

# OAKLAND FUND FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

2010-11 EVALUATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, OLDER YOUTH,  
COMMUNITY BASED AFTER SCHOOL, WELLNESS AND HEALTHY  
TRANSITIONS, AND SUMMER STRATEGY AREAS

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## OVERVIEW

### WHAT IS OFCY?

The Oakland Fund for Children and Youth was established in 1996, when Oakland voters passed the Kids First Initiative (Measure K) to support direct services for youth under 21 years of age. In a special election in 2009, Measure K reauthorized funding for the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth for an additional 12 years (2010-2022). Measure D (formerly known as Measure K) sets aside 3% of the City's unrestricted General Fund. Guided by a three-year strategic plan, OFCY grants approximately \$10 million annually to more than 66 nonprofit agencies that operate 123 programs in Oakland serving children and youth from 0 to 20 years old.

The 2010-13 Strategic Report identified four strategy areas, Early Childhood Development, Out of School Time, Wellness and Healthy Transitions, and Older Youth. Each of the strategy areas are subdivided into funding streams. The table below indicates these funding streams and the number of programs in supported in each stream. The shaded areas indicate programs included in Public Profit's report and *not* included in this report.

Strategy Area	Number of Programs
Early Childhood – Mental Health Consultation	5
Early Childhood – Family/Enrichment	9
Out of School Time – School-Based After School	55
Out of School Time – Community Based After School	10
Out of School Time– Summer Programming <sup>1</sup>	12
Wellness and Healthy Transitions – Transition Programming	5
Wellness and Healthy Transitions – Leadership and Conflict Resolution	9
Older Youth – Academic and Career/Job Success	10
Older Youth – Comprehensive Programming	7
<b>Total Funded Programs by OFCY</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>See Change Evaluation</b>	<b>61</b>

This document reports on See Change's evaluation of 61 grantees in five strategy areas: Early Childhood, Out of School Time (community based programming), Wellness and Healthy Transitions,

<sup>1</sup> Note in the 2010-13 Strategic Plan, and in OFCY's funding structure; summer programming is a sub category of Out of School Programming. For management and reporting logistics, in all other areas summer programs are treated as a separate strategy area.

Older Youth, and Summer (see prior footnote above). Public Profit reports on the evaluation of the other 62 grantees in the school-based after school strategy area. ***All references to OFCY in this report refer to the 61 grantees in this evaluation, not OFCY in its entirety.***

The 61 programs evaluated in this 2010-2011 report fall into five distinct strategy areas:

- **Early Childhood:** The 14 Early Childhood programs engage families, build peer supports prepare children for kindergarten, strengthen attachments, and enhance child development. Programs encourage kindergarten readiness by exposing families and their children to activities that promote curiosity and a love of learning through music, art, literacy, numeracy and/or science activities and support children's' socio-emotional and language development. Programs encourage families to access resources that benefit their child's health and education and which provide opportunities for peer support and parent education.
- **Community-based After School Programming:** These 10 programs provide applied experiential learning, enrichment, family engagement, fitness, and peer-support activities within a youth development framework during after school, evening, and weekend hours.
- **Wellness and Healthy Transitions:** The 9 programs in this strategy area focus on youth 11 to 20 years of age and aim to provide programming around transition into and out of middle school (a high-risk time for youth to disengage with school). This strategy area also focuses on programs that promote physical and emotional health, safety, and the creation of a positive school and community environment
- **Older Youth:** The 16 programs in this area serve youth aged 15-20 years old. There are two types of programs serving this age bracket, (1) academic and career success-focused programs and (2) neighborhood-based comprehensive support and enrichment programs that focus on youth transition to adulthood.
- **Summer Programs:** These 12 programs represent a slice of OFCY funding that ranges across a broad range of development and enrichment opportunities. Program foci are diverse, spanning a range that includes performance circus arts, outdoor physical programs, and academic enrichment.

Strategy Area	OFCY Funds Granted	OFCY Funds Spent	Youth Served	Total Hours of Service
Early Childhood	\$1,547,339	\$1,547,339	3,842	662,997
Community Based After School (includes Summer Programs)	\$678,931	\$558,664	6,272	775,594
Older Youth	\$1,540,241	\$1,428,330	3,898	270,784
Wellness and Healthy Transitions	\$870,217	\$860,675	1,202	126,558
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,636,728</b>	<b>\$4,395,008</b>	<b>15,214</b>	<b>1,835,933</b>

#### THE PURPOSE OF EVALUATING OFCY

OFCY's enabling legislation calls for annual evaluation of funded programs and services. This evaluation is useful to assess achievement of contracted performance measures, but most important, to determine whether or not the programs are making a difference in the lives of Oakland's children, youth, and families. Evaluation findings are presented to grantees, OFCY staff, the Oakland City Council, and the general public.

