2025
Santa Clara County
Children's Data Book

THE 2025 SANTA CLARA COUNTY CHILDREN'S DATA BOOK

EVERY CHILD
SAFE AND STABLE

EVERY CHILD
HEALTHY

EVERY CHILD
SUCCESSFUL IN LEARNING

EVERY CHILD
THRIVING IN LIFE

ABOUT THIS DATA BOOK

The 2025 Santa Clara County Children's Data Book describes how children and families across Santa Clara County are faring and is grounded in achieving the vision of **Santa Clara County's Bill of Rights for Children and Young Adults**.

This annual Data Book, developed and distributed by the County of Santa Clara, the Healthier Kids Foundation, Kids in Common, and the Santa Clara County Office of Education, provides data and dashboards reflecting child safety, health, success in learning, and thriving in life. It serves to drive our conversations and motivate us to make needed investments, change policies and practices on behalf of our children, and anchor our collective efforts in data, information, and context.

The partners producing this data book are committed to advancing racial, economic, health, education justice, and the intersectional context of sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability. We do this by examining root causes of inequities, and identifying how system partners can work together to reverse injustice for current and future generations.

NOTES ABOUT DATA AND TERMINOLOGY:

Terminology and Data Labeling: We honor the importance and autonomy of individuals and communities to self-identify. In many cases, we have found that how a group identifies may vary by generation, country of origin, and regional differences. Working with our partners, we have decided to use the labels that appear in this data book. We recognize this approach is imperfect, language is not static, and that this terminology may change in the future.

Disaggregation of data: When available, the data is disaggregated for race, ethnicity, disability, and income. This allows us to consider root causes for disparate outcomes and explore solutions that address the specific needs of our diverse communities.

Data suppression: Data will be suppressed when the number of individuals for a specific race/ethnic group is so low (e.g., fewer than 11) that it either represents unstable data or may threaten the privacy of children and families.

LGBTQ+: Collecting data on the LGBTQ+ community is rare in most of our public data collection systems. Therefore, it is rare to have data that reflects respondents' sexual orientation or gender identity. We include this data when it is available.

DIG INTO THE DATA!

Visit the Kids in Common Dashboard for the latest data, trends, and geographic breakdowns of the data. www.kidsincommon.org/dashboard

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

Race/Ethnicity: In the Federal Census, respondents are asked first to identify their ethnicity, specifically whether they are Hispanic or Latino. The definition of Hispanic/Latino identity is "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race."

The next question on the census asks respondents to identify their race: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, or White.

In most cases, we report information on those who ethnically identify as Hispanic or Latino, along with the race categories. In some instances, we have additional data on other racial or ethnic groups. For example, data collected by the California Department of Education includes Filipino as an ethnicity. Local data may also broaden the groups people identify to include regions of the world such as Vietnamese or Southeast Asian.

Cover photos courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation , Santa Clara County Office of Education, and Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

USING DATA TO DRIVE SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENT, EQUITY, AND BETTER OUTCOMES

The Santa Clara County Children's Data Book was created in support of building a community where every child is safe, healthy, successful in learning, and thriving in life. The data provides us with insight into how our children are faring, and a framework to achieve equitable systems and focus on continuous improvement. The Data Book is driven by the question, "Are our children doing better?" The answer to this question provides communities with information that can be used to discuss root causes and seek to change outcomes and achieve equity.
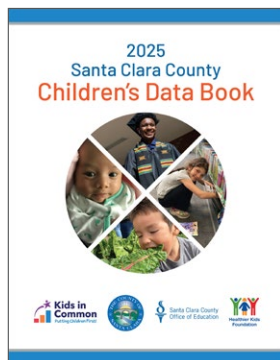
Indicators in the Data Book were selected by the cross-systems partners of the Children's Agenda Network (see page 67). The goal is for the data to be understandable, reliable, comparable to other regions, and whenever possible, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and other demographic factors. This is important, because disparities between different groups reflect the systems, policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural biases that have historically disadvantaged communities and still exist today. As we examine the data, we must consider the conditions that perpetuate disparities.

We invite leaders to use the Children's Data Book with their teams in order to generate discussions about equity, and inform project development as each organization strives to meet the needs of our community. Examples of guiding questions that may be useful to include:

- Which data points from the Data Book inform our projects and the impact we'd like to make in the community? What connections are coming up for us as a team?

- If we plan on combining data from the Data Book with other datasets, how can we best ensure that data users and viewers form a holistic, accurate, and asset-based conclusion about student or family needs?

- If we've identified a course of action or further exploration, how can we ensure that we use the data in ways that **do no harm** to the people whose data we hold? (e.g., using an asset-based lens, ensuring we act with others rather than for them, gathering additional data if necessary, creating parameters for who will have access to information, etc.)

- What safeguards are in place to respect the rights of people, contribute to the social good, and advance inclusion of underrepresented populations?

TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

Originally developed by john a. powell, [sic] a professor of law and African American/Ethnic Studies who leads the Othering and Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley School of Law, the Targeted Universalism (TU) framework sets all-inclusive goals for children and youth, to be achieved by implementing different and specific approaches based on equity.

In his 2012 book, "Racing to Justice," powell explains, "Fairness is not advanced by treating those who are situated differently as if they were the same." He asserts, "…**A policy that is neutral in design is not necessarily neutral in effect**…" Equality of effort can produce very different overall outcomes, depending not only on the beneficiaries' individual needs, but also on their environments."[1]

The five steps of Targeted Universalism

1. Set a universal goal.
2. Measure how the overall population is faring.
3. Measure how different population segments are faring.
4. Understand the structures and barriers that influence outcomes for each population segment.
5. Implement strategies that address the needs of each group and will support achieving the universal goal.[2]

For more about Targeted Universalism and to see a short, animated video, visit https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism.

A note about terminology:

Many terms are used in Santa Clara County to describe people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central or South American ethnic identity. These include Latino, Hispanic, Latina, Latino/a/x, and Latine. Similarly, many terms are used to describe sexual orientation and gender identity, such as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Non-binary, Intersex, and Asexual. After consulting our community partners, we have chosen to use the terms Latino/a/x and LGBTQ+ in this Data Book. We respect the importance and ability of people and communities to self-identify. We acknowledge that these labels are imperfect, that language evolves, and that this may change in the future.

1. powell, john a. *Racing to Justice.* Indiana University Press. 2012.
2. powell, john a., Menendian, Stephen, Ake, Wendy. *Targeted Universalism Policy and Practice.* Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society. May 2019.

TAKING A STAND FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

In February 2010, a Bill of Rights for Children and Youth was adopted by the Santa Clara Board of Supervisors. These rights keep the needs of children and youth at the forefront of decisions about budgets and government policies.

While these rights have served as an important guidepost during times of financial upheaval and political change, they were designed by adults. In the spirit of "nothing about us without us," members of the Youth Liberation Movement set out in Summer 2022 to create a new Bill of Rights grounded on the ideas and wisdom of young people. The rights below are the result of conversations with hundreds of youth and young adults from throughout Santa Clara County.

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

Every young person must get what they need when they need it, no matter their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, mental or physical ability, nationality, immigration status, criminal history, first language, skin color, education status, or wealth. We value the diversity of our children and young adults in Santa Clara County and believe we must treat each of them with respect and dignity.

ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

✓ **HEALTHCARE**
Affordable, timely, and quality mental and physical healthcare that they can access at any time.

✓ **MENTAL HEALTH**
Mental and emotional health and wellbeing and support systems in and outside of the home that promote emotional and social safety.

✓ **LOVE AND EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS**
Meaningful connections with consistent, caring adults and peers who love and appreciate the young person for who they are and want to see them grow.

✓ **SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**
Receive support and guidance from role models who are dedicated to helping them achieve their dreams and goals.

✓ **LIFE SKILLS**
Training to develop life skills and knowledge as well as opportunities to apply them for their growth.

✓ **EDUCATION**
A relevant and engaging education that exposes them to other cultures and promotes lifelong learning.

✓ **JOB OPPORTUNITIES**
Job opportunities that provide safe and reasonable working conditions, and a living wage, and allow them to grow their careers.

✓ **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**
Time, space, and resources to pursue any interest or opt for rest.

✓ **EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILY**
Support that will allow their families to be taken care of so they can pursue their dreams.

✓ **MODERN NEEDS**
Reliable transportation and wi-fi, computers that meet their needs, and phones when applicable.

✓ **BASIC NEEDS**
Enough quality food and water, showers, clean clothes, and hygiene products to keep their bodies healthy.

✓ **HOUSING**
Affordable, stable, safe, and comfortable housing that meets their needs as individuals.

✓ **GREEN SPACES**
Easily accessible and clean green spaces that will be preserved for future generations.

✓ **SAFETY**
Feel and be safe in all environments they are in, such as their schools, homes, neighborhoods, and online.

✓ **VOICE**
Be treated as equal partners in identifying problems, developing solutions, and making the decisions that they are impacted by.

✓ **CHOICE**
Make important decisions for their lives and set boundaries that are respected.

YOUTH LIBERATION MOVEMENT

The rights have not been fulfilled for all youth. Many are limited by the inflexible and overly restrained structure of the environments designed for them. Change to these environments will not happen without mass commitment and action. By combining our personal power and expertise through continuous collaboration, we have the ability to create lasting change for Santa Clara County youth.

DATA BASICS
SANTA CLARA COUNTY CHILDREN

1,903,297
people live in Santa Clara County[3]

95,588
are children
ages 0-4[4]

398,753
are children
ages 0-17[4]

170,413
are young adults
ages 18-24[4]

Figure 1 – Race/Ethnicity of Children in Santa Clara County (2023)

- Two or more races 8%
- Black 2%
- Asian 39%
- Other 1%
- Latino/a/x 28%
- White 22%
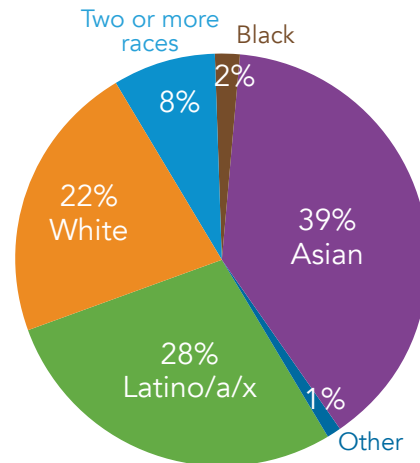
Other includes Native Americans (0.2%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.3%), and Other (0.7%).

Source: California Dept. of Finance Projections Report (P-3).

POVERTY

42,889 SCC children (0-17 yrs) experienced poverty in the previous year.[4]

2025 Annual Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for a family of four is **$32,150** ($2,679/month)

Families qualify for federal food programs at 185% of the FPL.

114,806 SCC children received public assistance such as MediCal or CalFresh in FY 2024.[5]

Figure 2 – Percentage of Children Living in Poverty
Below Federal Poverty Level of $32,150 (2023)

	Santa Clara County	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Black	Latino/a/x	White	Two or More Races
	7%	4%	5%	12%	3%	11%

EQUITY GAP
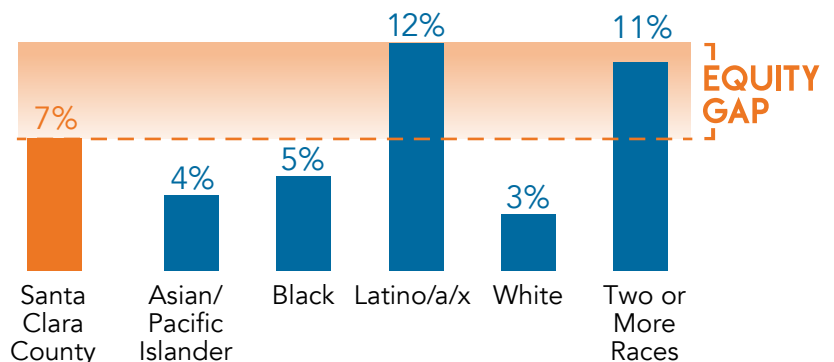
Source: IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota. American Community Survey, 1-year estimates. California Department of Finance Projections Report.

Figure 3 – Median Household Income by Race/Ethnicity (2023)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 1-year Estimates and Household Income by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin of Householder - Median Income.

Full-time state minimum wage	Median income Black families	Median income Latino/a/x families	Real Cost Measure	Median income Santa Clara County	Median income White families	Median income Asian families
$33,696	$84,362	$97,730	$128,176	$154,954	$159,586	$202,163

EDUCATION[6]

234,027

children are enrolled in public schools

28,205 have special education needs

23% are English Learners[7]

89,186 are low income

5,160 suffer housing instability

19% were reclassified as Fluent in English

Enrollment in public schools decreased by 15% – over 40,000 students – in five years! SY 2019-SY 2024

IMMIGRATION

40% of Santa Clara County Residents are Foreign Born[3]

61% of children live with a parent who is an immigrant[7]

55% speak a language other than English at home[7]

"For my parents who came here with nothing and gave me everything"
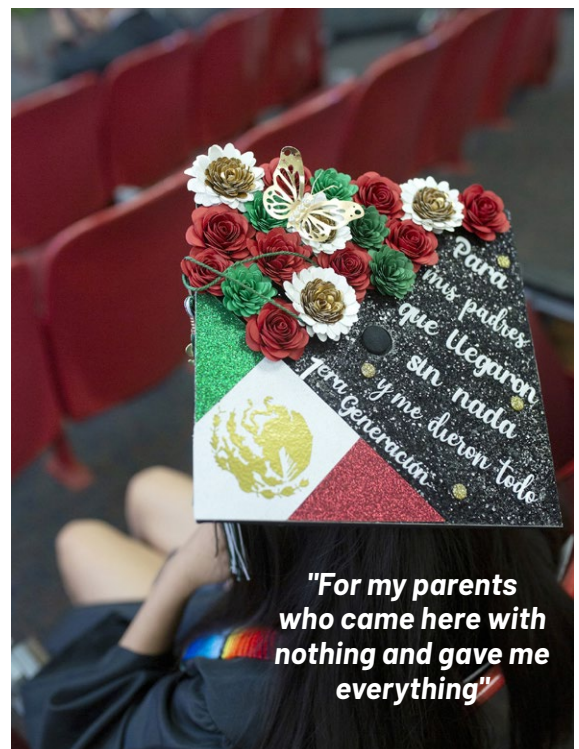
Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

3. American Community Survey, 5-year estimates (DP05), 1-year estimates (DP02, S1901, S1701, S1101, S1501, S0201, S1601), California Department of Finance Projections Report (P-3)

4. American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 1-year estimates & California Department of Finance Projections Report (P-3).

5. Social Services Agency, County of Santa Clara. Special data run 12/13/2024

6. California Department of Education. Data Quest. School enrollment 2023-24.

7. 2023 New Americans in Santa Clara County – The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County.
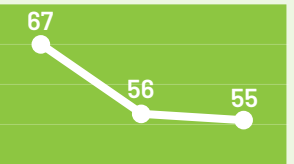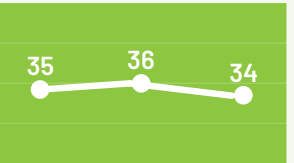
2025 DATA SNAPSHOT
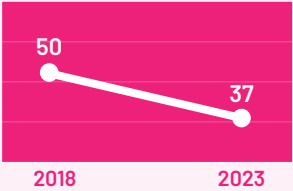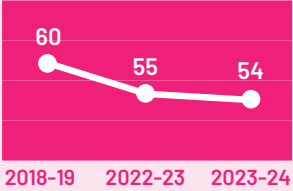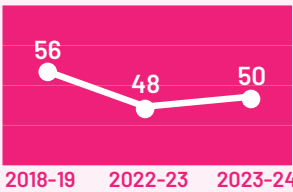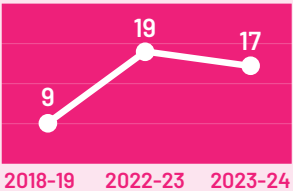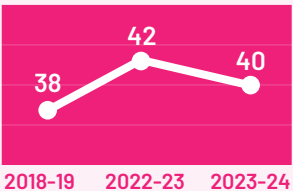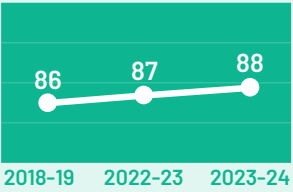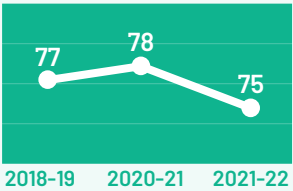
WITH NOTES ON RACIAL, ETHNIC, AND OTHER DISPARITIES

Every Child Safe and Stable

Percentage of Families Living Below the Real Cost Measure (RCM)

27 — 2017
25 — 2019
25 — 2021

Trend: Stable

Disparities: While the average dipped slightly from 2017, 41% of Black and 50% of Latino/a/x households fall below the RCM. Fewer Asian (18%) and White (19%) households fall below the RCM.

Number of SCC Students Experiencing Housing Instability

2529 — 2020-21
4452 — 2022-23
5160 — 2023-24

Trend: Getting Worse

Disparities: In SY 2023-24, Latino/a/x students were 8.4 times as likely as White students to experience housing instability.

Percentage At Risk for Food Insecurity

28 — 2019
30 — 2021
30 — 2023

Trend: Stable

Disparities: Food insecurity is more likely to be experienced by Latino/a/x (57%) and Black (56%) children.

SCC Children Entering Foster Care (Rate per Thousand)

1.3 — 2019
0.6 — 2021
0.4 — 2023

Trend: Stable

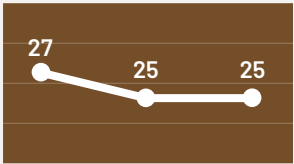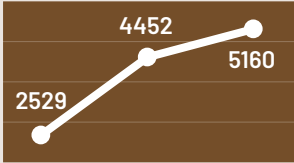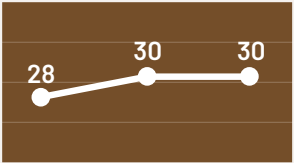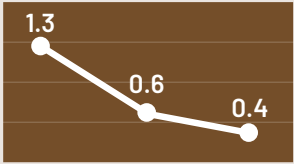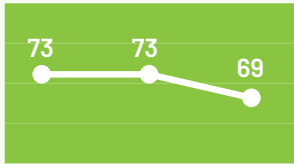**Disparities:** Black children are 7.6 times more likely to enter foster care (2.3/thousand) than White children (0.3/thousand). At a rate of 1.0 per thousand, Latino/a/x are 3.3 times more likely than White children.

Every Child Healthy

Percentage of SCC Mothers Receiving Early and Regular Prenatal Care

73 — 2009-2013
73 — 2014-18
69 — 2019-23

Trend: Getting Worse

Disparities: 69% of all mothers received early and regular prenatal care. Only 56% of teens did.

Percentage of Children on Medi-Cal with a Routine Health Check-Up in Past 12 Months

67 — 2019-20
56 — 2021-22
55 — 2022-23

Trend: Getting Worse

Disparities: 59% of Latino/a/x children had a routine check-up in the previous 12 months. The lowest access to routine health check-ups are Pacific Islander (43%), Native American (42%) and two or more races (41%).

Percentage of Children on Medi-Cal with Dental Appointment in Past 12 months

35 — 2020
36 — 2021
34 — 2022

Trend: Stable

Disparities: More Asian (39%), and Pacific Islander (40%) children on Medi-Cal saw a dentist in the previous 12 months compared to White children (27%).

Social-Emotional Wellbeing

On the California Healthy Kids Survey (2022-23):
- 34% reported feeling sad/hopeless for more than 2 weeks in the past year.
- 15% seriously considered suicide in the past year.
- 41% had 2+ optimistic feelings and 63% had 3+ feelings of life satisfaction.

No Trend Data Available.

Disparities: There were no significant racial/ethnic disparity in this data. However, there were significant differences for youth who identified as LGBTQ.

Percentage of Children Fully Ready for Kindergarten	50 (2018) → 37 (2023)	**Trend: Getting Worse**	**Disparities:** Data is not disaggregated by race/ethnicity.
Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Third Grade English Language Arts (ELA) Standard	60 (2018-19), 55 (2022-23), 54 (2023-24)	**Trend: Getting Worse**	**Disparities:** Latino/a/x (27%) and Black third-graders (39%) are far less likely to meet the Third Grade ELA standard than Asian students (77%). Only 21% of students with disabilities and 31% of low-income students met this standard.
Percentage of Eighth Graders Meeting Math Standard	56 (2018-19), 48 (2022-23), 50 (2023-24)	**Trend: Improving**	**Disparities:** Far fewer Black (23%) and Latino/a/x (19%) students are meeting the Eighth Grade Math Standard compared to White (67%) and Asian (81%) students. 26% of low-income and 12% of students with disabilities met this standard.
Percentage of Students Absent 10% or More of the Time (Chronic Absenteeism)	9 (2018-19), 19 (2022-23), 17 (2023-24)	**Trend: Improving**	**Disparities:** 31% of Pacific Islander, 27% Latino/a/x, 25% Native American, 22% Black students were chronically absent. Only, 6% of Asian, 12% of White students were. 29% of students with disabilities were chronically absent.
School Suspension Rate per 1,000 Students	38 (2018-19), 42 (2022-23), 40 (2023-24)	**Trend: Improving**	**Disparities:** Black students were suspended at a rate that was 4 times as high as White students and 12 times the rate of Asian students.

Percentage of Students Graduating on Time	86 (2018-19), 87 (2022-23), 88 (2023-24)	**Trend: Improving**	**Disparities:** There is up to a 21 percentage point difference in graduation rates between Black (82%), Latino/a/x (79%), Native American (79%), and White (95%) and Asian students (98%). Only 73% of students with disabilities graduated on time.
Percent Enrolled in Postsecondary Education within 12 Months of Graduation	77 (2018-19), 78 (2020-21), 75 (2021-22)	**Trend: Getting Worse**	**Disparities:** 91% of Asian students and 86% of White students enrolled in postsecondary education within 12 months of graduating from high school. 69% of Black and 58% of Latino/a/x and 55% of Pacific Islander graduates did.

LIFE COURSE FRAMEWORK FROM CRADLE-TO-CAREER

The Life Course Framework provides a structured way to understand the important markers at each stage of a child's life and the social factors and supports that are critical to a child's development and wellbeing. The framework also helps us understand what we need to remember as we work together to improve children's lives:

- **Race, Place, and History Matter** The legacy of past inequalities shape current realities.

- **Early Impacts Later – Address Upstream Factors** Today's experiences and exposures influence tomorrow's life outcomes. Refocus resources and strategies on upstream determinants of health and well-being.
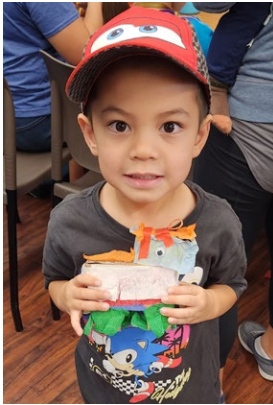
- **Later Impacts Earlier – Intergenerational Approach** What happens later in the lifespan – late adolescence and emerging adulthood – of one generation, powerfully impacts the early life outcomes of the next generation.

- **Change Systems and Environments** Dismantle the structural off-ramps that funnel young people to prison and poverty while simultaneously building new structural on-ramps that link to expanded opportunity.

- **Build Resilience and Promote Healing** Because changing systems and environments is long-term work, we must simultaneously build youth and family's resilience in the face of current adverse conditions.

- **Take a Cross-Sector, Cross- Systems, and Cross-Life Stage Approach** There are no silver bullets, and our collective approach must weave together work across sectors, systems, and life stages.

SOCIAL FACTORS THAT SUPPORT WELLBEING AND SUCCESS (IMPORTANT THROUGHOUT LIFE):

- ◉ Housing and Food Security
- ◉ Safe Families, Schools and Neighborhoods
- ◉ Positive Family Support and Communication
- ◉ Meaningful Adult Connections
- ◉ Feeling Valued by the Community
- ◉ A Sense of Agency and a Positive View of the Future
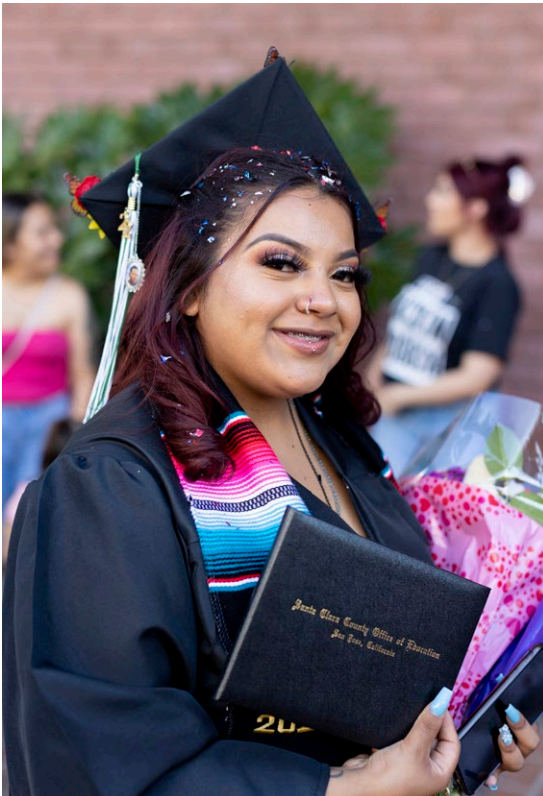
The Life Course Framework model, and the language above, is based on the work of Tia Martinez and Arnold Chandler of Forward Change Consulting. Please visit http://forwardchangeconsulting.com for more information.

Photos courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation, Santa Clara County Office of Education, and Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

Markers of Success
Cradle-to-Career

Healthy Pregnancy and Birth

High Quality Child Care and Education

Ready for School

Proficient in Reading in Third Grade

Proficient in Math in Eighth Grade

Graduates from High School Ready for Career and College

Has Stable Employment and Positive Net Worth, Earning 300+% of the Federal Poverty Level
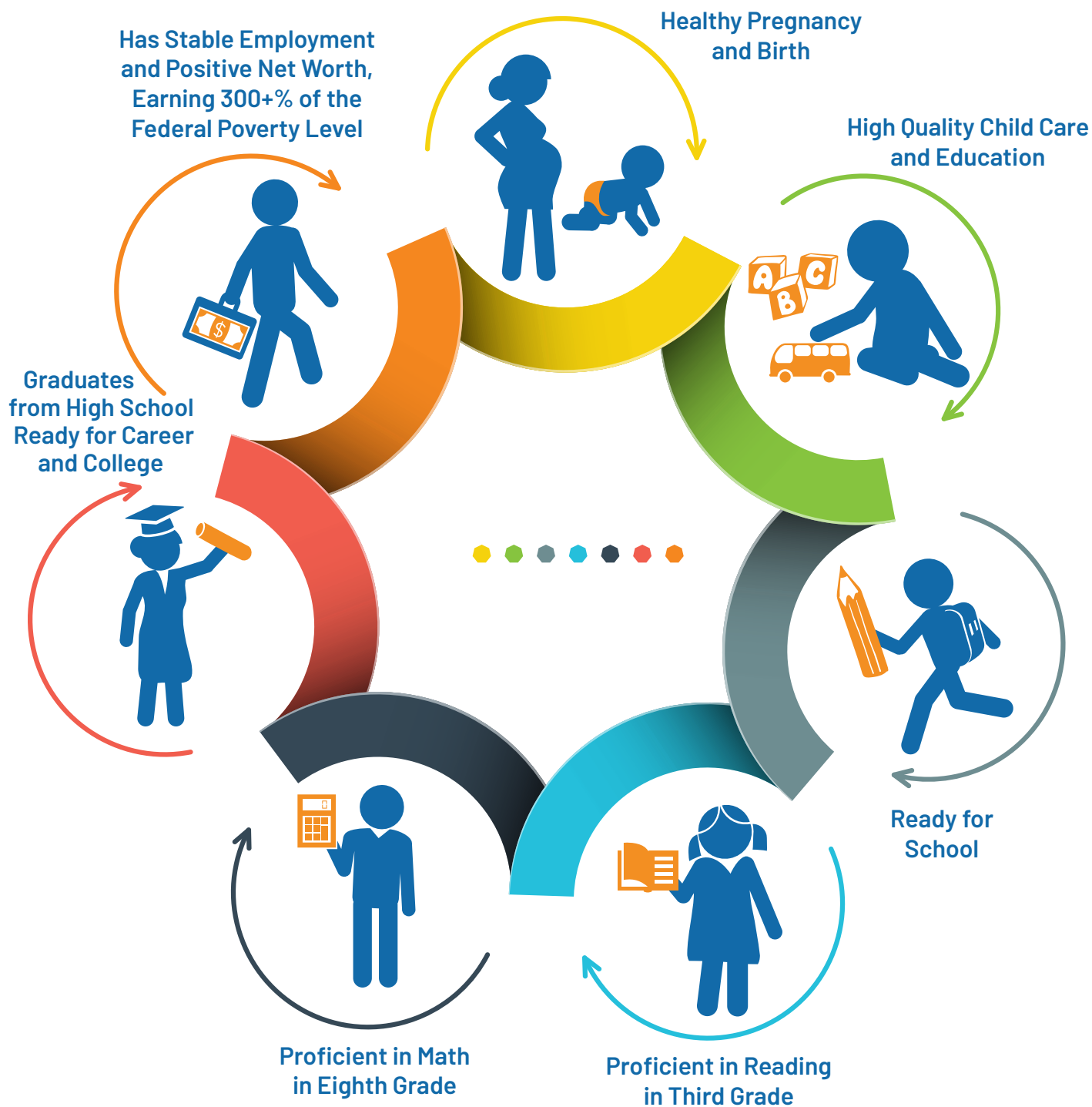
RACIAL JUSTICE AND ITS INTERSECTION WITH OTHER SOCIAL ISSUES

Every young person must get what they need when they need it, no matter their actual or perceived race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, mental or physical ability, nationality, immigration status, criminal history, first language, skin color, education status, or wealth. We value the diversity of our children and young adults in Santa Clara County and believe we must treat each of them with respect and dignity.

– Preamble, Santa Clara County Bill of Rights for Children and Young Adults 2023

Data about how Santa Clara County children are faring illustrates persistent inequities, inequality of opportunity, and unjust policies and practices.

When we think about racism, we often focus on individual and interpersonal racism and the attitudes and actions of individuals. However, while this type of racism still exists in our society and causes great harm, it is historical and systemic racism that has been codified through education, housing, justice, economic, legal, and other policies that we must address to achieve equity.[8]

This can be seen in the data. Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/x, Asian, and other communities of color are at increased risk of becoming ill and dying from public health disasters, disproportionate policing, and xenophobic policies that worsen inequities in education, employment, economic mobility and stability, health care, behavioral health services, housing, and food security. The terrible events of the past few years – including the global COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic crisis, along with the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and other

victims of racist violence – highlight the systemic racism that pervades the nation's structures, policies, practices, and mindsets. Systemic racism constitutes a public health crisis and perpetuates inequities that result in disparate outcomes for Black, Indigenous, Latino/a/x, Asian, and other communities of color in Santa Clara County.

Santa Clara County Office of Diversity, Equity, and Belonging

The Division of Equity and Social Justice (DESJ) began facilitating the co-design of the County's first Racial Equity Strategic Roadmap in December 2023. The co-design process included Countywide engagement of departments and agencies, as well as engagement and partnership with the Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits' Racial Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition.

By June 2024, the end deliverables of the Racial Equity Strategic Roadmap development process included an equity definition, guiding principles for achieving transformative racial equity in government, a countywide racial equity vision, racial equity priority areas, goals, strategies, and measures for internal county programs and services. The action planning phase began in October 2024. Its implementation will require all County departments to identify their role within the internal goals and strategies outlined in the roadmap, and work with DESJ to build an action plan to track, monitor, and communicate progress.

