

DCYF Community Needs Assessment

PARENT/YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS & SURVEY FINDINGS
JUNE 2022

Prepared by



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The Community Engagement Process

As stewards of the Children and Youth Fund, the Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families (DCYF) is committed to engaging in a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) every five years to hear from young people, families, and service providers about the service gaps and greatest needs in the City that require most immediate attention. Data gathered from the CNA process helps DCYF make strategic funding decisions that will carry greatest impact in areas of greatest need.

This report summarizes insights and themes that surfaced over the course of several community engagement sessions held between August 2021 and February 2022 as part of the CNA process.¹ Through intercept interviews, focus groups, key informant interviews, and surveys, feedback from an intentionally broad and diverse sampling of the community was gathered to inform what the City might do to support and improve the quality of life in San Francisco for children, youth, and families.

¹ For more information about the Community Needs Assessment process, please visit <https://www.dcyf.org/cna>.

Methodology

This CNA community engagement summary draws from several data collection efforts, including intercept interviews, surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews. Across data collection methods, efforts were made to reach out to populations that have been historically harder to reach and/or underrepresented.

INTERCEPT INTERVIEWS

A DCYF informational table was set up in a visibly prominent location where passersby could stop to receive information about DCYF, receive complimentary sunglasses and/or tote bags, complete a survey, and/or be “intercepted” by a researcher to conduct a very brief, 4-question “intercept interview”.

The interviews inquired as to families’ most pressing needs, challenges encountered in accessing services to address needs, what respondents would most like the City to understand about their lived experience right now, and finally, what the City should do to help children, youth, and families thrive.

Intercept interviews were deployed at three events:

1. The **CityKids Fair** was held in the Mission District in October 2021, hosted by the Children’s Council, and attracted parents with young children.
2. The **Dancing Feathers Powwow** was hosted by the Friendship House in the Mission District in October 2021 gathering members of the American Indian Cultural District.
3. The **Pop-Up Village** in the Bayview neighborhood in November 2021 attracted mothers and families seeking pregnancy and family-related services.

These efforts gathered input from 76 parents and youth attending community events.

SURVEYS

A number of different survey events informed this CNA effort. Key findings summarized in this briefing include data collected from surveys that were administered at community events, public spaces, and at housing developments as outlined below. Efforts were made to deploy surveys at events and locations that would capture a broad swath of the general population of the city, with an emphasis on elevating opportunities to connect with historically marginalized and underrepresented populations.

- **Backpack Giveaway:** In preparation for returning to school in person after a year of distance learning, DCYF hosted Backpack Giveaway events where families were invited to claim a free backpack with school supplies. A total of 135 parents and 95 youth completed surveys at these events in August 2021.
- **Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD):** In September 2021, HOPE SF and RAD providers visited multiple housing units to

administer surveys to parents and youth residents. A total of 373 parent surveys were gathered as well as 140 youth surveys.

- **City Kids Family Fair:** Hosted by the Children’s Council, this family-friendly event showcased many early care and education programs and services available to families. A total of 80 parents completed surveys at this event in October 2021.
- **15th Annual Dancing Feathers Powwow:** Hosted by the Friendship House in October 2021, DCYF and Clarity staff tabled at this event and surveyed 49 parents and 22 youth.
- **California Academy of Sciences:** Early in the week of Thanksgiving, DCYF staff set up tables at the Cal Academy to survey parents visiting the museum. A total of 54 surveys were collected over two days of tabling.

FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

A series of 32 interviews and focus groups were conducted virtually and in person with a total of 230 parents, youth, and service providers. Participants were recruited and gathered with the support and partnership of community-based organizations (CBOs) across San Francisco to gauge community strengths and needs between August 2021 and January 2022. Each focus group was facilitated by two CNA staff: a seasoned qualitative researcher who led groups through the protocols, who was supported by a trained notetaker.

At the end of each focus group session, participants were asked to complete a brief survey designed to capture respondents’ basic demographic background characteristics. While the overall response rate to this survey was low (46%), the following tables present the demographic characteristics of those focus group participants who completed the online survey.

What is your race/ethnicity?
(Please select all that apply)

	Frequency	Percent
American Indian/Alaska Native	6	6%
Arab/Middle Eastern	5	5%
Asian	34	33%
African American/Black	21	20%
Hispanic/Latinx	34	33%
Multiracial	5	5%
Pacific Islander	3	3%
White	10	10%
Decline to State	1	1%
Total	104	100%

What language do you speak the most at home?

	Frequency	Percent
English	43	43%
Spanish	24	24%
Chinese	15	15%
Cantonese	9	9%
English + other (Punjabi, Arabic, Spanish, and Turkish)	5	5%
Arabic	3	3%
American Sign Language (ASL)	1	1%
Tagalog	1	1%
Total	101	100%

What is your gender? Frequency Percent

Female	60	58%
Male	36	35%
Gender non-binary	6	6%
Genderqueer	1	1%
Bigender	1	1%
Total	104	100%

What is your age? Frequency Percent

Under 18	20	19%
18-24	40	38%
25 or older	45	43%
Total	105	100%

Participating Agencies

CBOs and school district partners who recruited and gathered the focus group and interview participants are listed below. Brief descriptions of each CBO are provided below based on each organization's mission statement from their website. Readers are encouraged to visit each agency's website for further information about them. Focus groups and interviews were conducted in English unless otherwise noted.²

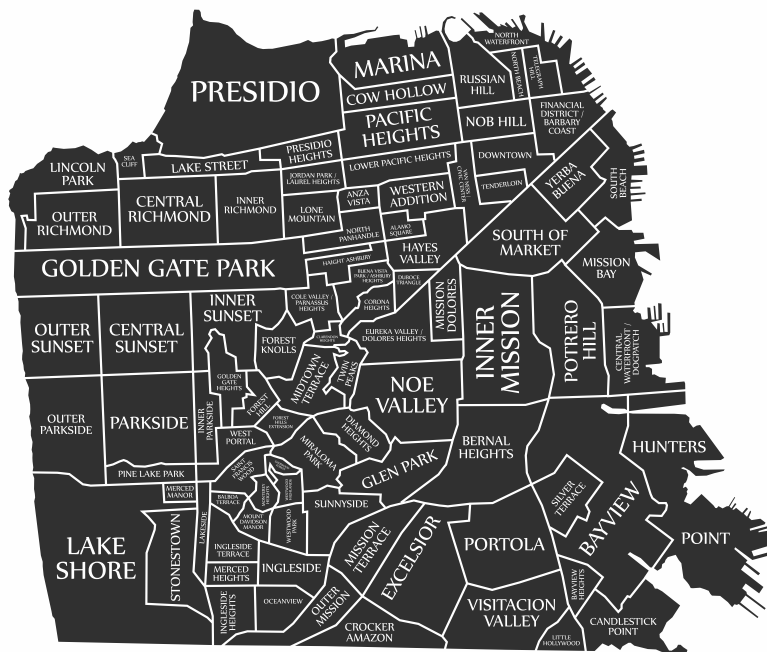
- **American Indian Cultural District (AICD)** serves the greater American Indian community by preserving and celebrating their unique cultures, strengthening voices, and increasing visibility to obtain equitable resources, funding, and opportunities for American Indian people. AICD seeks to empower the urban American Indian community and works to heal centuries of systemic oppression and racism to secure the tools and resources needed to create and enact culturally relevant and competent initiatives by and for American Indians.
- **Asociacion Mayab's** mission is to create the conditions that will allow for the optimal development of the Maya community living in the San Francisco Bay Area, focusing its work in three areas: social and emergency support, community advocacy, and cultural preservation, which includes language, dance, and embroidery classes. (Spanish Facilitation)
- **Black to the Future (B2F)** is committed to enhancing educational and economic opportunities for the community by instilling the necessary tools to become successful. Black to the Future's goal is to engage youth and young adults ages 14 to 35 around a continuum of culturally competent services that consider their role in family, community, and the overall landscape of San Francisco.
- **Buena Vista Child Care (BVCC)** provides a safe and nurturing place where children can learn and grow, offering strong academic structures, diverse enrichment, and opportunities for emotional and personal growth to prepare all of our students for successful futures. (Spanish Facilitation)
- The **Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC)** is a place-based community development organization serving primarily the Chinatown neighborhood, North Beach and the Tenderloin as neighborhood advocates, organizers and planners, and as developers and managers of affordable housing. (Cantonese Facilitation)
- **Community Youth Center of San Francisco (CYC)** encourages a diverse population of high-need young people to explore their full potential through academic, career, family, and community life.
- **Compass Family Services** helps homeless and at-risk families become stably housed, emotionally and physically healthy, and economically self-sufficient. (One focus group was held in Spanish and another in English)

² In the quotes that appear throughout this document, the term "youth" refers to participants under age 18 and the term "TAY" is used to represent transitional age youth participants between the ages of 18 and 24.

- The **DreamSF Fellowship** from San Francisco's Office of Civic Engagement & Immigrant Affairs (OCEIA) is a paid opportunity to gain professional experience in direct services, advocacy, community outreach, immigrant rights work and more. In addition to the immigrant-serving experience at their host organizations, fellows gain experience in a variety of topics such as financial empowerment, networking, self-care, and more during weekly professional enrichment seminars. (Spanish Facilitation)
- **Hamilton Family Services** mission is to end family homelessness in the San Francisco Bay Area through programs of shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, eviction prevention, resource referral, and advocacy.
- **The Hearing and Speech Center** is dedicated to supporting individuals through a comprehensive set of programs addressing clinical, educational, and social needs, offering audiology, assistive technology, speech therapy, counseling for individuals and families, support groups, educational programs, afterschool youth groups and a transition group which helps young people develop life skills. The Hearing and Speech Center is also active in advocating for the rights of individuals with hearing loss, through work with city agencies, senior and community centers, and through programs with parents.
- **Horizons Unlimited of SF, Inc** is a community-based organization that offers culturally and linguistically competent services for the diverse population of the Mission District and the City and County of San Francisco. Horizons strengthens and transforms the lives of Latino and other youth and families of color through a continuum of culturally rooted services that include substance abuse prevention and treatment, mental health and wellness, workforce development, and gender specific programming.
- **SFJPD's Juvenile Advisory Council (JAC)** is a group of dynamic youth leaders between the ages of 18 to 27 who successfully made it through the probation system who provide orientations to youth offenders recently ordered on probation. JAC members provide youth who are coming on to probation and their parents with a thorough introduction to probation. The program is designed to help youth understand their terms of probation, expectations, consequences, laws, and rights from a youth's perspective.
- **Larkin Street Youth Services** is San Francisco's largest nonprofit provider for young people experiencing homelessness whose mission is to create a continuum of services that inspires youth to move beyond the street, by nurturing potential, promoting dignity and supporting bold steps by all, to end youth homelessness.
- **Legal Services for Children (LSC)** provides free representation to children and youth who require legal assistance to stabilize their lives and realize their full potential through a holistic team approach utilizing legal advocacy and social work services to achieve safety and stability at home; educational success; and freedom from detention and deportation for our clients. (Spanish Facilitation)
- **LYRIC's** mission is to build community and inspire positive social change through education enhancement, career trainings, health promotion, and leadership development with LGBTQQ youth, their families, and allies of all races, classes, genders, and abilities.

- **Pomeroy Recreation and Rehabilitation Center** provides recreational, vocational and educational opportunities for people with disabilities through programs and services that encourage self-expression, promote personal achievement, and lead to greater independence.
- **Project Avary** is a national leader in supporting children with incarcerated parents and helping children heal from the impacts of having a parent in prison by surrounding youth with a long-term, supportive community of peer and adult mentors and by empowering them with leadership development skills so they can break free from generational cycles of trauma and incarceration.
- **SF Achievers'** mission is to support African American young men in San Francisco Unified School District lead and thrive in higher education and beyond by closing the opportunity gap. We do this through college scholarships, leadership training, and mentoring.
- **SF Court Appointed Special Advocate (SFCASA)** transforms the lives of youth traumatized and displaced in foster care and connected systems by providing consistent, caring volunteer advocates trained to address each child's needs in the court and the community, in order that every young person is in a safe and loving home, and has equitable access to the resources, community support, and opportunities they need to thrive.
- **SF Immigrant Legal & Education Network (SFILEN)** promotes full access to social services, direct legal services, civic engagement, legalization, freedom of movement, and reunification with family and community, for all immigrants and their families regardless of their immigration status. (Filipino Community Center hosted a Tagalog-language focus group; Mujeres hosted a Spanish-language group)
- The **SF LGBT Center** connects the diverse community of San Francisco to opportunities, resources and each other to achieve a vision of a stronger, healthier, and more equitable world for LGBT people and allies.
- **San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)** principals, school social workers (SSW).
- **Special Needs Service Providers** from **SF Recreation & Parks** and **SFUSD (SNSP)** provide specialized programs for children and youth with disabilities and special needs.
- The **Tenderloin Community Benefit District (TLCBD)** works to provide a clean and safe environment through strong community partnerships and supportive collaboration with city agencies to create positive change in the Tenderloin neighborhood. Organization services are focused on implementing neighborhood improvements around the physical environment, economic development, and neighborhood pride.
- **Young Women's Freedom Center's (YWFC)** mission is to build the power and leadership of directly impacted young people and inspire them to create positive change in their lives and communities. Meeting them where they're at, YWFC supports young people to build personal and collective power, heal from trauma, advocate on behalf of themselves and each other, and gain access to education and work to transform the conditions, systems, and policies that lead to intergenerational cycles of violence, incarceration, and poverty.

- **Community-based organization (CBO)** directors and providers, including **Service Provider Working Group (SPWG)** members. The SPWG engages a cross-section of service providers in providing information, education, and consultation to the DCYF Oversight and Advisory Committee. Membership in the SPWG is open to any organization currently and actively providing services to older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers.



Focus Group Findings

Note that the quotations offered in this summary are often paraphrased from participants' responses for ease of readability.

FAVORITE THINGS ABOUT THE CITY

Focus groups were started by asking participants: What is the one thing you love most about living in San Francisco? The word cloud below is comprised of all responses gathered from this question.



Many respondents noted the beautiful weather, green spaces, beaches, and public parks they enjoy in the city. Transportation also featured prominently, as respondents noted how easy it is to get around the city without a car, by relying on public transportation. Respondents also noted the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and languages, and expressed appreciation for the strong immigrant communities and emphasis on community and family that the City supports.

Respondents also noted the wide range of resources and programs available in the city that provide support and create diverse and inclusive learning and employment opportunities for residents.

