

An Update on Girls in San Francisco:

Resiliency in a Changing City

June 2018



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Report Updates

- + New housing section
- + New interviews with leaders who work with girls in San Francisco
- + New collaborations
 - Young Women's Freedom Center
 - Alliance for Girls, Young Women's Initiative
 - Mission Girls
 - Oasis for Girls
- + Expanded inclusiveness
- + Profiles of lived experience in every section



Starting with Strengths:

1. Resilience

*[Refugee, asylum seeker, and immigrant girls] are coming from places where struggle is a part of life. **Trauma is in their DNA but resilience is also in their DNA.** It's something that we don't tap into as much in this community; we only see them as vulnerable and overwhelmed.*



Starting with Strengths:

2. Naming & navigating oppressions

Girls are woke. They know. The secret's out. Get your foot off my neck. They know there's a movement happening. It's great that we have the shoulders of those who came before us, but there's a movement now.



Starting with Strengths:

3. Accessing, contributing to support systems

*A lot of [refugee and immigrant] girls contribute to the family, take on head of household roles. They have leadership skills, but don't often get the opportunity to tap into it here. They value community above the individual. **The cultural difference is that they see their worth, value, and joy in how they are able to bring up family and community.***



Starting with Strengths:

4. Communicating, advocating

Girls are really good at telling us when we are failing them, and what they need from us.

[Queer girls of color] are confident, assertive, and they stand up for themselves. A lot of the fighting happens because they stand up for themselves, they believe in themselves, enough to fight for what they believe in.




Challenge: Disparities

The big difference is the level of advocacy for girls. Certain demographics have better access to advocacy.

Poor, young, women of color are getting pushed further and further to the margins. It's a crisis.

We know that if we support the most marginalized in our communities, then everyone is supported. If we support queer and trans kids, then straights kids benefit too.





There is no such thing as a
single-issue struggle,
because we do not lead
single-issue lives.

A U D R E L O R D E

wist.info

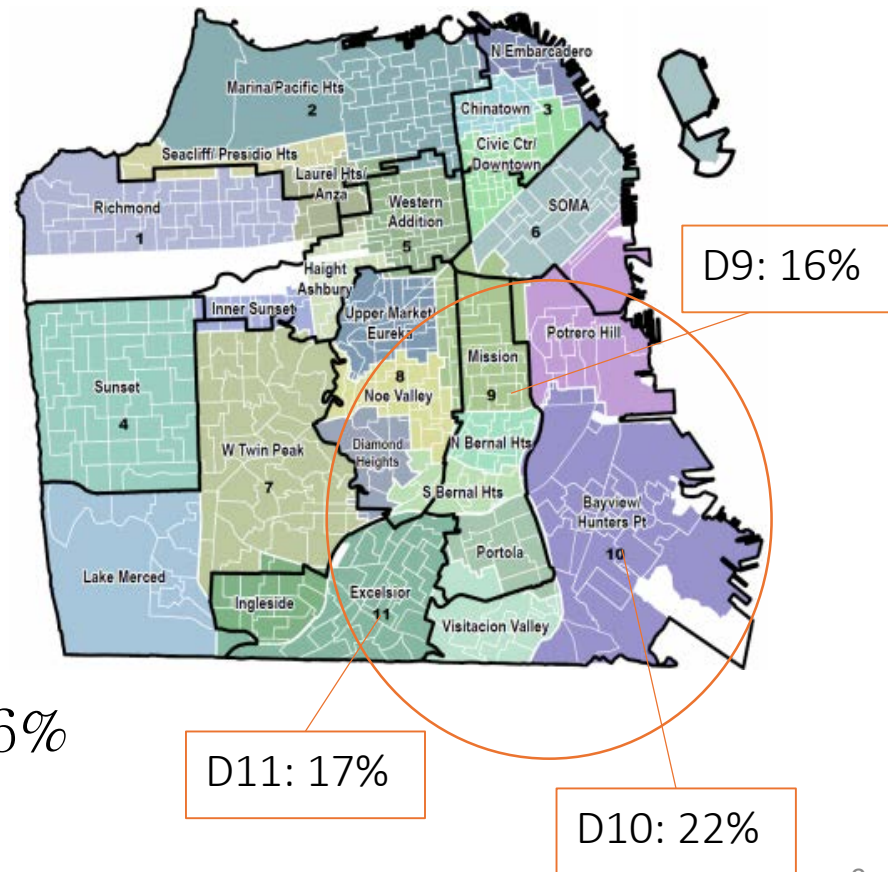


Demographics: Where are the youth?