When race intersects with other social factors or identities – such as poverty, immigration status, disability, or LGBTQ+ status – the resulting outcomes often become even more pronounced.

8. Race Matters Institute, a project of JustPartners, Inc. Resources page.

HISTORICAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT PERPETUATE RACIAL AND SOCIAL INJUSTICE AND POOR OUTCOMES FOR SCC CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Discriminatory Lending and Housing Practices

Redlining, which began in the late 1960s, was a discriminatory practice in which banks and lenders marked certain neighborhoods – often non-White or racially integrated communities – as "hazardous" for investment. This systemic exclusion denied residents access to mortgages and financial opportunities, preventing Black, Latino/a/x, and other communities of color from purchasing homes. Since home ownership is a key driver of generational wealth, redlining and similar housing discrimination policies created lasting economic disparities that continue to affect these communities today.

Figure 4 below demonstrates how neighborhoods that were redlined in the 1960s remain segregated with income disparities and increased safety concerns today. As a result of redlining, some neighborhoods in San José are well-lit, tree-lined, and have safe places for children to play. Others are pot-holed, dark and littered, and they lack parks, sidewalks, and places to buy healthy food. More people of color live in the neighborhoods that have fewer resources.

To understand redlining in Santa Clara County visit https://joshbegley.com/redlining/sanjose.

Discrimination in The G.I. Bill

Another example of racist policy is the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the G.I. Bill. The G.I. Bill supported education and accumulation of assets for White veterans but not for Black and Latino/a/x veterans. While the bill did not explicitly deny benefits to Black and Latino/a/x veterans, other structural issues such as programs that denied entry to Black and Latino/a/x veterans, redlining, and explicitly racist mortgage covenants, prevented these veterans from benefiting from the legislation.[9]

The 1998 Passage of Proposition 227 in California

Many view Proposition 227 as anti-Latino/a/x and anti-immigrant. It restricted English-learners to English-only immersion programs. Research from the Center for Research on Education indicated these programs were less effective than teaching students in their first language over a longer span of time. Teaching students in their first language leads to higher achievement levels and offers long-term cognitive benefits, such as improved memory and abstract reasoning skills.[10]

Zero Tolerance Policies and Aggressive Arrest Policies

These policies that began in the 1970s led to significant increases in school suspensions, expulsions, and juvenile arrests that disproportionately impact Latino/a/x and Black youth. Despite of our county's success in reducing suspensions and arrests, there remains a disparity in the rate of young people of color facing suspension from school. In 2024, the general school population was suspended at a rate of 40 per thousand students. Black students were suspended at a rate of 108 per thousand and Latino/a/x students at a rate of 69 per thousand. (For more information on this topic see pages 45 and 50.)

Differences in how schools deal with challenging student behavior, depending on the students' race, were identified in a 2015 Pennsylvania State University study: Black and low-income students were far more likely than White students to be punished rather than being offered behavioral treatment when they misbehaved.[11]

Figure 4 – Legacy of "Redlining" in two San José Neighborhoods

% 95116 – East San Jose ("redlined")
% 95125 – Willow Glen (not "redlined")

Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021 five-year estimates; 2010-2021 California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS).

	Black	Asian/Pacific Islander	Latino/a/x	White	Median Income	Pedestrian Accidents per 100K population
East San Jose	2	28	59	8	$76,339	48
Willow Glen	2	15	27	51	$128,452	24

9. Blakemore, Erin. *How the GI Bill's Promise was Denied to a Million Black WWII Veterans.*
10. Genesee, Fred, Lindholm-Leary, Kathryn, Saunders, William, and Christian, Donna. "Educating English Language Learners." Cambridge University Press. 2006.
11. Ramey, D. M. (2015). *The Social Structure of Criminalized and Medicalized School Discipline.* Sociology of Education, 88(3).

One County, One Future. We Stand United.

Immigrants are deeply interwoven into the Santa Clara County community. Forty percent of the county's population is foreign born[12] and 55% speak a language other than English.[13] As of 2021, eleven percent of K-12 students were immigrants and 61% were children of immigrants.[12]

Immigrant residents bring a wealth of skills and fill many high-demand roles in occupations in the tech industry, computer manufacturing, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, and more. Immigrants are entrepreneurs who contribute $1.5 billion in business income to Santa Clara County. In 2021, 57% of immigrants ages 25 years and older held a bachelor's degree or higher. Additionally, immigrants contributed $6.8 billion to state and local taxes, and wielded $44.9 billion in spending power within the county. Immigrant households support federal safety net programs by contributing $5.1 billion to Social Security and $1.8 billion to Medicare.[12]

Despite their economic contributions and the diversity of cultures and languages they bring to our county, immigrants continue to confront systemic barriers to opportunities and progress. Thus, the County of Santa Clara remains committed to support and fund services that welcome immigrant communities to thrive, break these barriers, and integrate.

Data highlights about New Americans (Immigrants) in Santa Clara County:

- 56% of households have at least one immigrant person in the home.
- 22% of immigrants are recent arrivals, with five years or less in the United States.
- 48% of all workers in Santa Clara County (approximately 494,800 people) are immigrants.

78% of immigrants have lived in the United States for more than five years.

Figure 5 – Languages spoken at home other than English

6% Hindi
11% Chinese
11% Vietnamese
19% Spanish
6% Tagalog
48% Other

Source: 2023 New Americans in Santa Clara County – The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County.

Photo courtesy of County of Santa Clara Office of Children & Families Policy.
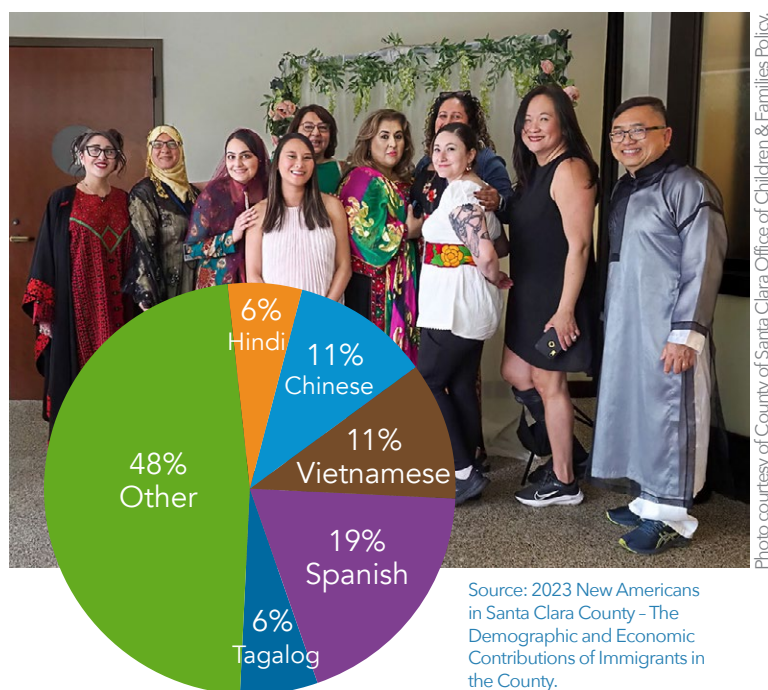
Immigrant Belonging Project

In 2023, the Office of Immigrant Relations (OIR) launched a two-year Immigrant Belonging Project that included a needs assessment conducted in collaboration with the Othering and Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley. With support from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, this project was designed to better understand the shifting demographics, existing assets, and emerging needs of the diverse migrant communities across the county. OIR completed the last phase of data gathering through community conversations expects to release findings and recommendations for funding, policy, and service delivery by Winter 2025.

12. 2023 New Americans in Santa Clara County – The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in the County.
13. California Immigrant Data Portal. Languages Spoken Santa Clara County. Feb 2025.

THE OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT RELATIONS

**Promoting immigrant integration and belonging • Uplifting immigrant contributions and resources
Addressing issues and needs of immigrant communities**

The Office of Immigrant Relations (OIR)

The Office of Immigrant Relations (OIR) established in 2015 by the Board of Supervisors has developed educational tools and programs to meet the needs of a diverse immigrant community. OIR has:

- Created the Rapid Response Network in 2017.
- Supported education and outreach efforts relating to Know Your Rights and the SCC Rapid Response Network.
- Published the 2023 New Americans in Santa Clara County: The Demographic and Economic Contributions of Immigrants in collaboration with Gateways for Growth and American Immigration Council.
- Administered nearly $6 million in legal services contracts annually since 2020.
- Created the New Americans Fellowship in 2016.[8]

New Americans Fellowship (NAF)

The New Americans Fellowship honors the contributions of immigrants and their children in the United States. Each year, the County hosts 10 to 15 New Americans who are ready to make significant contributions to U.S. society, economy, culture, and academia. The NAF offers opportunities for New Americans to enhance their leadership and professional skills, contribute to County services, receive mentorship from county leaders, and complete a research project that promotes social justice and equity. Since its inception, the NAF has graduated over 90 youth fellows!

OIR welcomed its eighth NAF cohort in Summer 2024. Their culminating project focused on increasing voter engagement among young adults ages 18 to 30, particularly those of Chinese, Korean, and Latino/a/x descent. The project's findings were used to develop outreach materials to increase voter turnout through video and social media content specifically designed to resonate with young voters. These findings also guided OIR's social media campaigns, including Why Voting Matters, NAF Stories, and Welcoming Week 2024. These multimedia campaigns were created in collaboration with community leaders, communication specialists, and youth to ensure their authenticity and impact.

To view NAF's Cohort 2024 final presentation and related social media videos, go to https://desj.santaclaracounty.gov/oir/new-americans-fellowship.

Immigration Legal Support Services

In FY 2023-2024, OIR administered 16 contracts for immigration legal and support services totaling $5,995,831.

In FY 2023-2024, OIR organized comprehensive training sessions focused on immigrant community demographics, local and national policies, immigration law updates, strategies for welcoming newcomers in public schools, disaster planning with the immigrant community in mind, updates on the Public Charge and other resources for immigrant families, including safety net services. Fourteen sessions were held, reaching 450 participants.

2024 Immigration Resources:

The County of Santa Clara partners with community organizations to provide essential immigration services and legal supports tailored to the needs of the immigrant community. The OIR website serves as a central hub of reliable information, offering access to free to low-cost or free immigration legal assistance, DACA legal services, Public Charge resources, assistance, help with rent, food, and other basic needs, housing and eviction support, and additional resources. For more information visit https://desj.santaclaracounty.gov/oir/resources.

For information and resources relating to the **Rapid Response Network**, **Know Your Rights**, and more, visit the County Of Santa Clara Division of Equity and Social Justice website at https://desj.santaclaracounty.gov/know-your-rights.

For printable Know Your Rights red cards, visit Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) at https://www.ilrc.org/red-cards-tarjetas-rojas.

You have constitutional rights:

- **DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR** if an immigration agent is knocking. If you are inside of your house, show the card through the window or slide it under the door.
- **DO NOT ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS** from an immigration agent if they try to talk to you. You have the right to remain silent.
- **DO NOT SIGN ANYTHING** without first speaking to a lawyer. You have the right to speak with a lawyer.
- If you are outside of your house, **SHOW THIS CARD TO THE AGENT**. Ask the agent if you are free to leave and if they say you can, leave calmly.

www.RedCardOrders.com

PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY
RAPID RESPONSE NETWORK IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

REPORT ICE ACTIVITY!
CALL (408) 290-1144

IF YOU SEE ICE ON THE STREET | IF ICE KNOCKS ON YOUR DOOR | IF ICE DETAINS A LOVED ONE

* THIS IS NOT A GENERAL INFORMATION HOTLINE

I do not wish to speak with you, answer your questions, or sign or hand you any documents based on my 5th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution.

I do not give you permission to enter my home based on my 4th Amendment rights under the United States Constitution unless you have a warrant to enter, signed by a judge or magistrate with my name on it that you slide under the door.

I do not give you permission to search any of my belongings based on my 4th Amendment rights.

I choose to exercise my constitutional rights.

These cards are available to citizens and noncitizens alike.

LGBTQ+ INTERSECTIONALITY

A part of the dynamic, diverse community in Santa Clara County includes those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ+). In July 2021, the Census Bureau initiated a series of nationwide surveys that included questions about sexual orientation and gender identification. Nine percent of Californians – 2.7 million people – identified as LGBT. (Note: Not all identities were captured in the census data.) One in five (20%) young adults ages 18-29 in California identify as LGBT.[14]

Yet, LGBTQ+ students have great needs for mental health and caring and inclusive school climates with their peers. While LGBTQ+ students reported caring relationships with adults at school, they also reported the highest rates of depressive symptoms, suicidal thoughts, and bullying from their peers.

Figure 6 – Social Emotional Status of LGBTQ+ Youth

Percent of Students Reporting Caring Relationships and High Expectations from School Staff (2022-23)

Caring Relationships*   High Expectations*

	Caring Relationships*	High Expectations*
Santa Clara County	60	71
Transgender**	62	69
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual	58	69
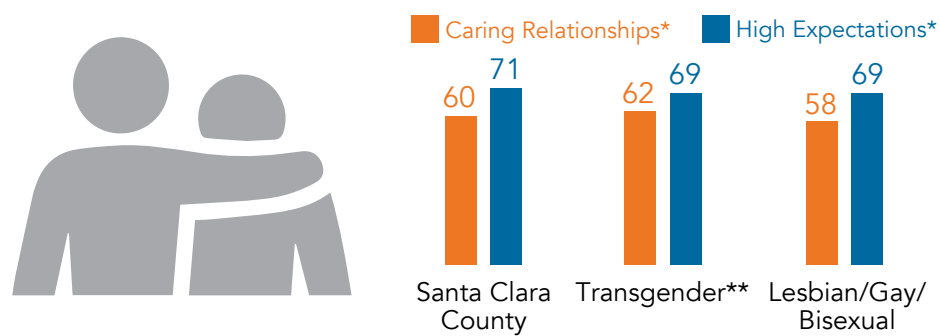
Percent of Students Experiencing Depressive Symptoms and Suicidal Thoughts (2022-23)

Depressive Symptoms***   Suicidal Thoughts

	Depressive Symptoms***	Suicidal Thoughts
Santa Clara County	34	15
Transgender**	71	55
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual	58	35
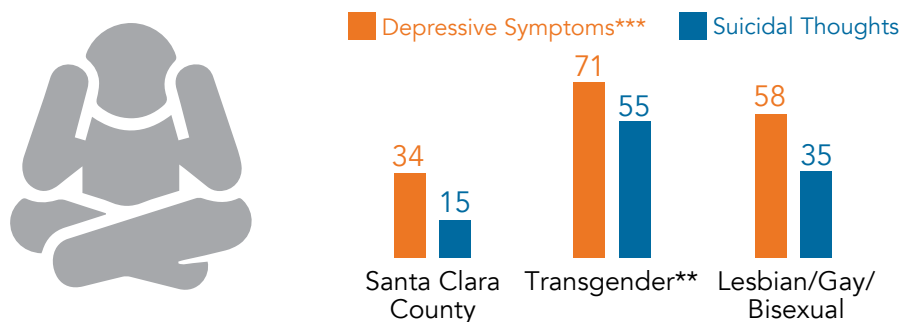
Percent of Students Reporting High Levels of Physical and Cyber Bullying (2022-23)

Physical Bullying   Cyber Bullying

	Physical Bullying	Cyber Bullying
Santa Clara County	10	17
Transgender**	18	21
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual	14	25
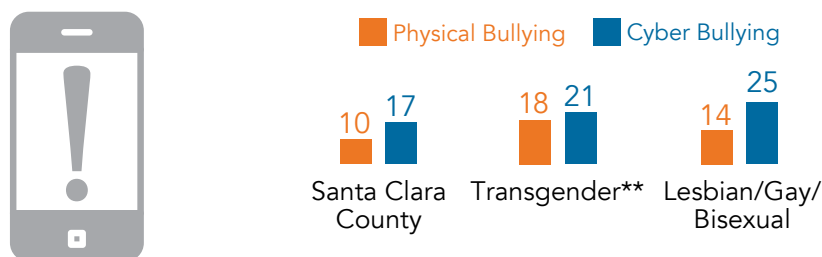
*   Students who reported 2+ survey questions for each indicator.
** Interpret with caution. Data less stable due to small group size.
***Depressive symptoms refer to extensive feelings of sadness or hopelessness.

Source: California Healthy Kids Survey (SY 2021-22 and SY 2022-23). The Department of Public Health conducted the analysis.

14. *California's LGBT Population.* Public Policy Institute of California. Retrieved 3/4/2024 at www.ppic.org/blog/californias-lgbt-population.

THE OFFICE OF LGBTQ AFFAIRS

Providing leadership and support for the well-being and longevity of LGBTQ+ communities in Santa Clara County through coordinated, integrated approaches.

The County of Santa Clara offers or partners across various programs and services to ensure that LGBTQ+ young people have the supports they need to thrive and feel included and valued in their schools and communities. Most of this work is led by or coordinated with the Office of LGBTQ Affairs (OLGBTQA). Here are some examples of these accomplishments:

P.R.I.D.E. Project for LGBTQ Youth

This work led by the Young Women's Freedom Center (YWFC) provides mentorship and builds community for teenagers through transitional-age young adults. One project, **P.R.I.D.E. (People Resilient in Determining Equality)**, engaged 15 LGBTQ+ justice-involved youth ages 16-26 in their LGBTQ+ youth leadership program. As part of YWFC's leadership sustainability model, a former participant was hired to support LGBTQ+ young leaders.

After attending the "**Free Her**" Youth Justice Conference and participating in the Transgender Day of Visibility Panel, one participant said: "I attended my first event that centered on trans folks and had the opportunity to be the moderator for it. This event centered on Trans-masc individuals and created a space for trans men to be seen and heard. I got to meet and work with a dope panel of men who are on their journey in transition. Being in space with them and the loved ones they brought and seeing all the support and love they were receiving made me confident in who I am and appreciate the spaces I get asked to be a part of."

LGBTQ Provider Training

In partnership with the Behavioral Health Services Department, OLGBTQA provides LGBTQ-focused training to service providers, County staff, and families. Trainings center on trans-youth care, the gender wheel, storytelling, and less discussed topics important to the LGBTQ+ community such as eating disorders, sex work, neurodiversity, and non-monogamy. Through post-training surveys, providers express gratitude for training on these topics that arise in sessions with clients. Holistic training enables service providers to better understand clients' needs and connect them to appropriate resources. 482 trainings have been provided, reaching 10,025 provider participants.

Youth Summit Partnership

The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) and OLGBTQA collaborate to enhance support for LGBTQ+ students and educators through policy initiatives, professional development, and resource development. SCCOE leads the monthly Genders & Sexualities Alliances (GSA) Advisor Network Calls, with OLGBTQA providing support and additional resources. In the past year, SCCOE and OLGBTQA presented on all-gender restroom policy initiatives and are developing a GSA Advisor Toolkit to equip school staff with best practices. These efforts foster more inclusive and equitable learning environments within Santa Clara County.

Collective efforts strengthen LGBTQ youths' sense of belonging and purpose.

The LGBTQ Youth Space

For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning as well as ally youth and young adults ages 13-25 who live in Santa Clara County. The LGBTQ Youth Space offers counseling services, social and leadership opportunities, community outreach and education, and a safe and welcoming drop-in center.

Santa Clara Trans Family Support Network

This peer-led group supports the parents of trans youth and adults in a safe and respectful environment. Meetings are usually held on the 2nd Saturday of the month, from 3:00-5:00 pm. To attend or for other questions, please email santaclaratransfam@gmail.com.

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)

supports, educates, and advocates for LGBTQ+ people and their parents, families, friends, and allies. PFLAG provides support to families and allies through peer-to-peer meetings, online outreach, and telephone hotlines and educational opportunities for all about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ+.

Bill Wilson Center (BWC)

With an emphasis on ending youth and family homelessness, BWC programs focus on building self-confidence and developing personal assets. LGBTQ specific programs include the BWC Connections Drop-In Center, the LGBTQ Transitional Living Program, and LGBTQ+ mental health services and peer support. For More information: https://www.billwilsoncenter.org/services/all/lgbtq-outreach.html.

Outlet

As a program of Adolescent Counseling Services, Outlet empowers LGBTQ+ youth and builds safe and accepting communities through support, education, and advocacy. Outlet services support the emotional, physical, and social development of youth as whole individuals. For more information: https://www.acs-teens.org/what-we-do/outlet.

For additional Santa Clara County and community-based resources visit https://desj.sccgov.org/resources-lgbtq.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

"Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities." – The 1975 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

In the 2024 school year, there were 234,027 students in Santa Clara County public schools and 28,205 have a disability. Of those students with a disability

- 14,439 were low-income students.
- 9,996 were English learners.
- 654 were experiencing housing instability.
- 120 were in foster care.[15]

Students with disabilities have some of the poorest education outcomes of all students as shown by Figure 7.

To address poor outcomes, resources are available in our county to help educators and families in supporting students with disabilities. When educators have a strong sense of self-efficacy, a growth mindset, a positive attitude towards innovation, and a personal commitment to all students, they significantly enhance the success of students with learning and attention differences.[16]

Santa Clara County Resources:

The Innovations Collaborative is a leader in providing supports to families, school districts, community agencies, preschools, and childcare centers to promote a culture that values all children by strengthening, sustaining, and ensuring inclusive practices. Built on the belief that every individual, regardless of abilities and disabilities, has the right to full access to quality, inclusive learning and community environments, the Innovations Collaborative provides:

- **Professional development** that supports innovative practice.
- A **WarmLine** that offers support, information, and referrals in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese to families and professionals.
- **Advocacy and access** to ensure inclusive practices for every child, regardless of ability, and to impact public policy and support legislation related to inclusion of all children.
- Promotion of "**Person First**" terminology that respectfully refers to a person with a disability.

Parents Helping Parents (PHP) supports families raising children with disabilities. PHP has an electronic-learning library with over 300 videos in five languages on topics such as special education, public benefits, behavior, financial planning, and assistive technology. In addition to hosting over 600 Zoom webinars each year on various subjects, PHP provides FREE weekly virtual mental health support groups in both English and Spanish. PHP recently launched "Connections California," a program tailored to the unique needs of families with children who have disabilities transitioning to adulthood. For more information visit www.php.com. Residents of Santa Clara County can receive one-on-one support by calling 408-727-5775.

A Guide for Supporting Students with Down Syndrome is a comprehensive resource designed for educators, school staff, and administrators to adopt best practices for students with Down Syndrome within school communities. This toolkit is based on information gathered from various sources across the globe that are committed to sharing effective strategies for supporting students with Down Syndrome from cradle to career. It helps readers identify best practices to implement in their classrooms and campuses to effectively address the unique learning profile of students with Down Syndrome. You can read it at: https://www.innovationscollaborative.org/docs/Down_Syndrome_Toolkit.pdf

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

Figure 7 – High School Graduation Rates (SY 2023-24)

- All SCC Students
- Students with Disabilities
- Low-income Students with Disabilities
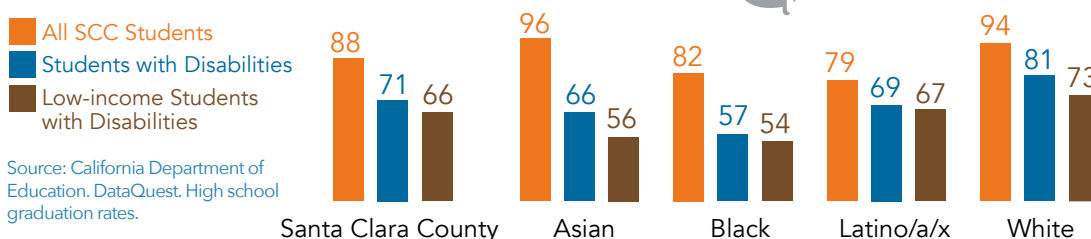
Source: California Department of Education. DataQuest. High school graduation rates.

	All SCC Students	Students with Disabilities	Low-income Students with Disabilities
Santa Clara County	88	71	66
Asian	96	66	56
Black	82	57	54
Latino/a/x	79	69	67
White	94	81	73

15. California Department of Education, DataQuest, SY 2023-24 Enrollment Data.
16. Santa Clara County Continuum of Services for Students with Disabilities Study. October 2019.

EVERY CHILD
SAFE AND STABLE

Safety and Stability is integral to healthy growth and development. Children raised in safe and stable homes are more likely to be healthy, successful in learning, and thriving in life. However many families face challenges that are out of their immediate control and that may negatively affect children's development such as being low-income, having unstable housing, food insecurity, and lack of access to childcare. These factors are known to impact children's learning and social-emotional wellbeing.

RELEVANT BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

SAFETY | HOUSING | EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR FAMILY
LOVE AND EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS

Photo courtesy of Second Harvest of Silicon Valley.

TO IMPROVE RESULTS

- Expand strategies to improve economic stability and mobility such as child tax credits, subsidies for childcare, housing, food, and other income supports.

- Increase programs that emphasize positive childhood experiences and healing.

- Champion policies and programs to ensure no families with children, no teens, and no young adults are unhoused or living in an unsafe situation.

- Fund a food and nutrition support system that guarantees every child and family has access to healthy, nutritious food to promote their growth and development.

- Provide financial support and early intervention services to prevent children entering foster care. When they do enter foster care, ensure they are placed in stable, loving families, preferably with relatives or kin.

BY THE NUMBERS

Figure 8 – The Real Cost Measure

Right: The Real Cost Measure for a Family of Four in Santa Clara County (2023) (Two adults, one preschooler, and one school-age child)

Below: Percentage of Households Living Below the Real Cost Measure

Santa Clara County	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	Latino/a/x	Native American	White
25	18	41	50	31	19

EQUITY GAP
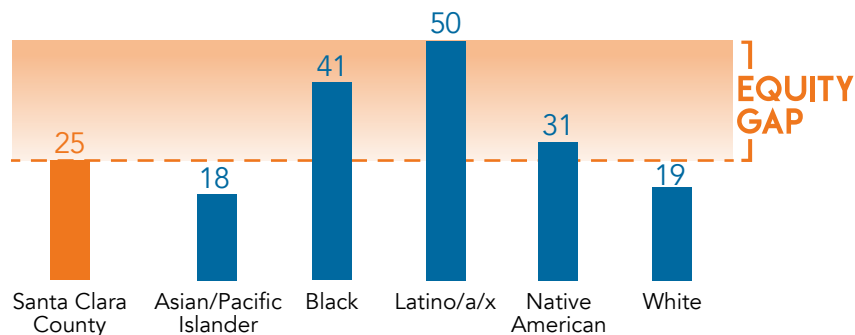
Source: United Ways of California

Real Cost Measure Total: $128,176

Amount	Category
$36,612	Housing
$24,708	Childcare
$23,152	Taxes/Credits
$12,432	Food
$11,364	Transportation
$10,356	Health care
$9,552	Miscellaneous
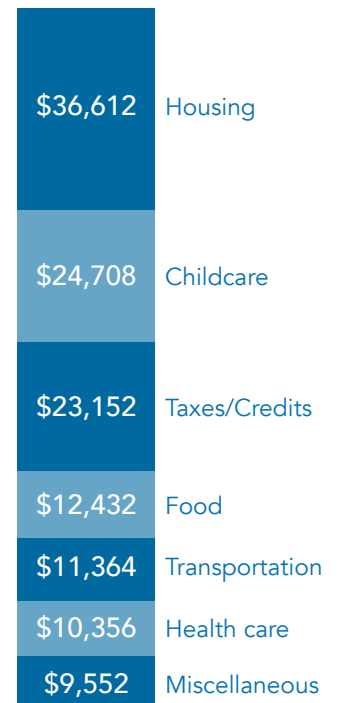
Figure 9 – Housing Instability

Children in Santa Clara County Schools Experiencing Housing Instability or Homelessness – Rate per Thousand (SY 2023-24)

Santa Clara County	Asian/Pacific Islander	Black	Filipino	Latino/a/x	Native American	White	2+ Races
22	7	29	16	42	37	5	7

EQUITY GAP
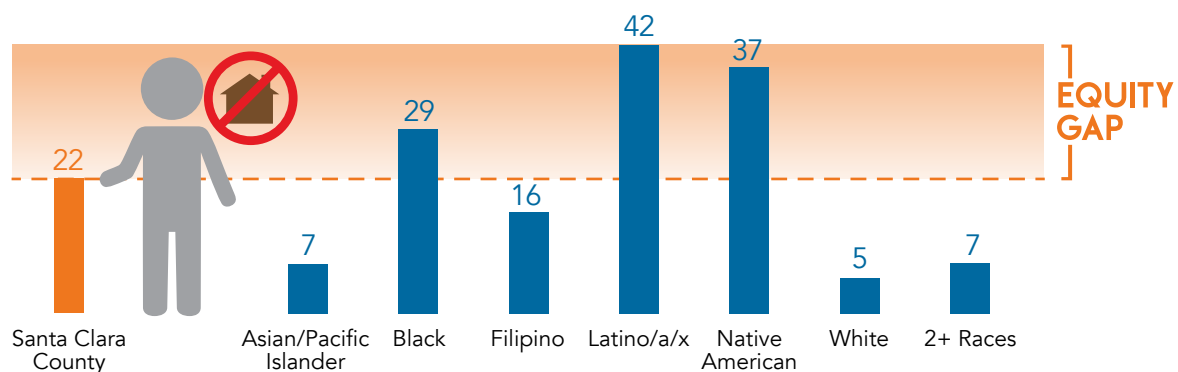
Source: California Dept. of Education, DataQuest. Annual Enrollment Data, Subgroup Filter: Homeless.

Figure 10 – Food Insecurity
Percentage of Children At-Risk for Food Insecurity (2022)

- 🟧 Between 185% and 300% of (FPL)
- 🟦 Below 185% of FPL

Category	Between 185% and 300%	Below 185%
Santa Clara County	16	14
Asian/Pacific Islander	5	8
Black	52	4
Latino/a/x	38	19
White	5	6
2+ Races	24	17
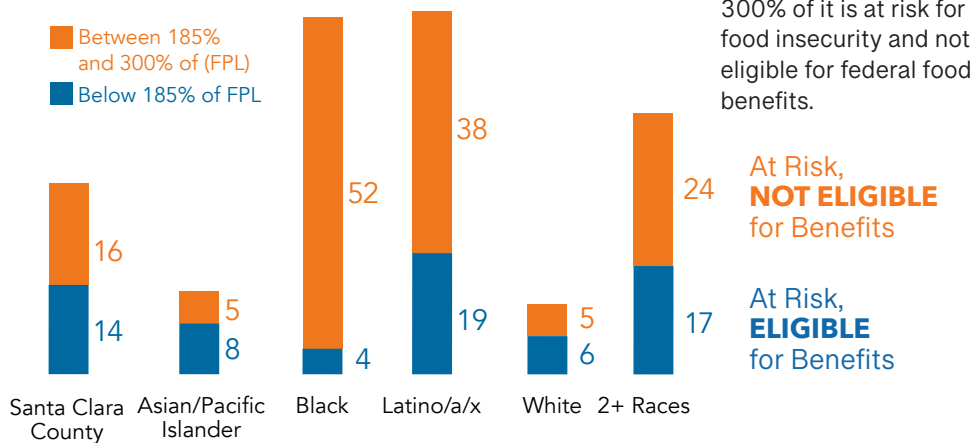
A family above 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but below 300% of it is at risk for food insecurity and not eligible for federal food benefits.

At Risk, NOT ELIGIBLE for Benefits

At Risk, ELIGIBLE for Benefits

Source: IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota.