OPPORTUNITY IN SAN FRANCISCO

People tell me that I'm young and that my life just started. But why do I feel left behind? - TAY experiencing homelessness

*A city with so many resources shouldn't have people without homes. We also need to have a way to address these topics with children.
– Latinx immigrant parent*

Respondents cited rising costs of living as an issue of great concern, with stark potential to access opportunities to continue living in San Francisco for many individuals and families. Overcrowding in small living spaces and Single-Room Occupancy units (SROs) is another focus of concern, with the pandemic heightening such concerns. Respondents shared experiences of inadequate and sometimes disrespectful services provision at shelters and many expressed needs for shelters in safer, quieter areas. Public benefits such as Medi-Cal and EBT cards were widely cited as crucial to continued residence in San Francisco, especially during the height of the pandemic. Several respondents also noted the need for more fresh and healthy food options at shelters and foodbanks with a wider availability of food box delivery services.

Stable and Adequate Housing in San Francisco

While outside of the scope of what DCYF might be able to solve for, the high cost of living and housing needs loomed large and was raised in every one of these conversations, across every group.

Cost of living is really high in SF. Housing—every year where I live in Lower Haight, they raise rent every single year. So many families been running in my area, left, moved across the Bay. The way we do it, is we're budgeting, we're recycling, we're sharing each other's ideas of what we can do, and how it would be better to get through with the cost of living. – American Indian/Native American parent

The cost of living, the rent and bills are very expensive. ...We need tangible support directly to help families with rent. – Latinx immigrant parent

Affordable rent. It's like, one of the important things so families don't have to move out of the city, kind of keep more families in the city, maintain all the expectations that families have on their plate. – American Indian/Native American parent

Housing is the biggest problem in the city. I have had many friends move away due to affordability. Also, safety. – Filipino immigrant parent

Living in a garage and having to pay \$3000 a month! - Mission District youth/TAY

Give the Native community a building to own. That way we could make it into our own community housing, maybe some acres of land. – American Indian/Native American parent

Many commented on the suffering they have observed and/or experienced as residents struggle with homelessness.

[I see a] direct correlation between gentrification, homelessness, drug use. Drug use is a symptom of people being failed, not having housing, or enough food, it covers a lot of pain and suffering that people have been going through. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Treating folks like pests. Ignore and don't make eye contact, first resort is calling the police, especially during COVID, the homeless are seen as carriers of the disease and bad for the community. – LGBTQQ and ally TAY

Housing challenges also create greater challenges for students trying to study: *“For TAY youth, who live in SROs, it's harder to study, it's hard to sleep at night, you end up having to go out and deal with the everyday of the TL, outside interferences.”* – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

There is a particular need for safe and affordable housing for single moms and families with children – some participants shared negative experiences with landlords, security, and service providers at shelters and expressed a need for greater sensitivity to their situations.

Especially the staff at the shelters and these housing programs and these little group homes - they don't give a f*ck. - Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

Medi-Cal, we have emergency Medi-Cal luckily haven't gotten sick... It's too complicated to find housing. It's so expensive. With a family, it's hard to afford to pay rent... I had a lot of problems with harassment with the property manager because I have kids, the rent is too high. – Latinx immigrant parent

The spaces and landlords aren't inclusive of children. The other issue is the relationships between tenants and landlords: they need to tell people before they are kicked out. Landlords don't respect the family, they don't send notices of eviction and then go and do it right in front of the children-very stressful and frustrating. – Latinx immigrant parent

I worked for two years but I stopped because I need to know that my children are safe when I'm at work. My biggest challenge is to provide care and housing for my children. I sometimes feel case workers and staff attack my children in the shelter and don't talk to me about it. I don't feel welcome in the shelter, I feel really hurt and I don't understand why I'm being criticized when I am following the rules. – Parent experiencing homelessness

Women at [program] don't know how to cook a healthy meal. Having access to more services that are for mothers is important. The programs there are great at

helping get the mental health/foundational support during transitioning period/being unemployed. ...But the organizations are helpful, especially with a full schedule as a single parent with a baby. - Pop-Up Village parent respondent

Some respondents wished for relocating shelter services or offices to safer areas.

It's a big surprise that anything children or family related, is located in like, even in like the worst parts of [the city]. I would recommend them to think of relocating. I would never choose to be in this area. – Parent experiencing homelessness

For those living in shared living spaces and SROs, COVID-19 risk loomed large as well.

Living in a single room housing in Chinatown; biggest challenge is - because we share a bathroom, a kitchen, a faucet, and one doorknob with a lot of people, it is our luck if we do not get infected with Covid. – Chinese immigrant parent living in SRO

Living in multiple family housed buildings-hard during the pandemic. You have to share with other people and trust that they are staying healthy. –Latinx immigrant parent

During COVID, I was poor, broke, and starving. Also very afraid of catching COVID. What would be helpful is to have more women's groups. Being a woman and using City services such as living in an SRO, or being homeless puts you in an especially vulnerable position. In an SRO still have to pay rent and have to use public amenities that make me feel vulnerable. - Pop-Up Village respondent

The high cost of housing pushes youth into living in small, cramped, shared spaces that are inadequate for their needs. Overcrowding was a common issue identified by youth and parents, particularly for low-income families.

I've never had and don't have now a space at home to be able to have peace and quiet. My uncle and cousin are using up all the space, causing noise. I need quiet, but it's hard to stay focused without the right environment. – TAY experiencing homelessness

We have to wait a whole year just to be put in a small cramped tiny room with shared bathrooms. No. – Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

At night there's especially people blasting music in their cars. I can feel the music through my windows and its annoying, especially because I have a younger sister that needs to sleep. It's really annoying, if we could somehow change it, it would be really helpful. - Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Some undocumented residents experience the same challenges of unaffordable housing, but also have an additional barrier of establishing credit and producing other documentation due to their undocumented status.

Some of my other friends who are undocumented who are experiencing unstable housing – aside from unaffordability of housing, it is challenging for them to jump through the hoops. For instance, for someone who is undocumented to build credit to be able to be qualified for housing. – Latinx immigrant TAY

Food Security and Public Benefits

During the height of the pandemic when parents were losing jobs and there wasn't money for food, the school district received a small grant for door-to-door food delivery. A special needs service provider suggested that perhaps through collaborations across City departments, this program might be expanded to serve children with individualized educational plans (IEP)s and adults with disabilities. Parents noted how helpful relief such as EBT cards and food banks have been.

Pandemic EBT cards have been a lifeline. That's how we've made it. Being really cautious at the store, and about what's in the budget...that's been huge. – American Indian/Native American parent

There are a lot of food banks and places where we can get support, we get WIC to help us with the food, we share the food, there's enough for rent but just for that, the kids have. – Latinx immigrant parent

Hard to get veggies, I go to other places, like the food bank to get food. But COVID has been super hard. - Pop-Up Village respondent

I help my mother with my younger siblings. Help with food, meat boxes or fresh foods would help her with being more pleasant at home. –Youth, Backpack Giveaway Survey

NURTURING FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Well, understand that people are poor and struggling. There is a lot of illness and sickness and stuff going on. And we just need assurance that we can be safe and protected. –Pop-Up Village intercept respondent

CNA participants widely observed increased crime, violence, racism, homelessness, and open-air drug use in the city, thereby making residents feel notably less safe. There is great concern that the brazen visibility of illicit behaviors, such as on public transit, is normalizing such behavior for at-risk youth. Increased mental health and substance use treatment services, as well as more safe spaces for kids, teens, and young adults are desperately needed in the neighborhoods where respondents reside, especially the Tenderloin district.

In order to support nurturing families and communities, parents cited the need for high-quality affordable day care nearby or accessible by public transport. Provision of subsidized childcare while parents look for work was also called for. Respondents expressed a lack of awareness about social services that is coupled with long wait times when attempts are made to access them. Youth who have had experience with the justice system expressed difficulties with navigating probation, stigma, and feeling alone. Such isolation is heightened for immigrant youth and families in need of language services.

Ethnic-specific community group spaces are widely supported by respondents, along with disability-specific community spaces and resources for youth with disabilities. Parents expressed a desire for broader inclusion of children with disabilities in programs in general. Summer Together, more summer programming, and paratransit for children with disabilities were also requested.

Families and Communities Need to Feel Safe

CNA participants have observed an increase in crime, violence, racism, homelessness, and drug use in the streets in the city over time, and this has made residents feel less safe. Indeed, over one in four (22%) respondents to the post-focus group survey indicated interest in information about or support with healing from violence or other trauma.

I don't want to target neighborhoods specifically as unsafe, but places where people are using substances, have mental health needs, more support needed. I don't feel safe walking through there, and people are needing help that we're not able to all provide.

- [New speaker in same group:] The street people are out of control. The city needs to do better and get this under control. – American Indian/Native American parent

I would like to live in a not dangerous area. Safety is a big thing, I know things are being put in place, but it happens. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

During the pandemic, the city got looted - lots of robberies – TAY with justice-involvement experience

People need help with drugs. Programs for parents who are dealing with substance use close to Civic Center – Latinx immigrant parent

In my community, it's a lot of violence and drugs going on. During the pandemic it just got worse" – Mission District youth/TAY

Many participants expressed a desire to keep children away from exposure to common occurrences of open drug use, homelessness, crime, and violence.

I lived around the Tenderloin, there was a lot of unsafety. A lot of dirty places, people using drugs. It's been getting worse. I live close to Daly City. It's safer here when you have kids. Places with drugs, violence, homelessness. It's dangerous if you have kids. – Latinx immigrant parent

...Keeping our kids away from gangs and making bad decisions and handling problems with violence. That's probably one of the biggest struggles for me at least. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

Overall, I like [the city] but one place you don't want to go is the Tenderloin, which is where I grew up. As a young kid you don't want to see drug abuse, people lying on the floor. I already came from a place where there's a lot of war, and I come to a country where there's drug abuse. It's not a good thing to see—you could get into that real quick, not good for your future, but overall the city is a good place to live. -Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

I currently live in SOMA, but I'm from the TL. It's getting worse, violence and drugs in front of kids, it does start to become typical and normal—TL gets worse. Kids are on the streets seeing it as normal, if adults are doing it, I can do it too. The Tenderloin, even though I grew up there, I love the people, love the community, but it's feeling unsafe. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Housing is expensive and children are exposed to the homeless, crime, broken windows in cars, shops. The social ills that my children see. Our children see and are affected by the City's social ills. - Filipino immigrant parent

For some, there seems to be very little sense of safety in the city:

I don't feel safe nowhere. Too much going on, not that I'm always in fear, but always gotta be on the lookout, keep your head on swivel. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

You can kinda get robbed wherever so I feel safe when I'm just with a bunch of people. – Mission District youth/TAY

We're leaving the city because I don't feel safe in the parks and with criminally insane walking around. So many parents say the same thing. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Safe Spaces for Transitional Age Youth (TAY)

One youth described his sense of insecurity, touching on homelessness, violence, drug use, work, and school – all daily stressors that have an impact on his sense of safety.

I'm working 12 hours with nowhere to sleep. My environment is not conducive to sleep. There's gunshots and violence. I smoke with friends until I can't smoke no more just to be calm and feel safe. Tired, not getting paid for work (apprenticeship) and then also have to go to school. – TAY experiencing homelessness

Several young people in one Tenderloin District focus group highlighted the need for safe spaces for youth particularly in the Tenderloin neighborhood:

More spaces for TAY and youth so they don't have to always be in the TL, so they can experience something different.

Safety really needs work—there's a new generation being influenced by what happens here and now, and if we don't address it, it's going to repeat for the children now.

I think there should be more spaces for TAY youth to go, feel safe in. I know Larkin is one spot, but would like more, more quiet spaces as well. Spaces for youth to go and study, or just somewhere that's not in the loud.... City can get too much sometimes.

Teens have trouble going to kids' spaces - it might be too "kiddy"—TAY, we need to get out of spaces like the TL. Another thing I'd want for the community in the TL is more bathrooms if possible, more organization, or more funds and support for like TLCBD, crossing guards that help people through the space.

Transportation Safety

Transportation was a topic that elicited both positive and negative reactions. Public transportation is seen by many as a big strength in the city:

Public transportation is more advanced than other areas, so that is a good aspect of the Bay area, we can get [our kids] on these buses, to where they're supposed to be. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

The transportation is affordable and clean. – LGBTQ and ally TAY

However, when the topic of transportation was raised, nearly every group commented on safety issues. As one parent put it, "Public transportation is good, because of affordability, but with the understanding that you should keep to yourself." Physical safety on public transit was a concern for most, and many respondents acknowledged that bus drivers are not trained to handle behavioral and safety issues.

Parents are concerned for their children's safety on buses:

My 11-year-old takes the bus home and that unsafe conditions is really hard. The drivers should be trained to turn people down. They smell terribly. People spit and that's unsafe. –Latinx immigrant parent

It can be stressful; I don't trust my son's safety with public transit going to/from school. There's a lot that takes place with people being territorial about different areas, all types of mischief that happens on public transportation. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

I also worry about my children who take public transit to school by themselves. I often instructed my children to call me once they got on the bus to ensure they rode on the bus safely. Now, I get even more panicked by worrying if they show their phone out on the bus and become a target. I tell them after calling me, should put away their phones immediately. – Chinese immigrant parent living in SRO

I even considered having my child carry pepper spray when riding the bus to school. – Chinese immigrant parent living in SRO

Speaking for grandma perspective, I've taken all of them to school. The public transportation they never really did, they've also gotten taken where they need to go, even the oldest one, she's 18 now, she's all on the bus thing, but if she can she'll just get the Uber. Don't like riding the bus at all. I don't know, the violence now...I don't know, it's just gotten out of hand, so I understand why, you know, my daughter has always driven them, or I will have to go get them. Drop them at school, pick them up, that was a regular routine for all of them. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

Many residents commented on drug use on buses:

More safety on the buses for kids and youth. Many people using substances get on the buses. That should be controlled. – Latinx immigrant parent

Some commented on individuals experiencing homelessness finding shelter on the buses:

I just don't like kids getting on the buses these days. When I was growing up, you didn't have to worry about that, so much homeless out there. I try to help out anytime, right now waiting for one to go in and play his basketball game. It's not comfortable going on the buses nowadays. I've been in SF all my life, grew up in Filmore. We used to get all kinds of fun, parties, they don't do that no more. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

Others noted safety issues around mental illness:

Need safe transportation to school. Streets of the TL are unclean and it's unsafe on MUNI where there are people with mental illness on. – Parent experiencing homelessness

Additional comments around the transportation service itself included a mix of having more buses during rush hours to alleviate crowding, and inconsistencies in timeliness.

Public transportation in Bayview is difficult, they take a while to come. - Latinx immigrant parent

Having more buses that aren't full. Buses are hot and uncomfortable.