2015 youth population in San Francisco overall: 13%
(N≈118,505)

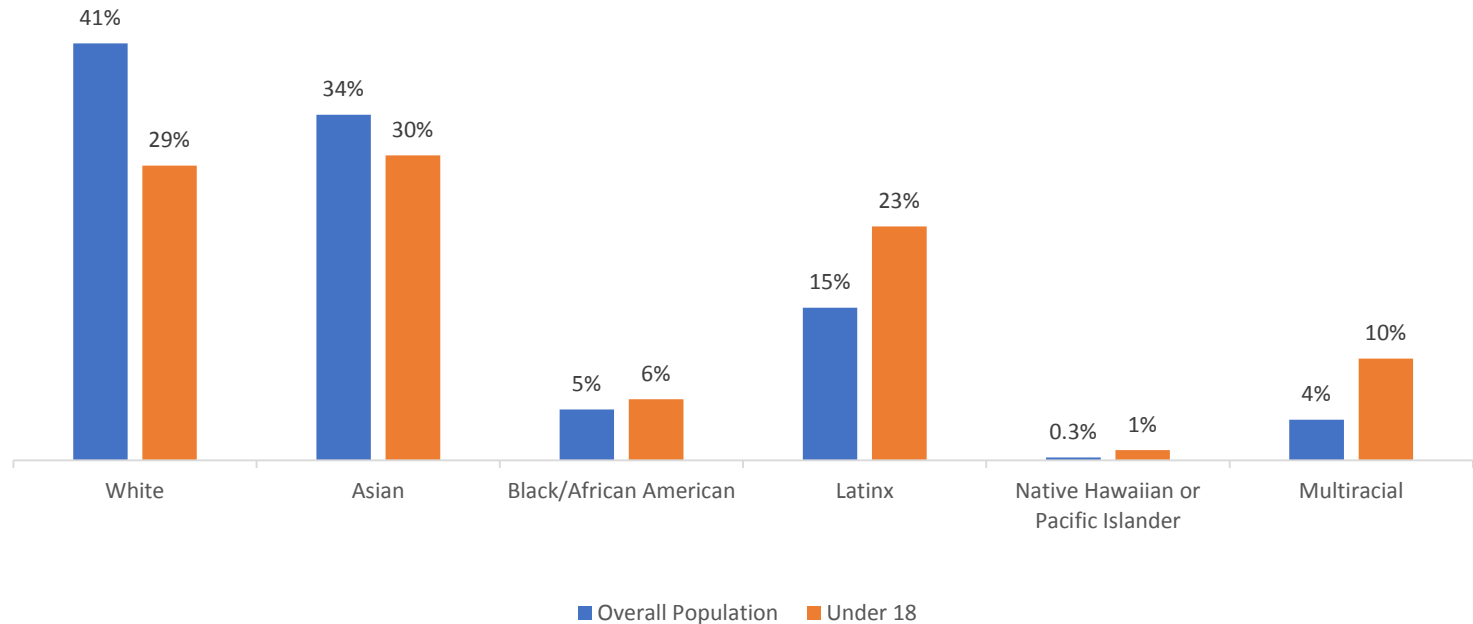
Southeast youth population:

- District 10 (Bayview Hunters Point, Potrero Hill, Visitacion Valley): 22%
- District 11 (Excelsior, Oceanview, Merced, Ingleside): 17%
- District 9 (The Mission, Bernal Heights, Portola): 16%



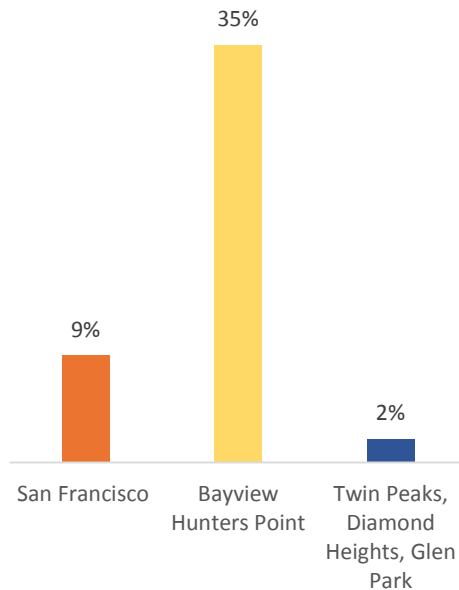
Demographics by Race

San Francisco Youth Population Compared to Overall San Francisco Population
By Race, 2016



Demographics: Income

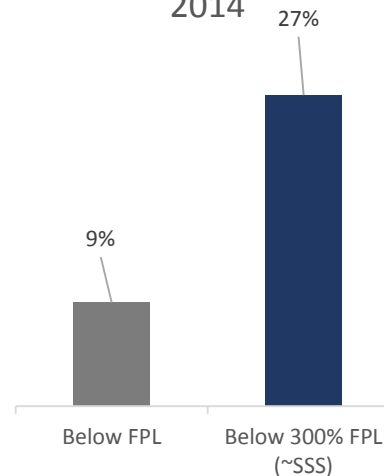
Children Living Below FPL
by Neighborhood
Disparity, 2016