Figure 11 – Increased Demand for Food

Average monthly amount of food distributed by Second Harvest of Silicon Valley

2019 — 4.3 million pounds

2021 — 8.2 million pounds

2024 — 7.5 million pounds

Average number of SCC residents served by Second Harvest of Silicon Valley each month
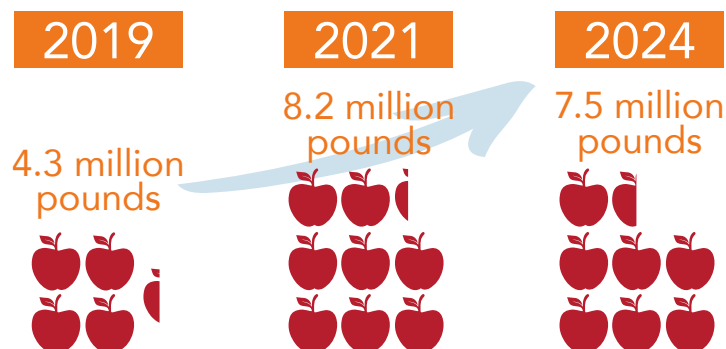
500,000 people

Source: Second Harvest Silicon Valley.

Figure 12 – Entries into Foster Care
Rate per Thousand Children
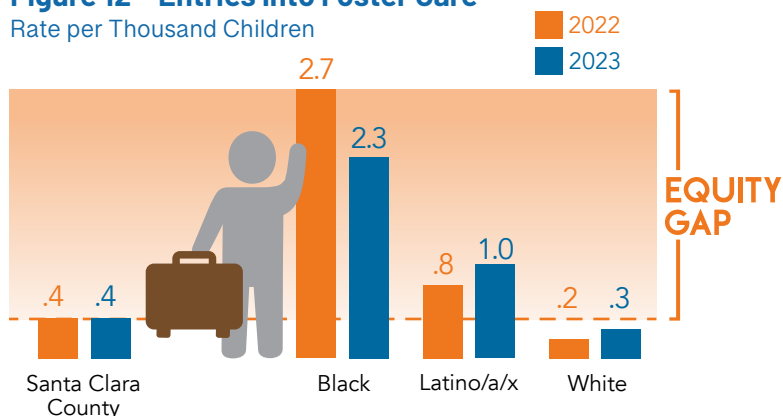
- 🟧 2022
- 🟦 2023

Category	2022	2023
Santa Clara County	.4	.4
Black	2.7	2.3
Latino/a/x	.8	1.0
White	.2	.3

EQUITY GAP

Source: CCWIP reports from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project.

Photos courtesy of Second Harvest of Silicon Valley.

DIG INTO THE DATA!

Visit the Kids in Common Dashboard for the latest data, trends, and geographic breakdowns of the data. www.kidsincommon.org/dashboard

THE REAL COST MEASURE

Percentage of Families Living Below the Real Cost Measure (RCM)

27 25 25

2017 2019 2021

The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is a severely inadequate measure. The FPL formula was established in 1963 and was based on food costs as a percentage of income. It overlooks other expenses like housing and childcare, and it also fails to consider geographic variations in the living costs. In 2025, the FPL for a family of four is $32,150. This amount cannot cover the cost of rent for housing, let alone the costs of other daily necessities.

The Real Cost Measure (RCM) methodology, developed by United Ways of California, considers local living costs to develop household budgets to meet families' basic needs within the county. It examines neighborhood-level demographics to estimate how many households earn below that basic needs budget. In high-cost areas like Santa Clara County, the RCM for a family of four with one preschooler and one school-age child is $128,176. **This amount is nearly four times the FPL! A full-time job at the California minimum wage yields only $34,320 annually.**

When we support families with affordable options or funding for food and health care, we assist them in moving closer to achieving the 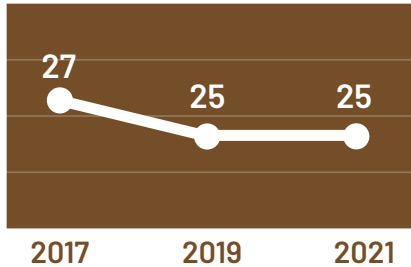Real Cost Measure. Figure 15 shows how the SCC Social Services Agency did this by enrolling 161,103 children and youth in Medi-Cal or CalFresh in 2024.
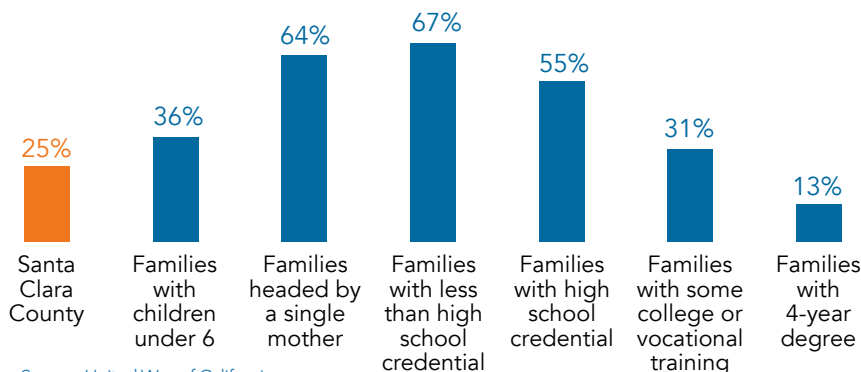
What the Data Tell Us

- 25% of Santa Clara County families fall below the Real Cost Measure (RCM).
- Higher percentages of Latino/a/x (50%) and Black (41%) families fall below the RCM.
- Families with more education and two parents are less likely to fall below the RCM.
- 36% of families with a child under age 6 fall below the RCM.
- Two of the major costs for families are housing and childcare. Free or subsidized childcare and affordable housing would make it easier for families to get by.[1]

Figure 13 – SCC Families Below the RCM (2023)

Santa Clara County	Families with children under 6	Families headed by a single mother	Families with less than high school credential	Families with high school credential	Families with some college or vocational training	Families with 4-year degree
25%	36%	64%	67%	55%	31%	13%

Source: United Way of California.

Figure 15 – Total Children and Youth Served by CalFresh and/or MediCal (FY 2024)
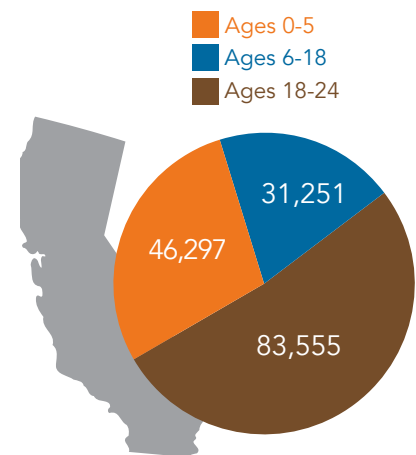
- Ages 0-5
- Ages 6-18
- Ages 18-24

46,297 31,251 83,555

Source: Social Services Agency, County of Santa Clara. Special data run 12/13/2024.

Figure 14 – Minimum Wage by Community (2024)

California	Milpitas	San José	Cupertino Los Altos Palo Alto Santa Clara	Sunnyvale	Mt. View	California Fast Food Worker
$16.50	$17.70	$17.95	$18.20	$19.00	$19.20	$20.00

Source: California Minimum Wage by City in 2025. Paycor.

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1. Block, Betsy Baum, Gascon,Henry, Manzo, Peter, Parker, Adam D. Parker. *Struggling to Stay Afloat: The Real Cost Measure in California 2018*. www.unitedwaysca.org.

IMPROVING THE REAL COST MEASURE

Overcoming poverty is not an act of charity, it is an act of justice.
– Nelson Mandela

Poverty Reduction

Many of the public efforts and investments for families struggling to make ends meet, address the symptoms of poverty, including not having enough food and unstable housing. In addition to focusing on helping families manage their situation, we should work to end or reduce the numbers of people living in poverty and seek strategies that do this. In other words, we should reduce the effects of poverty by reducing poverty.

When considering a new policy or investment, we can ask three simple questions to redirect our focus from short-term remedies to long-term solutions that attack the root causes of poverty:

- Does this strategy reduce poverty by increasing the family's income or lowering expenses?
- Will this initiative make people more independent?
- Is this a strategy that places families on a path out of poverty?[2]

Increasing Income Does Make a Difference

Two recent studies highlight the importance that increased income can have for children and families. In one study, a $1 increase in minimum wage correlated with a decrease in child maltreatment.[3]

Another study found that a small increase in annual income ($4,000) is associated with improved long-term outcomes for children, including going further in education and being more likely to hold a full-time job in adulthood.[4]

In 2022, the **Baby's First Years** study, evaluated the impact of $333 of monthly cash supports to low-income families. The study established a causal relationship between receiving this cash support and increased brain activity associated with thinking and learning in one-year-olds in these families.[5]

The Child Tax Credit during COVID provided essential support to children and families. No longer funded by Congress, the Child Tax Credit raised benefit levels, expanded support to the lowest income households that previously did not qualify for the credit, and distributed this benefit to families monthly instead of as a lump sum at the end of the year. Research demonstrated that it improved health and wellbeing by reducing food insecurity and enhancing parents' mental health. A Child Tax Credit can be implemented at the state or federal level significantly benefiting children and families.[6]

Santa Clara County Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) Pilot Programs

In October 2023, Joint Venture Silicon Valley released a study of the impact of Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) programs in Santa Clara County. **GBI programs offer an unconditional, individual- or household-level, regular cash payment designed to support the basic needs of recipients.** GBI programs unlike Universal Basic Income programs typically target a specific segment of the community to address persistent racial and ethnic disparities.

In an analysis of modeled GBI programs, providing $500 to $2,000 monthly could move 11,000 to 45,000 households toward income adequacy (similar to the Real Cost Measure). The model also found that, although not all households are eligible, housing assistance – especially combined with child care supports – can significantly reduce monthly costs.[7]

Currently nine GBI programs in Santa Clara County, spearheaded by local jurisdictions, nonprofits, and philanthropic organizations, provide unconditional monthly payments to over 800 households. Targeted recipients include former foster youth, homeless and unstably housed families, extremely low-income residents in Mountain View, unhoused high school seniors, college-engaged young adults, young parents, justice-involved individuals, and low-income older adults. Early results show improved living situations for participants, increased school enrollment and young adults engaged in full-time employment. Read more about these programs at https://guaranteedincomesv.org.

What Having Extra Money Does

The chronic stress parents experience when they worry about being able to pay the rent or whether they will have enough food at the end of the month can be toxic. This financial resource provides participants the flexibility to determine how best to meet their needs. Once basic needs are met, families can invest in their children and:

- Pay for tutoring that supports their learning.
- Afford enrichment activities and out of school programs including music and art lessons, sports programs, and camps.
- Enroll in summer education programs. This point is important because studies show lack of access to summer education programs leads to summer learning loss. Summer learning loss significantly contributes to the academic achievement gap experienced by low-income children.[8]

2. Carlton, Brock, Born, Paul. *A Guide for Cities Reducing Poverty*. Tamarack Institute.2016.
3. Raissian, Kerri M., Bullinger, Lindsey Rose. *Money matters: Does the Minimum Wage Affect Child Maltreatment Rates?* https://ideas.repec.org.
4. Akee, Randall, Simeonova, Emilia, Costello, E. Jane, Copeland, William. *How Does Household Income Affect Child Personality Traits and Behaviors?* National Bureau of Economic Research. September 2015.
5. Troller-Renfrea, Sonya V., et al. "The Impact of a Poverty Reduction Intervention on Infant Brain Activity." PNAS. 1/24/2022. www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2115649119

6. McCann, Nicole, Shafer, Paul, Ettinger De Cuba, Stephanie. "Association Between Child Tax Credit advance payments and food insufficiency in Households Experiencing Economic Shocks." Health Affairs Scholar, Volume 2, Issue 2, February 2024.
7. *Modeling Guaranteed Basic Income and Household Income Adequacy in Santa Clara County.* Joint Venture Silicon Valley, Institute for Regional Studies. Oct.2023.
8. McCombs, Jennifer Sloan, et al., *Making Summer Count, How Summer Programs Can Boost Children's Learning.* Rand Corporation. 2011.

HOUSING SECURITY AND HOMELESSNESS

Number of SCC Students Experiencing Housing Instability

4452

5160

2529

2020-21   2022-23   2023-24
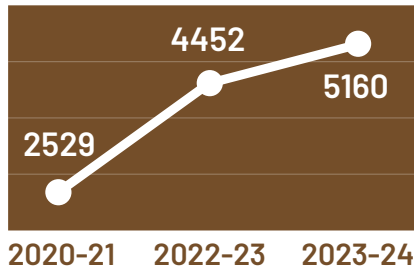
What the Data Tell Us

- In SY 2020-21, there were 2,529 students who faced housing instability. More than doubling, the count increased to 5,160 students in SY 2023-24, a rate of 22 per thousand students.

- One factor that may have led to this increase is the end of the eviction protections that were in place during the pandemic (June 2022). Another factor may be a state requirement for districts to institute a standardized approach to identifying students who qualify for the McKinney-Vento Act (MV). See the next column for info on MV.

- 4,022 Latino/a/x students were homeless in SY 2023-24, a rate of 42 per thousand. This is more than 8 times the rate of White students.

Experiencing housing instability and homelessness during childhood or young adulthood can lead to lifelong consequences for health and wellbeing.

The McKinney-Vento Act (MV) safeguards the educational rights of students who are homeless or facing housing insecurity. In MV, the definition of homeless include students living in temporary housing situations such as doubling up with family members, couch-surfing, or staying in a hotel. It also provides a count of students who experienced homelessness throughout the school year.

The act ensures children and youth experiencing housing insecurity have the right to attend their school of origin the entire time they are homeless. If they find permanent housing, they can finish the school year at their school of origin. Homeless children who qualify may also receive preschool services, free or reduced meal services, special education, before- and after-school care, and other services.

In 2023, according to Destination Home, the Santa Clara County Supportive Housing System permanently housed nearly 4,500 formerly homeless people – a 29% increase over the number housed in 2022. In the same year – as a result of the increasing rent burden and the lifting of the pandemic eviction moratorium – the number of people becoming homeless for the first time jumped by 24%.

The Impact of Housing Instability

Research indicates that 68% of adults who had experienced homelessness as children, experienced four or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). In contrast only 16% of adults who reported no homelessness in childhood experienced four or more ACEs. (For more on ACEs, see page 30.)

- Children experiencing homelessness are more likely to experience food insecurity and poor physical and mental health.

- Children are more than twice as likely to repeat a grade in school, or be expelled or suspended.

- Families experiencing homelessness are most often headed by young single women with limited education and are likely to have experienced family violence or mental health challenges.[9]

Youth at greater risk for homelessness include:

- Victims of physical, verbal, or sexual abuse at home.

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ+) youth.

- Former foster youth.

- Youth exiting the juvenile justice system.

- Pregnant or parenting youth.[10]

9. McCoy-Roth, Marcy, Mackintosh, Bonnie B, Murphey, David. "Child Trends Early Childhood Highlights". Volume 3, Issue 1. February 2012.
10. "Improving Outcomes for Homeless Youth Social Issue Report." Root Cause. September 2012.

IMPROVING HOUSING STABILITY

2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness

The 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness has three main strategies:

- Address the root causes of homelessness through system and policy change.
- Expand homelessness prevention and housing programs to meet the need.
- Improve quality of life for unsheltered individuals and create healthy neighborhoods for all.

Local housing strategies are making a difference. Partnerships among Destination Home, the Office of Supportive Housing and others resulted in the following outcomes between January 1, 2020 and June 30, 2024:

- **30,868** people received homeless prevention assistance. 96% of families remained stably housed while receiving services. (Exceeding the 2025 Goal of 20,000 individuals.) Of these, 26% were families with children and 13% were Transition-Age Youth.
- **21,425** people were placed in temporary housing and shelter. Those receiving services were in shelters (80%), interim housing (89%), other transitional housing programs (84%), and safe parking (77%). In FY 2024, 24% of all people served in temporary housing or shelter exited to **permanent housing**.
- More than **5,800 homes** are open, under construction or in the pipeline thanks to Measure A.
- More than **1,700 families** have been connected to permanent housing.
- The gap to Functional Zero was narrowed by 32%. (Functional Zero is when the number of people who become homeless is not larger than the number of people who are connected to housing.)
  - In 2019 for every household housed, another 2.5 became homeless.
  - In 2023 for every household housed, another 1.7 became homeless. This is a 32% improvement.[11]

Some of the strategies in the plan targeting children, youth, and families include:

- Expanding housing programs for families in the child welfare system
- Expanding housing programs for foster youth to meet their long-term housing needs
- Supporting households with incarcerated family members to prevent homelessness.
- Ensuring that all families with children under 18 years old have access to emergency shelter or temporary housing.

Additionally, policy strategies focus on developing enough housing to meet our community's needs, providing protections from evictions, displacement, and housing discrimination, and ensuring all residents have access to living wage employment.

11. "The 2020-2025 Community Plan to End Homelessness 2024 Mid-Year Progress Report." Retrieved 3/13/2025 from https://destinationhomesv.org/documents/2024/08/2023-mid-year-progress-report.pdf.

Heading Home Campaign

In October 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved the Heading Home Campaign, a collective effort by the County, various cities, and community partners to house all homeless families in the county. At that time, there were approximately 600 families in the county without housing. Each year another 600 families become homeless for the first time. 75% of these families have a female head of household and 62% have children enrolled in school. Heading Home has focused on:

- Leveraging more housing vouchers (providing rental support for up to 10 years).
- Expanding Rapid Rehousing to provide a time-limited rental subsidy, case management, and supportive services.
- Expanding homelessness prevention strategies.
- Creating more affordable and supportive housing.

Heading Home Campaign Results October 2021 to September 2024

- 1,955 families with children were placed into permanent housing (an average of 54 families/month).
- 3,162 of 6,882 households served by SCC homelessness prevention programs were families with children.
- During their first assessment, unhoused families reported sleeping in cars (31%), in shelters (23%), and couch surfing (17%).
- 56% of Heading Home families reported a disability, 53% domestic violence and 43% mental health disorder as contributing to their risk for homelessness.[12]

SANTA CLARA COUNTY HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SYSTEM
TO SEEK HELP: (408) 926-8885
info@preventhomelessness.org
www.preventhomelessness.org

Fostering Promise
Eradicating Homelessness Among Youth Exiting Foster Care

In the Bay Area, one in four youth exiting foster care will experience homelessness. To address this, the community-based organization, Fostering Promise, is championing four policy areas to ensure these young people have a safe place to call home:

1. Creating housing readiness plans by age 16 for each youth in foster care.
2. Produce more and better-suited housing by creating housing options that are welcoming to young adults emerging from foster care.
3. Secure a committed mentor for every emerging adult who offers unconditional and long-term support.
4. Inform and reform adult systems by training staff to meet the unique needs of these youth.

For more information visit www.fosteringpromise.org.

12. Office of Supportive Housing Heading Home Dashboard Oct. 1, 2021 through September 30, 2024.

FOOD SECURITY

Percentage At Risk for Food Insecurity

28 — 2019
30 — 2021
30 — 2023
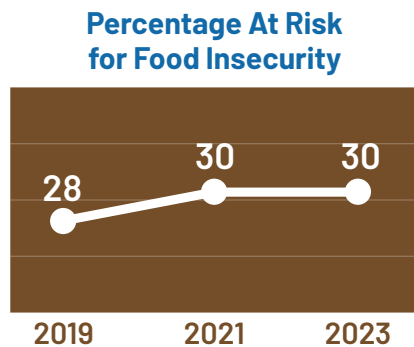
What the Data Tell Us

- Close to a third of all families were at risk for food insecurity across 2019-2023.

- Second Harvest has reported that its food distribution nearly doubled during COVID and has remained high since then.

- Black, Latino/a/x, and children with 2 or more ethnicities were at greater risk for food insecurity. This includes people who are at risk and eligible for benefits and those at risk who are not eligible for benefits because they earn more than 185% of the FPL. (185% of the FPL is the threshold for receiving many federal benefits.)

- In Spring 2023, FIRST 5 conducted a community survey of 2800 adults with children ages, prenatal through five. 50% reported access to healthy food and nutrition as a top concern.

At this time, there is not a reliable and consistent measure of food security. **The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) significantly underestimates the level of need in Santa Clara County when considering transportation, childcare and other costs.**

To address this, the Data Book utilizes 300% of the FPL to identify children and families who may be food insecure. ($96,450 annual salary for a family of four.) Additionally, we look at the gap between 185% and 300% of the FPL. Families below 185% of the FPL are at-risk for food insecurity and are eligible for benefits such as CalFresh. A family above 185% of the FPL, but below 300% of the FPL is at risk for food insecurity, however is not eligible for federal food benefits.

Building an integrated picture of food security requires data on the utilization of safety net programs like CalFresh, school meals, and WIC (Nutrition Support for Women, Infants and Children) and the utilization of other non-means tested programs such as Second Harvest Silicon Valley. Government reporting greatly lags our current point in time, so building accurate models to understand food security, especially those that consider housing costs, is extremely difficult.

Photo courtesy of Second Harvest of Silicon Valley.

Food insecurity and hunger are strongly associated with negative outcomes for children and adolescents:

- Behavioral, emotional, mental health, and academic problems are more prevalent.

- Hyperactivity, absenteeism, and tardiness are more likely.

- Lower math scores and poorer grades.

- Teens are more likely to have been suspended from school and have difficulty getting along with other students.

- Children are more likely to have repeated a grade, received special education services, or received mental health counseling than low-income children who do not experience hunger.

- Students are 17% less likely to be obese and 29% less likely to be in poor health when they receive free or reduced price lunch. (Based on estimates calculated at the national level.).[13]

13. Benefits of School Lunch. Food Research Action Center website topic. Retrieved 2/28/2019 at frac.org/programs/national-school-lunch-program/benefits-school-lunch.

IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY

Second Harvest of Silicon Valley is the hub of the charitable food system in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Second Harvest provided an average of 4.3 million pounds food to 192,000 people in Santa Clara County every month. In 2021, as result of the need created by the pandemic, Second Harvest almost doubled its food distribution in Santa Clara County. In 2025, as our community continues to recover from the economic impact of the pandemic, **Second Harvest of Silicon Valley provides an average of 7.5 million pounds of food to 370,000 individuals each month**. With inflation affecting food and gas prices, the number of people served by Second Harvest is near pandemic highs. Pandemic safety net benefits like the Child Tax Credit advance payments have ended and Emergency Allotments for CalFresh ended in February 2023, forcing families to stretch their household budgets even further. While the need remains high, donations to food providers have decreased precipitously.

Most organizations providing groceries to our community receive that food from Second Harvest at no cost. Second Harvest distributes food to over 1,000 locations in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties in partnership with over 400 organizations. Most sites utilize a farmer's market client choice model so that clients can choose the foods they will use and need.

NEED FOOD?
1-800-984-3663
MONDAY – FRIDAY, 8 A.M. – 5 P.M.
OR WWW.SHFB.ORG/GETFOOD

Second Harvest is also the main food recovery organization that rescues food from grocery stores and wholesalers and ensures it gets to food-insecure people. Second Harvest picks up large loads themselves but also enables partners to pick up from grocery stores on a regular basis. This food is hard to plan for but provides variety for our community.

In the last few years, Second Harvest has seen financial support decline from both individuals and the government. With inflation additionally increasing costs, this has required adjustments to Second Harvest's food budget and reductions in purchased food. The organization provides about 60% fresh produce and rotates in milk, meat, rice and beans. Eggs had been included in this rotation, however the current situation with avian flu and reduced supplies have made eggs unaffordable.

Second Harvest's large multilingual Food Connection team also assists community members in signing up for CalFresh as well as connecting people to their nearest food distribution or scheduling home delivery if required.

Other Food and Nutrition Programs
School Meals, Summer Nutrition, CalFresh & WIC
Second Harvest works to help Santa Clara County school districts take advantage of federal food programs, share best practices, and ensure that families are aware of school and summer meal options that are available to them.

Universal Free School Meals
Beginning in the 2022 school year, California became the first state in the nation to guarantee that every K-12 public and charter school student could eat breakfast and lunch at school, at no cost to them. Adoption of universal school meals creates more opportunity for equity by ensuring that every student has the nutrition they need to learn and thrive. Universal school meals also ensure that school is a place where communities are created, not divided.[14] Second Harvest will continue to advocate to make these policies a nationwide priority, and work with local school district to maximize their meal service, including by ensuring students have enough time to eat. In SY 2023-24, Santa Clara County schools served more than 32 million meals including lunch and breakfast, more than doubling the number of meals served prior to the free school meals program going into effect.

Summer Nutrition
Students need access to nutrition beyond the school year. Last year, a new federal program – SUN Bucks, or Summer EBT – debuted. This program helps low-income students fill the need gap when schools are closed and school meals are not available. Each qualifying child receives $120 for the summer. Students are eligible if they are receiving CalFresh, CalWorks, or MediCal, or if they are income-eligible based on the Free and Reduced Price Meal Form or Alternative Income Form completed at their school.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – known in California as CalFresh)
SNAP is a systemic answer to food insecurity. For every meal provided by food banks, nine are provided through SNAP. In California, CalFresh provides monthly food benefits on an EBT card (Electronic Balance Transfer card for public benefits) to be used at any grocery store to individuals and families earning up to 185% of the FPL.

Women, Infants and Children – WIC
WIC is a federal program offers benefits to purchase healthy foods like organic fruits, vegetables, and whole grain foods. It also delivers personalized nutrition education, breastfeeding information and support, along with other services aimed at enhancing the health and nutrition of women who are pregnant, post-partum, or breastfeeding, as well as infants and children under the age of five. Families below 185% of the FPL or who receive Medi-Cal, CalFresh, or Cash Aid are eligible to receive WIC.

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

SCC Children Entering Foster Care (Rate per Thousand)

2019	2021	2023
1.3	0.6	0.4
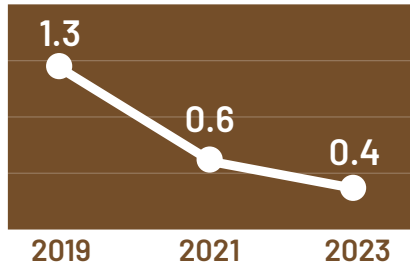
What the Data Tell Us:

- Between 2018 and 2023, the rate of children entering foster care in Santa Clara County decreased from 1.3 per thousand children to 0.4 per thousand children.

- In 2023, Black children entered foster care at a rate of 2.3 per thousand and Latino/a/x children entered at a rate of 1.0 per thousand.

Children who are victims of abuse or neglect are at higher risk of suffering from depression, attempting suicide, using alcohol and drugs, demonstrating learning and behavioral challenges in school, and becoming involved in the foster care system.[15] The County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors and Administration have been working diligently in partnership with the California Department of Social Services to improve methods to ensure child safety and prevent ongoing instances of abuse and neglect.

In some cases, it is necessary to remove children from their family to ensure their safety and support changes that will help the family be healthy. However, separating children from their primary caregiver is not without harm and can be traumatic for them, especially those under the age of six. It is crucial that children be taken away from their caregivers only when their safety is truly at risk.

When children are removed from their parents' care because of abuse or neglect, **placing them with relatives is a best practice**.[16] In Santa Clara County in 2022, 22% of children in foster care were placed with a relative or a non-relative extended family member (NFREM). In 2024, this percentage increased to 28%. Statewide, 35% of children in foster care were placed with relatives in 2024.

Poverty's Impact on Children and Families

Poverty can be an underlying issue in child-maltreatment cases. There have been studies that show a correlation between reports of child harm and the family being low-income. Poverty may play a role in increased rates of actual maltreatment or may be itself mistaken for neglect (or perhaps a combination of both), resulting in higher rates of children entering the foster care system.

Two recent studies have shown the importance that increased income can have for children and families. In one study, a $1 increase in minimum wage correlated with a decrease of child maltreatment reports.[17]

Poverty may play a role in increased rates of actual maltreatment or may be itself mistaken for neglect (or perhaps a combination of both), resulting in higher rates of children entering the foster care system.[18]

Placement Changes

In addition to placement with relatives, ensuring stable placements – staying in the same home – is also important to a child's sense of safety and stability. SCC has made this a priority and has decreased placement changes from 5.5 changes per 1,000 days in foster care in 2019 to 3.1 changes in 2023.

Figure 16 – Placement Changes

Number of placement changes per 1,000 days in foster care

	Santa Clara County	Black*	Latino/a/x	White
2019	5.5	5.6	5.7	3.1
2023	3.1	3.8	2.9	4.0
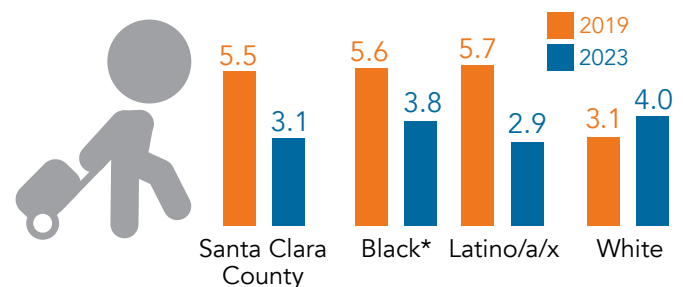
*2022 data. 2023 data is suppressed.

Source: CCWIP reports from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project

15. Knitzer, Jane. Promoting Resilience: Helping Young Children and Parents Affected by Substance Abuse, Domestic Violence and Depression in the context of Welfare Reform. National Center for Children in Poverty. February 2000.

16. Edwards, Leonard. Relative Placement in Child Protection Cases: A Judicial Perspective, Juvenile and Family Court Journal. NCJFCJ. 2010. "

17. Raissian, Kerri M., Bullinger, Lindsey Rose. "Money Matters: Does the Minimum Wage Affect Child Maltreatment Rates?

18. Dale, Maren K. Addressing the Underlying Issue of Poverty in Child- Neglect Cases. American Bar Association. April 10, 2014.

BUILDING A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF CARE

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SYSTEM OF CARE AND FAMILIES FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Santa Clara County is creating a **cohesive prevention-focused** system of care for children and families. Through the implementation of AB2083, the county-established Children and Youth System of Care (CYSOC) fosters interagency collaboration, ensuring that services are trauma-informed, culturally responsive, and accessible. The Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) directs agencies to enhance prevention and early intervention efforts, and to prioritize family-based care over institutional placements.

Children and Youth System of Care (CYSOC)

AB2083 allowed the county to establish an integrated, multi-agency approach to supporting children and youth proactively, addressing their complex needs. The county's model incorporates a No Wrong Door framework, ensuring that families receive assistance regardless of their entry point into the system. To foster a seamless service experience, the interagency approach includes child welfare, behavioral health, education, juvenile probation, regional center, county office of education, people with lived experience, and community partners.

Key AB2083 strategies include:

- **Interagency Leadership Teams:** Strengthening collaboration across sectors.
- **Training & Capacity Building:** Promoting trauma-informed and culturally competent care via training of the Integrated Core Practice Model.
- **Data Integration & Outcome Monitoring:** Improving coordination and effectiveness through shared data systems.
- **Cross-System Partnership:** Enhancing collaboration between public agencies, non-profit organizations, healthcare providers, and community-based services to create a unified response to families' needs.

Department of Children and Family Services Prevention Bureau

The Prevention Bureau implements community-based strategies that increase protective factors for families and increase community capacity to support and promote child and family wellbeing. For more information visit https://socialservices.sccgov.org/other-services/community-based-prevention.

Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

FFPSA promotes evidence-based prevention services designed to keep children safely at home. This aligns with CYSOC's focus on early intervention and prevention and expands access to mental health services, substance use treatment, and parenting support. Key elements of FFPSA in Santa Clara County include:

- **Reducing Congregate Care:** Shifting away from institutional placements toward family-based settings.
- **Community Pathway Model:** The Strengthening All Families Program (SAFE), launched in March 2024, provides families with voluntary community services to prevent involvement in the child welfare system. It focuses on early intervention and support for families at risk of maltreatment by connecting them to culturally responsive services that address their underlying needs. In 2024, the program referred 2,381 families to community providers. The engagement rate under the SAFE program was 38%.