– Black/African American youth

MUNI gets too crowded en-route to schools for my kids. Can services increase during rush hours in Chinatown? – Chinese immigrant parent living in SRO

And while many respondents commented on the affordability of public transportation, several youth expressed challenges with the expense of getting around town:

My biggest challenge is navigating transportation. It can be very expensive, especially to take multiple buses. It takes a long time, and it takes 2 buses to get to the LGBT Center and 2 buses to get back. I want to join a sports/swim club team, but I can't get there on time if the bus is not consistent and on time. It takes too long to get anywhere, and the bus fare is too expensive. \$80 a month for a bus pass is too much. Wish there was a young adult pass. – LGBTQQ and ally youth

Having to pay for bus transportation every day is difficult – Black/African American youth

Transportation cost is expensive. Students get a discount but it's still \$3. – Chinese TAY

Free bus fare would change my life. – LGBTQQ and ally TAY

Accessible Childcare

In order to work, parents need high-quality day care and preschools for young children that are affordable, accessible by public transport, and/or safe to walk to.

Universal Pre-k would be great. More investments in our public schools. Funding so that we could have good teachers and good facilities. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

My biggest struggle as a single mom is the adjustment with working and babysitting. I need supports with childcare while looking for full time work. I need to help my parents in San Bruno, they're in their 80's. Help them by driving them to doctor appointments, shopping. –Filipino immigrant parent

We need more after-care programs, more flexibility in hours with pickup and drop off of children. Childcare for afterschool hours. When my children were younger, I had to leave work to pick up children when there was emergency. Childcare is expensive. –Filipino immigrant parent

Childcare should be affordable for everybody. It's a need, not a luxury, especially if both parents work full time. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Afterschool and daycare would help and help with diapers. – Pop-Up Village parent respondent

Childcare is expensive and even with a job, it's not enough [to pay for childcare]. - CityKids Fair parent respondent

Families need affordable options for childcare. My next worry is in December when property taxes are due. Cost of everything is going up like gas prices (and childcare). Need more food bank options. –CityKids Fair parent respondent

Justice-Involved Youth Face Complex Systems

Youth who have had experience with the justice system expressed difficulties with navigating probation, stigma, and feeling isolated. Language barriers are an additional barrier to navigating the justice system and child welfare system:

Being on probation was really hard too, especially with parents that only spoke Spanish and couldn't understand everything that was happening in the courts. The difficulties make you learn and get stronger. –TAY with justice-involvement experience

Difficult to break stigma in the community, especially after probation. Probation has changed a lot. –TAY with justice-involvement experience

Before [Program]y I felt very sad because my dad went to jail. I felt weird that they were helping me without getting anything. I started to build trust and friends which made me not feel alone anymore. The [Program] retreats help me get away from my issues. – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

Advocates for foster youth shared hopes they had in some court initiatives that appear to have promising outcomes for children, youth, and families:

Family treatment court cases for family reunification have a higher percentage of reunification success than non-family treatment court cases, so looking to expand that opportunity and equity and fairness to as many families as possible. ...You need to support people on the front end before they get too far gone, because the timeline for reunification – you get 12-18 months tops. And that's a lot to change and ask people to change in that period of time, before then your case gets kicked to long-term foster care. And the problem is that we see too many kids wallowing in long-term foster care, making up the majority of cases that we serve. - Community-based service provider

One passerby at the Friendship House Powwow was intercepted and spoke with researchers about some difficulties transitioning from parole:

Greatest needs now are vocational services, jobs, housing. I'm living at Friendship House. Discharged from parole because I met milestones but I'm not eligible for housing. I can only get housing through SF Health Plan. I need a computer, school supplies.

Citywide Service Accessibility

One resident at the Pop-Up Village event shared her thoughts on the importance of community voice and representation in service provision:

We really need our voices and our solutions to be heard and not co-opted by officials and public officials, who first of all, are using our tax dollars inappropriately because they're not listening to us. They constantly want to pretend like they're listening to us and say, "Oh, we hear you," and they come out here, and then they want to put the money towards Band Aid types of solutions, as opposed to really digging deep and giving us what we need, letting us take care of ourselves; reallocate those resources and that money where it should go and let the community take care of it because we clearly know what to do. We've been having to care for ourselves for centuries here, so it's not like we don't know. It's reparations and action. And we need to have that coming back to us, so we can utilize it for ourselves.

Participants discussed the difficulty of accessing services in a timely manner, particularly during the pandemic:

Services are not complete; I need a social worker and referral. Right now everything is closed and nobody answers. They don't call back. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Government social services that are online are hard to access. Most difficulty with school. Need healthcare and doctors. –Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

General information on what's available and how to access. I don't know how to access that general information. I need information on mental health services and housing assistance. What's online can be confusing. Information on what's available for my son who has autism. Nothing comes through from SS and medical. Needs to be more streamlined. –Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

Not too much communication with the people that you need to get in contact with. You know, you don't really get to talk to a person on the telephone and you got to do internet stuff. I'd rather talk to a human like we are talking right now. Okay, I think that that's a better way to get things done. –Pop-Up Village intercept respondent

[It is] difficult to get free legal help or an attorney but the resources are limited, and it's usually a long wait. – Parent experiencing homelessness

Some respondents' comments suggest that information and outreach should be more catered to reach particular populations:

There's a lot of resources, but as Black people getting the access to it, there's a runaround, where only certain people are supposed to get access to it. I think just

getting more into these communities, like the jobs, more Black people. We just don't find out about it. It's never just including us, and I know that from personal experience. I think what the population of Black SF needs, being so small at this point, a lot of stuff just doesn't get to us. – Black/African American young adult and/or parent

One youth expressed frustration feeling that access to supportive services has strings attached and does not empower users:

There are lots of wonderful TAY resources. It isn't a problem of getting them, but there is a problem of tokenization in resources. Once someone has access—kind of getting system abused, having to comply with internal quotas. 'We'll offer you housing as long as you do classes, go here, here and here.' There really isn't a lot of autonomy in how people get their help. Once they've reached that point in accessing, there's a Citywide or organizational agenda that that person has to follow. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Immigration issues are top-of-mind to many city residents, and one-third of focus group survey respondents indicated interest in information about or support with immigration issues. In one focus group with Latinx immigrant TAY, there was robust discussion around documentation barriers that render access to services especially challenging:

Immigrants do not qualify for welfare, EBT, food or rent assistance. This has been a challenge during COVID. I think that the City should help immigrant communities more in this way, in practical and concrete ways.

As an undocumented youth, we are blessed with many resources. However, we have to do a lot of leg work to orient ourselves. It would be helpful to have a one stop shop. As an undocumented youth, it might feel safe to not have all of your information in one place. As I get older, I am helping people who have lost their jobs, and learning how challenging it is to help people when there is not a centralized way to figure out what resources are available.

To support youth, you need to support migrant communities as a whole. There are many restrictions for the support available to undocumented communities. We need to focus on getting rid of these restrictions to support undocumented communities. SF needs to be bolder about doing this, it needs to do it first, so that others can follow. A lot of this is providing the necessary resources for folks to not just survive but thrive.

Some of us do not have DACA. It is very hard to access resources, especially when your family is undocumented. It is hard to access help when you don't have certain paperwork. There is a tiered level of ability to get resources, even amongst undocumented people.

Community-based service providers noted that foster youth are particularly vulnerable, as they are increasingly having to be placed outside of the city and are unable to access needed services that the city offers:

Because of the incredible housing crisis here and lack of relative placements as well in addition to non-relative placements, more and more young people are San Francisco dependents placed in out of county homes. ...We have 70% of kids in care are placed outside of San Francisco because of the lack of foster placements in the city and San Francisco has been increasingly not a family friendly city, so not only are young people placed outside, but they're being placed increasingly further away, so they're not – to Erika's point – they're San Francisco youth but they don't have access to SF services, SF supports, and that's something that we at [Program] feel incredibly strongly about and they deserve to have the same access to the resources that other SF youth have.

Moreover, community-based service provider focus group participants note that removals of children and youth from their homes is often an artifact of poverty and the high cost of living in the city:

Another aspect that we certainly see in San Francisco, and I would say it's system-wide, the majority of kids are removed from their families of origin due to reasons of neglect not abuse, and neglect is so often correlated with poverty, right? And so the family doesn't have the resources to adequately support their child, the child is removed, the family gets more and more disenfranchised as a result of that, and the child as well gets disenfranchised as a result of that experience. And because it's getting harder and harder to afford living in SF, that neglect pattern is an extraordinary challenge.

60% or more of foster care cases are neglect cases. That's not a commission of an act, it's an omission of resources. It's not a commission of abuse, it's failure to provide something. And the injustices that we see in the city here around housing, nutritional scarcity, things like that, and you're more likely if you're poor, you're more likely to be a person of color, so you're under the microscope.

At survey intercept events, respondents expressed appreciation for the accessibility of events such as the Pop-Up Village event where information about services was made available:

This is my first time (at the Pop-Up Village). It's helpful!

It's my first time at the Pop-Up. Learning a lot about the different services available.

Appreciate the Pop-Up Village because it's a way to see services, programs, and opportunities that are available in the community.

The Pop-Up Village... it comes from that place that we are a strong, beautiful, and resilient community but we are traumatized. And there's so much love to be given, and there's so much love and care that we have for one another, but we need the resources available to us to take care of ourselves that are constantly denied us, and that is historic, and that is systemic.

This is my 3rd time being at the Pop-Up. I love the event and appreciate the women's support groups.

I come to this often. There are very helpful services.

Immigrant Community Strengths

Many respondents referred to a strong community where they feel a sense of belonging.

For the TL, I've never met such a strong community of elders. TL has survived a lot from direct gentrification, AIDS crisis, targeted as transgender district, amazing community elders that I'm starting to meet in my life, who are the reason TL hasn't been fully gentrified, and what's keeping it alive. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Having strong immigrant communities was highlighted by many as a strength of the city. Being able to speak their native language and see others in their community like them provides a sense of belonging.

Having a large Chinese community and the weather are my favorite things about living in San Francisco. – Chinese immigrant parent

In a big Chinese community, talking my own language and getting help from non-profit orgs for information in my language to give me a sense of belonging. – Chinese immigrant parent

In our Latinx community, we can speak many different languages. – Latinx TAY

What I think would help the community is, I feel like for us Arabs, especially the young kids, we need a program or a club that we can go to. I know I had that when I came into America. When I came into America I didn't know English, no friends, so I was scared to go anywhere except that program. I could relate to other kids in the same situation, who spoke the same language, they could show me around the area, the TL, which is not a great place for kids to grow around. Not just for the Arab community, I feel like every race should have their own program so they could help each other out and grow in America. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Socialization was lacking last year, but there was an Filipino Community Center (FCC) program that allowed for socialization outside of school with adult coaches that had activities and social situations outside of school setting with other kids their age. My child had opportunities to interact with other Filipino kids. His environment is very "white" in private school. He gets to practice his Tagalog. The group helps with socialization and mental health and ethnic community. – Filipino immigrant parent

When asked about their community's greatest strengths, two Chinese immigrant youth noted:

Staying together as Chinese;

I just immigrated to San Francisco, and I can speak Cantonese to people.

Many respondents expressed a strong sense of shared community living in the city:

Every block you see someone you know, someone with memories. SF has a lot of resources, there's youth programs, afterschool programs to help with homework, internships to get people jobs, we have a lot of great resources like that. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

The strength of the community is just being a community—people are there for each other. For example, the Boys and Girls Club of San Francisco and MTA are working together to keep kids safer in the streets, from traffic. –Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Racial Hostilities and Immigrant Families' Challenges

Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) violence that has been observed first-hand or seen in the news makes residents – particularly AAPI residents – feel unsafe. Some Chinese residents have observed more patrolling in high-crime areas such as Portsmouth Square but shared that the Chinese language crime reporting hotline always has a busy signal and they feel unable to get the help they need when they need it.

I avoid going out at night. We used to take walks with the kids after dinner but we're afraid to at night now. If the government can ensure safety on the streets, that would help with our mental health and stress/anxiety around safety. – Chinese immigrant parent

Anti-Asian is a threat, news about Chinese becomes a target to this situation and getting hit is worrisome. I become overly cautious whenever I go out now. I avoid carrying a purse, I have to consistently look around or look over my shoulder to confirm if there are people following me. – Chinese immigrant parent

For me, as an Asian American woman, to see my people attacked and targeted in SF...the number of elderly in the SOMA, the Sunset, it's ridiculous. I think it's sad that out of Anti-Asian sentiments, that we get articles talking about violence between Black and Asian communities, which creates more division. ...and also the Board of Ed diverts attention away from Covid and puts more time and energy into high school name changes—me as Asian American, I don't feel supported by the City. I feel more targeted...being seen as model minority, our struggle is seen as invalid. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Violence, crimes and criminal activities seem to be at an all-time high. Also concerned about anti-Asian sentiments, violence and robberies. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Some respondents shared experiencing hostility towards them as immigrants:

“I don't live in a dangerous place but I encounter racism in the community towards me and my children, especially when it's apparent that I don't speak English.”
– Latinx parent experiencing homelessness

Fears of deportation have kept some residents from seeking the help they need:

Fear of deportation, especially when I needed medical support. I did not have a job during Trump's presidency and was afraid of being deported. –Latinx parent experiencing homelessness

Immigrant youth cited examples of families experiencing domestic violence and substance abuse problems who are afraid to seek help from the police or from the City due to their undocumented status:

They don't want to ask for help or call the police because they are afraid of their status. I feel that the City can do more and provide more support for undocumented youth who are experiencing these issues. - Latinx immigrant TAY

Individuals with Disabilities and their Families

Parents of children with disabilities feel safe, and so do their kids, at Pomeroy, Support for Families, and at SF Hearing & Speech, . At these programs they feel a sense of belonging without judgment, but also shared how difficult it is to maintain connections with other families.

Pomeroy is definitely a place that, you know, both my son and I feel somewhat belong and understood without being judged. – parent of child/ren with disabilities Support for Families puts on great events and I feel seen in these events but it hasn't been a great place to meet other parents of children with hearing loss. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Create dedicated spaces for youth who are hard of hearing and safe spaces. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

The diversity and individual differences in the city make it hard to find a centralized place for access, even though the hearing and speech center has worked hard for families. Parents need to support their children and need someone to support them, but there is a lot of turnover with professionals who can support children who are deaf and hard of hearing (hard to find good teachers and other support staff etc). – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Parents expressed a desire for broader inclusion of children with disabilities in other programs and additional supports for their children in general:

Like, for example, my little five-year-old [who is autistic] loves Hamilton, like just but I can't, I can't take him to it, I can take my nine year old do it, but I can't take my five year old to it. And it's because there's not like a day for him. So I would just like love for these organizations to really think about our kids so that we can do things. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Summer Camps, counseling, parent support groups, ASL classes for the whole family, better support for the schools and within the schools, auditing the School Bus company, support to pay for hearing devices. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Parents also commented on the inaccessibility of public transit for youth with hearing difficulties. Special needs service providers concurred:

They need a system of youth paratransit. Regulations for going to providers. It has been hard to provide programs since rec and park programs are not at the school. After school programs sometimes have a way of picking youth up and walking them over but it is not accessible for all. – Community-based service provider

Summer Together, Summer programming - it's difficult for parents to take students to a rec and park program from a school program. We have paratransit for adults but we don't have it for children. - Community-based service provider
There's not enough revenue. The City needs to gather around philanthropy.
Pomeroy has the infrastructure to do the work [of paratransit], but not enough funding for it. - Community-based service provider

Parents of children with disabilities also expressed concerns about systems misunderstanding their children's disabilities and carrying the double risk if they are non-white.