Federal Poverty Level, 2016:
\$24,380 for family of 4

Self-Sufficiency Standard*,
2014: \$79,092 per year for a
family of 4 (2 adults and one
child age 3-5, and one child age
6-12), approx. 300% FPL**

Girls in San Francisco,
Income Insecurity,
2014



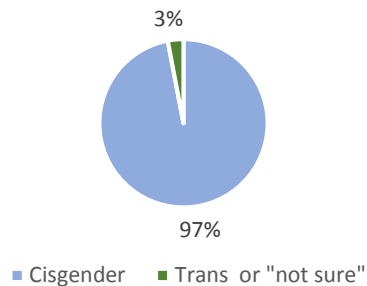
*To meet basic needs (housing,
food, child care, health care,
transportation, and taxes)
without assistance

**FPL 2014: \$23,850
for family of 4

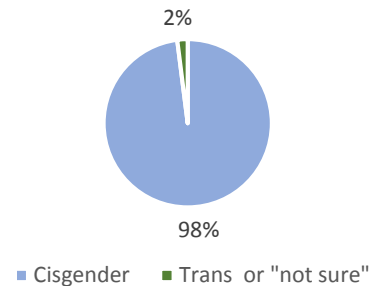


Demographics: SOGI

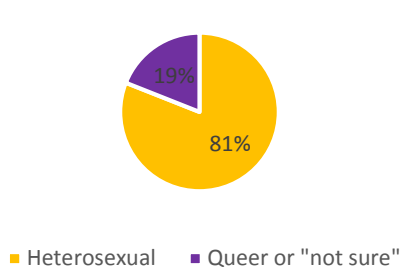
Middle School Students (SFUSD) by Gender Identity



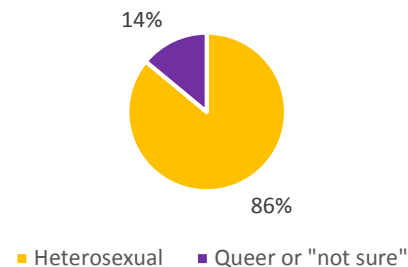
High School Students (SFUSD) by Gender Identity



Middle School Students (SFUSD) by Sexual Orientation



High School Students (SFUSD) by Sexual Orientation



Even young girls who have supportive families, the support is conditional or not freely given. Support to young people looks like not getting kicked out of their homes rather than affirmation.



Housing



Housing is the issue that crosses over to every issue.



Health: Maternal Health

Health trend: ↓ birth rates, girls ages 15–19 in CA and SF

- Live births per 1,000 females in San Francisco: 8.0 among girls ages 15–19 (2015), down from 14.1 (2012)

Of mothers ages 15–19:

- **55%** “experienced two or more hardships during childhood,” compared to 17% of all new mothers in SF
- **54%** lived in a high-poverty neighborhood, compared to 12% of new mothers overall
- **43%** did not receive prenatal care in the first trimester
- Girls under 18 were **three times more likely** to have a preterm birth than older women



Health: SFUSD Wellness Centers

In the 2016–17 school year:

- Served 52% of high school student population, across 18 school sites (N=7,597)
- Although girls comprised 48% of SFUSD students, they made up 52% of who accessed the Wellness Program
- Offered 206 groups, clubs, and partnered with 198 community organizations, universities to provide services

Every time we can remove one barrier to accessing services, that's a win. If we bring resources into schools, especially during the school day, we remove one barrier to services.



Health: Trauma and Mental Health

School aren't really equipped on a structural level when shootings happen in the community, or within the family structure, that affects more than just one student. The responsibility [of coping] falls on students, and then they're dealt with in punitive way based on their trauma responses.



Education

Strengths

- Wellness Centers
- CBO collaboration
- Caring adults
 - Resource officers
 - Paraeducators
- Extracurricular participation

Barriers

- Educator/
Admin bias
 - Racism
 - Sexism
- Harassment
- Trauma
- School-to-prison pipeline
- Pushout

Curriculum

- Reflect the population
 - Queer history
 - Ethnic studies
- Hard skills
 - Financial literacy
 - Career planning
- More variety of electives

School wasn't a focus; it was just something they had to do in addition to everything else. School could have been a real opportunity for the girls but it became punitive instead.



Safety and Violence

There's a lot of harassment on public transportation and walking to and from school. Every week, girls come to group and talk about another experience of being followed, harassed, and catcalled by men. Or being called anti-queer slurs. It's scary because I work with middle school students. That feeling of being unsafe is happening at such a young age.



Safety and Violence

Sexual violence and threat of sexual violence often contribute to why girls who are seeking asylum flee their country of origin.