Because the programs comprised by this evaluation are so diverse, we have organized and reported most of the findings by strategy area rather than in the aggregate. The quantitative and qualitative data See Change collected for this evaluation includes:

- 1) **Participation and Service Data** See Change analyzed data on youth/child participation rates (program enrollment) and hours of service delivered from June 2010-July 2011.
- 2) **Program Quality Site Visits** See Change assessed the quality of the programs at structured site visits guided by a nationally tested, research-based observation tool called the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA). We also interviewed program staff. High program quality is associated with positive outcomes for youth and children.
- 3) **Surveys of Children and Youth** See Change surveyed children and youth about their program experiences to gain insight into youth outcomes. We also surveyed parents and caregivers of small children in the Early Childhood programs.
- 4) **Data on school-related outcomes from the Oakland Unified School District** For the first time, See Change is reporting on academic outcomes for a subset of OFCY participants that Cityspan matched with school district records this year.

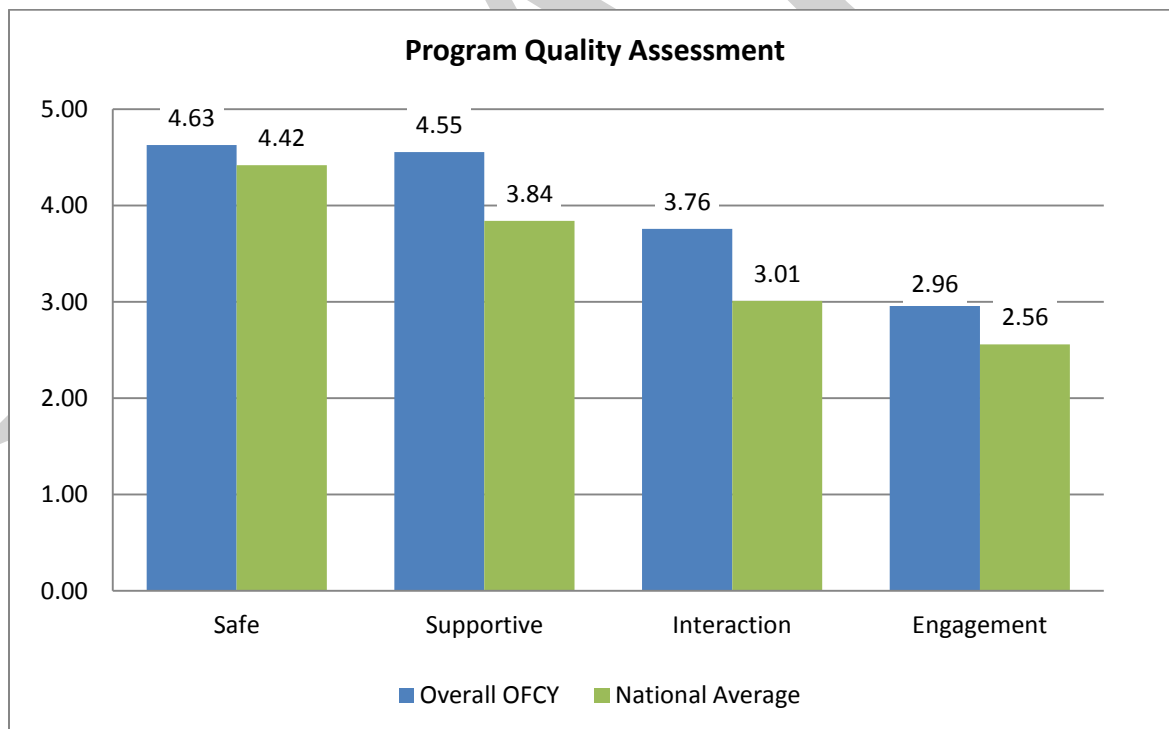
## KEY FINDINGS

- Across the five strategy areas, OFCY programs enrolled 15,214 children and youth.
- Grantees exceeded their service and participation goals by providing 45% more service hours and serving 32% more participants than projected in their original grant agreements with OFCY.
- The majority of youth 0- 20 years of age, attended OFCY programs for at least 24 days.

## PROGRAM QUALITY

Research indicates that the quality of youth development programs is strongly related to their effectiveness in achieving positive outcomes for children.<sup>2</sup>

All 61 OFCY programs rated highly on the quality assessment; in every strategy area for which there is national comparison data, OFCY scored higher than the national average.



<sup>2</sup> Vandell, D. L., Shumow, L., & Posner, J. (2005) After-school programs for low-income children: Difference in program quality. In J. L. Mahoney, R. W. Larson, & J. S. Eccles (Eds.), *Organized activities as contexts of development: Extracurricular activities, after school and community programs* (pp. 437-456). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Overall, OFCY programs are strongest relationship-building (caring adults and supportive staff), conflict resolution and program preparation (e.g., having appropriate and organized materials ready for participants). Success in fostering strong relationships helps programs increase participation and retention rates and is associated with positive youth outcomes.

OFCY programs scored less well in creating opportunities for youth input, peer mentoring, and youth-led planning. Few opportunities for youth to make meaningful choices and have a voice in programs were observed, though some programs reported that they have integrated youth voice and choice into program design.

### SURVEY DATA

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In addition to assessing program quality through site visits, See Change surveyed school-age children and older youth about their perspective on program experiences.