I've had Child Protective Services and police interactions that felt unsafe in part because of the disability. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

The isolation it really affected my child. So he became a little bit more of a wanderer. He always was, but I think it made him want to get outside of the house more. And with him being a brown skinned child who doesn't look disabled, because he has autism. So that's a fear for me, like the police and everyone else out there not understanding autism and understanding how to deal with our children. That became a big issue for me with the whole COVID situation. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH

[Kids are] stuck on those iPads. Kids are always in the house on their iPads. We used to have a whole lot of outside activities and games, basketball, tennis, games. These computers, it's the devil book, I call it. - Black/African American young adult and/or parent

There is a growing need for mental health services for children, youth, and families across the city. Support for navigating systems to access health services, especially for immigrants facing language barriers, are needed. Respondents identified a lack of affordable health care, dental care, preventive medicine, and proactive therapy, along with a need for aftercare for residents post-discharge from social services systems. Greater access to mental health resources to heal from trauma, particularly for the undocumented community, and more trauma-informed, culturally affirming, and linguistically appropriate care was broadly acknowledged across respondents, particularly for BIPOC and LGBTQ youth.

Parents also expressed interest in greater opportunities for children and youth to engage in physical activities and increased access safe parks, beaches, basketball courts, and playing fields. Afterschool programs are widely viewed as a broad safety net for kids, where academic and social-emotional support can be found, as well as opportunities for physical activity.

Physical Health

Young people need more opportunities for physical activity

When asked about their community's greatest strengths, parents and youth pointed to the availability of parks and the opportunities this provided for physical activity and play:

The parks. I like to go play basketball and play with friends. I like living close to school. – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

A lot of places to take the children to play, especially what has been opened during the pandemic (e.g. SF Rec and Park spaces) – Parent experiencing homelessness

[I enjoy] going to school and basketball practice, playing soccer on the weekend – Black/African American youth

And the best part that I like about San Francisco is that they have a lot of places where you can take the kids to play. I love all the San Francisco parks, my favorite places. – Parent experiencing homelessness

Parents expressed concerns about their children's lack of physical activity due to fears around the pandemic and safety issues in their neighborhoods:

My daughter's mental health wellbeing - she used to love playing in the park. It stopped since the pandemic. Even after the lockdown eased and we were

allowed to spend time at playground structures, my daughter hesitated and worried. She refused to go and have fun as she is scared of getting infected. Additionally, she becomes depressed and get irritated easily, so do I. – Chinese immigrant parent

Nowadays its difficult for kids to get out and play, we have to watch them constantly because of street people, gangs that are still around, I need an extra watchful eye every time on her. – American Indian/Native American parent

Parents and service providers called out the need for young people to get exercise:

They don't even play double Dutch anymore. Kids with these type 2 diabetes they eat and they don't play or exercise. We used to walk to the beach, we used to play team against team at the park, they don't play baseball, they don't do none of that no more. ...They need to get more involved and get more exercise. – Black/African American parent

[The city needs] wellness programs that center deaf and hard-of-hearing children and teens, exercise, intramural sports, gym programs. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

[During the pandemic] my kids joined volleyball to not feel isolation. Sometimes we just drive around to get out of the house. Sports, activities, programs, socialization are very helpful for mental and emotional health. What more would I like to see? My child is restless, so Safe Streets, activities with movement outside. – Filipino immigrant parent

Where opportunities for structured play are more limited, one school social worker observed that occasions for trouble at school become ripe:

I think where the where the breakdown happens is that recess where there's just less structure, there's fewer activity options, we don't have a lot of equipment, we don't have a play structure for older students. So it's, it's a little more ripe for fights. –SFUSD administration/staff

In addition to providing opportunities for physical exercise and structured play activities, one service provider observed that afterschool programs provide broad safety nets for kids:

Boy, that is so true that we're not just the people that play dodgeball, golf, foursquare. We're more than that. We stayed open for the past two years, during the pandemic, when the school shut down, we stayed open. And so I'm just really proud that we were able to do that and fill that gap. So yeah, proud of my team. – Community-based service provider

Access to health care is uneven

Several respondents acknowledged their lack of health care and how that makes them more vulnerable:

We are OK, we feel stable. However, I am an independent contractor. If anything happens to my husband's job, we lose healthcare. I need to find a good-paying

full-time job for a more stable income, We are ok, but healthcare is a concern. My children were approved for healthcare, but I was not. I am currently on my hubby's healthcare, but I am concerned I may be asked to leave. - Filipino immigrant parent

Not having insurance is challenging. – CityKids Fair intercept respondent

We're in between being able to afford insurance and not. All my money would have to go to paying insurance or paying for our other needs. – CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Healthcare for Native people, appointments are so hard to get. We just don't go. - Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

Lengthy wait time for medical services for my child. - Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

Dental care: Not a lot of services, having to drive out of town. Mental health: you have to be in the system. It's hard to access, you need transportation. - Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

Support for accessing health care, particularly for new immigrants with language barriers. – Chinese TAY

Access to preventive medicine was something several respondents expressed a need for:

I have medical care but it is for emergencies only and not for basic needs like consultations or therapy. Before the pandemic, I remember getting vouchers and food but this support has gone down now and so has rent support. I need help with rent and a more complete medical plan. – Parent experiencing homelessness

We see a lot of lack of medical homes for young people in foster care – they're changing providers all the time and I think that is really challenging. And preventative things, like basic – getting to the dentist, getting [to the doctor] for your annual child health disease prevention exam. Getting those things met before they become acute. An ounce of prevention's worth a pound of cure. And aftercare is also prevention.

(New speaker in same group:) You're preventing re-entry into more uncertainty. You're disrupting a trajectory of intergenerational experiences. And that's really - it's not just done in a generation. We don't want to see our clients re-enter care with their children, and they're more likely to do that. And so when you set people up with accessible, sustainable, visible support when they leave that system of care, they're less likely to re-enter it. And that's prevention. (New speaker:) And it's also prevention in terms of adult homelessness, the adult criminal justice system, and we know foster youth are overrepresented in those systems. So I think prevention from that standpoint as well. – Community-based service provider

I used to be a community health worker and helped provide residents in Bayview preventative health care services like breast cancer screening. I don't see this in the community anymore. - Pop-Up Village intercept respondent

I'm fortunate to have everything I need, but preventative healthcare services are not accessible. - Pop-Up Village intercept respondent

Emotional Health

Mental health needs are widespread

There is an increasing need for mental health services for children, youth, and parents across the city, particularly during the pandemic which has brought waves of stress and anxiety around health and safety. One in four respondents to the post-focus group survey indicated interest in information about or support with managing behavioral health challenges. Parents see their children struggling:

My child is happy not being in school, and just wants to stay home. They just want to play online. - Filipino immigrant parent.

I see the mental toll on my children. My daughter is 10, misses her friends. Interaction with kids is lacking, there's social isolation. - Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

[My kids] like to hug everybody, but they can't hug everybody. I barely can take her outside which is driving her crazy. -Pop-Up Village intercept respondent

Some parents expressed the need for support groups for themselves.

That can get challenging when parents feel alone and there's not enough resources for something they need. There should be more parent support groups for sure. ... Parenting young men without their father figure is also very stressful. - American Indian/Native American parent

However, many respondents discussed difficulty accessing services to address their mental health needs. Some parents believe that "the system is reactive: services kick in and you can access them only after some "incident" occurs, but it is so hard to initiate services earlier. - Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Just about every focus group indicated a need for improved access to free or reduced rate mental health services and help navigating systems to access those services.

Accessibility to mental health resources to heal from trauma, particularly for the undocumented community. Not many of them have a good healthcare provider that can cover the costs of their medicine or counseling. - Latinx immigrant TAY
More access to mental health workers, maybe through zoom. Also parenting classes, just so we can vent. Just so we can talk to other parents about, just, the things we have to deal with our teen, with our younger kids, even with our adult kids. -American Indian/Native American parent

My father lost his job after 10 years, and they didn't have any compensation. We don't qualify for public services- this affects our mental health. I am now on disability. – Latinx immigrant parent

Advocates. We need advocates. When you have someone in your corner, especially when your mental health needs are used against you, you need advocates to help you with your situations and with your mental health struggles. – Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

We need more resources geared towards mental health. Being more culturally sensitive with how they offer or present all services. Parents are stressed, kids are also experiencing stress and anxiety. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Need services for mental health, therapy options and support groups for grief and loss. It takes 4 to 6 months to access a therapist. Domestic violence went up and substance abuse skyrocketed. We need a hub of case managers who speak multiple languages and can refer people to resources that SF offers. -Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

Culturally affirming mental health care is limited

Importantly, some youth and service providers identified the importance of mental health support and other programs that are culturally relevant and staffed by providers who reflect their experiences:

Seeing more Black leader figures that look like us and more programs that include mental health and Black specific experiences. Important to have people that look like us in this field of work for the guys. – Black/African American youth

We always talk about mental health as being such a need, right. And I think it is a need. And we also have need for cultural relevancy in that mental health sphere. –CBO

More resources geared towards mental health. Being more culturally sensitive with how they offer or present all services. Parents are stressed, kids are also experiencing stress and anxiety.” – CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Some respondents at an intercept event at the Friendship House Powwow noted intragenerational needs for specific support for the Native community:

Consideration for different needs and more awareness. I have mental health needs, my son has mental health disabilities, and another child has Autism. Awareness for my community/Native community. It is hard to raise awareness- “Don't need the White Man.”

For the Native American community, we have generational trauma that gets closed on. My mom is a recovering addict. My mom introduced me to counseling when I was a little girl. If it wasn't for that, I wouldn't have been open to counseling.

Foster youth mental health care is difficult to access and maintain

Service providers note that the increased isolation brought about by the pandemic has been even more challenging for youth in foster care.

Increased social isolation. I think that's certainly been amplified by the pandemic. School access and achievement. I think at times being in placements that aren't appropriate because nobody wants to manage a placement change during pandemic, or also lack of placements, I want to put out there. Not being connected to important people in their lives, again amplified by pandemic. Increased mental health challenges. Our volunteers are certainly navigating even more mental health, with young people they're supporting as well as their caregivers.

– Community-based service provider

Advocates who work with foster youth note the need for greater access:

This is foster care mental health for young people who have moderate to severe mental health needs through DPH. But what's really lacking is the mild, the access to support for mild to moderate depression, anxiety, which most foster youth have because they don't meet the service qualification for that level of care through DPH's foster care mental health. – Community-based service provider

And as youth age out of foster care, their access to mental health and other supportive services ends, but that support is still needed:

What's happening now in terms of young people aging out of mental health care during a pandemic and all of their support stops. They're not getting AB12, they're not getting housing support, their mental health services are transitioning. And we have a system that's nurturing this dependency, not independence, right? And then everything is pulled out from under them. And so we did have this opportunity - extended care was extended during COVID, but there's a group of young people who are now aging out of that support in San Francisco without a safety net. You know, we're working on Universal Basic Income, we're working on identifying housing options for them, but we're not there, and this is an issue. And we have a group of young people, some who have been in out of county placements but want to be back in SF. And so they're also disconnected from services in San Francisco. Again, we really see our role for volunteers as creating those connections, and resource identification when we're able to but within the limitation of the existing systems. – Community-based service provider

School-site access to mental health services is critical

Parents and students expressed the need for onsite therapists and case managers at school so students have access to someone to talk about feelings and get needed services – a safe place for mental health services.

I think SFUSD needs more counselors altogether and more of a comprehensive program around the mental health of students. I know hella people that were going through it that got brushed aside because their school didn't have the tools to deal with the situation – Mission District youth/TAY

At school you only get three sessions and then you get charged a lot of money. Going to [Program] is helpful. Having more queer resources would be helpful. Not having enough financial resources as a queer person has been difficult.

– Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

Support for anxiety and depression, that should be across the board for the kids. My granddaughter, the middle one (just turned 13), for some reason, she's having anxiety. I don't know why, or when it started, she likes to stay isolated for some reason." – Black/African American parent

Especially counseling and mental health. I would say they're neglected or overlooked in the school system – I think it's a huge struggle in the city. Most people I talk to, there's no support for this, adults even (except for programs like Horizons, CASA..) – Mission District youth/TAY

I need people to talk to like a therapist. I get stressed from school and I feel overwhelmed really easily. I need someone that will give me really good advice. – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

There should be more funds allocated to organizations that are doing this kind of [mental health, outreach] work. More funds directed to public schools and not charter systems. I'm seeing the City do a lot of emergency initiatives and not long-term initiatives. I also feel that our City should not do this collaboration with law enforcement. – Latinx immigrant TAY

Schools need to provide more information about mental health, that it's ok to be scared. The kids seem to be really affected emotionally and mentally by the pandemic. Schools should check in with the kids about how they're doing, but if there are issues, there is a wait to speak with a mental health professional. The school does not have enough staff with therapists. Many activities have been canceled due to COVID (field trips, story time, etc.). There are fewer outlets. There should be more options like Sunday streets. – Filipino immigrant parent

There's a lot of teens. I'm a high school counselor, and there's a lot of teens that need access, and school resources are very limited. And so giving more money... or presenting a budget to the school system where they can also add mental health services to schools, as well, at all levels; not just high school, but all levels - college, the secondary as well as elementary. –Pop-Up Village intercept respondent

Student mental health needs are on the rise

Particularly during COVID, distance learning presented additional mental health challenges for students.

Distance learning was difficult especially with the first semester of college. I felt alienated and alone. I moved into college by myself. [Program] had Zoom meetings that helped me feel less alone. Housing was limited at school and

distance learning was hard, but the outings through [Program] gave me something to look forward to. – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

Service providers for students with special needs also observe that mental health concerns for children and teenagers have been on the rise:

We need more collaboration in the city. Mental health problems can be a barrier for learning. It is hard to provide help outside of the academic environment. We are seeing an uptick in behavior regulation for students that really need routine and predictability. Children's behavior is not lined up with their grade level because of COVID. We need a place to connect folks who do and don't have disabilities. We had an ASL hub for learning disabilities during the pandemic. We had staff try to focus on emotional regulation, just to process what was going on. This was a struggle because we had to contact individual teachers and therapists to help these students. There's a lack of consistency in scheduling with teachers/therapists for students with individual learning needs.

Participants in the special needs service providers focus group continued to note that access to recreation has been clearly shown to help with academic success. Yet, for families that have so much going on with school, work, raising children with special needs, it can be more difficult to find time or access these resources.