A three-year Comprehensive Prevention Plan focuses on strengthening family resilience, expanding service accessibility, and ensuring culturally responsive support. The County has taken several critical steps toward implementation, including:

- **Implementing the Community Pathway by:**
    - **Expanding the SAFE Program:** Increasing provider capacity and connecting more families to early intervention services in the community without needing to be involved in the child welfare system.
    - **Leveraging the City of San José Demonstration Sites providers** implementing the "No Wrong Door" service delivery model to strengthen and increase the capacity to support more families with early interventions.
- **Enhanced Home Visiting Programs:** Collaborating with FIRST 5 to scale these programs.
- **ParentChild+** and launch additional family support initiatives.
- **Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) Pilot Expansion:** Launching a young parent initiative that provides a two-year $1,200 monthly stipend to 110 young pregnant and parenting teens (ages 14-24), coupled with case management, support services, and assess long-term impact. The initiative is tentatively scheduled to launch in the summer of 2025.
- **Culturally Specific Services:** A new Request for Proposals (RFP) was released in July 2024 to enhance culturally responsive interventions that are either promising practices or well-supported evidence-based practices to prevent child welfare system involvement.
- **Implementation of evidence-based practices** such as Motivational Interviewing (MI) and the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM) aim to enhance family engagement, support decision-making, and improve service delivery.

The Cultural Brokers (CB) Program promotes cultural understanding, family empowerment, and prevention-based supports with the FFPSA goals of reducing family separations and improving child welfare outcomes in mind. They do this through:

1. **Early Intervention:** The CB program provides support during the initial child welfare investigation, which is critical in preventing unnecessary system involvement– an approach that matches FFPSA's goal of using early intervention to prevent foster care placements.

2. **Prevention and Family Engagement:** The CB program works to prevent or support a child's removal by addressing cultural misunderstandings, supporting family engagement, and ensuring families understand and participate in decision-making. FFPSA's emphasis is on keeping families together through preventative services.

3. **Strength-Based Approach:** Both the CB program and FFPSA prioritize family strengths and self-advocacy. The CB program ensures that family voices are heard in the child welfare process and works to shift systemic bias, which aligns with FFPSA's intent to strengthen families rather than rely on out-of-home placements.

4. **Reducing Disproportionality:** FFPSA aims to create more equitable child welfare outcomes, and the CB program directly addresses racial disparities in Santa Clara County's child welfare system by providing culturally responsive support to overrepresented ethnic groups, such as African Ancestry and Hispanic/Latino families.

5. **Collaboration with Community-Based Services:** FFPSA promotes partnerships with community organizations for preventative services. The CB program uses community-based agencies to provide cultural liaisons who assist families, ensuring culturally competent service delivery.

Be Strong Families – Parent Café

- Provides safe space for caregivers to discuss the challenges and victories of raising a family.
- Through individual deep self-reflection and peer-to-peer learning, participants explore their strengths, learn about the protective factors, and create strategies from their own wisdom and experiences to help strengthen their families.
- Provided in partnership with Rebekah Children's Services, SOMOS Mayfair, ICAN and Catholic Charities of Santa Clara Valley.

Safe, Secure, and Loved© – Resilient Families

- A six-week, community-led parent education class to promote the 5 Protective Factors for parents of children ages 0-3 years old.
- Parents practice stress management and self-compassion, reducing their reactivity while increasing sensitive and nurturing care giving.

Virtual Resource Fair

- View on-demand videos and handouts highlighting the services of more than 50 agencies and community resources that support families and youth.

Through these and other efforts, Santa Clara County is setting a precedent of child welfare reform, guaranteeing that every child and family receives the appropriate support at the right time to attain long-term wellbeing and support.

The ACEs Aware Initiative

Too many children in our community have experienced trauma or chronic stress including child abuse, exposure to violence, divorce, a parent being incarcerated or struggling with mental health issues, family alcohol or substance use, and poverty. We recognize how these Adverse Childhood Experiences or ACES's, affect children's development, their ability to focus in school, and their health into adulthood.

California's ACEs Aware initiative is a first-in-the-nation effort to screen patients for ACEs. It collaborates across sectors to prevent and address the effects of ACEs and toxic stress. The initiative offers a free training for clinics, Becoming ACEs Aware, preparing them to begin their own ACEs screenings. It is required for eligible Medi-Cal providers to be reimbursed for conducting ACE screenings.

ACEs Aware also offers the evidence-based Stress Busters, seven ways to manage day-to-day stress as well as counter toxic stress from ACEs. They have been shown to improve brain health and immune function and balance stress hormones.

ACEs Screenings in Santa Clara County (January 2020 through December 2022):

- 36,150 Medi-Cal members ages 0-20 were screened.
- This is 18% of Santa Clara County's Medi-Cal population in this age group.
- 5% of those screened had an ACEs score of 4 or more.

Statewide, 25% of the Medi-Cal population in this age group was screened and 7% had four or more ACEs.[19]

Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) Tufts Medical Center

Research shows that Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs) drive healthy development and lessen the effects of ACEs. The four building blocks of HOPE are:

- **Relationships** within the family and with other children and adults through interpersonal activities.
- **Environments** that are safe, equitable, and stable for living, playing, learning at home and in school.
- **Engagement** in social and civic activities to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness.
- **Emotional growth** through playing and interacting with peers for self-awareness and self-regulation.[20]

For more information go to: www.positiveexperience.org

19. ACES Aware. Retrieved 3/12/2025 at https://www.acesaware.org/data-reports.
20. HOPE Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences. Tufts Medicine. Retrieved 3/12/2025 at www.positiveexperience.org.

EVERY CHILD
HEALTHY

Health is influenced by many factors including genetic makeup, a healthy birth, regular health and dental care, healthy foods, exercise, healthy environments, and connections to others that support social-emotional development. When a child experiences positive emotional and physical health, they are able to participate fully in education and activities that will lead to a fulfilling life, making them full participants in society.

RELEVANT BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTs

HEALTHCARE | MENTAL HEALTH
BASIC NEEDS | GREEN SPACES

Photo courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

TO IMPROVE RESULTS:

- Ensure pregnant people have health insurance and early, regular, and culturally-relevant screenings and supports.

- Implement policies and programs that work across sectors to prevent, identify, and promptly and effectively treat behavioral health challenges.

- Ensure every child has health insurance, has access to culturally appropriate health care professionals, and receives required routine developmental, behavioral, dental, vision, hearing, mental health, and other preventive screenings.

BY THE NUMBERS

Figure 17 – Early and Regular Prenatal Care

Percentage of Mothers Receiving Early and Regular Prenatal Care (2019-2023)

	Value
Santa Clara County	69
Asian/Pacific Islander	73
Black	67
Latino/a/x	64
Native American	67
White	72
Teens 15-19	56

EQUITY GAP
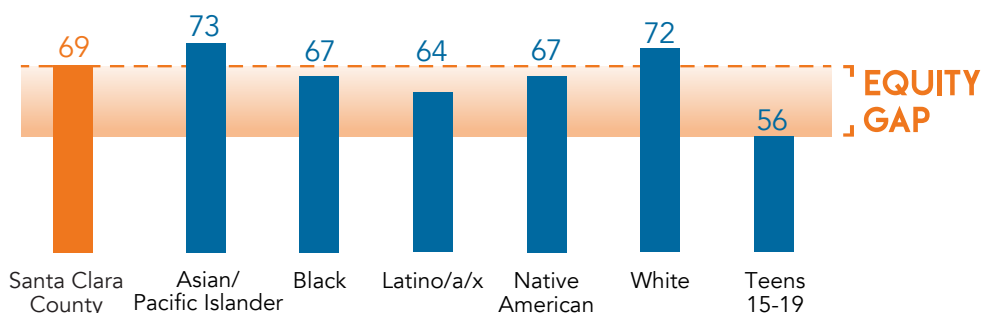
Source: Santa Clara County Public Health Department, Vital Records Business Intelligence System 2004- 2023 Birth Database.

Figure 18 – Access to Health Care

Percentage of Children Enrolled in Medi-Cal with Routine Health Check-up in the Previous 12 Months (2023)

Photo courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

	Value
Santa Clara County	55
Asian	50
Black	49
Latino/a/x	59
Native American	42
Pacific Islander	43
White	45
2+ Races	41
0-15 Months old	50
15-30 Months old	69
3-21 Years old	47

EQUITY GAP

Source: California Department of Public Health

DIG INTO THE DATA!

Visit the Kids in Common Dashboard for the latest data, trends, and geographic breakdowns of the data. www.kidsincommon.org/dashboard

Photo courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

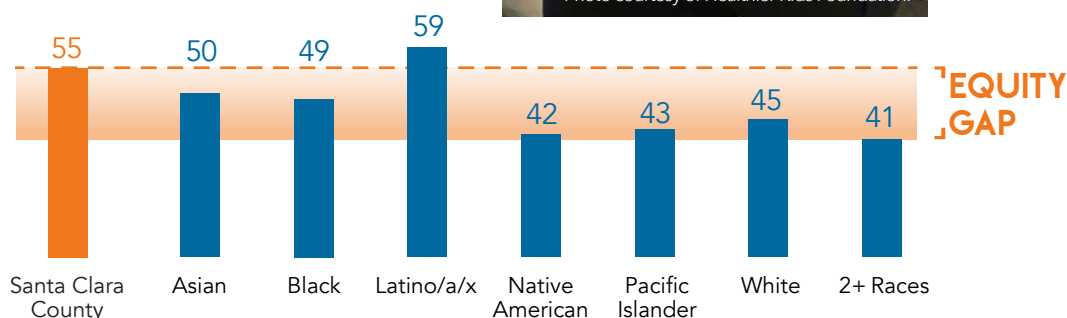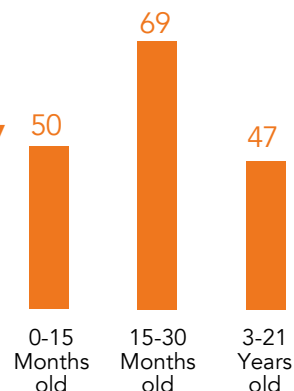## Figure 19 – Access to Dental Care
Percentage of Children Enrolled in Medi-Cal with Routine Dental Check-up in the Previous 12 Months (2022)

Santa Clara County	Asian	Latino/a/x	Pacific Islander	White
34	32	40	21	19

EQUITY GAP
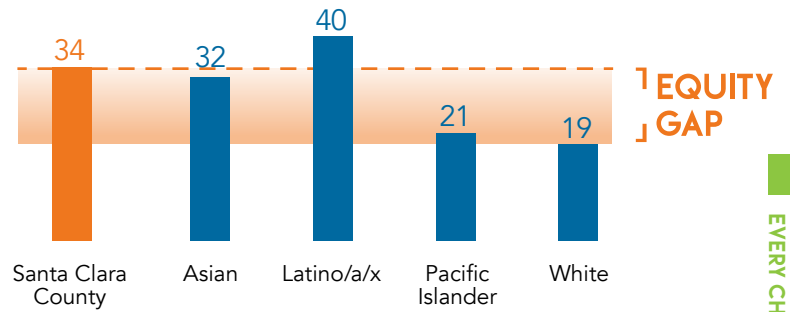
Source: California Health and Human Services. Dental Utilization Measures and Sealant Data by County, Ethnicity and Age.

Photo courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Public Health Department.
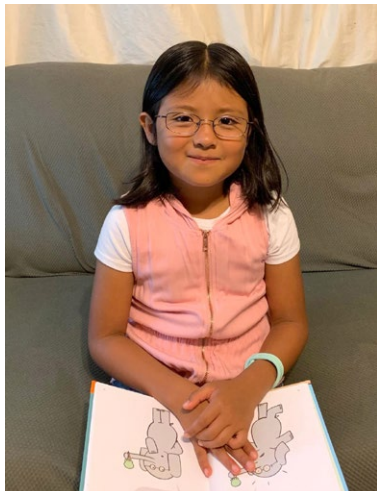
Figure 20 – Social-Emotional Wellbeing
Percent of SCC Students Reporting Social-Emotional Status (2022-23)

Feeling Sad/Hopeless for More than 2 Weeks in the Past Year	34%
Seriously Considered Suicide in the Past Year	15%
Had 3+ Distressing Thoughts in the Past Month	30%
Had 2+ Optimistic Feelings	41%
Had 3+ Feelings of Life Satisfaction	63%
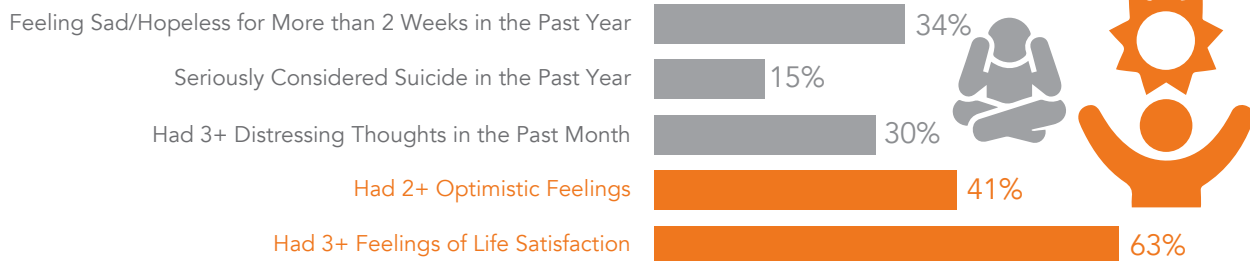
Source: California Healthy Kids Survey (School Years 2021-22 and 2022-23). The Department of Public Health conducted analysis.

EARLY AND REGULAR PRENATAL CARE

Percentage of SCC Mothers Receiving Early and Regular Prenatal Care

2009-2013	2014-18	2019-23
73	73	69
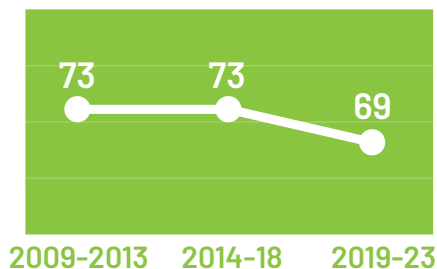
What the Data Tell Us

- The Healthy People 2030 goal is that 80.5% of mothers receive adequate prenatal care.

- Between the five-year time periods of 2009-13 and 2019-23 the percent of mothers receiving early and regular prenatal care decreased from 73% to 69%.

- The groups that had the highest percentage of early and regular prenatal care were Asian and White mothers at 73% and 72% respectively.

- Latino/a/x mothers had the lowest rate at 64%. 67% of Black and Native American mothers received early and regular prenatal care.

- 56% of teen mothers between 2019-21 received early and regular prenatal care.
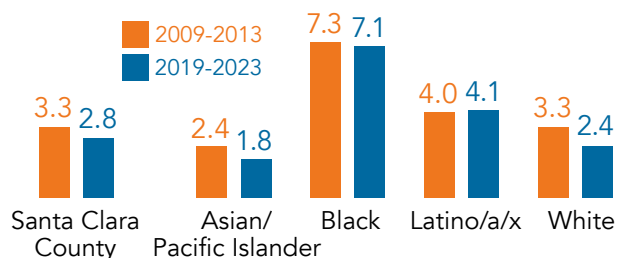
Figure 21 shows the Infant Mortality Rate for 2009-13 and 2019-23.

- The infant mortality rate for Santa Clara County was 2.8 per thousand. The rate for Latino/a/x and Black infants is 4.1 and 7.1 per thousand.

Figure 21 – Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 births

Legend: 2009-2013 (orange), 2019-2023 (blue)

	Santa Clara County	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Black	Latino/a/x	White
2009-2013	3.3	2.4	7.3	4.0	3.3
2019-2023	2.8	1.8	7.1	4.1	2.4

Source: Santa Clara County Public Health Department, California Integrated Vital Records System (Cal-IVRS), 2009-2023 California Comprehensive Death File and Comprehensive Birth File.

Photo courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

Physical health sets the stage for healthy development in childhood and later years. Positive physical and mental health outcomes for children and youth are more likely when they experience a healthy birth, normal growth and development, minimum disability from acute and chronic diseases, a strong sense of self, and respect for others. When they adopt habits that support their health, such as regular exercise, healthy eating and good sleep behaviors.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted inequities in accessing care, compounding barriers that make it more challenging for residents to see their health care providers.

Early and Regular Prenatal Care

Prenatal care is critical for reducing birth complications for both infants and pregnant people. Access to early and regular prenatal care, starting within the first three months of pregnancy:

- Supports healthy pregnancies.

- Reduces the rate of infant mortality.

- Reduces other adverse birth outcomes such as premature birth, low birth weight, and developmental delays.

Early prenatal care also helps mothers understand critical health issues related to their pregnancy and detect individual health risks.[1]

1. "Early Prenatal Care." Santa Clara County Department of Public Health website. Web-accessed 12/9/2017 at www.sccgov.org.

SUPPORTING HEALTHY BIRTHS

There are many programs in Santa Clara County designed to support healthy births, health in early childhood, access to important health screenings, stronger connections to health care providers, and supports for healthy social-emotional development.

Santa Clara County PUBLIC HEALTH

Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Program (MCAH)

By reducing systemic barriers, MCAH initiatives and activities improve access to quality care and enhance the wellbeing of pregnant and parenting people, children, and youth, including those with special health care needs. MCAH staffs a toll-free pregnancy and parenting number to provide community members with resources, services, and referrals (including to perinatal services, food resources, and medical providers). MCAH also leads or co-leads countywide initiatives including the Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative and the Adolescent Sexual Health Advocates network. Both convene community members and agencies to improve awareness, access to services, and best practices to promote wellness among MCAH populations in Santa Clara County.

MCAH Toll-Free Pregnancy/Parenting Support: 1-800-310-2332

Public Health Nursing Home Visitation Programs

The Public Health Nurse Home Visitation programs include the Nurse-Family Partnership, CalWORKS, Regional Nursing, and Milestones Home Visiting Program (a collaboration between County of Santa Clara Social Services Agency, the Department of Family and Children's Services, and the Santa Clara County Public Health Department). Public Health Nurses (PHN) in these programs provide home visits to those who are pregnant or parenting, as well as to infants and children/youth. PHNs conduct health assessments and developmental screening, and provide anticipatory guidance and health education. The goal of PHN home visitation is that families get appropriate follow-up and linkage to services.

Black Infant Health Program (BIH)

Within a culturally supportive environment, and honoring the unique history of Black women, Black Infant Health (BIH) helps women have healthy babies. BIH implements an evidence-informed intervention utilizing a group-based approach. Participants get to meet, interact, and build a sisterhood with other Black women. The educational group sessions are complemented with client-centered life planning, goal setting, participant-centered case management, in-home visitation with a BIH Public Health Nurse, and referrals to services. This powerful combination serves to help Black women enhance life skills, gain pregnancy health-related education specific to their needs, learn proven strategies to reduce stress, and build social support. BIH services are provided by a team of family health advocates, social workers, and public health nurses. The program serves Black women who are 16 years or older, and pregnant or up to six months postpartum at the time of enrollment, regardless of income.
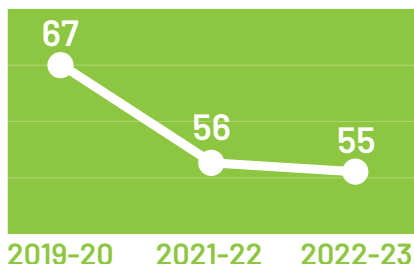
Perinatal Equity Initiative

Perinatal Equity Initiative (PEI) addresses the causes of persistent inequality and identifies best practices to eliminate disparities in Black infant mortality. While declines in infant mortality have been achieved, the statewide mortality rate for Black infants continues to be two to four times higher than rates for other groups. The goal of PEI is to improve birth outcomes and reduce mortality for Black infants through interventions implemented at the county level that are evidence-based, evidence-informed, or reflect promising practices. In Santa Clara County local PEI specific interventions include **Maternal Health Navigation** and **Interconception Care** – care given to parents between one pregnancy and the next to optimize their health – provided by a local community-based organization, Roots Community Health Center. Through the collaboration with Roots, PEI also provides free doula services to Black women and birthing people in their third trimester and up to one year postpartum. **Doulas** provide prenatal and postpartum support, including education (in childbirth, breastfeeding, newborn care, and nutrition), assistance in creating birth and postpartum plans, lactation services, and emotional support. Additional PEI local interventions include a five-county partnership Bay Area media campaign, **#DeliverBirthJustice**, a community advisory board, and educational outreach to improve outcomes for Black mothers and their babies.

ACCESS TO HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE

Percentage of Children on Medi-Cal with a Routine Health Check-Up in Past 12 Months

67 — 2019–20
56 — 2021–22
55 — 2022–23

Percentage of Children on Medi-Cal with Dental Appointment in Past 12 Months

35 — 2020
36 — 2021
34 — 2022

What the Data Tell Us

- About one third of Santa Clara County children are on Medi-Cal.

- In 2019-20, 67% of children had a routine check-up in the previous 12 months. This dropped, post-COVID, to 55% in 2022-23.

- 59% of Latino/a/x children had a routine check-up in the previous 12 months.

- The children with the lowest access to routine health check-ups are Pacific Islander (43%), Native American (42%), and children who are two or more races (41%).

Routine access to health care is one of the factors that influence children's health and wellbeing. Optimal health outcomes result when families have:

- Insurance and a regular place to receive care.

- Timely visits to their doctor.

- Access to specialty doctors, behavioral health services, dentists, and vision and hearing specialists.

- Education about prevention measures.

- Relevant health screenings, so that health problems can be detected and treated as they emerge.

In "**Pediatricians are Essential Supports for Families**," the RAPID national survey of families with young children conducted in March 2023, over 80% of parents reported that pediatricians were an important source of advice and support about their children's health and emotional wellbeing. Additionally:

- 64% of parents reported they are more likely to enroll in food assistance programs such as WIC or CalFresh if their pediatrician told them they were eligible for them.

- Parents of color – 67% of Black and 72% of Latino/a/x parents – were even more likely to say this than White parents (61%).

- Less than a third of parents reported pediatricians asking them about experiences of hardship.[3]
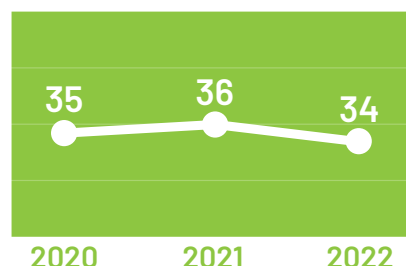
What the Data Tell Us

- From 2018 to 2022 the percentage of children on Medi-Cal who saw a dentist in the previous 12 months has remained fairly stable, but low, hovering around 34%.

- A higher percentage of Latino/a/x (40%) children on Medi-Cal are seeing dentists in a timely manner than White children on Medi-Cal (19%).

- Since 2016, 177,414 children have received a dental screening by the Healthier Kids Foundation. Of these, 33% were referred to dentists. 21% were emergency referrals, meaning the child had pain or an infection, and 60% of those referrals were successful.

- Since 2021, 1,328 pregnant people were screened for dental issues and when appropriate referred to care.

Good oral health is vital to a child's life. Poor oral health too often leads to unnecessary pain and suffering, poorer academic outcomes, and poorer overall lifetime health. Tooth decay is the most common chronic infectious disease of childhood, and dental pain interferes with a child's ability to learn. Good oral health is also important to the health of pregnant women and may be linked to healthy birth outcomes.[4]

Santa Clara County Oral Health Program (OHP)

OHP collaborates with key partners to move forward the Oral Health Strategic plan geared to increase access through school screenings, promoting the Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment requirement, medical-dental integration with managed care partners and providers, and workforce development to increase capacity. The OHP prioritizes building oral health literacy around oral systemic health and reducing barriers to care within the community through training, technical assistance, social media campaigns, and partnership building to ensure families have the educational resources to care for their oral health. In collaboration with the Healthier Kids Foundation (HKF) and the Santa Clara County Dental Society, free dental screenings are provided annually to high-need children at school sites. Additionally, the County or Santa Clara champions community water fluoridation, especially for our most vulnerable communities.

3. "Pediatricians are Essential Supports for Families." Stanford Center on Early Childhood Rapid Survey Project. December 2023.
4. "Bright Smile for a Bright Future: Oral Health for California's Children." The Partnership for Children. The Children's Partnership. Retrieved 2/28/2024.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE

The Healthier Kids Foundation (HKF) and Health Screenings

The Healthier Kids Foundation partners with community-based organizations, public entities, and public school systems (Head Start and state preschools, elementary schools, middle schools, and secondary schools) to:

- Provide health screenings (hearing, oral health, and vision) to low-income children and connect parents to the appropriate preventative and intervention health services based on the results.

- Identify uninsured children and assist their parents with enrolling them into subsidized health coverage.
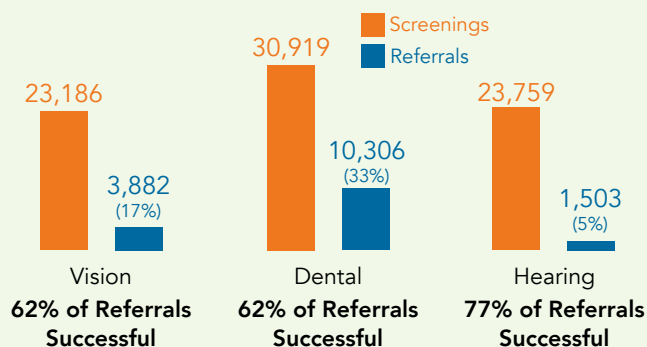
Healthier Kids Foundation

If a child has unmet hearing needs, it is difficult for them to learn language. If they cannot see, it will be difficult for them to learn to read and be successful in school. A child in pain from unmet dental needs will struggle to pay attention in class. Too often, unmet dental, hearing, and vision needs are not addressed until a child enters school or even later, and this is too late.

Screening children for unmet dental, hearing, and vision needs is a cost-effective way to identify issues that may impact a child's well-being.

An important feature of the HKF's screening program is that when a need is identified, the child is referred to specialty care. HKF case managers work very hard to ensure a connection with the health care provider is made.

Figure 22 – Screenings and Referrals Made Healthier Kids Foundation (2022-23)

- Screenings
- Referrals

	Vision	Dental	Hearing
Screenings	23,186	30,919	23,759
Referrals	3,882 (17%)	10,306 (33%)	1,503 (5%)

Vision: 62% of Referrals Successful

Dental: 62% of Referrals Successful

Hearing: 77% of Referrals Successful

Source: Healthier Kids Foundation Annual Data Run

Access to Health Care in Santa Clara County

Santa Clara County has been successful in creating high levels of health insurance coverage, starting in 2005 with the Children's Health Initiative. In 2021, 98.5% of children in the county had health insurance. While this is excellent, issues that still create barriers for our community members include:

- **A shortage of providers for specific services** prevents children from receiving care in a timely manner. This includes a dearth of mental health providers who work with children and teens.

- **Medi-Cal reimbursement rates** – while recently increased – are still low and disproportionately affect lower-income families' access to specialists such as audiologists, pediatric dentists, and mental health providers.

- A **"benefits cliff"** for families who earn too much money to qualify for Medi-Cal and other public insurance benefits, but cannot afford insurance premiums or co-payments.

- **Geographic isolation** that makes it difficult for families in the southern part of the county to get access to services.

- **Difficulty navigating the complex health care system**. Eligibility requirements for services, differences in insurance plans and coverage details, and lack of information about available services prevent families from accessing them.

- **Fear and distrust of the health care system**: Undocumented immigrant families reported being afraid to access services, often waiting until a health concern becomes a crisis. Some communities may not access mental health services due to stigma related to it.

- **Lack of culturally-relevant, multilingual services**. There is a lack of services for monolingual, non-English speakers.

Additionally, some providers lack the knowledge and competence to provide services to diverse sub-populations, such as diverse race and ethnicities, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth in the foster care system.[5]

Photos courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

5. 2016 Status of Children's Health Volume 2." Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

ABOUT SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

What the Data Tell Us:

In school years 2021-22 and 2022-23, the **California Healthy Kids Survey** (CHKS), a confidential and anonymous web-based survey, was administered in Santa Clara County to 11 districts and 51 schools to students in 9th and 11th grades. 23,000 students participated, and the data was weighted to represent the overall student population in Santa Clara County. This survey found:

- 34% expressed signs of depression, feeling sad or hopeless for more than 2 weeks in the past year.
- 15% seriously considered suicide in the past year.
- 63% had 3 or more feelings of life satisfaction, such as positive feelings about family, friendships, school, community, or self.
- There were not significant differences between different racial or ethnic groups. There were significant differences when students identified as LGBTQ+ (see pages 16-17).

Additional Data:

The Healthier Kids Foundation implemented a behavioral health screening called **My HealthFirst** for children in schools and childcare settings. In FY 2023-24:

- 3,218 children were screened.
- 1,363 received referrals for specialty care.
- 86% of those referred received specialty care.

Social-Emotional Wellbeing

Children who are socially and emotionally healthy have acquired the skills to:

- Identify and understand their own feelings.
- Manage strong emotions in a constructive manner.
- Care about others and developing positive relationships.
- Make good decisions.
- Behave ethically and responsibly.
- Avoid negative behaviors.[6]

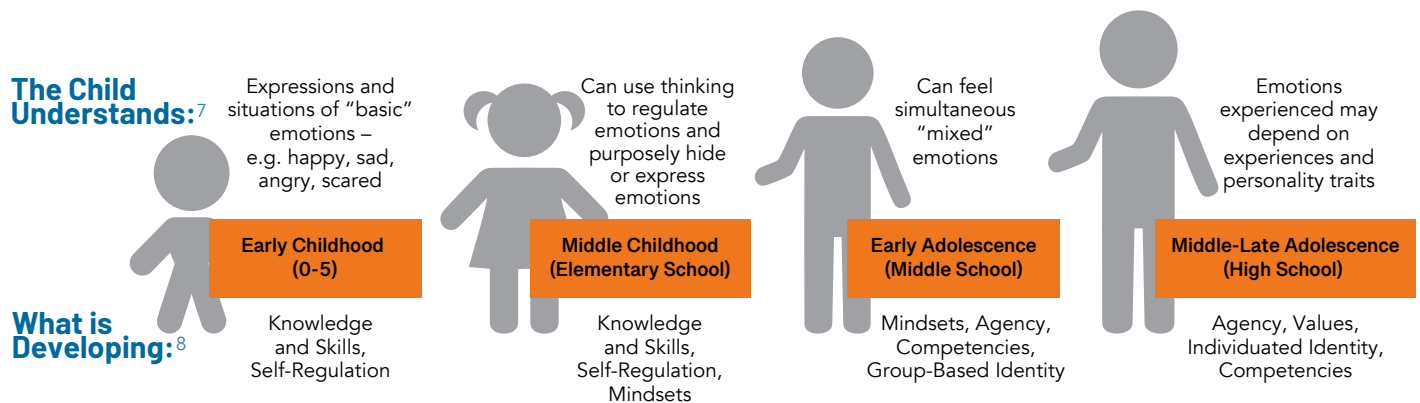## Social-Emotional Developmental Lens

Social-emotional wellbeing is developmental with specific skills coming into being at different ages and stages of life. Figure 23 below shows this development by ages.

