Key Stakeholders in the Process of Creating an Outcomes-Based, Standardized Evaluation Plan for the next 3-5 years.**

DCYF should use these four months to research and plan for a solid outcomes-based, standardized evaluation plan and engage key stakeholders in the process, including CBO providers, community advocates, DCYF staff, cross-agency partners, parents, and youth. Not only should this time period include research into the benefits and challenges of the process from the CBO perspective, but these four months should include further research and development on the variety of evaluation options and cost of each option available to DCYF.

June 2002	**Report final Evaluation Decisions to the Provider Community**

This meeting could take place in the June CBO Quarterly slot and should be used to report decisions on all aspects of the plan.

June-Sep. 2002	**Revise and Update Evaluation Template and Survey Instruments**

Through CBO input, interviews and focus groups, DCYF should revise and update evaluation instruments. This work includes obtaining CBO input through interviews and focus groups to create a standardized logic model template, review the outcomes template in light of research literature, shorten and revise surveys, validate surveys and translate surveys into needed languages.

June-Sep. 2002 **Revise and Update Web-based Evaluation Tools**

The 2000-2001 evaluation clearly demonstrated the need not only for the web-based tools that were utilized in this evaluation, but also for new web-based tools. Furthermore, there is a need for integration platforms that will bridge the CMS database and the evaluation data. Work in this time period should include revising current web-based data entry and analysis tools, creating a web-based capacity for parents, youth and staff to take surveys on-line, and creating additional evaluation project management tools.

Sep.-Dec. 2002 **Training and Capacity Building**

Adequate training of DCYF staff and CBO providers is a crucial piece of sustaining on-going outcomes-based, standardized evaluation over the coming years. The fall of 2002 should focus on training DCYF program officers in using the framework and providing technical assistance to CBOs. Training for CBOs in using the framework on an on-going basis is also part of this work.

Sep.-Dec. 2002 **Plan for Data Collection in Spring 2003**

With decisions finalized as to the purpose, structure and resources to put to evaluation in 2003, September through December should be utilized as a planning period for the next possible intense period of data collection in the spring of 2003. This period is comprised of reviewing logic models and baseline program evaluation data, working with individual CBOs to re-visit/re-write their logic model, determine evaluation outcomes and performance measures, and plan for springtime data collection with CBOs. At this time, field evaluators should be hired (if using 2000-2001 model) and trained.

Jan.-Feb. 2002 **Next Evaluation Implementation**

Trained in the conceptual framework of the evaluation, DCYF program officers and CBO providers should be trained in the technical protocols of evaluation implementation.

March-Apr. 2002 **Data Collection**

At this time, surveys and/or other data collection methods administered and implemented at programs by field evaluators with the collaboration of CBOs.

May 2003 **Data Entry**

Depending on the method of data collection and the state of the web-based tools at this time, data entry is a time consuming part of the process and may take up to a month to complete this work.

June-Sept. 2003 **Data Analysis**

Data Analysis comprises the next stage of work. Queries are identified and built. On-line data tools are used to run analyses.

Sept-Dec. 2003 **Writing of Final Evaluation Report**

The final phase of work consists of completing individual evaluation reports for each CBO and writing the general, final evaluation report.