We need more awareness, training and education for people running programs to make them more available and inclusive: Rec and Park offer services outside of school time (after school, before school, weekends) but people don't have awareness or training to serve kids with trauma, mental health issues, and disabilities. The pools of programs are never large enough but it gets even smaller for youth that don't have easy access. Could we have an offline counselor, evening or weekend session, for providers to come in? Rec and Park programs don't have the ability to run an assessment. They do intakes, but that is it. We need to have a connective network to engage private and nonprofit, school and city, for youth to get an assessment and the right services. Title II and III- legal obligations.

Students who have had access to mental health services expressed appreciation:

Mental health service has been helpful a lot but I feel that they should add more so that many youths can access it easily – LGBTQQ and ally TAY

The school counseling unit is very supportive – LGBTQQ and ally TAY

However, some students' experiences suggest that access to mental health services outside of school would also be of great benefit, particularly in a context with others with similar experiences that might feel more welcoming:

I don't feel safe going to my school's counseling. Sometimes they kind of help but they don't help. [Program] allows me to be myself. Sometimes in other programs I don't want to speak about things. Like my incarceration situation with my dad. It

gives me someone to talk to about mental health or financial problems. – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

A method to reach troubled youth. I feel that a lot of resources are available through school. Many of the youth I consider troubled are not around schools, and they are the ones that can't access resources. Conduct more outreach for these kids but in alternative ways besides through school and more in the communities we know these troubled youth are at. – Latinx immigrant TAY

Young people expressed anxiety about the future as they transition from high school to college and needing support navigating this time: "For a while didn't see myself as having a future, but now that I feel that I have one, it is also terrifying".
- LGBTQQ and ally youth

New immigrant students at City College expressed anxiety and stress and feeling under pressure taking difficult classes, getting assignments in on time, and doing all of this with significant language barriers.

Alternative Solutions to Mental Health Needs

One parent offered an alternative mental health remedy:

Maybe the City celebrates mental health day, then all the parents at SFUSD public schools get this ticket, valid for a year, to go to a spa, or family visit to a farm, all paid for, you don't have to worry about that. Going out somewhere, for being in quarantine, it would do us good. Zoom does work with listening and talking to therapist, but to make it even better, to be a better parent, grandma, is to step out of that routine. Spa, horseback ride, boat ride. Put it back on the City—you celebrate all kinds of holidays, we parents need a holiday too, where our kid goes one direction, we go another. – American Indian/Native American parent

Another parent in the same group offered another suggestion for youth: "Peer resources since the kids are in a unique situation where only their peers who have had to endure distance learning and the loss of activities can understand".

READINESS TO LEARN AND SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

Many programs are not benefitting the kids... I want to see more arts, music, classes that kids really need. Or more tutoring for kids who need extra help. For our young kids, arts, music and remedial supports are most needed. – Latinx immigrant parent

Concerns regarding negative pandemic effects on education reverberated across respondent groups. Students identified needs for greater academic supports during the school day as well as after school. Dual language learning resources, culturally affirming programming, and culturally responsive bilingual school staff and staff of color to work with kids of color are desired and sorely lacking.

For all young people in San Francisco to be ready to learn and succeed, increased advocacy and navigation services are needed particularly for the city's most vulnerable youth. Parents of children with special needs expressed challenges associated with systems navigation and paying out-of-pocket for educational therapists and other specialized needs that are inadequately addressed at school. Resources for extracurricular activities are also less accessible to children with special needs; the isolation and social exclusion this creates is damaging. Foster youth also struggle with systems navigation and need support through the school displacement that occurs with placement changes: bouncing from district to district, not being known within a system, gathering multiple transcripts, having credits lost, having special needs tracked across districts and systems, etc.

K-12 School Experiences in San Francisco

Some parents saw school as a very supportive place amidst dark and distressed times.

We have dirty, unclean streets like in the TL. But we have safe transportation to school. And dependable help from school staff and teachers. I am satisfied with the teachers support and attentiveness. – Parent experiencing homelessness

Some students also expressed appreciation for their teachers:

My instructors have taught me to have more self-care. Hearing from an instructor that it is okay to feel overwhelmed/stress and to take care of yourself is helpful. Talking to an instructor (although it can be hard) when they show that they care it allows me to speak up and feel more comfortable to seek support. A caring teacher. – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

Academically I am doing really bad. I could use a lot of help. We don't have tutors but all of our teachers are willing to help us individually, spiritually and emotionally. I can go to them and they are always there – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

However, several parents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of their child/ren's schooling:

People are warm bodies but are they really going above and beyond or even meeting basic expectations. The quality of staffing is lacking – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

I would like more support at school with after school programs. Some only do snack but nothing structured. I would like them to focus more on helping them with science and math, many places just let them play around. - Latinx immigrant parent

Our kids don't get the best education at all. They don't even teach our history and the real things they should be teaching in school. – Black/African American parent

The public school system and how it is managed is discouraging. Something major needs to happen with public school system so that the focus is on our kids of all classes. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

School Safety

However, for some students, school is not a safe place. One parent experiencing homelessness decided to homeschool their ninth grader due to fear of violence in public schools.

I don't feel safe at school. My teachers don't care about our safety. School isn't a safe space. I feel unsafe especially with the school shootings happening recently. I don't feel that the school cares about us or what we think. I don't feel that they would protect us. There was this girl that got sexually assaulted by a teacher but the teacher is still working there. The school only cares about getting money. - Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

I feel unsafe at school because anything could happen – Black/African American youth

They need more staff at school for children's safety. A lot of behavioral issues at school and teachers don't say anything. – Latinx immigrant parent

Safety at School: Covid Concerns

Some expressed concern around how schools are handling COVID-19 outbreaks:

They don't check whether or not you're vaccinated when you come back, there's been outbreaks in HS. What they do is they still allow those kids to come back and continue within 3 days. For colleges, all-in-all school is a scam. During the pandemic, I think they increased tuition. At mine, SFSU, they withhold when there are outbreaks on Covid on campus. They notify staff, but don't tell students. And how they regulate those on campus, it's a survey, where anyone can lie on it. ...Schools need to do better at regulating who comes back to campus and hold their position in the spread of Covid. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Because of quarantine, he has no means to learn. He's not yet vaccinated, but in-person class has resumed. So he has to stay home, because of positive COVID contact, but there are no options for distance learning or Zoom. I just requested his homework so he has something to do. - Filipino immigrant parent

For my youngest, 3rd grader, he's dealing with a lot of peers taking masks off during class. He's worried about it, so he's telling me this when he's coming home. ...Constant emails from principals notifying of positive cases at the school, which really stresses you out. You don't know if it's your kid's classroom, just at the school. I know you can't identify, but it's stressful.

- American Indian/Native American parent

A parent of a private school student also expressed concern over how their school is handling COVID-19:

My child is vaccinated and boosted, so has returned to in-person instruction, to make sure my child is engaged in school, because he had lost interest in the school work in hybrid learning. I'm concerned about school closing down again. Feels like school should have had more support for the student, more outreach from teachers, and there was no response about concerns about student engagement. School should have been more proactive about student engagement or mental health. - Filipino immigrant parent

Culturally Affirming School Supports

Some parents shared how important it is to have more culturally responsive and bilingual literacy programs and culturally responsive bilingual school staff and staff of color to work with kids of color.

At [my child's school] they have afterschool programs, and the staff are wonderful. They have three African American teachers who are working with my kids, there's been a few times the school didn't tell me about incidents, and the afterschool teachers did tell me. Even if it's afterschool, they're real hands on. So just having more Black staff, even if they're just afterschool, it could help. In the year 2021, I don't know when we'd ever get rid of that, how folks don't work well with kids of color, or if we just need to learn to live with it better. " - Black/African American parent

Some students also expressed interest in having programming and curricula that speak to their particular race/ethnicity or community.

It would be great for every school to have programs that are designed to support specific racial and ethnic groups, different needs (African American supports and others). Programs to help youth get ahead with their goals and during stages of high school is very important. - Black/African American youth

I feel like I'll have to teach my kids my damn self what the real history is, like on this program I attended called Black History Game Show. I didn't learn that stuff in school. They don't teach that in school. It's all about the white people. – Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

When we discuss things like racism, Islamophobia, like everyone says they want to sweep it under the rug with an email blast. Advisors in our high school, even in college, they have a lot of misinformation, don't necessarily guide us. It is so hard to navigate high school, college, and it ends up taking 5 or 6 years. A lot of campuses advertise services like free, open to everyone, women, LGBTQ, Black students, yet nothing is advertised to us (Middle Easterners). – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Hire individuals in these afterschool programs that knows and cares for our kids. Talks to them, there, they can teach them life skills, but some programs don't. – American Indian/Native American parent

Nearly one-third (31%) of respondents to the post-focus group surveys indicated interest in information about or support with dual-language learning resources.

Support for Students with Special Needs

Parents of children with special needs expressed challenges associated with having to navigate systems, pay out-of-pocket for educational therapists and other specialized needs that are not adequately addressed at school by their IEP team. Just about one in every four (24%) post-focus group survey respondents expressed interest in information about or support with how to support a child with special needs.

Some families shared the sense that they and their child was merely being tolerated, but that schools are fundamentally ill-equipped to truly support or include students and families with special needs. One parent shared that their principal implied their children are lucky to be in a high performing school, even though the school lacks adequate training in how to support their child: "Because my kids were born deaf I should be grateful that the district put them in that school" – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

A participant from SFUSD in a community-based service providers focus group agreed that while the district has an ongoing Ability Awareness campaign, greater ability-awareness for children and adults in schools, programs, and services is needed; "Adults need an awareness that we all belong."

During COVID-19, some children were unable to follow Zoom classes because they were not closed captioned. And even as SFUSD and the Mayor's Office were quick to roll out information about vaccines and making home test kits available, one SFUSD special needs educator observed that using rapid tests at home is almost impossible for caregivers with vision impairments. "In planning learning at home, we had to create our own options and plan

great ideas to accommodate needs of special educators in online learning. They should have allowed us to be apart of this process earlier, include this community early on.”

Outside of Covid, parents expressed a need for greater inclusion of children with special needs. Resources for extracurricular activities are inaccessible to their children and the isolation and social exclusion this creates is damaging for youth with special needs. Parents shared that their children had trouble readjusting to school with limited access to social outlets at school or afterschool and suggested creating more dedicated spaces for youth and families with special needs to network and connect with one another.

Supports seem to fall apart in middle school and as kids grow older. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

We need SFUSD to have a designated teacher for students hard of hearing. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Not sure if school has enough time to address students’ emotional needs, would like more integration between general education and special education students, focus on removing stigma and more acceptance of differences. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Turnover of professionals who can support children who are deaf and hard of hearing is a challenge. Suggest creating a position for someone to work with schools and other public institutions to support children who are deaf and hard of hearing. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

We want kids with disability to be able to go to any camp they want to. The city needs to provide the staffing and hiring and training so this is possible. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Focus group participants of service providers serving students with special needs concurred that training staff, supervisors, and coordinators that oversee these programs is a challenge. Particularly with so many vacancies - both permanent staff as well as temporary staff vacancies - it is difficult to find staffing at all, let alone get consistency in staffing to provide consistent service. Staffing issues are so acute that the district is challenged with being able to uphold minimum legal standards for serving students with IEPs. This group continued to share that there is a *“lack of options for kids and providers. If an organization has a particular program, the parents sign up for everything. There is less variety of choices for children with disabilities. There is a lack of resources and support for people to design programs for children with disabilities.”* The group expressed interest in following through with partnerships with City agencies, including more people who work with children with disabilities to think about: *“What is universal design? What is accessibility?” “We are not a part of the planning in the beginning. We’re always playing catch-up. Programs are not prioritized, children we serve are not considered in the staff that are hired or locations of programs.”*

Parents of children with special needs expressed a need for American Sign Language (ASL) classes, more support to pay for hearing devices, and more support for parents themselves to

learn English. Parents of deaf and hard of hearing children also shared that access to deaf mentors early on in childhood would be life-changing for deaf kids growing up.

Parents of children with special needs, some who have special needs themselves, and service providers supporting children with special needs concur that communication is often difficult:

The school system doesn't have enough understanding of the needs of kids [with special needs]. They try and package everyone into one classification and labels don't capture individual needs such as mild/ moderate or moderate/ severe. Parents aren't prepared with knowledge of who to contact to have their child's needs addressed and parents need to be involved on a daily basis to hold the school accountable to meet the IEP. For parents who do not speak or understand English as well, this may be even more challenging to do this. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Communication is very difficult with parents and children with disabilities, but especially hard when they do not speak English. We need better options for translation and ASL – Community-based service provider.

One parent of a student with special needs observed that the school is doing more to improve support and inclusion of students with special needs: *“My daughter has special needs, so I get phone calls a lot. I think the school is working on inclusion more, how to support students that have additional needs. I've seen recently in one of their meetings, they're trying to improve their services and work on inclusion.”* – American Indian/Native American parent

Foster Youth Student Needs

For students in foster care, maintaining connection to school is challenging even without a pandemic:

One of the roles that our volunteers play and are specifically trained for is to be educational rights holders, and spokespeople and advocates within school systems on behalf of youth. At the top of the list is the school displacement that happens with placement changes, going from district to district, not being known within a system, not having the family capacity to advocate within a system, having credits lost, if a young person is getting special services, not having those be identified when they enter a new system. These are all enormous challenges that our young people navigate apart from COVID, so a real lack of educational continuity and the impact that can have on not only their achievement but their attachment or connection to school, right? Because it's too many changes. And then you add COVID in, and here we have young people in new foster homes, who are suddenly there 24/7 doing school online without technology, without access to resources, without someone in the home who is able to provide academic support and that was a lot of – early in the pandemic, what we focused on with our volunteers- was supporting school connection, because kids could not be engaging in online schooling for months without anyone really being

aware of it, right? Because they're invisible often if they're in a new school system, a new school district. – Community-based service provider

Another speaker at the same focus group added emphasis to the critical importance and growing need for an educational rights holder to support foster youth through their educational careers:

I also want to lift up that the demand for our educational rights holding program has steadily grown over the last five years. Because with an educational rights holder vs a district surrogate, the educational rights-holder appointed through the court -through our close partnership with the unified family court and the attorneys- can follow that young person, so there's significantly less education disruption when you have an educational rights holder for a youth who move among districts, because you're coordinating transportation, you're coordinating mental health support with the inclusion now for school districts to hold own mental health dollars for school-based services, that's a whole other ball of advocacy for young people, is getting those educationally related mental health services and making sure that all of those transfer across districts. And to [Partner's] point, increased invisibility and marginalization that has been the experience of the pandemic. Little things like advocates being like "Hey, I collected these 5 different transcripts over the course of the two years from these three different schools, and I see that we haven't been credited this credit." That's the difference between a young person graduating in a semester or not graduating in a semester. And what's the impact on your mental health knowing that you should have graduated, you're telling everyone that you should have graduated, and no one believes you.