Young children struggling with self-regulation or poor social skills may display difficult or disruptive behavior in day-care programs, preschool, and when they enter school. Teachers may find it harder to teach them and may see them as less socially and academically competent. Consequently, teachers may provide these children with less positive feedback. Peers may reject them, resulting in even less emotional support and fewer opportunities for learning from their classmates. They may grow to dislike school and disengage from learning as early as Kindergarten.[9]

Adolescence is when behavioral health concerns often emerge. There are both biological and social explanations for this. Young people's brains are growing and new connections are forming between different parts of the brain, making youth and young adults capable of higher-order thinking, but also prone to worry and sadness. There are also major social changes in adolescence, including growing academic pressure, peer pressure, making new friends, and developing a sense of identity.[6]

Social media is also contributing to the rise in teen stress and anxiety. This includes exposure to events and issues in the news that cause anxiety and fear as well as the way social media encourages young people to compare themselves to others. A 2019 study of 12- to 15-year-olds found that those who spent more than three hours a day on social media were twice as likely to report poor mental health including symptoms of anxiety and depression.[10]

Figure 23 – The Development of Social-Emotional Wellbeing

The Child Understands:[7]

- Expressions and situations of "basic" emotions – e.g. happy, sad, angry, scared | **Early Childhood (0-5)**
- Can use thinking to regulate emotions and purposely hide or express emotions | **Middle Childhood (Elementary School)**
- Can feel simultaneous "mixed" emotions | **Early Adolescence (Middle School)**
- Emotions experienced may depend on experiences and personality traits | **Middle-Late Adolescence (High School)**

What is Developing:[8]

- Knowledge and Skills, Self-Regulation
- Knowledge and Skills, Self-Regulation, Mindsets
- Mindsets, Agency, Competencies, Group-Based Identity
- Agency, Values, Individuated Identity, Competencies

6. "Protecting Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory." 2021.
7. Denham, Susanne A. "Keeping SEL Developmental: The Importance of a Developmental Lens for Fostering and Assessing SEL Competencies." Establishing Practical Social-Emotional Competence Assessments Work Group. Frameworks Briefs Special Issues Series. November 2018.
8. "Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework." University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research. Brief. June 24, 2015.

9 Boyd, Judi S., Barnett, W. Steven, Bodrova, Elena, Leong, Deborah J., Gomby, Deanna, Robin, Kenneth B., Hustedt, Jason T. "Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Development Through Preschool." NIEER Policy Report. 2005.
10. "The Efficacy of Implementing a School-Based Approach to Student Wellness." Santa Clara County Office of Education. January 2022. To read the entire research brief visit https://sccoe.to/wellnessbrief.

IMPROVING
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Social-Emotional Wellbeing Supports in Schools

Teachers, school administrators, and staff are acutely aware that students' ability to engage in learning is directly related to whether their behavioral health and social-emotional needs are being met.

When Social-emotional Learning (SEL) is incorporated into the classroom and embedded mental health services are offered to students, schools see improved academic performance and attendance, and reduced school disciplinary action, referrals into the justice system, and drop-out rates. Students are more likely to receive behavioral health services when they are provided on a school campus.[11]

California is funding a system of social-emotional and behavioral supports to be delivered through the schools:

- **Children & Youth Behavioral Health Initiative** (CYBHI) is a five-year, $4.7 billion state initiative to transform and reimagine the behavioral health system.
- **Statewide Multi-Payer School-Linked Fee Schedule** – The Department of Health Care Services has developed a statewide fee schedule for outpatient mental health or substance use disorder services to students 25 years of age or younger at or near a school site.
- The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) provides technical assistance to districts to establish these school health systems and support medical billing. This contributes financially to the sustainability of these programs in their schools.

School Wellness Centers

School Wellness Centers (SWCs) support social-emotional wellbeing by providing early intervention, direct service, and a calming space to "hang out." SCCOE developed 22 of these centers in collaboration with local school districts. Many districts funded their own SWCs.

Through the school-based wellness center grant program, the County of Santa Clara allocated $12.1 million to support 39 schools to implement 27 new wellness centers, enhance existing wellness centers, and support infrastructure needs.

Community Schools

In Santa Clara County, 57 schools have received grants to become Community Schools. Community schools provide Community Schools provide a school improvement strategy that enables schools to work closely with educators, students, and families to understand and address the unique needs, assets, and aspirations of the school community.[12]

The foundation of community schools include: integrated student supports, family and community engagement, collaborative leadership, expanded learning time and opportunities. For more information on SWCs and Community Schools visit www.sccoe.org/yhw.

School Linked Services (SLS) Initiative

Funded by the County of Santa Clara, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), and school districts, the School Linked Services (SLS) Initiative includes service coordination and school-based behavioral health services through programs such as Family Engagement, Prevention and Early Intervention, SLS Behavioral Health, and other programs in schools throughout Santa Clara County. The SLS Initiative encompasses programs, supports, and services utilizing a **Multi-Tiered System of Support** (MTSS) framework while building an upstream approach to prevention.

SCHOOL LINKED SERVICES

Through these programs, schools become a place where youth and their families can find a network of support and services. The SLS coordinators – through the Family Engagement program – provide linkages and supports for children and their families who experience economic, social, and other inequities that directly affect learning and success in school.

Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) services seek to prevent or intervene early in the development of emotional and behavioral problems in children who may be experiencing symptoms ranging from behavioral/emotional distress to depression and anxiety caused by trauma or other risk factors. PEI provides outcome-based parenting strategies, mental health promotion and outreach services, classroom-wide social skills training, family workshops, and short-term therapy services in school settings.

The early intervention of specialty mental health treatment services, through **SLS Behavioral Health**, are provided in school settings, but can also be accessed at home, in clinic settings, and at community agencies. Services are tailored to the needs of youth and families, considering cultural values, age, developmental stage, and history of trauma.

Currently 26 districts in SCC have the SLS Family Engagement program and 7,395 students received services in SY 2023-24. Of these:

- 74% of the students receiving services were Latino/a/x.
- 81% of the recipients of services were ages 0-15 and 19% were ages 16-25.
- 54% of the students were linked to behavioral health services.
- 80% of all referrals made to families were successfully connected.

For more information visit https://bhsd.santaclaracounty.gov/learn-about-school-support-services.

11. "The Efficacy of Implementing a School-Based Approach to Student Wellness." Santa Clara County Office of Education. January 2022. To read the entire research brief visit https://sccoe.to/wellnessbrief.
12. Coalition for Community Schools.

EVERY CHILD HEALTHY

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS FOR SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

County of Santa Clara Children, Youth, and Family System of Care

School Linked Services is part of the county's system of care for children, youth (up to age 25), and families. This system not only provides prevention and early intervention, but also outpatient care, residential care, and crisis services. The System of Care served 12,987 children, youth, and young adults in Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Youth Wellness Centers

Current research tells us that drop-in youth centers are instrumental in supporting youth in navigating and accessing services across systems while also providing a space for activities, learning, socializing, and connecting. In partnership with the Stanford Center for Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Alum Rock Counseling Center, Santa Clara County has invested in two centers anchored in a model of care that considers the holistic needs of young people.

allcove

allcove Palo Alto is an integrated youth mental health center designed with, by, and for youth and young adults that reduces stigma, embraces mental wellness, increases community connection, and provides access to culturally-responsive services. allcove Palo Alto serves young people ages 12-25 with mild to moderate needs, providing unique spaces for them to access services, as well as resources and support for friends, family, and the larger community. Services are free or low-cost and include mental health, physical health, supported education and employment, substance use cessation, peer and family support, and community activities.

2741 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto, CA 94306 | 650-798-6330
www.allcove.org/centers/palo-alto

Downtown Youth Wellness Center (DYWC)

The DYWC was developed to support youth in navigating and accessing services across systems while also providing space for activities, learning, and being a place to socialize and just "be". The DYWC serves adolescent and transition-age youth, ages 12-25 with peer support, mentoring, support navigating resources and referrals, social activities, psychoeducational activities, and employment/ education support. A central focus is youth mental health and linkage to peer and clinical support. The center fosters an inclusive and welcoming environment with a flexible and open approach to decrease barriers to access and reduce stigma.

725 East Santa Clara Street, Suite 105, San José, CA 95112
408-961-4645 | dywc@hhs.sccgov.org

Project Cornerstone

A community movement of the YMCA of Silicon Valley, Project Cornerstone ensures every young person has the support, skills, and relationships needed to thrive. Through a variety of programs, youth, families, schools, and community organizations create environments that foster social and emotional growth, build positive relationships, and sustain safe, supportive spaces. With a presence in hundreds of Bay Area schools, **YMCA Project Cornerstone engages over 4,000 caring adults annually, reaching 62,000 youth each month, creating lasting, positive change.**

YMCA Project Cornerstone's programs include:

- **Asset Building Champions (ABC)**, **Los Dichos**, and **Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten/Kindergarten** programs engage parents to build positive connections with their children and the community while volunteering at preschools and elementary schools. Parents read books and lead activities that teach lessons on bullying, being an "UPstander," problem-solving, and peer support. The bilingual (Spanish-English) Los Dichos program helps parents from diverse cultures support their children's educational success.

- **Middle School SEL Curriculum** provides lessons, led by volunteers and/or school staff, to help middle schoolers manage emotions, social situations, behaviors, and develop responsible decision-making.

- **Expect Respect** offers a leadership and bullying prevention workshop that emphasizes student voice and action plans to promote a caring school climate.

- **Adult Workshops** provide interactive sessions for parents and community members, focusing on strengthening relationships with youth and inspiring adults to deepen their commitment to supporting youth in their lives. Workshops are available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

- **School Staff Training** helps teachers, administrators, and staff strengthen positive relationships with students.

Additional Programs Include:

- **Student Leadership Council** offers high school students the opportunity to represent youth voice and develop leadership skills.

- **Asset of the Month Toolkit** highlights 12 Developmental Assets, providing monthly editable posters and handouts in English and Spanish.

- **Summer Fun** offers 8 weeks of lessons and videos for continued student and family engagement.

For more information visit www.projectcornerstone.org or call 408-351-6482.

SPOTLIGHT ON

YOUTH SUICIDE AND FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

Youth Suicide

Nationally, suicide is the second-leading cause of death for children ages 15-19. According to the Santa Clara County Public Health Department, between 2019 and 2023, thirty-three Santa Clara County youth under age 18 died by suicide. It was the third leading cause of death in this age group.[13]

Several risk factors contribute to a youth attempting or committing suicide including:

- Substance use.
- Incarceration.
- A history of mental illness or depression.
- Past suicide attempts.
- Family history of suicide or mental disorders.
- Poor family communication.
- Stressful life events.
- Access to lethal means.
- Exposure to suicidal behavior of others.

Screening, early identification, and access to and receipt of services are critical in preventing and reducing suicide risk. California law requires public school districts and charter schools serving grades 7-12 to establish suicide prevention policies that address high-risk groups, including LGBTQ+ youth, those who are homeless or in out-of-home settings, youth bereaved by suicide, and youth with mental health problems, disabilities, or substance use disorders.[14]

K-12 Toolkit for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention

The HEARD Alliance (Health Care Alliance in Response to Adolescent Depression and related conditions) convenes resources for promoting wellbeing, treating depression and related conditions, and preventing suicide in youth and young adults. In addition to providing community resources on mental health, it created a K-12 Toolkit to support the development of school suicide prevention and wellbeing promotion policies, drawn on evidence-based national and state youth suicide prevention guidelines. The toolkit can be found at www.heardalliance.org/help-toolkit.

Crisis and Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24/7
Call 988 (for local area codes)
All others call 800-704-0900 and press 1

Crisis Text Line 24/7
Text RENEW to 741741

Behavioral Health Navigator Support
800-704-0900 Option 4

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs) include a variety of conditions that can occur in individuals exposed to alcohol before birth. These conditions impact each person differently and range from mild to severe. Those with FASDs face lifelong effects, including behavioral and learning difficulties as well as physical challenges. FASDs are preventable if a developing baby is not exposed to alcohol.

Behavioral issues include:

- Hyperactive behavior.
- Difficulty with attention.
- Poor reasoning and judgment skills.
- Difficulty with social skills.
- Being easily upset (meltdowns).

Learning challenges include:

- Poor memory.
- Learning disabilities.
- Speech and language delays.
- Intellectual disability or low IQ.
- Difficulty in school (especially with math).

FASD affects up to 1 in 20 school children in the U.S., making it the most prevalent yet largely unrecognized developmental disability in the country. Most people with FASD do not have the identifying facial features of those with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Protective factors such as early diagnosis and special education support – and above all, support and education for families raising affected children – can help mitigate the effects of FASDs and enable individuals with FASDs to reach their full potential.[15]

In 2022, California Senate Bill 1016 was signed into law, officially recognizing FASDs as a condition to be recognized in special education services. As a result, children and families affected by FASD will finally gain access to appropriate special education services, improving their overall school experience, enhancing their education and academic performance, and setting them on a path to thrive in life.

The County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health Services Department has been raising awareness about FASDs among public service providers since 2021, aiming to prevent these disorders and support affected individuals, caregivers, and families. Alongside this awareness campaign and training efforts, the county has prioritized the screening for prenatal substance exposure and diagnosis of FASDs, along with providing targeted services and interventions to individuals affected by FASDs.

EVERY CHILD HEALTHY

13. Santa Clara County Public Health Department, California Integrated Vital Records System (Cal-IVRS), 2014-2023 California Comprehensive Death File.
14. Kidsdata.org. "Learn More about Youth Suicide and Self-inflicted Injury." https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/34/youth-suicide-and-self-inflicted-injury/summary.
15. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). "About Fetal Alcohol Disorders." Retrieved at https://www.cdc.gov/fasd/about/index.html on 3/17/2025.

ADDRESSING THE CURRENT STATE OF PARENTAL/CAREGIVER STRESS AND WELLBEING

In his 2024 advisory, **Parents Under Pressure**, the U.S. Surgeon General, Vivek H. Murthy, describes the growing stress parents and caregivers have experienced over the past decade. In 2023, 33 percent of parents reported high levels of stress in the past month compared to 20% of other adults.

Beyond the common demands of parenting, including sleep deprivation, time scarcity, and managing child and adolescent developmental behaviors, today's parents and caregivers also feel increased stress from the following:

- Financial strain, economic instability and poverty.
- Even greater time scarcity caused by increased time spent in employment or work related activities. (e.g., time spent at work increased 28% for mothers between 1985 and 2022.)
- Worries about their children's health and safety.
- Parental isolation and loneliness.
- Technology and social media stress caused by its rapid adoption and evolution. Additionally, the risks to children's health and safety from social media has become stressful and difficult for parents to manage.
- Cultural expectations and pressure to meet perceived parenting standards.[16]

The table below shows everyday actions that child care professionals, teachers, and other professionals who interact with families can take to support them as they navigate the challenges of parenting.
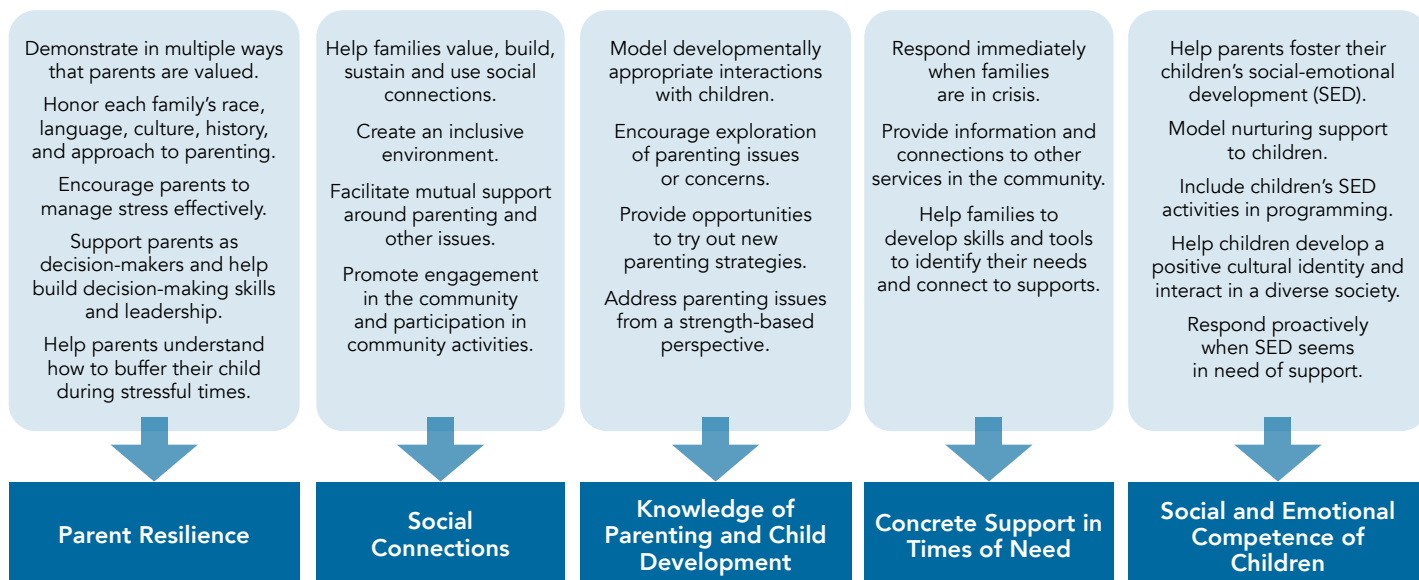
Seeking Support

There are times that each of us experiences fear, anger, worry, sadness, or other distressing emotions. It isn't always clear when these feelings become serious enough to warrant intervention, so it can be difficult to define, diagnose, and address an issue that may be interfering with daily functioning or affecting interpersonal relationships.[17]

There are many resources to support the wellbeing of families, children, youth and young adults. A few of these are:

- **Brightlife Kids** provides personalized support for California families. Kids ages 0–12 get free, expert coaching for sleep issues, worry, social skills, and more. Live, 1:1 video sessions, secure chat, on-demand content, and more. Learn more at www.hellobrightline.com/brightlifekids.
- **Family Guide to Supporting Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing** Information, Tips and Resources available at www.wested.org/resource/calwellfamilyguide
- **CalHOPE** provides digital mental health support for youth, young adults, and families. This groundbreaking new program provide free, safe, and confidential mental health support for young people and families across the state with two easy-to-use mobile apps. Learn more at www.calhope.org.
- **Soluna Digital** is a groundbreaking new program providing free, safe, and confidential mental health support for young people ages 13-25 and families across the state with two easy-to-use mobile apps. Visit https://solunaapp.com.

Everyday Actions that Help Build Protective Factors[18]

Demonstrate in multiple ways that parents are valued. Honor each family's race, language, culture, history, and approach to parenting. Encourage parents to manage stress effectively. Support parents as decision-makers and help build decision-making skills and leadership. Help parents understand how to buffer their child during stressful times.	Help families value, build, sustain and use social connections. Create an inclusive environment. Facilitate mutual support around parenting and other issues. Promote engagement in the community and participation in community activities.	Model developmentally appropriate interactions with children. Encourage exploration of parenting issues or concerns. Provide opportunities to try out new parenting strategies. Address parenting issues from a strength-based perspective.	Respond immediately when families are in crisis. Provide information and connections to other services in the community. Help families to develop skills and tools to identify their needs and connect to supports.	Help parents foster their children's social-emotional development (SED). Model nurturing support to children. Include children's SED activities in programming. Help children develop a positive cultural identity and interact in a diverse society. Respond proactively when SED seems in need of support.
Parent Resilience	**Social Connections**	**Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development**	**Concrete Support in Times of Need**	**Social and Emotional Competence of Children**

RESULTS: Strengthened Families and Optimal Child Development

For more information on the Strengthening Families Framework visit www.strengtheningfamilies.net.

16. "Parents Under Pressure – The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Parents." - Office of the U.S. Surgeon General. 2024.
17. "Protecting Youth Mental Health The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory." 2021.
18. This model was created by Norma McReynolds for the National Alliance of Children's Trust & Prevention Funds.

EVERY CHILD
SUCCESSFUL IN LEARNING

Children are Successful in learning when they are in good physical and mental health, live in safe and stable families and communities, and are on track developmentally. They must have educational opportunities that develop fundamental language, literacy, cognitive, and social-emotional skills that are critical for lifelong learning and success. The skills that children need to grow into successful students – including the capacity for reasoning, problem-solving, and self-regulation – are largely developed from birth through third grade.

RELEVANT BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS
EDUCATION | MODERN NEEDS | LIFE SKILLS

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

TO IMPROVE RESULTS:

- Ensure families have access to healthcare, education, and services that promote optimal development and well-being.

- Increase access to affordable, high-quality childcare options that cater to their needs and support the development of the whole child.

- Target strategies to meet the specific learning needs of our students while considering race, ethnicity, language, income, and disability.

- Support every child's participation in high-quality out-of-school learning opportunities, such as tutoring and after-school or summer programs. Also provide opportunities for them to discover their "spark" through art, music, and sports.

- Partner with schools to enhance positive school climate, support children's behavioral and physical health, promote their social and emotional learning, and address the human service needs of students and their families.

BY THE NUMBERS

Figure 24 – School Readiness
School Readiness by Domain (2018-23)
(On a 4-point scale, with 4 being optimal readiness)

■ 2018 ■ 2023

Domain	2018	2023
Overall	3.33	3.19
Self-Regulation*	3.35	3.12
Social Expression**	3.27	3.09
Kindergarten Academics	3.29	3.24
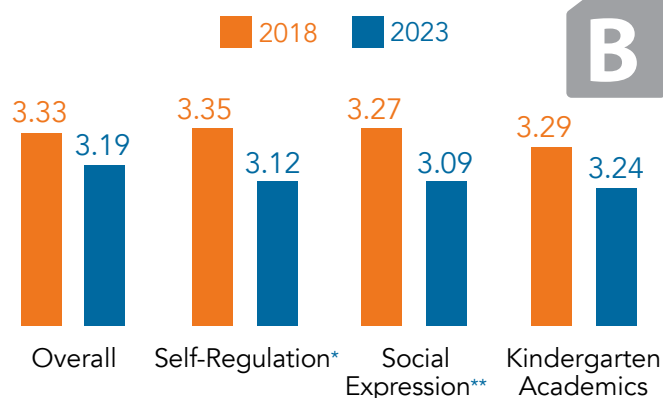
Source: Kindergarten Observation Form, Applied Survey Research (2018, 2023).
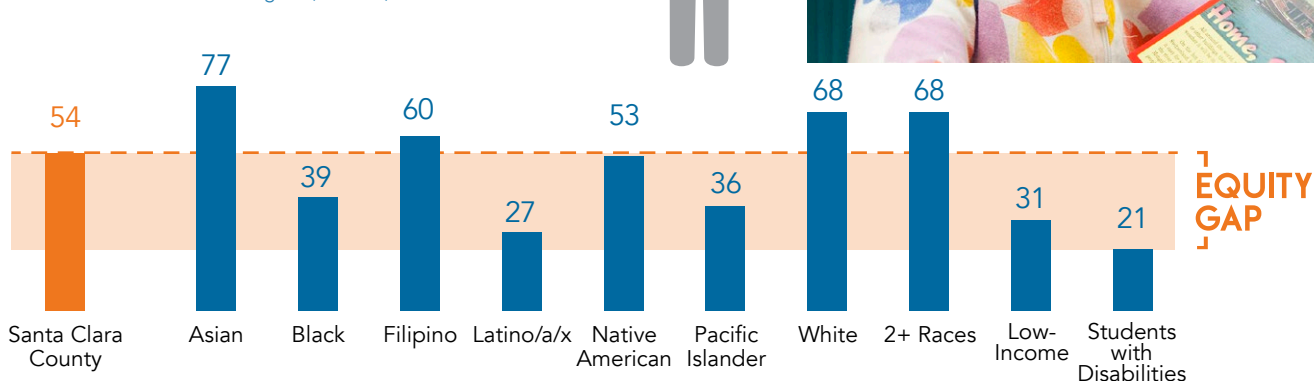*Statistically significant, p < .01.
**Statistically significant, p < .05.
Average scores could range from 1 to 4. Model controls for race, child gender, age, English language learner status, special needs, and socio-economic status.

Figure 25 – Third Grade Reading
Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Third Grade English Language Arts Standard (SY 2023-24)
Source: California Department of Education, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

Group	Percentage
Santa Clara County	54
Asian	77
Black	39
Filipino	60
Latino/a/x	27
Native American	53
Pacific Islander	36
White	68
2+ Races	68
Low-Income	31
Students with Disabilities	21

EQUITY GAP

Figure 26 – Eighth Grade Math
Percentage Students Meeting or Exceeding
Eighth Grade Math Standard (SY 2023-24)
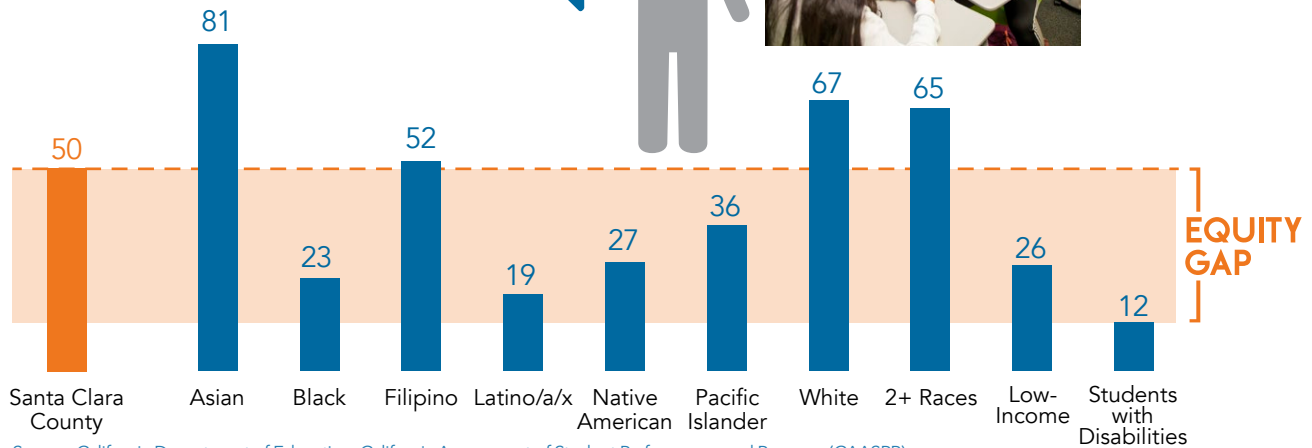
EQUITY GAP

Santa Clara County	Asian	Black	Filipino	Latino/a/x	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	2+ Races	Low-Income	Students with Disabilities
50	81	23	52	19	27	36	67	65	26	12

Source: California Department of Education, California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP)

DIG INTO THE DATA!

Visit the Kids in Common Dashboard for the latest data, trends, and geographic breakdowns of the data.
www.kidsincommon.org/dashboard

Figure 27 – School Attendance
Chronic Absenteeism - Percentage of Students
Absent 10% or More of the Time (SY 2023-24)

EQUITY GAP

Santa Clara County	Asian	Black	Filipino	Latino/a/x	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	2+ Races	Low-Income	Students with Disabilities
17	6	22	10	27	25	31	12	11	26	29
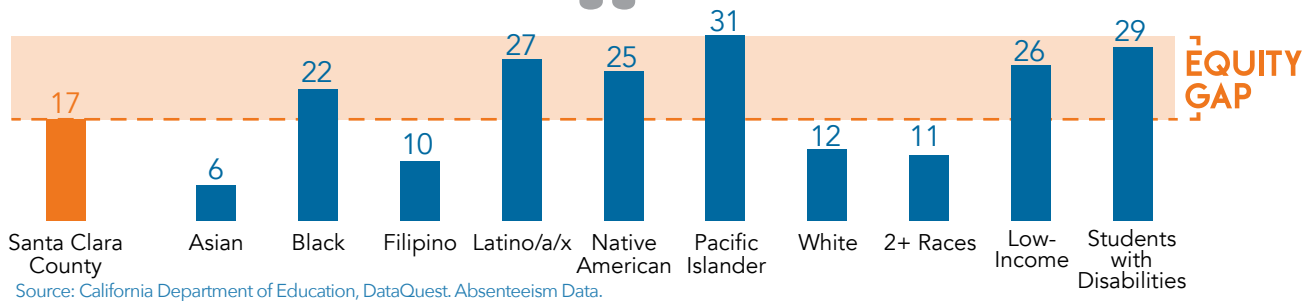
Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest. Absenteeism Data.

Figure 28 – School Suspensions
Suspension Rate per 1,000 Students (SY 2023-24)

EQUITY GAP

Santa Clara County	Asian	Black	Filipino	Latino/a/x	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	2+ Races	Low-Income	Students with Disabilities
40	9	108	17	69	71	75	26	25	68	102
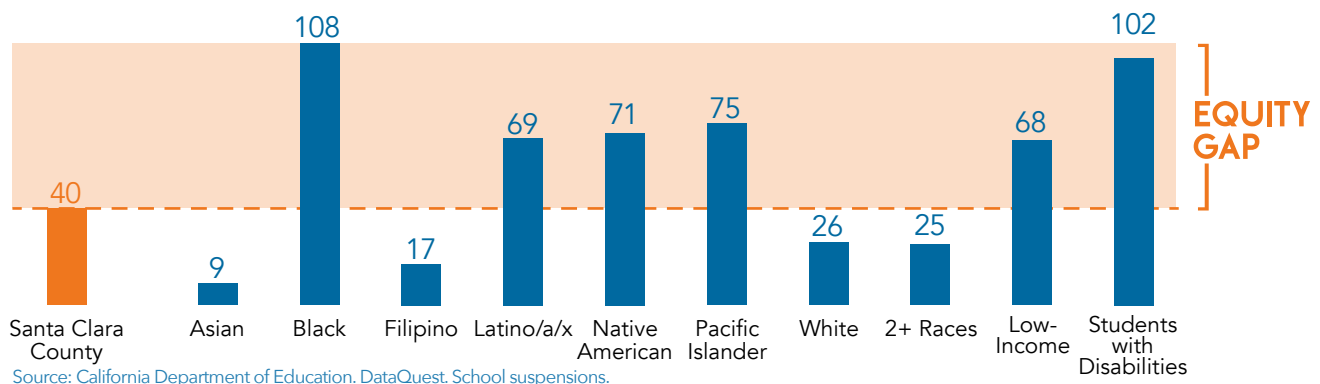
Source: California Department of Education. DataQuest. School suspensions.

CHILD CARE AND SCHOOL READINESS

Percentage of Children Fully Ready for Kindergarten

50 · 2018

37 · 2023
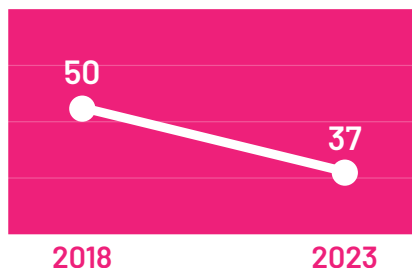
In the fall of 2023, a kindergarten readiness assessment was conducted with a countywide sample of 952 children. This assessment measures the social, emotional, and academic skills that predict later success in school.

- Only 37% of the students in the sample were fully prepared for kindergarten.
- In 2018, 50% were fully ready for kindergarten.
- The greatest decrease was in the social-emotional domains of self-regulation and social expression.

The decline in readiness is likely due to the lingering effects of COVID-19 on children and their families, including those resulting from the widespread closure of early care and education (ECE) sites. A 2025 assessment, if conducted, will provide insight into the effectiveness of recovery efforts since COVID.

The Importance of Improving School Readiness

Research has demonstrated that "the emotional, social, and behavioral competence of young children is a strong predictor of academic performance in elementary school and beyond, even affecting employment and income in adulthood." **The building blocks of school readiness encompass motor skills, self-regulation, social expression, and Kindergarten academics.** Entering school with these building blocks supports school success. For example, children who are school ready are more likely to be reading proficiently by the end of third grade.[1]

School readiness also includes schools being ready for the children they receive and families being ready to support their children's learning.