Once they get here, the expressions of that trauma that they're working through makes them more vulnerable for retraumatization. I walk into a room of 5 girls who recently arrived and 3-4 have been abused sexually.



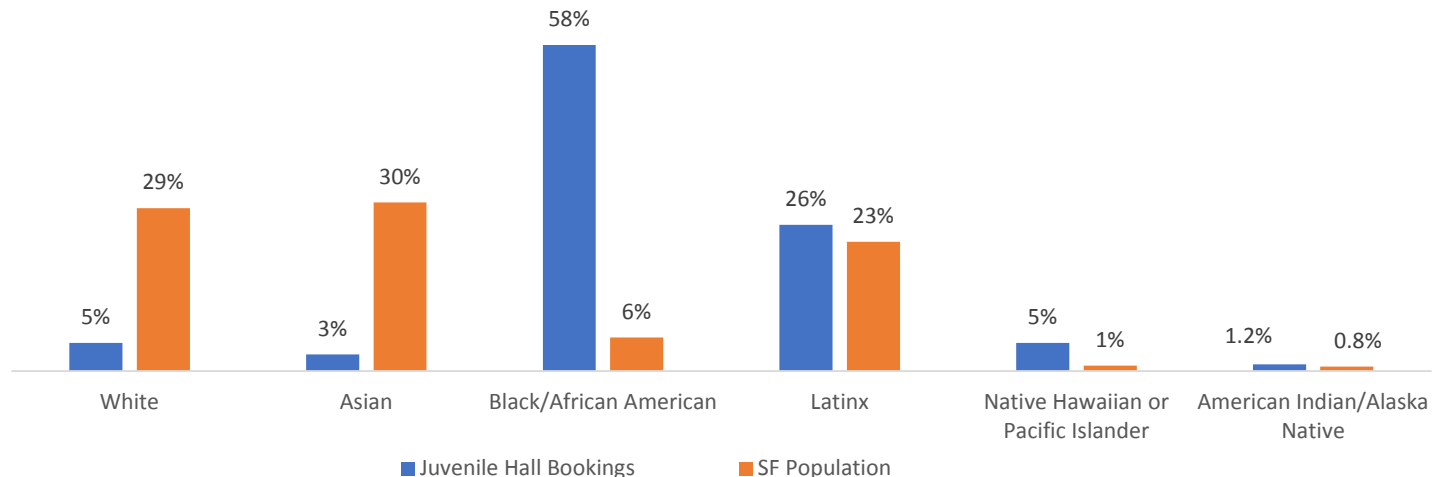
Justice System Involvement

In 2017, girls in San Francisco accounted for:

- 261 (duplicated) Juvenile Probation referrals
- 120 (duplicated) bookings for criminal offenses
- 84 girls booked (unduplicated)

Juvenile Hall Bookings (Girls) Compared to Overall San Francisco Youth Population By Race, 2017

N = 84



Justice System Involvement

Juvenile hall bookings
disparity by zip code:

- Bayview Hunters Point (94124): 30%
- Lake Merced (94131): 1%

} Suggests over-policing by zip code

Considerations by age:

- Ages 16–18: 64%
- Age 14: 17%
- Age 13: 6%

} Age 14 is often when girls start working, but do not necessarily have access to jobs. This can push them to the underground economy, placing them higher at risk for arrest.



Lived Experience: Rashida Greene

- 18 years old
- African American
- Identifies as a gender-nonconforming lesbian
- Involved in foster care and juvenile justice systems



*Melendrez, A. Z., & Herrera, L. (In press).
Centering the lives of San Francisco system
involved cis and trans girls: A participatory
and decolonizing model. San Francisco, CA:
Young Women's Freedom Center.*



Recommendation:

Vote to support the Unifying Bill of Rights Platform for System Involved and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls



- Self determination
- Freedom from **sexual and physical violence**
- Be treated with dignity
- Redemption
- Access our loved ones
- Gender to be respected
- Make **medical care** decisions, access care
- Access cultural, holistic, professional healing
- Permanent safe, healthy, and affordable **housing**
- Access **education**, knowledge, and technology
- Be declared free from any debt to the **justice system**
- Be consulted when institutions want to create, revise, and eliminate policies, legislation, rules, or laws



Recommendations

1. Housing for foster families
2. Eviction protection policies for families
3. Bilingual, culturally responsive, affordable mental health services
4. CBO service expansion, collaborations
5. Universal legal representation for asylees
6. Support girls facing immigration status challenges
7. Engage girls as stakeholders
8. Collect intersectional data



Recommendations: School-specific

1. SFUSD curriculum
2. School food options
3. Professional, financial support of classified positions
(Resource Officers, Paraeducators)
4. Housing assistance for educators, school staff
5. Wellness component to academic achievement initiatives
6. District-wide response to trauma, bereavement
7. End school-to-prison pipeline