(New speaker)...I think that's an area where DCYF could really impact and make a difference in supporting that educational rights holder role, really to meet the goals that DCYF has around youth and education and graduation. Like this is a really explicit way we can support young folks who are placed out of county with that educational continuity and advocacy. ...Funding is a big part of it. We currently have one staff person (Educational Advocacy Specialist) that's dedicated to supporting educational rights holder volunteers, so to grow that program there's funding needed so that we could add staff to that support. We would also love to offer our educational rights training to kin families, to foster families, to biological families. For those of us in parenting roles, navigating education systems is a challenge in any circumstance, and we have a really great resource in our training that could help others once young people are back in families to really do that navigation work. That's another area that we want to grow, in terms of family-strengthening work, is offering that training resource to others. But it really is a funding issue for us that limits our ability to expand that. – Community-based service provider

As schools opened back up to in-person learning, service providers for foster youth were wary and cautious about how their youth would fare:

I still think it all still remains to be seen. I mean everything takes so much longer when it involves a young person in foster care. So just going to school, feeling safe getting to school- you know, what does it mean to take public transportation for someone residing with an elderly caregiver who has some personal health hesitancy, right? Just the physical act of returning to school has been a challenge for our clients. Certain things that we'll fund, like "yeah, let's just pay for them to get in an Uber because that feels safer and that will get them to school". They don't feel safe taking BART, you know, 3 hours from the north to the south to get to their school of origin. Catching up on the assessment requests that were submitted in 2020, before pandemic hit – that hasn't happened yet. Initial requests for assessments, whether around IEPs and other things, that has been so slow going. Records transfer [is another example]. When you can't staff schools with teachers and staff, kids don't [want to be there] – why would they go? So I think we don't yet have a full sense of what this all looks like. We're just starting to see what the fallout here is, starting with staffing. - Community-based service provider

Pandemic Learning Loss: Need for Academic Support

Service providers and school staff acknowledged the detrimental impact the pandemic has had on students' academic outcomes, while students themselves identified needs for greater academic supports during the school day as well as after school.

And I think we can only accomplish [meeting families where they're at] through intentional collaboration. So a lot of our services rapidly turned into basic needs services, getting families connected with food, relief funds, things like that. If we were able to combine that even more intentionally with schools that would make it more successful for the academic realm, with families feeling more stable, and able to support their children in their academic learning careers path.
– Community-based service provider

Mental health for academic success, mental health for academic outcomes, right. So there's that piece where maybe we can't control our environment, but being able to recognize some of the triggers that bring adverse effects. – SFUSD administration/staff

Our first graders are in the worst shape social-emotionally, academically, because they had online kindergarten, which is crazy, right? And most didn't even log in for that. So you just see it. They don't know their letters and sounds, they don't know how to make friendships, they're fighting, punching, and I worry that the damage from not having kindergarten will carry them to fifth grade. ...What can we do to catch them up? –SFUSD administration/staff

Students expressed a need for more academic support outside of school time.

At my school we don't have a lot of people to help us with homework or tutoring. I see a lot of people falling behind in classes and it's easy to fall behind. It's hard to catch up – Youth/TAY, children of incarcerated parents

School doesn't give me enough time to get my work done. I need help with time management. – Black/African American youth

Teachers need to give more time to complete assignments. Some of us have stuff outside the school to do and I'd like to have teachers recognize this and provide more time to do the work. Some of the students need more time” – Black/African American youth

In the pandemic, because it was tough getting situated with the stay home environment, doing things on the computer. I didn't like the online experience and I turned off on going to school. I'm frustrated to this day. – Mission District youth/TAY

I was super depressed in high school and there wasn't really any support for academic stuff when I was falling behind – Mission District youth/TAY

Afterschool Programs

Parents wanted greater access to afterschool programs: “*We need more support for children to go to programs like Boys & Girls Club*”. - Latinx immigrant parent

Parents and youth expressed a need for afterschool programs for kids who may not feel safe at home or have the space to feel comfortable at home –space where kids can stay at school to do homework, hang out, and feel safe with trained staff.

Afterschool programs for kids that don't want to go home, an option to do homework or go hang out. For children that do not feel safe at home. Making sure these safe spaces that will play with them, resonate with their feelings, and are trained. – TAY with justice-involvement experience

One focus group of young women shared interest in having school programs for teen moms.

I want to have access to school and classes for teen parents. But I want to actually have access. I have a lot of school debt because I tried to go last year, but because of the impact of COVID. I have so much debt now that I can't even go to school. – Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

One youth shared his experience that highlighted the critical role that a caring adult and engagement in afterschool programs can play in shaping a young person's life path: “I have a lot of friends in SF who were in school and then got involved with gangs and drugs. I took a break. My counselor helps me a lot to be a part of groups. It makes you feel good. You can learn a lot and you can access many resources.” – Latinx TAY

READINESS FOR COLLEGE, WORK, PRODUCTIVE ADULTHOOD

They should do more programs for kids, where kids can learn about college and life skills-this doesn't happen in school. SF REC stops at some point-there's not much for teens. –CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Young people in San Francisco are thirsty for opportunities for a productive adulthood. There was broad interest in career services, resume building, and interview preparation. Programs that offer paid internships and/or on-the-job training are highly sought after and valued. And while there was great interest in accessing entry-level positions to build work experience, many are tired of low-wage work and yearn for work that provides a path for upward mobility. Young people expressed interest in life skills training, including financial literacy.

Undocumented residents are especially vulnerable to job insecurity, particularly owing to the pandemic. Bilingual services at City College were specifically requested along with help for immigrants with navigating financial aid. Immigrant youth also need support with job applications without a social security number.

Employment Supports for Parents

Parents and young adults alike need access to jobs with upward mobility, as they are finding it difficult to move away from what feels like a constant treadmill of minimum-wage jobs.

Jobs are very limited. It's hard to get other kinds of job. Our job opportunities are very limited. – Latinx TAY

It's hard to move away from minimum wage – TAY with justice-involvement experience

Housing affordability – kids have to go out and get jobs to support family. - TAY with justice-involvement experience

Parents have also had to quit jobs to stay home for virtual learning for their children, further compounding their already-stressed financial situations. Undocumented residents are particularly vulnerable to job insecurity, particularly during COVID-19, as observed by one youth:

In context of COVID, I saw how immigrants and undocumented workers were swept aside. Many lost their jobs and there were few resources for us during the pandemic. We were left on our own. There should be more safety net resources in the cases of emergencies for undocumented workers. For example, my dad was let go of two of his jobs. He suffered from mental illness which led to some accidents.” - Latinx immigrant TAY

Particularly during the pandemic, many respondents' jobs have become vulnerable, and COVID-19 has made job searching more complicated:

We are quarantined, COVID-positive right now, but have no more sick leave for work, and I don't know if they will pay me for missed work. The rent takes much of the income. The whole family had COVID last year. We are all ok. We had 10 days quarantined, where we were not able to work and lost wages. And now, there's no more sick leave. I don't know if I will be compensated for the time off for quarantining. –Filipino immigrant parent

The jobs-it's so hard to find a job. My husband can't take just any job because of COVID. We have two children who are unvaccinated. - CityKids Fair intercept respondent

Getting a job is difficult with the COVID requirements. Normally find out about job opportunities through in-person events such as flea markets. – Friendship House Powwow intercept respondent

Postsecondary Readiness, Access, and Enrollment

Parents and youth expressed interest in programs for young people to facilitate their transition to adulthood. For some, this meant greater investment in post-secondary schooling:

Invest in the child's education because that child could be the next president. This needs to happen by providing more accessibility. All parents want children to go to a nice, pretty school but this costs a lot of money and this won't happen without financial assistance programs. – Latinx immigrant parent

My eldest 16 wants to go to community college but wants to work first. I think she should study first then work afterward. What kind of resources for college/university? Are there programs for financial aid, and concerns about student debt? That's why she wants to work - so no college debt. There is an aversion in the Filipino community to take out college loans. We both took loans and grants to go to college, it is an investment in your future. Not wanting to be in debt is a cultural hurdle. - Filipino immigrant parent

Some young people expressed interest in having more college counseling options available to them: "Why are there only like three counselors for all the schools? There should be more counselors at high schools." – Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

At the college level, students also shared challenges associated with the pandemic and beyond:

Especially when the pandemic hit – everything was completely thrown off. Schools weren't sure how to handle it. Whole talk about having classes outside. No one was ready to handle it. Colleges especially, the transition was hard for me online – I like to ask teachers in-person. And the website makes it hard to find help – Mission District youth/TAY

My experience with school has been bad. because it's hard to do assignments online because it's harder and the internet at school sucks and it takes half the

class to load! My school's work is all due online but I suggest that we should do it on paper. That's causing me to have a bad grade because its making the assignments marked missing and my GPA is not that good. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Language barriers are significant for recent immigrant youth at City College, who expressed a need for more translated materials and/or access to interpretation services in order to keep up with schoolwork. Financial aid for college and help filling out financial aid paperwork was also discussed as a particular challenge for immigrant youth with limited English language skills.

Some youth expressed appreciation for access to City College: “I appreciate that CCSF is free now. CCSF cost was a big barrier. I wish there was more housing, but I do see that companies respect a CCSF certification.” - Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Career Planning and Professional Skills Building

For others, the transition to adulthood was more focused on preparation for entering the work world, including how to prepare a resume and what to wear to an interview, and how to find job opportunities. Respondents to the post-focus group surveys were most interested in information about employment and training programs.³ Programs that offer paid internships and/or on-the-job training are highly sought after and valued.

Workshops for resume writing, interviews, where do we find job opportunities for under 16? Financial literacy, also. He does not have a sense of the worth of money. That would be very helpful. - Filipino immigrant parent

Construction is well paid, and you don't need a lot. In the program I was at, you get trained for interviews. And they helped me to get extensions on my work permit. You can work for your friends and get paid in different ways. To have a good job, you need a high school diploma or GED. – Latinx TAY

I'm finding it difficult to get trade programs for the young...I see it for TAY (18-24), but if 15 or 16-year-olds could work over summer at different organizations, I think it'd OK to start allowing them to try to figure out what type of trade they might be interested in, in addition to , what's the field they want to go into. You usually determine career on what subjects you like in school, my child...he can't really designate a subject he really masters and he completely understands, so now, let's find you a trade you could learn.– Black/African American parent

At school you get an internship, and they help you do a resume, and you can summarize your experience. I did that, and it helped a lot but the work permit is the barrier. I would like to do that to help people. I work in a Korean store and get \$17/hour in seafood. Others get paid less. – Latinx TAY

³ 53% of respondents indicated interest in information about or support with “Employment and Training Programs”.

City College has internships. Part time jobs outside of school are good preparation - there are a lot of opportunities at City College like success coaches and tutoring for students. Classes in person, you can work after class on campus and gain working experience in school and learn different things. – Chinese TAY

I used to be at the YMCA in the Tenderloin and they had job opportunities there. Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

More job preparation to help students understand how to get a job and where to get a job. What you need to be able to get a job – Black/African American youth

Invest in young people and their communities, hire them for city jobs that offer a living wage. \$16 an hour is not a living wage in SF. Ensure young people have a basic income so they can go to school/finish school while taking care of their families and children. – TAY with justice-involvement experience

So maybe, some sort of curriculum with life skills, how to get a job, how to do an interview. In high school, you could get a worker's permit if you have a good grade. They can test the water, maybe for sophomores, or work for a while, then finish high school. I think it's some sort of life skill to help them get to that point, how to interview, how to dress, how to talk to your boss. Not everyone is fit for college...maybe offer vocational training...intern at job interests or shadow a professional. –American Indian/Native American parent

Students in several focus groups expressed the need for job preparation skills and life skills to help them transition into adulthood:

Life skills, if you have life skills down, managing finances, balancing budget, prepping long term and forecasting so you know what you need to survive on your own. – American Indian/Native American parent

Interpersonal skills, there's not a lot who focus on this. People focus on can you do the job, technical, but no company culture, timeliness, conflict resolution. A lot of trainings focus solely on the job, not the person as a whole, which ties into mental health, work life balance. Expectations are so high, we kind of focus on getting the job done and neglect every other aspect of our lives. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Have classes to learn how to be financially independent, manage their money, make money, do taxes, cook for themselves. – Black/African American youth

We need more opportunities for jobs that go into a career who actually want to make a living not just getting a job to get food on the table and pay the bills.

- Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

Financial preparation would be helpful in classes and career and college.

– Black/African American youth/TAY

Many youth expressed interest in programs supporting financial literacy.

I think the city needs to reinstate our programs and push forward financial literacy especially towards the African American Community, or at least make it more accessible. – Black/African American youth/TAY

Business trainings and understand how to use money. Money is the only subject that is not taught. You have to find information through YouTube. What to do with money when you have money. – TAY experiencing homelessness

There's a lack of prep in the American education system, no financial literacy support. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

I mean job finance like learning deeper stuff about financial literacy in stocks that start there and then I feel like maybe if I did more internships though some system based for kids who've been in juvenile hall or anything like that for people that never had that. From people who know what it's like and understand and care.

– Young women-identified TAY with justice-involvement experience

Youth expressed frustration with low wage work, minimum wage not providing enough, and having to compromise to make a living:

Opportunities to have access to jobs that will actually produce wealth for a family. Tired of working minimum wage. Feels like a lot of jobs are being outsourced to non-locals. There are a lot of kids that want to make art, but there are no opportunities for artists to have to compromise their economic stability.” – LGBTQQ and ally TAY

Feels like a minimum wage job right now is not enough. Don't understand the point of school if it does not guarantee a job or money-especially when it takes time. - TAY with justice-involvement experience

Support for jobs with a living wage – minimum wage is not realistic. Need training, job preparation and advice to younger students in school (i.e., school options such as colleges, different kinds of jobs out there) TAY with justice-involvement experience

Need barriers removed in higher end jobs for City. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

And some youth simply expressed the need for more job opportunities to get started.

Create employment opportunities, even internships for systems-impacted youth. - LGBTQQ and ally TAY

Need entry-level positions. – LGBTQQ and ally TAY

We need more programs for youth afterschool, need more opportunities for youth and TAY to gain experience for future job opportunities. A lot of times they expect that we already have experience. We need more programs addressing bigger issues of drugs, housing, and we need more guidance for youth. A lot of kids are lost in these streets. – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Supporting Stable Employment for Vulnerable Children, Youth, and Families

Parents of children with special needs noted gaps in career readiness resources for their children.