High Quality Early Care and Education (ECE) Supports School Readiness

Participation in high-quality early childhood education (ECE) has been shown to support school readiness and children's brain development. Investing in high quality ECE strengthens our schools, and more than pays for itself through economic benefits to children, families, and our community. When children from lower socio-economic backgrounds attend high quality early learning programs, they are more likely as adults to attain higher levels of education, health, and income compared to children from similar circumstances who do not participate in these programs.[1]

California has a mixed-delivery system for ECE. This system includes settings such as schools, childcare centers, family childcare homes, and care provided by family, friends, and neighbors. Care may be publicly subsidized in various ways and provided under different licensing regulations, or it may be unlicensed.

Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)

UPK is an expansion of California's current mixed delivery system to meet the diverse early learning and care needs of children and families. It encompasses all existing state and federal early learning, childcare, and extended learning programs, including **transitional kindergarten** (TK), **state preschool**, **general childcare** (CCTR), **Extended Learning Opportunities Program** (ELO-P), **Head Start**, **After School Education and Safety** (ASES), **Alternative Payment** (AP), and **private pay childcare**. Most notably, the age eligibility for TK and the expanded eligibility criteria for California State Preschool have enabled more families to access care that was previously unattainable.[2]

Figure 29 – Factors Associated with School Readiness in Santa Clara County Study (2023)
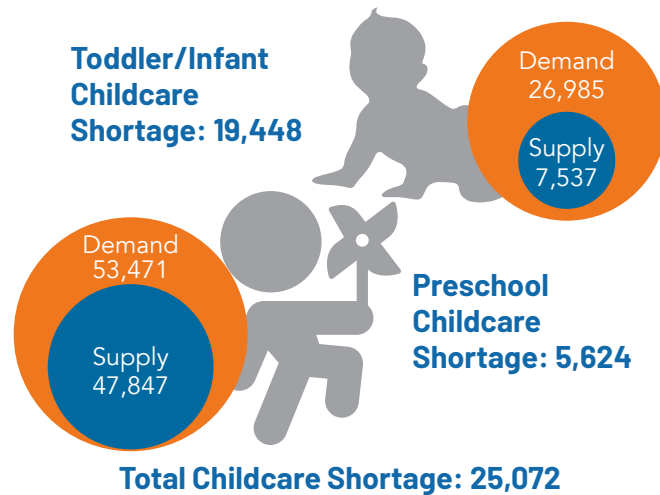

Source: Applied Survey Research Santa Clara County School Readiness Fall Assessment Findings 2023.

1. Early Care and Education Advocacy Toolkit. Santa Clara County Office of Education.
2. Universal Prekindergarten FAQs. California Department of Education website. Retrieved 4/3/2025 at www.cde.ca.gov/

# EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

In Santa Clara County, there is currently a shortage of childcare for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children.

Toddler/Infant Childcare Shortage: 19,448

Demand 26,985
Supply 7,537

Demand 53,471
Supply 47,847

Preschool Childcare Shortage: 5,624

Total Childcare Shortage: 25,072

According to the Santa Clara County Office of Education Childcare Portal: (Special data run, January 2025.)

1,335 Number of Family Childcare Homes (FCCHs).

645 Number of childcare centers.

9.5% of providers serve children with Disabilities.

27% serve in a language other than English.

Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is an important component of UPK and could create up to 15,000 new and free ECE slots for four-year-olds in Santa Clara County by the 2025-26 school year. Participation in TK is growing:

Participation in Transitional Kindergarten (TK)

2,732 — 2021-22
4,103 — 2022-23
5,639 — 2023-24
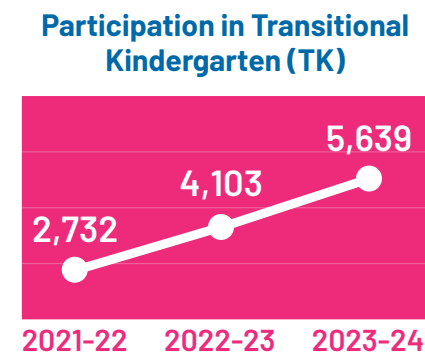
Source: California Department of Education. DataQuest. School Enrollment Data. Retrieved March 2025.

3. Early Childhood Workforce Index 2024. Center for the Study of Child Care Employment
4. "Share of the Population 3- to 4 -Years-Olds Enrolled in School." Silicon Valley Indicators.Silicon Valley Institute for Regional Studies. Retrieved 4/2/2025 at https://siliconvalleyindicators.org.
5. Santa Clara County Child Care Average Tuition Rate Survey 2023. Local Early Education Planning Council & Indigo Project. October 2023.
6. Eliminating the Burden of Preschool Costs. Joint Venture. September 2022.
7. "Revised State Median Income (SMI) Ceilings and Income Ranking Table for Fiscal Year 2024-25." Management Bulletin 24-05. California Department of Education.
8. Guidance on Family Fees for Fiscal Year 2024-25. Management Bulletin 24-06. California Department of Education.
9. Interim Guidance on Serving Two-Year-Old Children. California Department of Education. July 7, 2024.

The Economics of Early Childhood Care and Education

Early childhood educators, who are often parents themselves, rank among the lowest-paid professions nationwide. This workforce is primarily made up of women, particularly women of color, who carry out the vital and intricate work of caring for and educating young children while their parents are at work.

The median wage for childcare workers is $13.67 per hour, while for preschool teachers, it is $17.66 per hour. In California, 12% of early childhood educators fall at or below the Federal Poverty Level, and 47% of early educator households participate in one or more public safety net programs. L**ow wages result in financial insecurity for these workers, high turnover rates, and teacher staffing shortages**, negatively children's healthy development. Ensuring educators and caregivers have good working conditions and financial security helps the children they care for thrive.[3]

The childcare system also impacts parents and families financially:

- 42% of lower-income three- and four-year-olds were enrolled in preschool programs compared to 56% of higher-income three-year-olds and 82% of higher-income four-year-olds.[4]
- The median weekly cost for infant care in a childcare center is $589 and $413 in a Family Child Care Home (FCCH).
- The median weekly cost of care for a toddler (2-4 years old) is $482 in a center and $386 in a FCCH.
- Care for a school-age child ranges from $253 - $318 per week (before and after school care).[5]

Support for Families:

- Full implementation of Universal Pre-Kindergarten that includes full-day, year-round care could result in estimated 7,000 households and 31,000 individuals achieving adequate household income. (Similar to the Real Cost Measure described on page 20).[6]
- The expansion of TK is critically important for "gap" families – those who earn too much to qualify for subsidized childcare yet too little to afford care out of pocket.
- Childcare subsidies are available to families earning less than 100% of the State Median Income (SMI), $122,993 for a family of four.[7]
- Approximately 50% of families with children in Santa Clara County qualify for subsidized childcare.
- Instituted in October 2023, a new family fee structure ensures no family who is eligible for subsidized care will pay more than 1% of their income in family fees, and that families under 75% of the SMI will pay no fees.[8]
- Extension of eligibility for full-day and part-day preschool to income-eligible 2-year-olds through July 1, 2027.[9]

EVERY CHILD SUCCESSFUL IN LEARNING

EXPANDING SANTA CLARA COUNTY'S EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) SYSTEM

SCC Resource & Referral Program

The Santa Clara County Resource and Referral Program supports families understand early learning options, how to access assistance for childcare costs, and provides referrals for childcare services. Families can speak directly with multilingual staff or search for providers on the Childcare Portal.

Since 2021, the state of California has committed to adding over 200,000 slots in its general childcare, state preschool, and alternative payment subsidized ECE programs statewide.

TO FIND CHILDCARE VISIT
WWW.CHILDCARESCC.ORG
or call 669-212-5437 (KIDS)

Early Learning Apprenticeship Initiative

The County and FIRST 5 of Santa Clara County have collaborated on three early learning workforce initiatives, providing $10 million in funding, including $5 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). One of these efforts is an "earn and learn" apprenticeship initiative designed to bring new talent into the field of childcare and early education. So far, 82 individuals have participated in the Early Learning Apprenticeship Initiative, which involves several community partners, including local community colleges that offer instruction at a centralized location.

Childcare Expansion Grant Program

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected childcare providers in Santa Clara County, leading to the shutdown of more than 160 businesses and leaving parents without access to high-quality care for their children. In response to this issue, the County Office of Children and Families Policy initiated a Childcare Expansion Grant Program that allocates $15 million in federal coronavirus relief funds to assist childcare providers in opening, reopening, or expanding their operations. Administered by the Valley Health Foundation, the program provides funding for facility improvements as well as operational and staffing costs to meet a critical community need.

QUALITY MATTERS . . . A STRONG START for Kids

QUALITY MATTERS is Santa Clara County's local quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) committed to providing early educators with access to information, resources, and opportunities to deliver the best care to children and families in Santa Clara County. Co-led by FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara County Office of Education, QUALITY MATTERS supports 142 childcare centers, 564 licensed family childcare homes, and 80 license-exempt providers serving over 7,500 children.

San José Public Library Family, Friend, & Neighbor (FFN) Caregiver Support Network

In California, approximately 80% of children ages 0-2 and 40% of children ages 0-5 are cared for by family members, friends, and neighbors. These caregivers play a foundational role in the community, often providing accessible and affordable childcare, and are referred to as "FFN Caregivers" by early care professionals.

Photo courtesy of San José Public Library.

The San José Public Library's FFN Caregiver Support Network connects caregivers to learning and workforce development opportunities, a peer community, and various resources. FFN caregivers are empowered and inspired to pursue personal and professional growth – and to become lifelong advocates for excellence. By guiding the early learning and development of young children, these respected and trusted childcare providers contribute to a strong economy.

For More Information go to: https://www.sjpl.org/ffn-caregiver-support-network

AB 2806

The Child Care and Developmental Services Act was signed into law in September 2022. Aiming to end suspensions and expulsions in state preschool and childcare programs, this bill enhances early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) as a way to provide essential support to teachers, children, and families. This initiative promotes positive mental health, mitigates the effects of toxic stress and trauma, and fosters optimal development and learning for every child.

THIRD GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Percentage of Students Meeting or Exceeding Third Grade English Language Arts (ELA) Standard

| 2018-19 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| 60 | 55 | 54 |
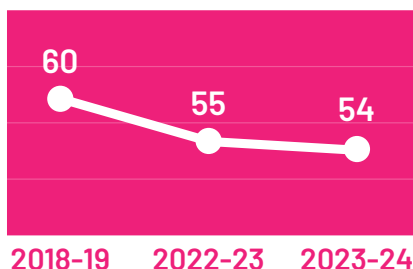
What the Data Tell Us

- In SY 2018-19, 60% of students met or exceeded the third-grade English Language Arts (ELA) standard. This decreased to 54% in SY 2023-24.

- Only 39% of Black, 27% of Latino/a/x, 31% of low-income students, and 21% of students with disabilities met or exceeded the ELA standard.

The Importance of Improving Third Grade English Language Arts

Significant impacts on a child's language and vocabulary development happen when parents and caregivers talk, sing, and read to them. **When infants and toddlers hear and use language** – whether it's English or the language spoken at home – t**heir brains form the connections necessary for learning how to read.**[10]

- Students reading at grade level in third grade are more likely to achieve academic success later on.

- By the end of third grade, children should demonstrate reading comprehension and be able to read unfamiliar words.

- Even if children are prepared for school when they enter kindergarten, it requires hard work, consistent school attendance, engaged parenting, additional learning opportunities, a strong curriculum, and skilled teachers to help them become good readers.[11]

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Extended Learning Time

The impact of poverty on learning outcomes is well-established. Children from middle- and high-income families have significantly greater access to extended learning activities, such as tutoring, afterschool, and summer programs.

For low-income children, summer programs can be transformative and address learning loss during those months. While there is no difference in learning rates between low-income and higher-income students during the school year, the lack of access to summer learning opportunities is cumulative and significantly contributes to the academic achievement gap experienced by low-income children.[12]

The initiative **San José Learns** works to ensure students most in need have access to extended learning opportunities. Read more on SJ Learns on page 72.

Tutoring Strategies that Work:

- **At least three 30-minute sessions during the school day**, with educators or well-trained tutors using high-quality, evidence-based curriculum.

- **Working with students 1-on-1,** or in **small groups**.

- **Targeting students based on academic need** instead of requiring parents to opt-in for services.

- **Differentiated tutoring** based on student needs and skills.

- **Utilizing data and progress monitoring**, particularly when schools are working with outside providers.[13]

- **Bite-sized tutoring** in the early grades – 5-10 minutes at a time – may boost early reading skills.[14]

Key to the success of all these approaches is to focus on a sustained, coordinated effort with support from school leaders and a structured process for managing the logistics of implementation.

Dyslexia and Students at Risk for Other Reading Difficulties

Dyslexia is often a hidden, language-based learning disability. The International Dyslexia Association believes that up to 15–20% of the population has some symptoms of dyslexia, including slow or inaccurate reading, poor spelling, poor writing, or mixing up similar words. They also state that by applying appropriate teaching methods, students with dyslexia can learn successfully.[15]

Starting in SY 2025-26, all districts in California are required to screen K-2 students for dyslexia and other reading difficulties. This includes adopting one or more screening instruments by June 2025 and developing processes for interpreting results and supporting students identified as "at-risk." Early universal screening enables system-wide early intervention and can be a crucial first step in closing academic gaps.[16]

10. A Child's Ability to Communicate Starts at Birth. First 5 California.
11. School Readiness and Student Achievement, A Longitudinal Analysis of Santa Clara and San Mateo County Students. Applied Survey Research and the Partnership for School Readiness. 2010.
12. McCombs, Jennifer Sloan, et al., Making Summer Count: How Summer Programs Can Boost Children's Learning.
13. What Two New Studies Reveal About Learning Recovery. Education Week. Aug. 10, 2023.
14. Sparks, Sarah. How Short Bursts of Tutoring Can Boost Early Reading Skills. Education Week. Jan. 17, 2024.
15. International Dyslexia Association. Retrieved 3/28/2025 at https://dyslexiaida.org/.
16. "CA's New Screening Requirement and What Comes Next?" and "Is Your District Ready to Start Screening for Risk of Reading Difficulties, Including Dyslexia?" Posted 7/13/2035 and 1/10/2025 on www.DecodingDyslexiaCA.org

EVERY CHILD SUCCESSFUL IN LEARNING

EIGHTH GRADE MATH

Percentage of Eight Graders Meeting Math Standard

56	48	50
2018-19	2022-23	2023-24
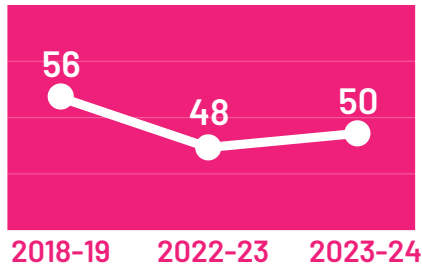
What the Data Tell Us

- In SY 2023-24, 50% of eighth-grade students met or exceeded the math standard. This is down from 56% in SY 2018-19 and up slightly from SY 2022-23.
- Only 23% of Black, 19% of Latino/a/x, 26% of low-income, and 12% of students with disabilities met or exceeded the eighth-grade math standard.

The Importance of Improving Eighth Grade Math Performance

Students who succeed in math during eighth and ninth grades are more likely to graduate from high school.[17]

The skills necessary to grasp math are essential for effective problem-solving. Math abilities foster logical thinking, critical reasoning, and analytical sharpness. These skills play a significant role in achieving proficiency in music and are applicable in nearly every profession. Engaging in math enables students to dissect complex situations and arrange them into coherent, logical frameworks.

- Math is the fundamental language of science, engineering, technology, medicine, biology, and even construction.[18]
- Math skills start developing in early childhood.
- Children proficient in early math concepts by the time they enter kindergarten perform better not only in math but also in reading and language skills. Conversely, children with poor math skills often struggle to catch up and may lag behind their better-prepared peers through eighth grade.
- Children's daily routines help develop early math, language, and social-emotional skills.
- For example, dividing a plate of cookies so that everyone gets an equal amount teaches early division skills as well as a sense of fairness and self-regulation.
- Playing a game together, such as Candyland, teaches counting, shapes and colors, patience, cooperation, and language skills.[19]

California Mathematics Framework

Adopted on July 12, 2023, by the State Board of Education and currently in its implementation phase, the Mathematics Framework provides crucial guidance for learning for all students at every level, including calculus. It aims to achieve excellence in math teaching and learning through curriculum and instructional approaches based on research and reflective of best practices worldwide. Its goal is to ensure that all students develop deep skills and a love for mathematics, leading more students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, or math. It is based on the belief that strong mathematical knowledge will enhance all students' abilities to thrive as citizens in a complex world. The framework includes:

- **Big Ideas:** The revised framework integrates the standards for making connections regarding "Big Ideas" across grade levels, rather than teaching them in isolation.
- **Emphasis on Inquiry-Based Instruction:** The framework emphasizes inquiry-based instruction, stating that most of the time should be devoted to mathematical investigations that create authentic connections to the real world and students' lives.
- **A Focus on Equity:** The framework outlines strategies to promote equitable instruction and outcomes, to ensure all students "see themselves as mathematically capable individuals whose curiosity and love of mathematics learning will be sustained throughout their schooling."
- **More Support for Multilingual Learners:** The framework outlines best practices and support for multilingual learners, including an asset-based approach, supporting home language, developing students' academic language, creating more discourse opportunities, and integrating the English Language Development Standards throughout math instruction.
- **Pathway Updates:** The framework recommends that schools begin teaching algebra in ninth grade, while granting districts the flexibility to decide if certain students are prepared to take this course in middle school. It also provides guidance for incorporating data science instruction throughout the grade levels, explicitly urging publishers to include "data as a means to spark inquiry and apply mathematical concepts."
- **Adoption Guidance:** The adoption guidelines reorganize materials based on Big Ideas and instruct students to "spend the majority of their time on mathematical investigations that address the Big Ideas of that grade." It also asks publishers to provide additional support for teachers working with students who are not yet proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in academic English.[20]

17. Algebra Policy in California – Great Expectations and Serious Challenges. EdSource. May 2009.
18. Why is Mathematics Important? School of Mathematics, Math.umn.edu
19. Schoenfeld, Alan H, Stipek, Debra. Math Matters: Children's Mathematical Journeys Start Early Executive Summary. Heising-Simons Foundation. Nov. 2011.
20. "Overview of the Revised Mathematics Framework." California Curriculum Collaborative. Retrieved 3/24/25 at https://calcurriculum.org.

STUDENTS WHO ARE IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, OR ENGLISH LEARNERS

Welcoming Immigrant Students in Our Schools

Often, when we think about immigrant children, the focus is on them as English language learners. While learning English is important, we need to consider other elements that contribute to their success in learning. In **Making Schools a Welcoming Place for Immigrant Students**, Elizabeth Ross suggests:

- Be sensitive to the extra "weight" they may carry. Many students may be enduring painful separations from loved ones, experiencing trauma from their home country or while traveling here. If children or their parents are undocumented, they might also have concerns about finances, access to resources, and deportation.

- A high-quality school with a caring culture makes a difference and is one of the best predictors of student success over time.

- Foster a sense of belonging, address bullying, promote family engagement, and ensure all students are included in the curriculum by integrating global perspectives. It's also crucial to offer educators professional development opportunities to support the use of culturally sustaining practices.[21]

Rights of Immigrant Students and Families in California Schools and Colleges

In December 2024, California Attorney General Rob Bonta published guidelines and model policies outlining what K-12 schools, colleges, and universities can and cannot do under state and federal law to protect immigrant students and families. Some rights for these students and schools are listed below:

- All children present in the United States, regardless of their immigration status, have the right to attend public school.

- California schools cannot request or collect information regarding social security numbers, immigration status, or citizenship during student enrollment. Schools can request information about place of birth and other information to assess a student's eligibility for programs. However, parents are not obligated to provide this information.

- In most cases, the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prevents schools from sharing students' personal information with other agencies or organizations, including federal immigration authorities.

- In certain situations, schools may need to provide personal information in response to a court order or judicial subpoena.

- Without a judicial warrant, school staff are not required to grant an ICE officer permission to enter a school, conduct a search, or require the school to provide information or records regarding a student or family.

- If a student's family member is detained or deported, California law requires the school to follow the parents' instructions regarding whom to contact in an emergency. Schools should avoid contacting child protective services unless they are unable to arrange care for the student.[22]

It is recommended that districts develop policies for creating secure and peaceful learning environments for all students, regardless of nationality or immigrant status, and communicate those policies to their students and families. Model policies are available at the California Department of Justice.[23]

Multiple Language Learners

In 1998, Proposition 227 relegated English learners to English-only immersion programs. The Center for Research on Education found these programs to be less effective than teaching students in their first language over a longer period. Instruction in the first language produces higher levels of achievement and offers long-term cognitive benefits, including improved memory and abstract reasoning skills.[24] Proposition 227 was repealed in 2016, and since then, school districts have been revitalizing their bilingual education programs.

There is a growing belief that bilingualism – developing proficiency in English as well as a non-English language – provides economic, educational, and health benefits. California has instituted the **State Seal of Biliteracy** for high school graduates who have attained proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing one or more languages other than English.[25]

The Santa Clara County Office of Education has a library of resources for districts and educators to support English Learners. These can be found at https://www.sccoe.org/sclis/resources.

The SIFE Equity Project

It is estimated that one in ten immigrant students have had limited access to formal education in their home countries due to poverty, violence, or war. These resilient students are often referred to as Students with Interrupted or Limited Formal Education (SIFE). They are motivated to learn but may lack foundational literacy in their home language to support their education. Until recently, middle and high school educators have lacked the necessary tools to meet the learning needs of these students. The SIFE Equity Project unites a growing community of researchers and educators across the country to build collective knowledge and enhance the quality of education for these learners. The project has developed curricula, instructional approaches, assessments, technical support, and other resources to address the needs of SIFE learners.

For more information on the SIFE Equity Project visit https://www.sife-equity.org.

21. Ross, Elizabeth M. Making Schools a Welcoming Place for Immigrant Students. How educators can help newcomers in the classroom. Harvard Graduate School of Education. February 2, 2023.FN
22. Stavely, Zaidee. "What Rights do Immigrant Students and Families have in California Schools and Colleges | Quick Guide." EdSource. 1/6/2025.
23. Bonta, Rob. Promoting a Safe and Secure Learning Environment for All: Guidance and Model Policies to Assist Californias K-12 School in Responding to Immigrant Issues. California Department of Justice. December 2024.
24. Genesee, Fred, Lindholm-Leary, Kathryn, Saunders, William, and Christian, Donna. "Educating English Language Learners." Cambridge University Press. 2006.
25. "State Seal of Biliteracy." California Department of Education.

EVERY CHILD SUCCESSFUL IN LEARNING

Chronic School Absenteeism – Percentage of Students Absent 10% or More

| 2018-19	2022-23	2023-24
9	19	17
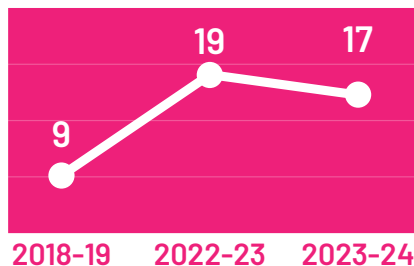
What the Data Tell Us

- Chronic absenteeism more than doubled after the COVID-19 pandemic. It then decreased by 2 percentage points to 17% between SY 2022-23 and SY 2023-24.
- 31% of Pacific Islander, 27% Latino/a/x, 25% Native American, and 22% Black students were chronically absent. Only 6% of Asian and 12% of White students were.
- 26% of low-income and 29% of students with disabilities were chronically absent.

The Importance of Improving School Attendance

School attendance starting in the early grades plays a significant role in student success. A child who is absent more than 10% of the time – considered chronically absent – is less likely to be on target for reading and math skill development. Chronic absenteeism, beginning as early as kindergarten and first grade, can lead to a child being unable to read at grade level in third grade, to lower achievement in middle school, and to more likely to drop out of high school.

The reason for the absence doesn't matter. Being absent – whether it is an excused absence, an unexcused absence, or due to a suspension – impacts a student's learning. There is a need to create structures that remove barriers to school attendance and support students when they are absent for health-related reasons.[26]
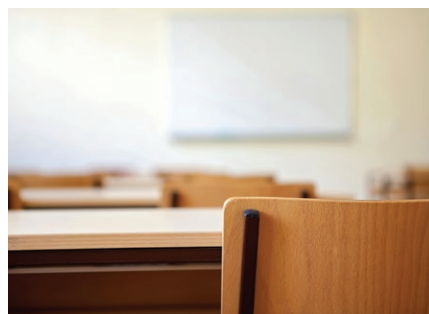
FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM:

BARRIERS	AVERSION	DISENGAGEMENT	MISCONCEPTIONS
➤ Chronic and acute Illness	➤ Struggling academically or behaviorally	➤ Lack of challenging culturally responsive instruction	➤ Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
➤ Family responsibilities or home situation	➤ Unwelcoming school climate	➤ Bored	➤ Missing two days per month doesn't affect learning
➤ Poor transportation	➤ Social and peer challenges	➤ No meaningful adult connections at school	➤ Losing track of and underestimating
➤ Housing and food insecurity	➤ Anxiety	➤ Lack of enrichment opportunities	➤ Total number of absences is not important
➤ Inequitable access to needed services	➤ Biased disciplinary and suspension practices	➤ Lack of academic and behavioral support	➤ Sporadic absences aren't a problem
➤ System involvement	➤ Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations	➤ Failure to earn credits	➤ Attending only matters in the older grades
➤ Lack of predictable schedules for learning	➤ Parents had negative education experiences	➤ Drawn to low-wage job instead of being in high school	➤ Suspensions don't count as an absence
➤ Lack of access to technology			

26. Attendance Works website. www.attendanceworks.org

IMPROVING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Remote learning, hybrid schedules, fractured school routines and habits, and disconnection from fellow students and teachers have led to one of the most serious consequences of the pandemic, chronic absenteeism for 17% of Santa Clara County students.

Attendance Playbook – Smart Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism Post Pandemic outlines foundational strategies, targeted support, and intensive support to address this issue which threatens to impact our current generation of learners. Some of these strategies are listed below.

Foundational Support and Schoolwide Prevention include:

- Providing a whole-child approach to education with an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, and community and youth development through Community Schools and School-Based Health Care. This holistic approach can include Telehealth, counseling, and free meals for all.
- Focusing on parent engagement and student-teacher relationships.
- Teaching relevant and culturally relevant Information (e.g., ethnic studies classes or classes that relate to career and work).
- Instituting restorative discipline practices.
- Supporting summer learning and afterschool strategies.
- Providing attendance Incentives.
- Rethinking recess to ensure it is positive for all students, has the right level of supervision and structure, helps students reconnect with peers, and help ease anxiety and depression.
- Having healthy school buildings with effective ventilation systems.
- Providing transportation to school and/or ensuring a safer walk to school.
- Installing laundry facilities at schools. About 15 percent of households in the US do not have washing machines and rely on laundromats. This leads to students missing school because they do not have clean clothes to wear.[27]

Positive Greetings at the Door

A 2018 study of middle school students found that when teachers greeted students individually by name at the classroom door, using a handshake or nod, academic engagement increased by 20% and disruptive behavior decreased by 9%. This strategy fosters a sense of belonging, and while a direct link to absenteeism has not been established, this greeting – taking about 5 minutes of classroom time – provides the teacher with an opportunity to connect, remind students of behavioral expectations, guide them to an activity as they settle in, and support reconnections with students who may have struggled the previous day.[28]

Targeted Support

Students at higher risk for absenteeism may benefit from targeted support. Strategies may include targeted home visits, providing mentors and tutors and targeted opportunities for youth engagement. Specific strategies may need to be developed to address challenges facing students with disabilities, asthma, or mental health issues that have led to school refusal.

Heightened immigration enforcement in some communities may interfere with student attendance because of the fear these actions create. Qualitative case studies suggest that having clear school-based protocols for handling immigration enforcement and building trusting relationships with students and families may help support school attendance.

Intensive Support

When students are facing serious and complex problems such as housing insecurity, pregnancy and parenting, or mental health challenges, coordinated case management with governmental and community organizations can help create school stability and support attendance.[27]

It is vital that we address this attendance crisis. To do so, schools and districts, with the help of community partners, must focus on the implementation of strategies that lead to student and parent engagement, build early warning systems, and support those students who are struggling most.

This challenge will not be solved overnight, but with strategic planning and long-term investments we can reconnect and re-engage students and families in school and support every student's academic success.

Resources to Improve Student Education (RISE) Court

When school districts have exhausted their options to improve severe attendance or truancy issues, students and their families are referred to the district attorney's office. Recognizing that these students and families may be in crisis, the County of Santa Clara District Attorney's Office, in partnership with the Santa Clara County Court, created a first-of-its-kind collaborative truancy court that brings appropriate resources to resolve this crisis. The RISE Court connects approximately 150 families each year to a variety of services, including the County's Behavioral Health Services programs, Pacific Clinics, Parent Project, housing and car repair funding assistance, employment and medical services, and more, all aimed at improving student attendance. One hundred percent of families in RISE Court who were surveyed, reported an improvement in their ability to be good parents, and 77% said they would recommend RISE Court to other parents struggling with their child's attendance. The success of RISE Court has led to this model being adopted in other California counties.

27. Jordan, Phyllis. Attendance Playbook – Smart Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism Post Pandemic. Published by FutureEd & Attendance Works. May 2023.
28. Heubeck, Elizabeth. This Teaching Routine Takes Just 5 Minutes. Its Impact Lasts Much Longer. Education Week. Feb. 23, 2024.

SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

When children and youth are suspended from school, they are not in the classroom learning.

School Suspension Rate per 1,000 Students

38 — 2018-19
42 — 2022-23
40 — 2023-24
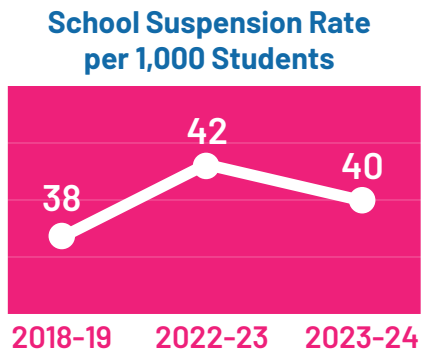
What the Data Tell Us:

- After a decade of declining suspensions between 2012-2022, suspensions increased in SY 2022-23.

- In SY 2011-12, there were 17,591 suspensions, a rate of 63 per thousand. These decreased to a rate of 38 per thousand in SY 2018-19.

- When schools were fully back in session in SY 2022-23, the rate increased to 42/thousand (10,418 suspensions.)

- In SY 2023-24, suspensions decreased to 40 per thousand (9,736 suspensions.)

- Black students were suspended at a rate that was 4 times as high as White students and 12 times the rate of Asian students.

- Low-income students had a suspension rate of 68 per thousand, and students with disabilities had a suspension rate of 102 per thousand.

The Importance of Decreasing the School Suspension Rate

Often, the behavior that leads to a school suspension indicates an underlying issue that, if left unaddressed, will persist. Even a single suspension triples the likelihood of a student's involvement with the juvenile justice system within the school year. **Nearly 70% of youth who are excluded from school are arrested.** Students who are suspended or expelled face a higher risk of repeating a grade or dropping out of school. [29]

A 2022 study suggests that the use of suspensions can reduce attendance and student success for all students in the classroom, not just those who are suspended, but also for others who feel the discipline is imposed unfairly. This is particularly true for Black students when they perceive that White teachers exhibit racial bias in their discipline. Restorative practices foster a sense of community within classrooms by reducing conflict and encouraging students to accept responsibility and rebuild relationships. [30]

It is also concerning that many students with disabilities are suspended since special education students have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). These plans are designed to address any areas of the student's education that might interfere with learning, including behavioral issues. Federal law mandates that students with an IEP receive a "manifest determination," which determines whether the problematic behavior is related to the student's disability and outlines an intervention plan to reduce the behavior.