1. **Safety:** 82% of youth surveyed reported that they felt safe in the programs, and that they did not experience bullying or harassment from peers.
2. **Self Efficacy:** 81% of youth reported that programs positively impacted their confidence in their skills and abilities, as well as their commitment to working hard and expecting good things of themselves.
3. **Positive Connections:** 78 % of youth reported feeling more connected to peers, their community and adults through involvement with their programs.
4. **Academic Success/School Attachment:** Three out of four youth (75%) reported high outcomes on school and academic measures, including increased school attendance.
5. **Cultural Awareness:** 70% of youth stated that involvement in the program increased their knowledge of other cultures and gender identities.
6. **Respect/ Violence Prevention:** 68% of youth reported they were less likely to get in physical altercations, and more likely to resolve conflicts without violence.

## SCHOOL DATA

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Increased support for academic success is one of the main focal points of the 2010-2013 Strategic Plan. Some of the desired outcomes include reduced truancy and suspension rates, and increased scores on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). For the first time, this year we were able to match a significant number of the OFCY participants with their Oakland Unified School District records, enabling us to analyze their school performance relative to OUSD as a whole.

This school data helps us understand how participating in OFCY programs might impact academic success. Our primary findings include the following:

- OFCY students attend school more frequently than average OUSD students and have significantly lower rates of truancy.
  - African American OFCY participants were statistically less likely to be truant ( $p < .00005$ )
  - African American males were also less likely to be truant ( $p < .001$ )
- Higher rates of youth in OFCY programs pass the CAHSEE.

We will continue to work with Cityspan and the grantees to improve data collection practices, and anticipate a higher match with OUSD next year.

## OUTCOMES BY STRATEGY AREA

The strategy area reports have two foci: (1) to describe program performance, and (2) to investigate outcomes for the program participants.

### OLDER YOUTH

*More Participants in the academic and career support programs had significantly higher rates of passing CAHSEE than OUSD as a whole on the English Language Arts portion (ELA (  $p < .03$ ).*

- ✓ 100% of Older Youth programs received the highest ranking (Thriving) on the Weikart youth program quality assessment tool.
- ✓ More than 70% of youth reported high outcomes in the areas of academics and self efficacy.
- ✓ Older youth programs positively impacted connection to community, adults and peers for over 70% of youth participants.

### WELLNESS AND HEALTHY TRANSITIONS

*Evaluators observed a high level of youth engagement, and learned that programs do an excellent job of including youth in the design and leadership of program offerings.*

- ✓ Evaluators noted youth were highly engaged in activities.
- ✓ Program staff included youth in program design in meaningful ways.
- ✓ 100% of wellness and healthy transitions programs were rated thriving on the Weikart youth program quality assessment tool.
- ✓ More than 80% of youth reported programs positively impacted their sense of belonging to community, and connection to peers and adults.
- ✓ More than 70% of youth experienced high outcomes in academics and self efficacy domains.
- ✓ More boys reported higher outcomes in the area of health, and more girls reported high outcomes in the area of connection to peers, adults and communities.



## COMMUNITY BASED AFTER SCHOOL

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*Community based after school programs do an excellent job of encouraging collaboration among participants.*

- ✓ Evaluators observed that youth were highly engaged in activities at most programs.
- ✓ 100% of community based afterschool programs were rated thriving on the Weikart youth program quality assessment tool
- ✓ More than 80% of youth reported programs positively impacted their sense of belonging to a community, and their connection to peers and adults.
- ✓ More than 70% of youth experienced high outcomes in academic and self efficacy domains.
- ✓ More boys reported higher outcomes in the area of health, and more girls reported high outcomes in the area of connection to peers, adults and communities.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

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*The majority of parents reported that the early childhood programs helped them connect with resources in the community and other parents, reducing their sense of isolation.*

- ✓ The majority of programs met or exceeded OFCY grant requirements on service and participation.
- ✓ 68% of parents reported reduced isolation.
- ✓ Evaluators noted that program staff was organized and knowledgeable about resources in the community.
- ✓ Both parents and educators observed high outcomes in children's cognitive skill development.

## SUMMER

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*The majority of participants reported that programs contributed positively to goal setting and confidence as well as academic skills and sustained learning.*

- ✓ All programs met or exceeded program quality expectations.
- ✓ Summer programs exceeded their service goals by 90% and their participation goals by 28%
- ✓ 90% of participants reported attending 4 or more times per week.

## SUMMARY

Viewed collectively, the 61 grantees evaluated by See Change offer a vast range of services to a very large and diverse population of children and youth in the city of Oakland. See Change's analysis of service and participation data revealed that, both as a whole and at the strategy level, grantees met and exceeded their attendance and service-hour goals.

Grantees also showed consistent levels of program quality. By using the national Weikart Youth Program Quality Assessment tool, we can see that in the aggregate OFCY programs score more highly on every element of program quality than the national average.

In addition, See Change noted improvement in an area that we had identified in last year's evaluation (2009-10) as meriting further attention: increased opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction and for youth leadership. This year, we found that all of wellness and healthy transitions programs, as well as many of the older youth and community based after school programs did a better job of allowing youth to guide program design and implementation.

See Change looks forward continuing to work with OFCY and all of our partners over the next year to distill insights into OFCY's investment in positive youth development in Oakland.