What is available? I know my son when he graduates, they can go to the transition programs, but you know, what do they really do there? What do they teach, though? Are there people that really help them strengthen skills and be able to use them? Just to understand even what's available? Yeah, and I don't want it to be like just "daycare" for him. (New speaker:) The COVID shut down a lot of the jobs for people with disabilities. I also think that we have to also be mindful of sending our children out in the community without much preparation. – Parent of child/ren with disabilities

Some foster youth shared challenges around "aging out" of services: "You have about 2 years to get things together until you're no longer helped. A lot of folks aren't ready to face challenges for adulthood, especially after pandemic—aging out of services when they entered into adulthood in nationwide crisis, that's a lot of people being failed. Anything you give a TAY should be available to adults. That includes food, therapy, job supports, anything a TAY needs, a normal adult needs too." – Tenderloin District Middle Eastern TAY

Participants in the Special Advocates focus group also shared concerns around "aftercare":

Looking at how do we continue to support young people who age out of care to continue to support their health and wellbeing, and then also do our part to putting an end to the generational cycle of systems involvement. And so, we're really exploring what does aftercare look like, in terms of young people still having the support of a volunteer to support that systems and resource navigation. Just because they're out of the system and a certain age doesn't mean that the need for that support doesn't continue. And there's really no other organization – unless they move into adult homelessness, which is certainly not what we're looking for, there's not a way for them to continue to get support. So we're looking for that. And that aftercare program is a program that we have not yet identified formal resources for. So those are just some areas." – Community-based service provider

Special advocates for foster youth also noted the critical need for job training to support youth in successful transitions to adulthood.

Absolutely, job training is critical for our young people. One of the things we have as an organization is something called the Sunshine Fund, where we provide access to resources for young people not otherwise provided by the system, right? I mean they're systems involved, and the systems are intended to ensure their needs are met, but there are always things they need that are not provided. And so we're committed to flexible resources in order to offer those things. And

often that's job training or access to supports that are in the workforce development arena. A lot of it is also making – and this comes into the aftercare and natural supports program that we were just talking about – is helping CASAs be aware of what's out there in terms of SF's workforce development programs for young people but also ensuring that those programs, that any barriers to access that are particular to systems-involved youth, that there are flexibility around those so that they're able to access them. – Community-based service provider

Another speaker in the same group named transportation as a barrier to many foster youth accessing job preparation programs who have been placed outside of the city.

If this is a current or former SF foster youth who wants to participate in a job training and readiness program paid for by [DCYF] and their transportation costs are such that they can't get there - you know? These are San Francisco children. And they don't have access to San Francisco programs. – Community-based service provider

Language barriers for newcomer immigrant youth makes job preparation particularly challenging, highlighting the need for more services in-language and translated materials for resources. In addition, immigrant youth need support in navigating job applications without a social security number.

How to apply for jobs without an I-9. The ones I'm interested in ask for my social. I get the jobs, clothing and styling. Everything goes well for me. I get hired because I can't get paid legally. How do I get paid without being a contractor or having a business? – Latinx TAY

When I was in college, I did not have a lot of opportunities to do internships, I hope that the City can provide more of these job experience opportunities for youth. You can go to college without papers, but once you get the degree it is difficult to enter the workforce or further your education. – Latinx immigrant TAY

I feel that the support in having undocumented youth go to college is important. There are resources for this, but once you go beyond college, I feel that we are left without these support/resources. After college, we are left scrambling looking for resources and guidance in these fields. When I was applying for Law School, one of the questions was if you are a permanent resident or a U.S. citizen. I was neither of these options, but I chose permanent resident. I didn't see myself as one of these options. - Latinx immigrant TAY

Latinx undocumented youth in one focus group had robust conversation around challenges and needs around transitioning to adulthood, pursuing higher education or entering the workforce for young people, and for undocumented youth in particular. When asked about supports they need that they do not currently have, they shared the following:

Have a job fair for undocumented folks. Have employers who are willing to accept undocumented folk for positions. This could be for the general population, not just for students in college...More networking opportunities.

When I was applying to college, I got pulled into international students as a category even though I was undocumented. I was considered an international student but not able to access the funds that international students received, like a housing grant or other scholarships. The use of categories can invalidate undocumented youth's experience.

It is hard to target our community with these resources when we are living in the shadows. When we are in High School, no one teaches you how to file taxes. If in High School people told me about the options for what jobs I could get with a certain degree...If we can provide more job education support and resources for undocumented youth in high school (e.g. how to pursue internships, how to start your own business), before they make up their mind to not get a higher education because they don't see any professional career opportunities. Some youth go to trade schools because they thought it was easier to get into even though they might have wanted to pursue higher education degrees...Teach them about the various pathways for career opportunity.

Think about giving youth stipends or programs for immigrants that are connected to stipends.

There should be resources for employers to hire independent contractors. Employers are afraid of doing this and employees need support because they don't know how to file taxes for it.

Independent contracting workshop included in that job fair!

Hire high school kids to work in professional spaces. Start them early so that they can envision doing those things.

More resources to help employers, organization/companies know how to support undocumented workers. (capacity-building). Also improve language assistance for employers and employees. Not every organization have bilingual staff or if they do, this staff might not have all the information. If they don't have bilingual staff they have to figure out a way to find an interpreter which increases the wait time. Clients feel discouraged with the long wait time to seek support.

Focus Group Survey Results

At the close of each focus group session, participants were asked to complete a survey to gather demographic information as well as participants' interest in information or support. Readers should note that response rates were very low. Results are reported in the table below.

Please indicate if you have any interest in information or support with any of the following.	Frequency	Percent
Employment and training programs	50	53%
Immigration issues	30	32%
Dual-language learning resources	29	31%
How to support a child with special needs	23	24%
Healing from violence or other trauma	21	22%
Managing behavioral health challenges	19	20%
Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQQ) kids/youth	14	15%
Family life with justice-involved family members	13	14%
Navigating child protective services	13	14%
Fostering children or youth	9	9%
None of the above	20	21%
Total	95	100%

Survey Results

A total of 691 parents and 257 youth responded to a brief survey about resident perceptions of their community's strengths and needs. Surveys were administered at community events, public spaces, and at housing developments as outlined below.

- **Backpack Giveaway:** 135 parents and 95 youth completed surveys at these events in August 2021.
- **Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD):** 373 parent surveys were gathered as well as 140 youth surveys in the fall of 2021.
- **City Kids Family Fair:** 80 parents completed surveys at this event in October 2021.
- **15th Annual Dancing Feathers Powwow:** 49 parents and 22 youth were surveyed at this event in October 2021.
- **California Academy of Sciences:** 54 surveys were collected over two days of tabling in November 2021.

PARENT SURVEY SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

Basic Needs

- Three out of ten respondents (31%) reported that they did not have a job that could pay enough for their family's expenses. Compared to other respondents, American Indian/Alaska Native, African American/Black/Black, Multiracial, and Hispanic/Latinx respondents were less likely to have a job that covers expenses, and more likely to be struggling with rent and other bills. These respondents also tend to report a higher average number of basic needs compared to others. Respondents between 18 and 24 years old were less likely to indicate having a job that pays enough for their family's needs compared to respondents aged 25 years and older.
- In open-ended responses, many highlighted the instability of their housing and the increased cost of rent. Additional comments discussed recent increases in the cost of food.
- Even though 78% of respondents indicate having access to health care, some open-ended comments mentioned the need for medical care or insurance. In addition, younger respondents (18-24 years old) also seemed to have more problems getting health care and healthy food than older respondents.
- Needs for stable housing were more likely to be reported by respondents living in and around the Tenderloin district of the city in ZIP codes 94115, 94103, and 94102. Transportation needs were more likely to be reported by respondents living in the South of Market area in ZIP code 94103.

Support and Care Needs

- Only 38% agreed that they had the care for aging dependent adults that they need.
- Between two and three out of ten respondents reported needs for enrichment opportunities before the school day starts (25%) for their K-12 children, job trainings

for 18+ year old children (25%), affordable childcare (23%), parenting support (23%), and access to college planning for their high school student (23%).

- In open-ended responses, many shared difficulties finding affordable and high-quality childcare for their young children and before- or after-school programs.
- Younger respondents (18-24 years) reported higher needs for parenting skills, academic support for their K-12 children, and school supplies compared to older respondents (25+ years).

Safety Needs

- About 28% of respondents do not feel safe in their neighborhood. This was also mentioned by many in their write-in responses: increased crime in their neighborhood, racism, and gun violence were featured in open-ended responses.
- About 25% do not feel safe from COVID in their neighborhood. This was particularly true for parents with older children.
- A greater proportion of younger respondents reported needs around neighborhood violence, COVID safety, their own well-being, safe places in their neighborhood, and a home safe from violence.
- Respondents living in ZIP code 94115 (Lower Pacific Heights) reported greatest needs for neighborhood safety.

Effects of COVID

- Between 40% to 47% of respondents reported negative effects of COVID on social relationships, academic knowledge and skills, and emotional well-being. Parents with children under 5 believe that their children's social relationships were most negatively affected by the pandemic. Parents with school-aged children (ages between 5 and 17) were most concerned about the negative effects on academic knowledge and skills. Parents of children aged 18 and older reported the largest negative effects on emotional well-being and social relationships.
- In terms of returning to school, many parents were looking forward to having their children regain social interactions and structured education once school resumed in person.

Information or Support Needs

- 30% of respondents were interested in dual-language learning resources while 28% were interested in employment and training programs, and 25% were interested in managing behavioral health challenges.
- Parents of young children (ages 0-4) were more interested in dual-language learning resources (42%) and parents of older youth (ages 18+) were more interested in job training opportunities.
- Younger parents (ages 18-24) were particularly interested in how to support a child with special needs (39%) and job training programs (35%).

- Asian parents were most interested in dual-language learning resources (49%) and American Indian/Alaskan Native parents were most interested in healing from violence or other trauma (47%). A large proportion of Pacific Islander parents (41%) indicated interest in information about how to support a child with special needs.

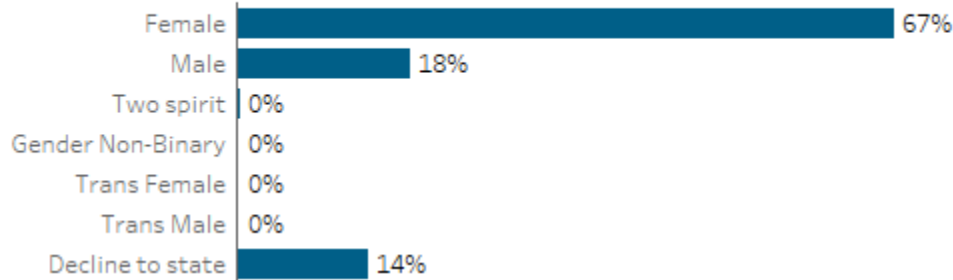
PARENT SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The majority of parent survey respondents were aged 25 and older and female. The parent surveys achieved an oversampling of Black/African American respondents, as illustrated in the figures below.

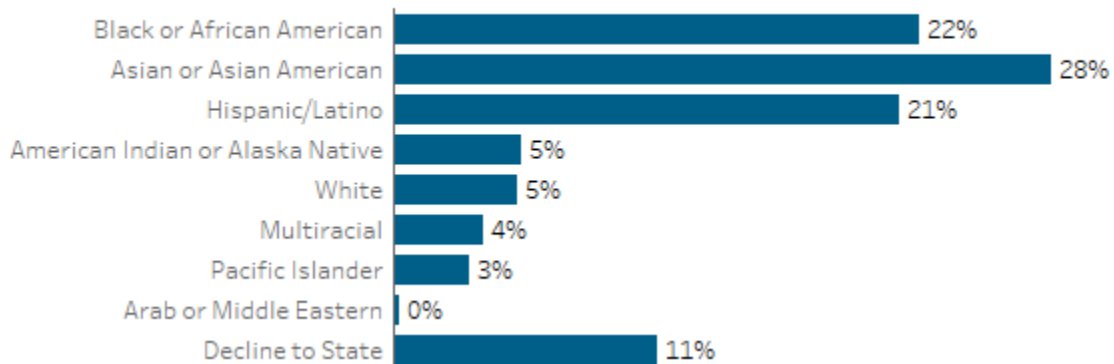
Age



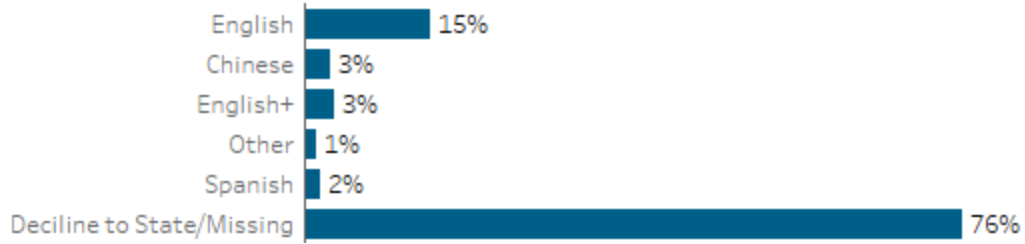
Gender Identity



Race/Ethnicity

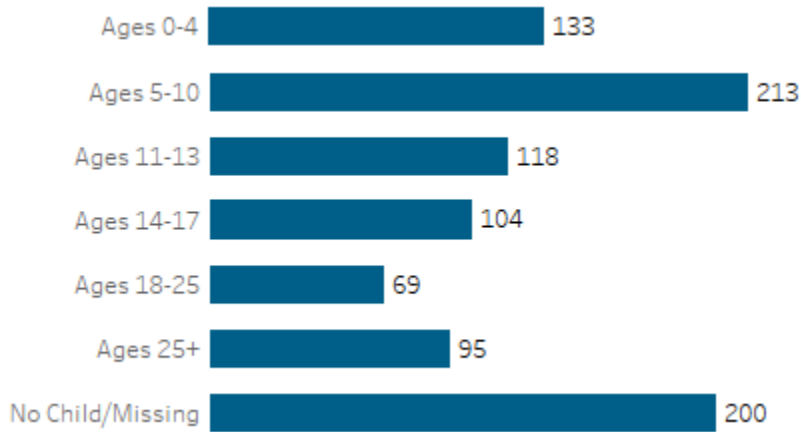


Language



N=691. Note: “English+” indicates the respondent identified English and another language as the languages they speak most at home. Two sources did not include the language question which accounts for the large proportion of missing data (MOHCD and Backpack Giveaway). Other languages that respondents identified included French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Navajo, Nepalese, Yurok, Paiute Shoshone, Punjabi, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Children’s Ages



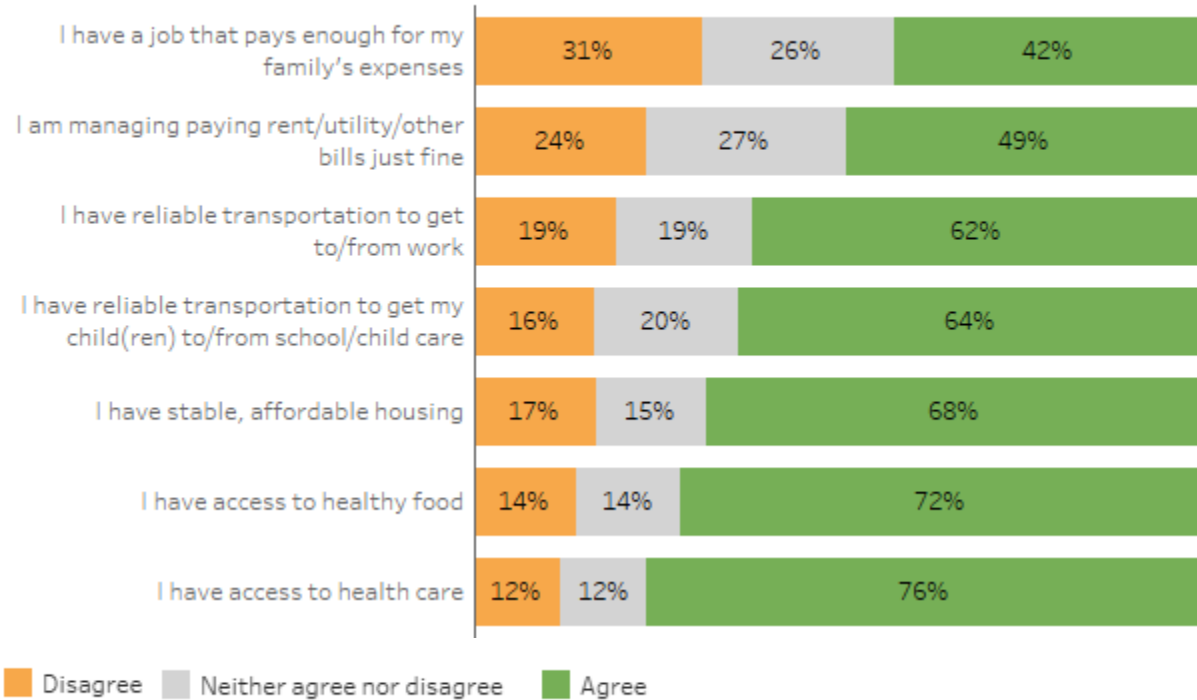
N=691.