The increase in suspensions in SY 2022-23 is likely another consequence of the pandemic, which affected the social-emotional wellbeing of everyone – students, teachers, parents, and caregivers. School leaders can continue to reverse this trend by analyzing data on who, where, when, and why suspensions are occurring, as well as by implementing evidence-based alternatives to suspensions, such as teaching social-emotional skills, instituting restorative practices, and other strategies that support a safe and caring school climate, including **Positive Behaviors, Interventions, and Support** (PBIS).

Thirteen years ago, Santa Clara County schools took steps that nearly halved our suspension rate. This was mainly achieved by increasing awareness about suspensions and creating alternatives to suspending students. We must once again prioritize reducing suspensions today to ensure the success of all our students.

29. Hoag, Christina. Defiance Seen as Cause of California Suspensions. cnsnews.com. April 7, 2012.
30. Jordan, Phyllis. Attendance Playbook Smart Strategies for Reducing Student Absenteeism Post Pandemic. Published by FutureEd and Attendance Works. May 2023.

EVERY CHILD
THRIVING IN LIFE

Youth transition successfully to adulthood when they graduate from high school ready for employment and post-secondary education. For all children and youth to succeed in life, it is essential to provide effective services and supports for those facing the greatest challenges and barriers, ensuring they graduate on time with experiences and training that will connect them to employment and self-sufficiency.

RELEVANT BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTs

SUPPORT & GUIDANCE | PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT
VOICE | CHOICE | JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

TO IMPROVE RESULTS:

- Support educators and other professionals who work with teens and young adults in building meaningful, caring relationships with those they serve.

- Work to keep youth on track for high school graduation by implementing early warning systems that identify students facing challenges and provide timely, targeted support in academics, behavior, and human services.

- Prepare students for postsecondary academic success through college, career, and technical education activities starting at an early age, while also supporting college savings accounts.

- Facilitate the reengagement and completion of secondary education, as well as the transition into post-secondary education, apprenticeships, or training opportunities for youth who leave school without graduating.

BY THE NUMBERS

Figure 30 –
High School Graduation
Percentage of Students
Graduating from
High School on Time
(SY 2023-24)

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

88	96	82	95	79	79	83	94	94	81	71
Santa Clara County	Asian	Black	Filipino	Latino/a/x	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	2+ Races	Low-Income	Students with Disabilities

EQUITY GAP
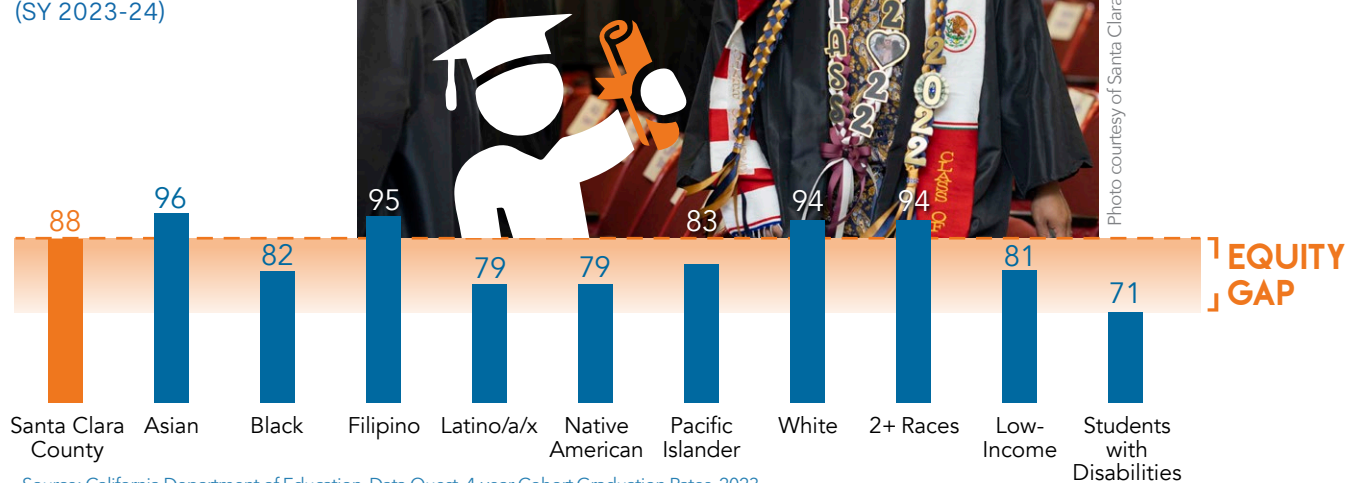
Source: California Department of Education. Data Quest. 4-year Cohort Graduation Rates, 2023.

DIG INTO THE DATA!

Visit the Kids in Common Dashboard for the latest data, trends, and geographic breakdowns of the data.
www.kidsincommon.org/dashboard

Figure 31 - College-Going Rate
Percent Enrolled in Postsecondary Education within 12 months of Graduating (SY 2021-22)
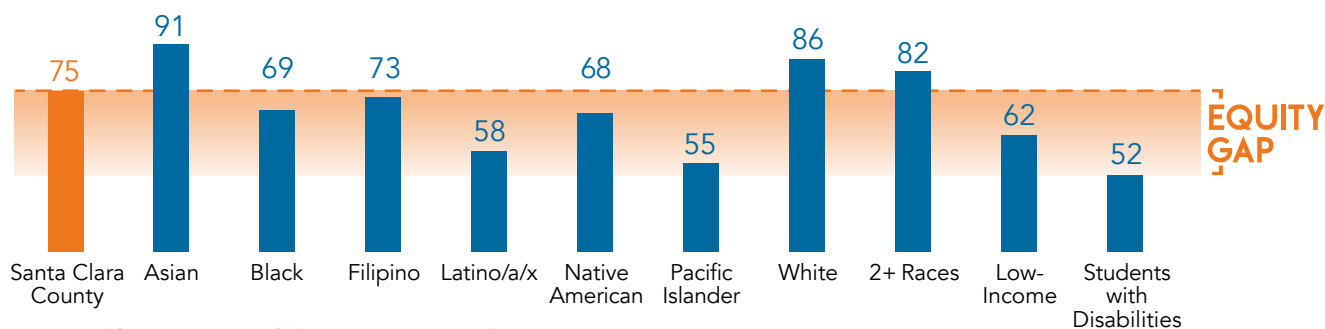
75	91	69	73	58	68	55	86	82	62	52
Santa Clara County	Asian	Black	Filipino	Latino/a/x	Native American	Pacific Islander	White	2+ Races	Low-Income	Students with Disabilities

EQUITY GAP

Source: California Department of Education. Data Quest. College-Going Rates.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

Percentage of Students Graduating on Time

86 — 87 — 88

2018-19   2022-23   2023-24
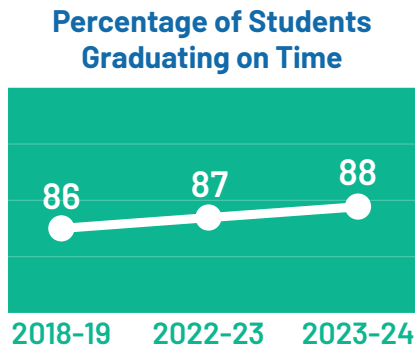
What the Data Tell Us

- In SY 2018-19, 86% of students in Santa Clara County graduated on time. This number increased to 88% in SY 2023-24.

- 96% of Asian, 94% of White students graduated on time. 82% of Black, and 79% of Latino/a/x and Native American students graduated on time.

- 2,546 students did not graduate on time in SY 2023-24.

Having a secondary credential, such as a high school diploma, is vital for a young adult's success in life. Students who graduate from high school are more likely to earn higher incomes, enjoy better health, and have a lower risk of living in poverty. Helping more students reach graduation day will also benefit society. A 1% increase in graduation rates in Santa Clara County could result in an additional $950,000 in federal tax revenue, a $54.9 million savings on healthcare, and an extra $5 million in earnings that supports the local economy.[1]

Keeping Students on Track to Graduation

Disengaging from school is a slow process for most students, which parents and teachers may overlook. However, research shows we can predict with 66% accuracy whether an elementary school student will later fall off track for graduation.

Early Warning Signs and Systems

Early warning systems can identify when students begin to disengage from school, even as early as kindergarten or first grade. Throughout elementary, middle, and high school, with appropriate academic and social supports, most students can get back on track for academic success, high school graduation, and transitioning to postsecondary education. Schools require the resources to identify students with learning challenges and to provide the necessary support for their success.

Early warning signs include:

- Absent for more than 10% of the time.

- Not reading at grade-level in third grade.

- A suspension or an "F" in middle school.[2]

When these and other early warning signs arise, it should serve as a call to action to assist that student in getting back on track by:

- Having an adult at school make a meaningful connection with the student.

- Addressing the social service, social-emotional, and out-of-school needs of the student.

- Ensuring the student receives additional academic support, such as tutoring, summer programs, or after-school learning opportunities.[3]

We have a critical interest in helping EVERY student graduate from high school or obtain their secondary credential. To support young people who may struggle in school, we must collaborate and focus on their success in learning.

A Focus on Reengagement

Without a high school credential, the chances of having income that allows an individual or family to live at or above the Real Cost Measure is challenging. (See pages 20-21 for the Real Cost Measure.) When young people do not complete high school, we must establish a clear pathway for them to reengage in education, both secondary and postsecondary.

When they are ready, it should be easy for a young person to reengage and persist in programs that lead to earning a high school credential or participate in postsecondary education that will result in better-paying jobs. Steps to achieve this include:

- **Connecting the Ecosystem of Programs and Supports** – Develop educational options that assist students who are furthest from opportunity. These options should encompass the 14 elements of WIOA Title 1 Youth Services: tutoring, both paid and unpaid work experience, education concurrent with workforce preparation, supportive and follow-up services, mentoring, leadership development, and more.

- **Build an Earn & Learn Pathway System** – Linking private and public investments to increase the total number of available placements and develop a continuum of opportunities.

- **Connect School and Work** – Link reengagement schools, work experience, and on-the-job training resources to ensure the most vulnerable youth, who often have adult responsibilities, can participate in school and work in a coherent and connected manner.[4]

1. The Graduation Effect. Alliance for Excellent Education. February 2018. https://all4ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Graduation-Effect-OnePager-FINAL.pdf.
2. 10-Point Plan for Graduation Success. America's Promise Alliance. http://www.americaspromise.org.
3. Don't Quit on Me. What Young People Who Left School Say About the Power of Relationships. Center for Promise, America's Promise Alliance. September 2016.
4. Youth Forum 2.0 Recommendation Letter to the Youth Committee of the work2future Workforce Development Board. A project of the Youth Liberation Movement, San José Public Library and Lighthouse Silicon Valley. 12/12/2023.

EVERY CHILD THRIVING IN LIFE

IMPROVING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND REENGAGEMENT

Foundations for Young Adult Success

Agency, purpose, and hope all contribute to a young person's success in life. They can be resilient – even in the face of hardship – if they have meaningful relationships with adults who recognize their needs, strengths, and goals. Caring for them, being responsive to what is happening in their lives, and providing support when they encounter challenges can help them stay on track and achieve their goals and dreams.[5]

In Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework, the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research outlines key factors and foundational components for young adult success. These factors include "having the agency to make active choices about one's life path, possessing the competencies to adapt to the demands of various contexts, and integrating different aspects of one's self into a cohesive identity."

Children and youth build foundational components through developmental experiences that underlie key factors for success:

- Knowledge and skills offer insight into the world and oneself, along with the ability to perform tasks to achieve desired results or goals.

- Mindset constitutes one's beliefs and attitudes about oneself and the world, and provides the lens through which we process everyday experiences.

- Values serve as guidelines for life and shape one's vision for the future. They represent enduring beliefs – often defined by culture – about what is considered good or bad and important in life.

Children are shaped by their interactions with the world, the adults around them, and the way they interpret their experiences, regardless of their circumstances. Poverty, racism, and other systemic barriers can lead to disparities in opportunities and outcomes.

Adults play a pivotal role in the development of these foundational components and key factors. Young people are continually growing – at home, in school, in programs, and in their community. Preparing young adults for success in life necessitates strong, supportive, and enduring relationships with caring adults.[5]

How young people experience their interactions with adults and whether they can derive meaning from those interactions is also important. Training and professional development for those who work with youth – at all stages of their lives – should focus on understanding the significance of this perspective.

Programs that Create a Connection

We help students by fostering meaningful connections with caring adults or older peers. Several programs in Santa Clara County aim to achieve this, and most utilize volunteers in these roles. Among these organizations are:

Mentor-Tutor Connection supporting the education and social-emotional needs of students in Mountain View and Los Altos: www.mentortutorconnection.org

Bright Futures at Yerba Buena and Overfelt High Schools: www.conxion.org/youth

New Hope for Youth serving and reaching out to young people facing adversity in SJ: www.newhopeforyouth.org

Child Advocates of Silicon Valley supporting youth in foster care: www.childadvocatessv.org

Fresh Lifelines for Youth (FLY) supporting youth in probation: www.flyprogram.org

Pivotal supporting education needs of youth in foster care: www.pivotalnow.org

Bay Area Tutoring Association providing tutoring support to youth throughout Santa Clara County: www.bayareatutoring.org

Santa Clara County Reengagement Programs
(for a high school/secondary certificate)

Santa Clara County students who left high school without a credential have several options available to them to receive a secondary credential. Some of these programs have flexibility, in-person or online options, and/or support employment or postsecondary opportunities. For more information visit www.kidsincommon.org/highschoolreengagementprograms.

Opportunity Youth Academy (OYA)

Part of SCCOE, OYA serves students ages 16-24 and offers a blended learning program with teacher-directed instruction and online credit accrual.

San José Conservation Corps and Charter School

For students ages 18-27. This program provides the opportunity to earn a free high school credential and gain job skills and work experience.

SiaTech at Job Corps Center

Free high school credential program for 16- to 24-year-olds. Daily flexible schedules allow students to choose from morning or afternoon class sessions. Also provides job training.

Escuela Popular

Provides intensive English Language Development so that students are able to meet their goal of graduating bilingual and biliterate.

5. Nagaoka, Jenny, Farrington, Camille A., Ehrlich, Stacy B., Health, Ryan D., with Johnson ,David W., Dickson, Sarah, Turner, Ashley Cureton, Mayo, Ashley, Hayes, Kathleen. Foundations of Young Adult Success a Developmental Framework. University Chicago Consortium on School Research. June 2015.

DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY SCHOOLS

The Developmental Relationships Framework developed by Search Institute identifies five elements and twenty specific actions that strengthen relationships in young people's lives. Just as trees rely on a system of roots to support and nourish them, young people need developmental relationships to build resilience and to thrive.[6]

With the generous sponsorship of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, in Fall 2024, YMCA Project Cornerstone and Search Institute partnered to conduct a survey in Santa Clara County schools to assess the current state of developmental relationships between students and educators.

A total of 16,435 students in grades 4-12 and 878 educators across 92 schools in nine Santa Clara County districts participated in the survey. The figure below represents the percentage of students who expressed that they "mostly" or "extremely" experienced each of the developmental relationships elements and actions. These findings underscore the importance of adults in creating supportive and challenging environments. For more information go to http://www.ProjectCornerstone.org

🟩 Top 5 Actions – Keep Doing These
🟧 Bottom 5 Actions – Need to Focus on Improvement

Elements	Actions	Elementary School	Middle School	High School
Express Care Show me that I matter to you.	**Be Dependable** – Be someone I can trust.	80%	72%	69%
	Encourage – Praise me for my effort and achievements.	76%	69%	67%
	Listen – Really pay attention when we are together.	73%	65%	65%
	Believe in me – Make me feel known and valued.	68%	59%	56%
	Be Warm – Show me you enjoy being with me.	68%	55%	53%
Challenge Growth Push me to keep getting better.	**Expect My Best** – Expect me to live up to my potential.	90%	89%	85%
	Hold Me Accountable – Insist I take responsibility for my actions.	80%	80%	75%
	Reflect on Failures – Help me learn from my setbacks.	77%	67%	62%
	Stretch – Push me to go further.	63%	62%	63%
Provide Support Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.	**Set Boundaries** – Put limits in place to keep me on track.	79%	70%	64%
	Navigate – Guide me through hard situations and systems.	79%	70%	64%
	Empower – Build my confidence to take charge of my life.	72%	64%	61%
	Advocate – Stand up for me when I need it.	67%	58%	57%
Share Power Treat me with respect and give me a say.	**Respect Me** – Take me seriously and treat me fairly.	87%	81%	80%
	Collaborate – Work with me to solve problems and reach goals.	74%	68%	66%
	Include Me – Involve me in decisions that affect me.	61%	55%	54%
	Let Me Lead – Create opportunities for me to take action and lead.	61%	55%	54%
Expand Possibilities Connect me with people and places to broaden my world.	**Inspire** – Inspire me to see possibilities for my future.	56%	54%	64%
	Broaden Horizons – Introduce me to people who can help me grow.	63%	55%	54%
	Connect – Expose me to new ideas, experiences and places.	55%	53%	56%

PROJECT CORNERSTONE — A YMCA of Silicon Valley Initiative

Santa Clara County Office of Education

Search INSTITUTE

6. Houltberg, Benjamin J., Scales, Peter C., Williams, Joanna. Developmental Relationships: The Roots of Positive Youth Development. 10 years of Youth Voice, Practitioner Wisdom and Research Insights. Search Institute. November 2023.

EVERY CHILD THRIVING IN LIFE

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Percent Enrolled in Post-Secondary Education within 12 Months of Graduation

77 — 2018-19
78 — 2020-21
75 — 2021-22
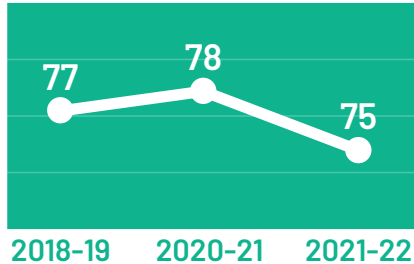
What the Data Tell Us:

- In SY 2021-22, 75% of students who graduated from high school attended a two-year or four-year postsecondary institution, such as a community college or a UC/CSU school. This reflects a decrease from 78% in SY 2020-21.

- 91% of Asian and 86% of White students enrolled in postsecondary education within 12 months of graduating. 55% of Pacific Islander, 58% of Latino/a/x, 68% of Native American, and 69% of Black graduates did.

- Note: This data does not reflect other postsecondary opportunities, such as trades and apprenticeship programs.

The Importance of Postsecondary Education

Postsecondary education, whether it involves vocational training programs, apprenticeships, or two- or four-year college and university programs, increases the likelihood of achieving an income above the Real Cost Measure.

Dual Enrollment

A strategy that has shown promise and garnered significant investment from the State of California is dual enrollment, allowing students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously. This approach decreases the time students take to complete a college degree and saves tuition costs.[7]

> **When students see how their education is relevant to the work they want to do in the future, the chances of their graduating on time increases.**

Figure 32 – Enrollment in Postsecondary Education Graduating Class (SY 2021-22)
Includes students who did not graduate. Cohort = 21,783.

CA 2-Year College 28%
Did Not Graduate 12%
Not Enrolled 22%
Out-of-State/Private 15%
CA 4-Year College 23%
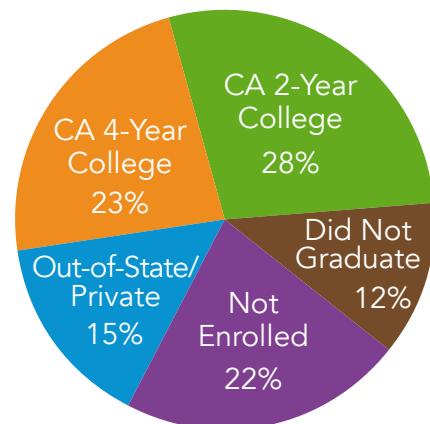
Source: California of Education. Data Quest. College-Going Rate & Graduation Rate.

Figure 33 – Percentage of Adults Living Below the Real Cost Measure by Education (2021)

68 — Less than High School
55 — High School diploma or equivalent
38 — Some College or Vocational Training
13 — College degree or higher
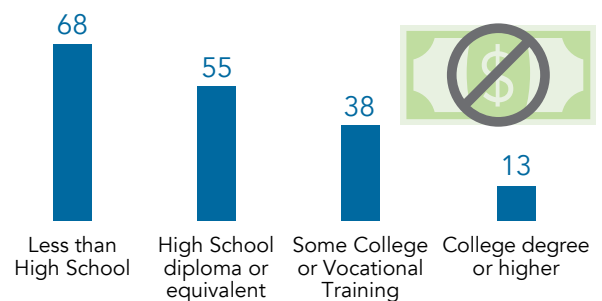
Source: Struggling to Move Up: the Real Cost Measure in California 2021. United Ways of California. July 2021. See page 20 for more information.

7. "Jumpstarting California Towards Universal Dual Enrollment. EdTrust-West. February 2025.

IMPROVING COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

Elementary schools can foster college and career dreams when adults intentionally discuss and demystify what occurs after high school. Counseling and planning support should start in middle school and continue as students transition to high school. It is also essential to ensure students are completing the necessary coursework that will help them successfully apply for and thrive in the postsecondary pathways they choose.[8]

Early and frequent messaging, along with activities that reinforce a future-oriented culture, identity, and behaviors, is a key part of narrowing the opportunity gap in Silicon Valley and promoting lifelong agency, as well as future-ready skills and traits.

College and Career Month 2025
Explore | Engage | Achieve

Thinking about how to access college or other postsecondary training opportunities, and how to finance them, can be overwhelming, especially for those who will be the first in their family to take this important next step after high school. College Month occurs in October and is sponsored by the Santa Clara County Office of Education, with the hope that all Santa Clara County schools will participate in college and career culture-building activities. College and Career Month offers resources and supports activities and events at schools throughout the county. Many of these resources can be used throughout the academic year. For more information, visit www.sccoe.org/cte.

The Spartan East Side Promise

Established in 2016, the Spartan East Side Promise (SESP) is a collaboration between San José State University, the East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD), the East Side Alliance, the East Side Education Foundation, and the Silicon Valley Education Foundation. Through interactive programming, SESP creates a pathway to admission at SJSU by clearly outlining the admission requirements and sharing information about resources for academic success with students and families in the district. In Fall 2016, 1,608 ESUHSD students applied for admission, and 436 enrolled for their first semester. This increased to 1,903 applications and 658 enrollments in Fall 2022. For more information, visit https://www.sjsu.edu/soar/spartaneastsidepromise.

Children's College Savings Accounts

Research shows that low-income children who have as little as $500 in a college savings account are three times more likely to attend college compared to those who do not have one. By assisting families in understanding the importance of saving for college and offering them an accessible method to achieve this, we bolster college aspirations.

The state of California launched **CalKIDS** in 2022, a statewide, automatic enrollment college savings program. Children born in California on or after July 1 2022 and eligible low-income public school students, are automatically enrolled in a CalKIDS savings account with an initial deposit (parents are not required to contribute). Eligible public school students (Grades 1-12) received at least $500 in 2022. Each year moving forward, eligible public school students in the first grade will be enrolled. www.calkids.org.

As of February 2025, 110,952 school-age children in Santa Clara County have received a CalKIDS scholarship, and 11.2% have registered their accounts – **a 60% increase in the registration rate from the previous year**. Excite Credit Union is partnering with the State Treasurer's office to raise awareness about CalKIDS. Contact John Hogan at jhogan@excitecu.org for more information.

Excite Credit Union offers the **Step Up Savings** program to help families begin a college savings account. Excite makes an initial $50 deposit, matches up to $25 in deposits annually, and offers a higher interest rate on balances up to $2,500. Accounts are available to eligible children living in the East Side Alliance footprint or receiving services from various non-profit organizations. For more information, visit www.excitecu.org/personal/save-spend/savings/step-up-savings.

The **College In My Future** (CIMF) program was launched in partnership with Excite Foundation, East Side Education Foundation, and Franklin-McKinley School District in 2021. Over 2,600 children have been automatically enrolled in the CIMF program, including 214 from the new 2023 partner, Kidango. These students received an opening $50 deposit and can earn deposit matches and other incentives in the future. Visit www.excitefoundation.org/childrens-savings for more information.

Photos courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

8. The Nine Elements of College-Going Culture. Center for Educational Partnerships, University of California Berkeley.

EVERY CHILD THRIVING IN LIFE

SPOTLIGHT ON

YOUTH IN THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

What the data tell us:

- **Arrests or Citations:** 2,308 in 2024, down 24% from 2019 (3,041), prior to COVID.
- **Referrals to Juvenile Hall:** 784 in 2024, down 26% from 2019 (1,054).
- **Detentions at Juvenile Hall:** 656 in 2024, down 32% from 2019 (958).
- 71% of youth arrested were male. 29% were female.
- 12% of youth arrested were 13 and younger. 34% were 14-15 years. 51% were 16-17. 4% were 18+.

While making up only 35% of the population, 78% of the youth in detention were Latino/a/x. 12% were Black in spite of only making up 3% of the population.[9]

Engagement in the juvenile justice system is linked to adverse education and health outcomes, recidivism, and eventual entry into the adult justice system. Adults bear a responsibility to tackle these challenges and foster pathways to success.

A 2013 study found that there are consequences when juveniles are incarcerated. Incarceration during adolescence – even for short periods – may disrupt human and social capital accumulation at a critical moment in a young person's life, resulting in reduced future wages and increased criminal activity as adults. The study examined data on over 35,000 juvenile offenders from a large urban county in the U.S. Juveniles who were charged with a crime and incarcerated, compared to those who were charged with a crime but not incarcerated, were 13% less likely to graduate from high school and 22% more likely to be incarcerated as adults.[10]

Education Services Unit

The Education Services Unit (ESU) of Probation is dedicated to supporting the educational needs of youth and families amenable to services beginning from the pre-adjudication stage. To achieve this, ESU conducts pre-screening and intake assessments to systematically identify and stabilize youth needs, and then refer them to suitable educational services that address youth needs with:

- Educational rights.
- School enrollment.
- Special education.
- Credit deficiency.
- Individualized Education Plans (IEP).

These services include professional support and guidance from the Morrissey-Compton Educational Center for youth with special education needs, legal advocacy from Legal Advocates for Children and Youth to protect youth educational rights, and educational advocacy from specially trained, non-caseload carrying ESU probation officers to assist youth in reintegrating into school and succeeding academically.

The services referred evolve in response to the needs of youth and legislative changes, with rapid response plans created to effectively address youth needs through available resources and partnerships, including the East Side Union High School District and the Santa Clara County Office of Education.

Secure Youth Treatment Facility

On September 30, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bill 823, which initiated the closure of the state's Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), the system that housed and treated youth who committed the most serious crimes. As of July 1, 2021, counties became responsible for housing, programming, and treating youth who would have previously been committed to the DJJ in a local Secure Youth Treatment Facility (SYTF).

Upon a youth's commitment to the SYTF, a team of stakeholders, including family members and natural supports chosen by the youth, develops an Individual Rehabilitation Plan that outlines services and programs, along with specific goals, to address the youth's primary service needs.

By June 30, 2024, all youth in the SYTF program were actively engaged in academics and vocational training. Among those admitted to SYTF at Juvenile Hall, 53 youth earned their high school diplomas. All eligible youth in custody were enrolled in online college courses, and those in the LIFT program can attend community college in person. Thirty-nine SYTF youth participated in vocational training while in custody, covering trades such as construction, horticulture, and welding.

Among the SYTF youth who reentered the community, 11 were employed, 7 were employed while also attending school, 2 were solely attending school, and 7 were actively seeking employment at the end of 2024 or at the time of dismissal. Notably, two youth have gone on to attend four-year universities and are working toward their bachelor's degrees.

Figure 34 – Youth Arrests and Detentions (2023)
Disproportionality in Youth Arrest and Detention Counts

Legend:
- % of County Youth Population
- % of Arrests
- % of Detentions
- n = Arrests/Citations

	Asian/Pacific Islander (n=152)	Black (n=186)	Latino/a/x (n=1,509)	White (n=238)	Other (n=105)
% of County Youth Population	37	3	35	25	0
% of Arrests	7	8	69	11	5
% of Detentions	2	12	78	6	2
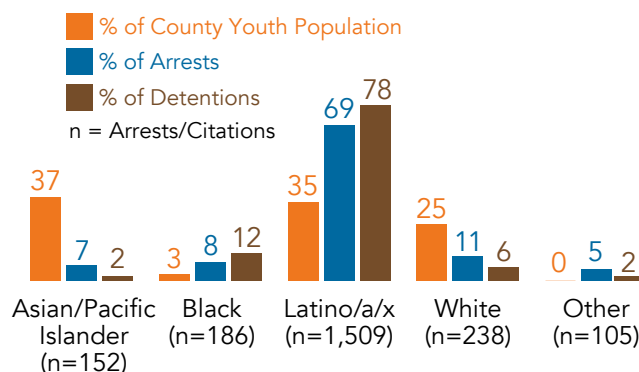
Source: County of Santa Clara Probation Department. Annual Juvenile Justice Data Book 2023.

9. Probation Department special data run. Feb. 27, 2025
10. Aizer, Anna, Doyle Jr., Joseph J. "Juvenile Incarceration, Human Capital and Future Crime: Evidence from Randomly-Assigned Judges." National Bureau of Economic Research. June 2013.

BUILDING A SYSTEM OF SUCCESS TO PREVENT JUVENILE JUSTICE ENGAGEMENT

There are several efforts in Santa Clara County that aim to decrease the number of young people coming into the juvenile justice system. Other efforts work to keep the youth who have had justice-engagement from being re-arrested. Some programs work to help youth re-engage in school, get on a pathway to graduation, and eventually enroll in postsecondary education, trades, and other programs. Changing the young person's education trajectory increases the likelihood of better employment opportunities and earning enough money to support themselves and their family.

Juvenile Court Aligned Action Network (JCAAN)

Founded on the principle that we are all responsible for supporting students, JCAAN is a collective impact initiative that unites school districts, the juvenile court, the probation department, and community-based service providers to collaboratively enhance educational outcomes for youth within the justice system. Using data to inform planning, drive results, and apply evidence-based strategies, JCAAN aims to reconnect youth involved in the justice system with schooling and learning opportunities. This past year, JCAAN supported:

- **Summer School Attendance Challenge** aims to encourage students in the justice system who are behind to attend and expedite their credit recovery in summer school programs.
- **College and Career Fair** focused on meeting the needs of students in the justice system while cultivating their college and career mindsets.

For more information go to: www.KidsinCommon.org.

San José Youth Empowerment Alliance (SJYEA)

SJYEA is the city's strategy for preventing youth and gang violence (formerly known as the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force). For over 30 years, the city's efforts to reduce gang violence have served as a model for collective impact. Its vision of safe and healthy youth connected to their families, schools, communities, and futures sets the framework and drives its collective work.

Believing that youth violence is preventable, the SJYEA invests in community-based programming and city intervention, along with neighborhood services for young people ages 6 to 24. The implementation of strategies that promote the development of protective factors– helping to buffer against vulnerabilities early and consistently – reduces the impact of risk factors and strengthens young people's resilience. City intervention services target youths with higher risk factors and aim to redirect them towards a brighter future. Providing young people with life-changing opportunities, such as tattoo removal and job placement, directly contributes to reduced risk factors.

For more information visit https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/parks-recreation-neighborhood-services/sjyea.

South County Youth Task Force (SCYTF) & South County HEALS!

Founded in January 2012, SCYTF addresses the effects of violence, gangs, and trauma on youth in Gilroy, Morgan Hill, and San Martin. SCYTF envisions a safe, violence-free community where young people can thrive and connect with their support systems. They enhance access to well-being services for youth and families, empowering their voices and growth by expanding care and addressing service gaps. Their 2023-2026 strategic plan, **Project II THRIVE!**, emphasizes youth well-being, empowerment, healthy relationships, and community capacity building. SCYTF employs a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to improve youth support systems and internal interactions, while striving to reduce inequities.

SC HEALs! – an SCYTF resident-led initiative – is working to create healthier, safer communities by bridging California's Violence Prevention and Community Health Worker initiatives.

Neighborhood Safety Unit of Probation (NSU) supports East Gilroy strategies and SC HEALs! Integrating these vital state programs enables SC HEALs! to address social determinants of health, fostering healing, social-emotional wellness, equity, and prosperity. The goal is to improve outcomes for youth, families, and entire neighborhoods, building a legacy of peace for future generations. This community-driven work is "**For Us, By Us.**"

In 2024, SCYTF, with SC HEALs! and NSU partners:

- Served 7,000+ youth through collective grant/funding strategies.
- Hosted workshops, classes and trainings for 10,000+ duplicated youth and adults.
- Through the South County Restorative Justice Youth Program served 46 youth at an 89% success rate.
- Engaged 1,000 unduplicated youth in pro-social programs and supports.

San José Valley Palms Neighborhood Services Unit (NSU)

NSU is a place-based violence prevention initiative that addresses violence prevention through a public health perspective and focuses its resources on primary prevention. The 95122 ZIP code was identified through a collaborative, data-driven process reviewing public health and other system data, including crime trends and school suspensions or expulsions.

In San José Valley Palms, juvenile referrals to probation decreased from 193 to 97 between FY 2022 and FY 2023, and the rate fell from 17.7 to 9.2 referrals per 1,000.

With NSU's support, this community has successfully advocated for a new soccer field at Valley Palms Apartments, secured the construction of a crosswalk, developed a growing pool of participants in leadership and advocacy programs, and created numerous opportunities for pro-social activities accessible to parents and youth.

EVERY CHILD THRIVING IN LIFE

Santa Clara County
We Are
Better Together

Santa Clara County is a community devoted to its children, youth, and families. This commitment is evident in the diverse programs, services, and initiatives designed to enhance outcomes for our youngest residents and their families. In this section, we showcase the efforts of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, the County of Santa Clara, the Healthier Kids Foundation, and the Children's Agenda led by Kids in Common. Additionally, this section highlights the contributions of FIRST 5 Santa Clara County and the City of San José, both of which invest significant resources to better the lives of children and families.

Photos courtesy of San José Public Library, Santa Clara County Office of Education, and Santa Clara County Public Health Department.

2·1·1

Get Connected. Get Help.™

There are many services, programs and initiatives in Santa Clara County that support children, youth, and families.

For information on health, education and wellness service providers connect with 2-1-1.

Free * Confidential * 24/7
Available in Multiple Languages

Dial 2-1-1 to get connected to a specialist for personalized assistance or go to www.211BayArea.org.

PARTNERSHIP WITH YOUTH, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITY

When families, agencies, and community partners collaborate, they are more likely to create policies, systems, and decisions that lead to equitable and positive outcomes.

Too often, policymakers, program implementers, and direct service staff develop policies or bring services to the community that they believe will be effective. However, policies and programs created without community input – no matter how well-intentioned – often repeatedly disadvantage the same groups, leading to harmful unintended consequences and compounding generational trauma. When the community is involved from the beginning in the design and delivery, these consequences can be avoided.

The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership, developed by Rosa González of Facilitating Power, offers a model for cultivating thriving, diverse, and equitable communities through deep participation, especially among

Nothing About Us Without Us

groups often excluded from democratic voice and power.

It presents a model for a new wave of community-driven civic leadership. The spectrum below outlines the essential steps for building community collaboration and governance.

Many efforts in Santa Clara County aim to foster collaboration and community ownership, including the Probation Department's Neighborhood Safety/Services Unit (NSU), FLY's Youth Advisory Council, the South County Youth Task Force, and the SCCOE Wellness Center Initiative Youth Advisory Group.

To read more and access the tools of the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership go to https://movementstrategy.org/resources/the-spectrum-of-community-engagement-to-ownership.

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP
Increased Efficiency in Decision-Making and Solutions Implementation Equity

	IGNORE 0	INFORM 1	CONSULT 2	INVOLVE 3	COLLABORATE 4	DEFER TO 5
Stance Towards the Community						
Impact	Marginalization	Preparation or Placation	Limited Voice or Tokenization	Voice	Delegated Power	Community Ownership
Community Engagement Goals	Deny access to decision-making processes	Provide the community with relevant information	Gather input from the community	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process and inform planning	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in decision-making and the implementation of decisions.	Foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision-making; Bridge divide between community & governance
Message to the Community	Your voice, needs & interests do not matter	We will keep you informed	We care what you think	You are making us think (and therefore act) differently about the issue	Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address the issue	It's time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions.
Activities	Closed door meeting Misinformation Systematic	Fact sheets Open Houses Presentations Billboards Videos	Public Comment Focus Groups Community Forums Surveys	Community organizing & advocacy House meetings Interactive workshops Polling Community forums	MOU's with Community-based organizations Community organizing Citizen advisory committee Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling	Community-driven planning Consensus building Participatory action research Participatory budgeting Cooperatives
Resource Allocation Ratios	100% Systems Admin	70-90% Systems Admin 10-30% Dramations and Publicity	60-80% Systems Admin 20-40% Consultation Activities	50-60% Systems Admin 40-50% Community Involvement	20-50% Systems Admin 50-70% Community Partners	80-100% Community partners and community-driven processes ideally generate new value and resources that can be invested in solutions

ENSURING EVERY CHILD THRIVES

The Healthier Kids Foundation believes that every child deserves equitable access to quality healthcare. Every day, the organization works alongside families and caregivers to identify and eliminate health barriers, ensuring that children receive the support they need to thrive. By providing proactive and positive interventions, children are empowered to reach their full potential and navigate life with confidence.

Their commitment to health equity drives their mission to increase access to high-quality care and build a strong, supportive ecosystem around each child and their family. They strive to ensure that every child in Santa Clara County receives the comprehensive care they need – not just for today, but for a lifetime of health and learning.

Photos courtesy of Healthier Kids Foundation.

Healthier Kids Foundation is committed to supporting the whole child through prevention and intervention, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive. Their efforts focus on three key areas: Health Screenings, Care Coordination, and Education – addressing both immediate health needs and long-term well-being.

Health Screenings
Identifying Needs Early

Healthier Kids Foundation provides physical health screenings (dental, vision, and hearing) and universal emotional wellness checks to students throughout Santa Clara County's public schools. By identifying unmet health needs early, children facing barriers are connected to primary care with the necessary interventions – helping them stay healthy and ready to learn.

Programs
include VisionFirst, HearingFirst, DentalFirst and MyHealthFirst

Care Coordination
Ensuring Long-Term Care

For children identified with unmet health needs, the Healthier Kids Foundation's Care Coordination team provides follow-up services through CalAIMs programs, including Community Health Workers (CHW) and Enhanced Care Management (ECM). The goal is to secure sustainable medical and dental homes for every child while fostering positive relationships with healthcare providers.

Programs
include AppointmentFirst and COPE

Education
Empowering Healthier Futures

Healthier Kids Foundation offers tailored health education workshops for both children and parents, covering essential topics such as nutrition, healthy habits, and oral hygiene. By equipping families with the knowledge and tools for a healthy lifestyle, Healthier Kids Foundation promotes lifelong well-being and disease prevention. Through these initiatives, Healthier Kids Foundation is breaking down barriers to healthcare access and empowering children and families with the resources they need to thrive. Working together, Healthier Kids Foundation and families can create a healthier future for every child.

Programs
include SmileFirst and 10 Steps

WORKING FOR BETTER RESULTS FOR OUR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Kids in Common (KIC) is a leading child advocacy organization focused on eliminating systemic inequities impacting children's education, health, social emotional wellbeing, and justice. KIC advances this mission by supporting policies, promoting data-driven action, and fostering collaborations of cross-systems leaders and experts that support positive outcomes for all children in Santa Clara County, from cradle to career. **KIC's vision is to see every child Safe, Healthy, Successful in Learning, and Thriving in Life**.

Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

OUR APPROACH:

KIC serves as the backbone organization for the collective impact of cross-sector organizations coming together to meet the needs of Santa Clara County youth by mobilizing, coordinating, facilitating action through a coordinated, structured, and collaborative approach; KIC establishes a framework and common language to help policymakers, funders, nonprofit and business leaders to collectively address child development and well-being broadly, from birth to young adulthood, through innovative and sustained collaboration that cuts across bureaucratic silos. KIC takes a holistic view of health with a focus on four major spheres of influence: communities, government and education systems, families and selves. Working collaboratively, KIC achieves collectively what cannot be done alone and is able to align efforts across sectors and among organizations working at different stages of a child's development and move from fragmented action and results to deep and durable impact.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- **Partnership** – building strategic alliances with other organizations, both within and outside the health and human services arena.
- **Collaboration** – working in concert with and valuing the success of member organizations, interested parties and other related groups.
- **Independence** – pursuing those issues and strategies that represent and support the best interests of children and their families in our community.

- **Integrity** – guided by what is best for children in our community, reliable in every commitment made, authentic in word and deed.
- **Diversity** – respecting, understanding, and integrating a wide range of perspectives, people and ideas.
- **Non-Partisan** – being free from political party affiliation.

OUR PROGRAMS:

1. **Children's Agenda Network (CAN):** a county-wide network of over 45 cross-sector leaders committed to improving outcomes for children, youth and families by:

   a. Relationship Building Across Networks that Support Children, Youth, and Families.

   b. Common Language and Framework for Improving Outcomes.

   c. Developing Shared Knowledge of Best Practices and a culture of continual improvement.

   d. Community participation on activities and policies that affect diverse children and families.

2. **Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) Initiative:** a structured, data-driven program of the Children's Agenda and 5-year action plan that collaboratively address the youth mental health crisis through three key pillars of work:

   a. **Addressing Basic Needs**: Address the economic and social barriers that cause stress and contribute to poor mental health for young people, families by expanding access to food, housing, and other financial supports.

   b. **Cultivating Caring Communities**: Building a caring culture that supports positive youth development and seeing value in every young person.

   c. **Family and Community Education**: Support programs that educate communities about the importance of social-emotional wellness and how to get help when needed and that reduce stigma around seeking help.

3. **Children's Summit:** an annual event that brings together over 250 cross-sector leaders and experts in Santa Clara County who are passionate about improving children's lives through collaboration and data-driven approaches.

4. **Juvenile Court Aligned Action Network:** a structured, data-driven collaborative focused on improving education outcomes and increasing the graduation rate of youth in the juvenile justice system.

Santa Clara County ⚜ Office of Education

COMMITTED TO SERVING, INSPIRING, AND PROMOTING STUDENT AND PUBLIC SCHOOL SUCCESS

Working collaboratively with school and community partners, the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) is a regional service agency that provides instructional, business, and technology services to the 31 school districts of Santa Clara County.

The factors contributing to academic success and disparities are complex. It is important to increase learning opportunities for students from cradle to career, as well as provide support for the physical, mental and behavioral success of children. The responsibility for our youth is not solely a school's responsibility – it is a collective responsibility between parents, caregivers, schools civic leaders, businesses, and our community at large. We all have a role to play in our children's successes.

Supporting Students

SCCOE provides a range of services related to school climate, and student health and wellness efforts, improving achievement for all students and helping create a positive school culture that supports learning. Trainings include bullying prevention, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), Restorative Practices, and tobacco-use prevention. Some of the SCCOE's featured initiatives are listed below.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is a comprehensive framework that aligns academic, behavioral, and social-emotional learning in a fully integrated system of support for the benefit of all students. MTSS helps districts and schools create needed systematic change through the design and redesign of services and supports to quickly meet the needs of all students. More information about MTSS is available at www.sccoe.org/educational-progress/mtss.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

SCCOE supports schools and districts in implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to create safe, , and supportive learning environments for all students. Through professional development, coaching, and technical assistance, SCCOE helps educators establish proactive strategies that promote positive behavior, social-emotional well-being, and academic success. By fostering a culture of equity and continuous improvement, PBIS empowers schools to meet the diverse needs of children and improve student outcomes. https://www.sccoe.org/pbis

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that provides all students opportunities to succeed. Based on neuroscience and evidence-based practices, UDL is a framework that guides educators in

Photos courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

designing learning experiences that meet the needs of all students. It is based on the principles of universal design (UD) that are used in architecture, space planning, and product design and emphasizes the importance of creating flexible and accessible learning environments. Barriers to learning are assumed to be in the design of learning environments and not in the student. UDL encourages educators to design learning environments that provide students with multiple means of engaging, comprehending, and expressing their learning so that all learners may access and participate in meaningful, challenging learning experiences.

For information on SCCOE resources and support for UDL visit https://www.innovationscollaborative.org/training.aspx.

Empowering Educators, Transforming Literacy

SCCOE recognizes that strong literacy skills are the foundation of academic achievement and lifelong success. Committed to fostering excellence in education, we provide comprehensive professional learning opportunities designed to enhance educators' expertise in evidence-based literacy instruction.

Through targeted professional development, coaching, and technical assistance, this program equips teachers, instructional aides, and literacy coaches with the tools to strengthen students' foundational reading skills and comprehension. Additionally, supports are available to local education agencies in developing and implementing effective literacy improvement plans, leveraging data-driven insights to drive meaningful progress.

By investing in educators, SCCOE is shaping a future where every student has the literacy skills necessary to thrive in school and beyond.

Strong Start of Santa Clara County

Strong Start Is a coalition of community leaders, individuals and organizations working to ensure that all children ages 0 to 8 in Santa Clara County have access to high quality early care and education (ECE) opportunities. It does this by providing public education on the importance of ECE and the need for additional resources to support universal access, and by leveraging the support of coalition members. Strong Start meets monthly. For more information and resources, visit www.strongstartsantaclara.org.

Steps to Success

The Steps to Success campaign seeks to raise public awareness about the benefits of enrolling and regularly attending early learning programs and facilitate enrollment in programs for ages birth through five. Multilingual enrollment resources have been centralized to support families in their search for early learning programs that best meet their needs. In addition to creating information resources for families, SCCOE created the Outreach Toolkit for School Leaders, providing outreach materials that can be embedded into current enrollment outreach plans within school districts. To access enrollment and attendance resources for early learning programs visit www.enrollsantaclara.org.

Student Wellness

Embedding mental health and wellness programs in schools breaks down barriers for youth in need of support, reduces the stigma surrounding mental health, and prioritizes prevention and early intervention efforts.

The Peer Advocate Advisory Council (PAAC)

The Peer Advocate Advisory Council (PAAC) is a Santa Clara County youth-centered leadership group that engages in community level advocacy and awareness projects ranging from conference presentations, media campaigns, research, and peer-to-peer education.

Power of Democracy: Civic Engagement Initiative

The Power of Democracy: Civic Engagement Initiative is a multi-sector coalition facilitated by the SCCOE to foster an understanding of the structures and processes of our democracy, share resources and best practices, encourage informed and multifaceted civic participation, and build stronger communities.

Through the lens of serving, inspiring, and promoting student and public school success, and partnership, the SCCOE Power of Democracy (POD) Initiative:

- Fosters an understanding of our democracy's structures and processes by sharing resources and best practices, and encouraging informed civic participation that engages districts and communities.
- Partners with districts and communities to provide access to high-quality civic education through programs, activities, and resources that encourage student civic engagement and civil discourse.
- Supports the principles of liberty, civility, individual responsibility, representation, partnership, and justice.
- Supports effective and evidenced-based practices to engage authentic youth voice and prepare students to be active in the democratic process.

For more information about the Power of Democracy initiative visit www.sccoe.org/supoffice/Pages/Power-of-Democracy.aspx.

Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE)

The Tobacco Use Prevention Education program is a comprehensive evidence-based tobacco-use prevention, youth development, intervention, and cessation program. The purpose of the TUPE program is to reduce youth tobacco-use by helping students make healthy decisions through tobacco-specific educational instruction and activities that build knowledge.

TUPE Peer Advocate Program: The TUPE Peer Advocate Program engages students leaders at secondary schools to educate their peers on the importance of staying tobacco-free.

TO FIND CHILDCARE VISIT WWW.CHILDCARESCC.ORG or call 669-212-5437 (KIDS)

PUTTING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES FIRST IN OUR POLICIES AND SYSTEMS

The County of Santa Clara prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable communities on behalf of the wellbeing and life success of all children and youth.

Office of Children and Families Policy

The Office of Children and Families Policy (OCFP) works to ensure that the County maximizes resources and coordinates effectively with internal and external partners in its shared goal of achieving better results for children, youth, and families.

OCFP is guided by three core objectives of advocacy for policy and analysis, addressing and supporting strategic issues and initiatives, and collaboration and partnerships. In the past year, OCFP collaborated with internal and external partners to meet the critical needs of children and families through efforts to:

- Centralize budget understanding of all County resources for children and families.
- Develop an operational plan for a grant program to expand student access to school-based wellness centers.
- Implement early learning workforce initiatives and a childcare grant program to expand parents' access to childcare and stabilize the field.
- Understand caregivers' needs and challenges through parent and early educator participation in Stanford University's RAPID Survey.

Early Learning Workforce Initiatives

The global pandemic disrupted the early learning workforce and exacerbated the ongoing closure of local family- and center-based childcare businesses, weakening the economic infrastructure essential to family stability, school readiness, and economic growth.

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved $10 million to address workforce shortages. Since 2022, OCFP has partnered with FIRST 5 Santa Clara County (FIRST 5) to stabilize the early care and education (ECE) field and increase quality childcare.

The Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Teacher Equity Program aims to diversify the body of local early educators. TK is a developmentally appropriate early education program that prepares children for Kindergarten. In 2024, San José State University was approved to run a PK-3 ECE Credential Program. Through this program, participants can compete for higher-paying, benefited, and union-protected school district jobs.

The Apprenticeship Program creates a pathway for childcare teachers to earn an Associate Teacher Permit or Teacher Permit. The program funds three cohorts and offers no-cost college coursework, on-the job training in a State Preschool or family childcare home provider (FCCH) setting, stipends,

and wage increases. In June 2024, 40 apprentices earned an Associate Teacher Permit. An apprentice participant said they credit the program for increasing their knowledge and skills and providing an opportunity to "get a pay raise" and "obtaining a better job in the future."

The Shared Services Alliance (SSA) engages FCCH providers to design and implement the infrastructure needed for quality early care and business stability. FCCH providers run micro-businesses that are core to the ECE economy and often serve low-income communities. In FY 2023-2024, providers planned the first annual Leadership Conference (150 attendees) and first annual Summit (70 attendees). Providers voiced their need for supports and policy advocacy, informing the priorities of the SSA.

Childcare Expansion Grant Program. The BOS approved $15 million in Federal American Rescue Plan Act funding to expand families' access to childcare. In 2023, OCFP contracted with the Valley Health Foundation to implement an equity-grounded grant program to assist childcare providers with renovation and operational needs with the goal of increasing childcare enrollments for infants/toddlers and in high-need communities. A hallmark of this work was its attention to providing high quality customer support to providers who needed it most to complete their applications. These efforts led to the receipt of 499 applications for FCCH start-ups, FCCH and center construction and/or operations. Grant awards, made on a rolling basis, were distributed beginning in May 2024.

County of Santa Clara Children's Budget

Budgets can be a statement of values, representing the investments a community is making and its priorities. In November 2019, the County released its inaugural edition of a children's budget. This year's 2024-25 budget presents the financial data and program descriptions of the vast array of services the County offers to support children and youth, many in collaboration with community partners. In FY 2024-25, the County will spend approximately $1.29 billion on programs serving children and youth. The funding comes from state, federal, and other sources. This year's Children's Budget highlights two key programs: Advocacy and Flexible Support Services through the Office of Gender-Based Violence Prevention and the Amigos Motel Shelter and Rapid Rehousing Programs. It should be noted that the Children's Budget only includes programs funded by the County and does not include programs funded by school districts, cities, or FIRST 5. For more information on the Children's Budget, visit https://www.santaclaracounty.gov/government/budget-and-finance.

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA YOUTH TASK FORCE

The mission of the Youth Task Force (YTF) is to **provide a voice for Santa Clara County youth in the decisions and policies of government agencies and community organizations that affect the lives of young people**. Effective January 2023, OCFP took over staff duties for the YTF. As part of its role, OCFP informs commissioners of any emerging priority areas, policy opportunities, and procedural changes, as well as provides appropriate connections to both internal County departments and external community partners. This level of support allows the YTF to be well positioned to support the BOS with youth-focused recommendations and enhances their experience serving on a civic commission.

2024 Youth Leadership Summit

YTF commissioners expressed interest in hosting a youth leadership event in School Year (SY) 2023-24. OCFP collaborated with the YTF to develop the structure and content of the Youth Leadership Summit. Commissioners focused the theme on student wellness, complementing their annual work plan goals. The summit was held in April 2024 at Oak Grove High School and provided a space for over 175 youth attendees to learn about community engagement opportunities, participate in interactive sessions supporting student wellness, contribute to impactful policy recommendations, and connect with other youth leaders passionate about making positive change.

Featured speakers included Dr. Jeff Duncan-Andrade, associate professor of Latina/o Studies and Race and Resistance at San Francisco State University; County Board President Susan Ellenberg; County Executive James R. Williams; a student panel on wellness; and more. The Summit included tours of the Oak Grove High School wellness center, yoga sessions, resource tables, arts and crafts, and a mental health survey developed by the YTF Mental Health Subcommittee.

OCFP Student Internship

In June 2024, OCFP launched a summer internship program to conduct foundational research to guide the 2024-25 YTF Workplan. Two student YTF interns were selected to complete projects of interest based on YTF priorities. The first intern conducted background research to develop an assessment of support services for students with housing instability. The second intern began a collection of educational resources and pathways to higher education to be disseminated to students.

YTF Retreat and Achievements

In October 2024, OCFP facilitated the second YTF retreat to develop the SY 2024-25 workplan. Commissioners received presentations from the summer interns, Social Services Agency Youth Participatory Action Research, and Office of Government Relations on County policy and the state legislative process. Commissioners discussed hosting a youth networking event and are engaged in preparatory work to facilitate a future leadership event.

In January 2025, the Behavioral Health Services Department invited the YTF Mental Health Subcommittee to share findings from their mental health survey with school grantees of a newly deployed school-based wellness center expansion program. The commissioners presented survey findings from over 50 student responses. Approximately 82% of respondents indicated they had moderate to high or very high stress levels, with academic difficulty, general anxiety, and peer relationships the top reasons affecting their mental health. Approximately 56% of students reported utilizing school wellness centers for counseling and/or additional therapy services, and approximately 45% reported accessing school wellness centers to calm down. The Mental Health Subcommittee is continuing to brainstorm other venues where they can share their findings.
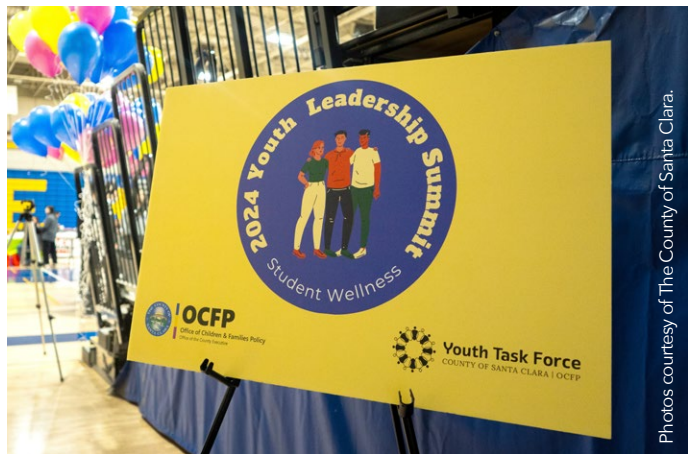
Photos courtesy of The County of Santa Clara.

INVESTMENTS TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S LIVES
WORKING TO CREATE A BETTER FUTURE
FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

The City of San José Children and Youth Services Master Plan

The Children and Youth Services Master Plan for the City of San José is a strategic roadmap and outlines the city's commitment to supporting children, youth, and young adults. It guides policy, practices, investments, and strategic actions to create and expand opportunity pathways, from cradle to career.

Vision: Fostering a future where every child and youth in San José blossoms into healthy, resilient, self-sufficient adults, enriched with abundant opportunities to live, work, play, dream, and prosper within the vibrant landscape of Silicon Valley.

Unifying Purpose: Create and expand opportunity pathways and supports, from cradle to career, that develop 21st century skills and lead to better health outcomes, sustainable employment, and a competitive living wage for San José children, youth, and young adults (birth through age 24), particularly for those most vulnerable.

Priority Areas:

- Early Learning and Child Care
- Health and Mental Wellness
- Housing Access and Security
- Learning and Empowerment
- Meaningful and Sustaining Jobs
- Safe, Clean, and Connected Communities
- Systems Transformation: City of San José System of Care "Safety-Net"

This plan articulates the City's commitment to systems transformation and moving beyond the status quo to establish, strengthen, and foster a collaborative network of organizations, system and policy leaders, and community members to address the needs of the city's youngest community members. It does this with an emphasized focus on reaching vulnerable children, youth, young adults, and their families and into communities that have historically been most disenfranchised and under-resourced.

For more information visit https://www.sanJoseca.gov.

San José (SJ) Learns

The San José (SJ) Learns initiative supports academic achievement by funding innovative expanded learning programs for San José students in kindergarten through third grade. These high-quality programs offer essential academic support, particularly for students struggling in the classroom and those whose families cannot afford fee-based alternatives. The San José Public Library Foundation manages city-funded grants, while the San José Public Library's Education Team leads program implementation and evaluation. The initiative serves San José's most vulnerable students, including a significant population of English language learners (over 50%),

students receiving free and reduced lunch (close to 75%), and Latino/a/x students (close to 70%). By 2025, SJ Learns will empower 8,300 students across 35 schools across ten Local Education Agencies. Students achieve this success through intensive engagement, participating in an average of 400 hours of programming per school year, which proves the effectiveness of SJ Learns' approach to educational equity and its success in closing achievement gaps for San José's diverse student population. For more information, visit www.sjplf.org/sjlearns.

San José Public Library

The San José Public Library Foundation is committed to collaborating with the San José Public Library to create a community where everyone has equitable access to

Photo courtesy of San José Public Library.

lifelong learning to reach their full potential in school, career, and life. The Library Foundation supports a variety of education and enrichment programs:

- **Adult Literacy and ESL:** Supports adult learners in basic reading, writing, language, technology, and life skills through one-on-one tutoring and small group instruction.
- **Career Online High School:** A free, online, nationally accredited program that enables adults to earn a high school diploma and a career certificate in a variety of high-demand career fields.
- **Digital Skill Building:** A year-round initiative that provides free and equitable access to computer science learning programs for students in grades K-12.
- **Family, Friend, and Neighbor Caregiver Support Network:** A workforce development and networking program for informal caregivers.
- **Resilience Corps Learning Pathway:** A jobs program giving college students living in San José's under-resourced census tracts a living wage, professional development training, and experience in the expanded learning field working with high needs students in grades K-8.
- **San José Learns:** Created in response to low academic performance in underserved communities, San José Learns administers grants to innovative expanded learning programs for students in kindergarten through third grade.
- **Summer Learning:** An eight-week program in June and July that encourages active and engaged learning for prereaders (0-5), young readers (5-12), teens (12-17) and adults (18+).
- **Wee Programs:** A suite of programs designed to stimulate the minds of young children, ages 0-5, to prepare them for kindergarten success and beyond.

FIRST 5
SANTA CLARA COUNTY

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County acts as a catalyst to ensure that the developmental needs of young children, prenatal through five years, are a priority in all sectors of the community. FIRST 5's mission is to support children's healthy development and enrich the lives of their families, caregivers, and community. Committed to fostering an organizational culture that celebrates diversity, advances equity, promotes inclusion, and cultivates a deep sense of belonging for all, FIRST 5 recognizes that working with diverse communities across Santa Clara County makes the organization stronger and more effective in its mission.

FIRST 5 Community Initiatives:

FIRST 5 launched a three-year "**Stronger Systems, Stronger Families**" initiative with 22 community partner organizations, including neighborhood Resource Centers, to address families'

top concerns and to work to dismantle systemic barriers to accessing basic needs such as food, housing, health care, and childcare supports. As part of its Child Development/Early Learning initiatives, FIRST 5 focused on key professional development supports for Family Child Care Home providers, including an innovative early learning Apprenticeship program and a Shared Services Alliance that provides equitable access to business supports for these micro-entrepreneurs. And FIRST 5's Child Health initiatives included convening a collaborative of home visiting services, in addition to supporting physical and developmental screenings as well as prevention and intervention services. Read FIRST 5's Home Visiting Expansion Feasibility Study here: https://www.first5kids.org/what-we-fund/community-health-wellness-initiative.

FIRST 5 Santa Clara County continues to face declining revenue from the state tobacco tax (Proposition 10) that funds First 5 programming. In the past year, however, as a reflection of the increasing integration of FIRST 5 into the local human services landscape, the proportion of funding from grants now exceeds the proportion of funding from the Proposition 10 tobacco tax. FIRST 5 received $11 million in Proposition 10 dollars, but nearly $13.7 million in grants and other funding. The ongoing decline of Proposition 10 revenue will continue to have a significant impact on FIRST 5's community services, staffing, and systems change efforts, requiring the organization to make strategic choices about community investments while seeking additional revenue streams to ensure the wellbeing of our county's children, families, and providers.

FIRST 5 at a glance: 2023-2024

Number of families and children served through Family Strengthening initiatives:

172,236

Number of families and children served through Child Development initiatives:

8,782

Number of families and children served through Child Health initiatives:

40,706

Total investment in programs and initiatives countywide:

$25.2M

Families who identify as Hispanic/Latino:

46%	57%
children	parents/caregivers

Families who identify as Asian:

24%	31%
children	parents/caregivers

Photo courtesy of FIRST 5

For more information, find FIRST 5's 2023-24 Community Report here: https://www.first5kids.org/about-us/evaluation-reports.

INDEX

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WWW.SCCGOV.ORG

The County of Santa Clara serves a diverse, multi-cultural population of 1.9 million residents. With an $11.9 billion budget in FY 2024-25, over 70 agencies/departments, and 22,000 employees, the County provides essential services, including public health and environmental protection; behavioral health and medical services; child and adult protection services; homelessness prevention/solutions; roads, parks, and libraries; disaster emergency response; protection of threatened communities; a fair criminal justice system; and other services for communities with the greatest need.

HKIDSF.ORG

Healthier Kids Foundation's commitment to health equity drives our mission to increase access to high-quality care and build a strong, supportive ecosystem around each child and their family. We strive to ensure that every child in Santa Clara County receives the comprehensive care they need–not just for today, but for a lifetime of health and learning. Our efforts focus on three key areas: Health Screenings, Care Coordination, and Education–addressing both immediate health needs and long-term well-being.

WWW.KIDSINCOMMON.ORG

Kids in Common (KIC) is a leading child advocacy organization focused on eliminating systemic inequities impacting children's education, health, social emotional wellbeing, and justice. KIC advances this mission by supporting policies, promoting data-driven action, and fostering collaborations of cross-systems leaders and experts that support positive outcomes for all children in Santa Clara County, from cradle-to-career.

Kids in Common's Vision: Every child safe, healthy, successful in learning, thriving in life.

WWW.SCCOE.ORG

The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) champions public education by providing leadership, advocacy, and support to schools, students, and the community. Serving 31 districts and over 235,000 students, SCCOE offers instructional, administrative, and fiscal services, directly supporting students through special education, alternative schools, and early learning programs.

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Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Office of Education.

We want to hear from you!

**Tell us what you think about
the 2025 Data Book.**

www.surveymonkey.com/r/DataComments