PARENT SURVEY FINDINGS

Basic Needs

Parent Survey responses suggest that families are struggling with holding a job that pays enough for family expenses and managing bills. Less than half of respondents agree that they have these basic needs. Roughly one-third of respondents do not agree that they have stable, affordable housing, or access to healthy food.

Basic Needs



N=535-673. The question "my income covers all my bills" was combined with the question "I have a job that pays enough for my family's expenses".

In their write-in responses about basic needs, stable or affordable housing was mentioned most frequently. In addition, respondents reported problems related to not having enough money to cover expenses or bills, access to food, getting medical care or insurance, reliable transportation, unemployment.

"I need to establish housing and employment. I need access to medical care."

"Food is a problem at home. My food stamps got cut off so everything is costly."

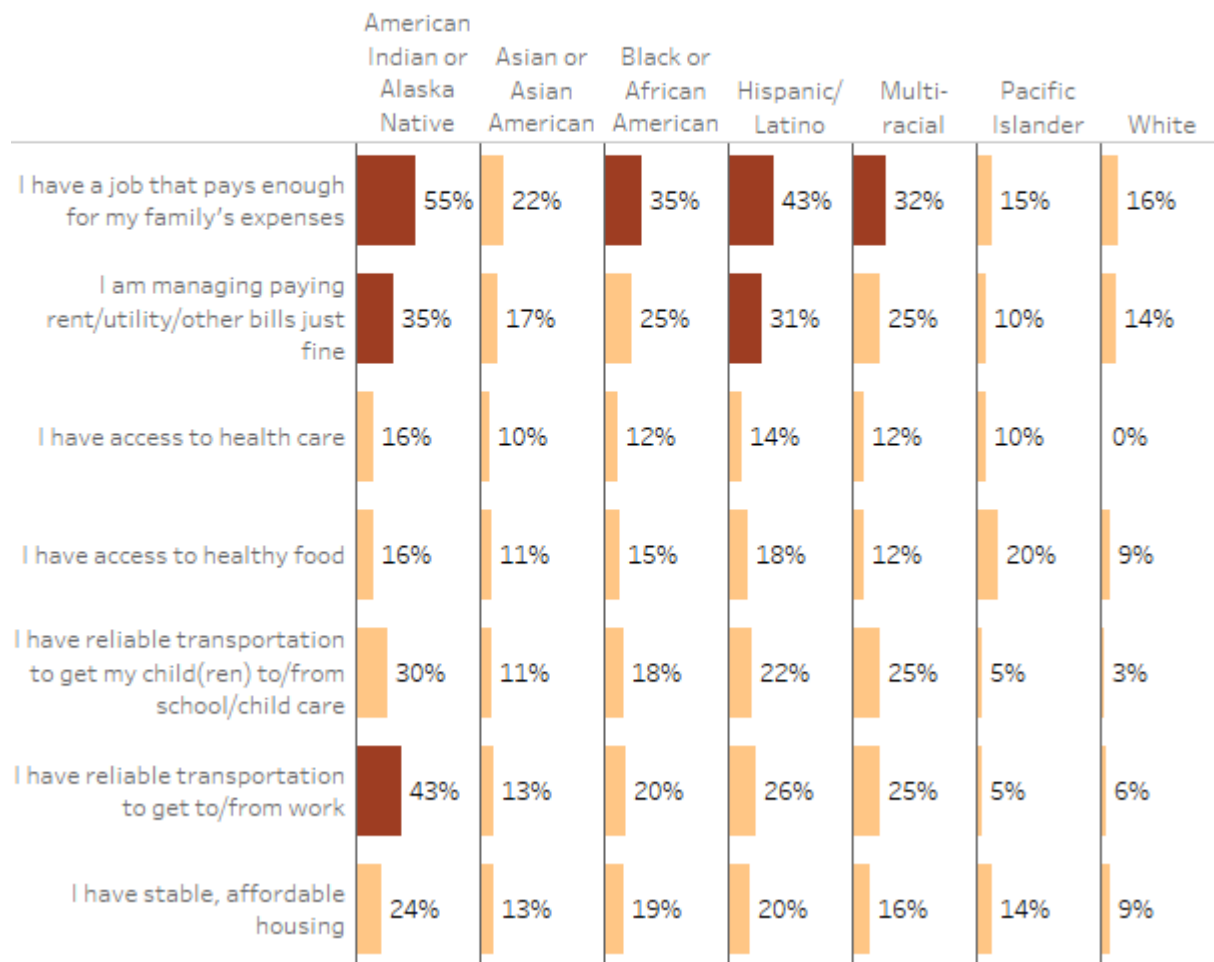
The average number of needs respondents indicated having was 1.2 out of the seven listed. While most (57%) of the respondents did not indicate having needs in any of the basic needs areas listed, 13% of respondents identified needs in four or more areas; 3% of respondents indicated needs all seven areas listed in the survey

Overall, roughly three out of ten respondents reported that they did not have a job that pays enough for their family's expenses. As illustrated in the following figures, compared to other

respondents, American Indian/Alaska Native, African American/Black/Black, Multiracial, and Hispanic/Latinx respondents were less likely to agree with the survey statement, “I have a job that pays enough for my family’s expenses”, and more likely to be struggling with rent and other bills. These respondents also tend to report a higher average number of basic needs compared to others.

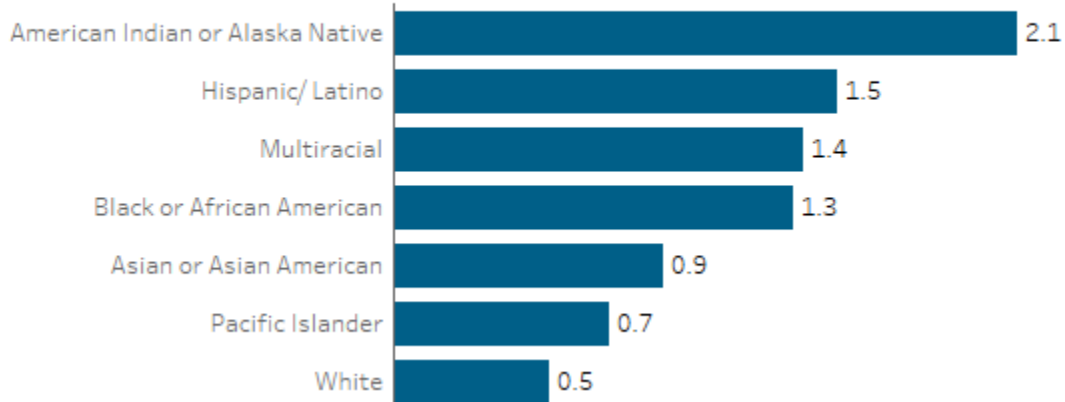
American Indian/Alaska Native respondents indicate having a greater number of basic needs relative to other respondents, and a greater proportion of American Indian/Alaska Native respondents identify reliable transportation to get to/from work as a need relative to other respondents.

Basic Needs by Race/Ethnicity (percent of respondents who DISAGREED with each statement)



N=481-596. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

Average Number of Basic Needs by Race/Ethnicity

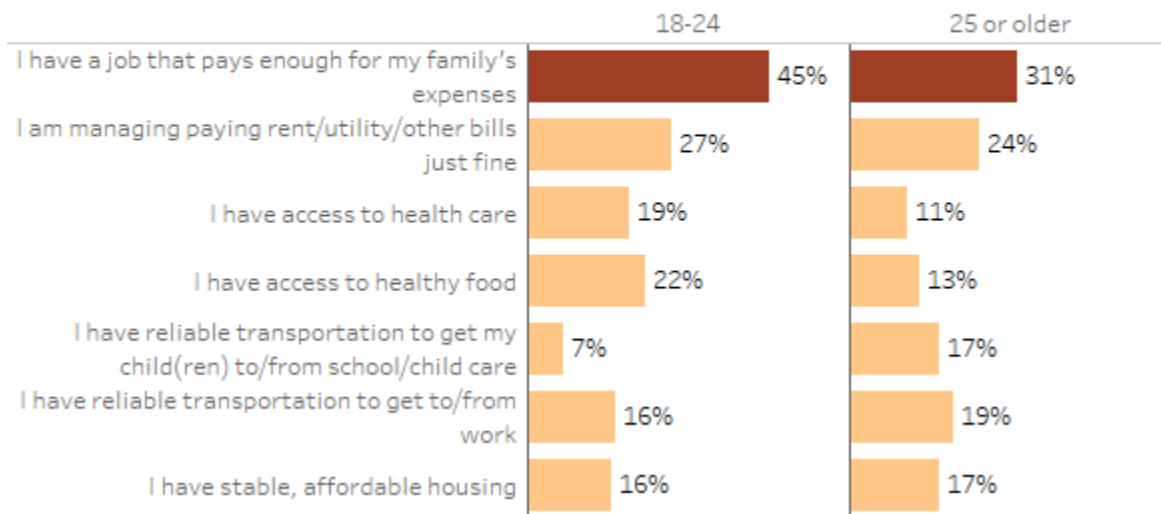


N=612. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

Basic needs reported also differed by the respondents' age. Younger respondents who were between 18 and 24 years old reported more needs for jobs compared to respondents aged 25+.

Even though 78% of respondents indicate having access to health care, some open-ended comments mentioned the need for medical care or insurance. In addition, younger respondents (18-24 years old) also seemed to have more problems getting health care and healthy food than older respondents.

Basic Needs by Age (percent of respondents who DISAGREED with each statement)

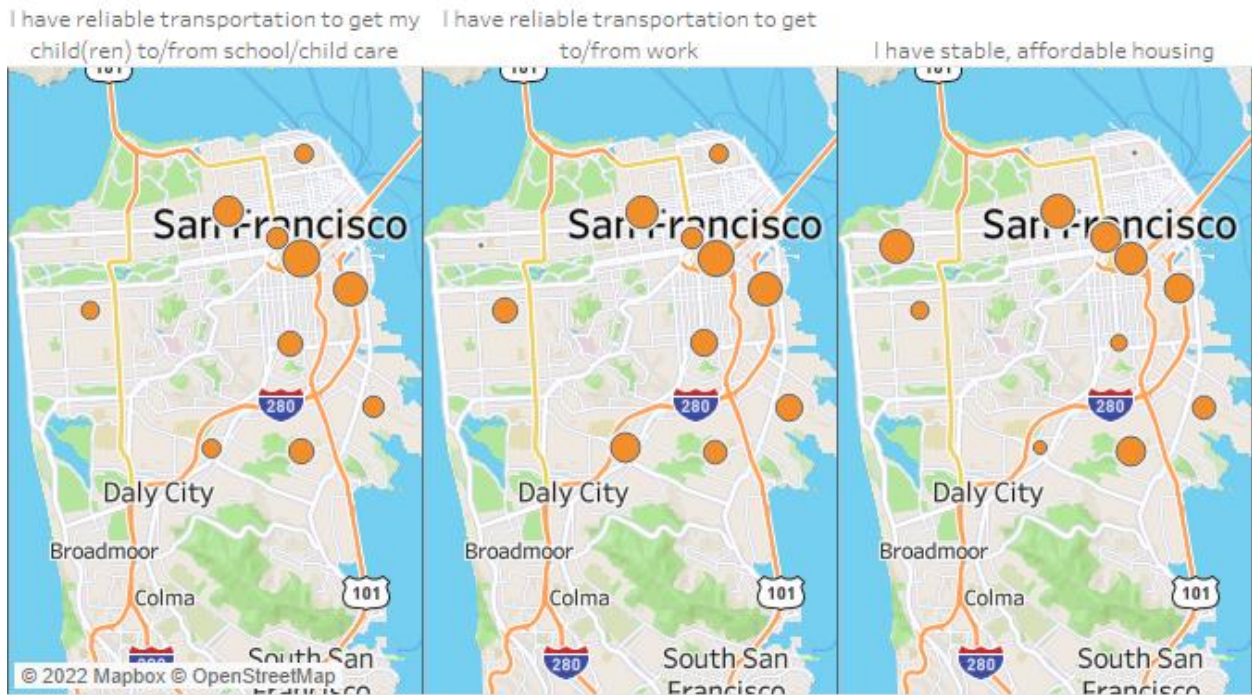


N=481-591

The three questions related to the geographic regions below were analyzed by the ZIP code of the respondents' residence. The first two maps show the percentages of respondents who need better transportation. The results were very similar indicating the regions with bigger circles had transportation challenges generally. The ZIP codes with highest needs for transportation included 94103 (29-31%), 94107 (25-26%), and 94115 (20-23%).

The ZIP codes with highest needs for stable housing included 94115 (27%), 94103 (22%), and 94102 (20%).

Percentage of Disagreement by ZIP Code



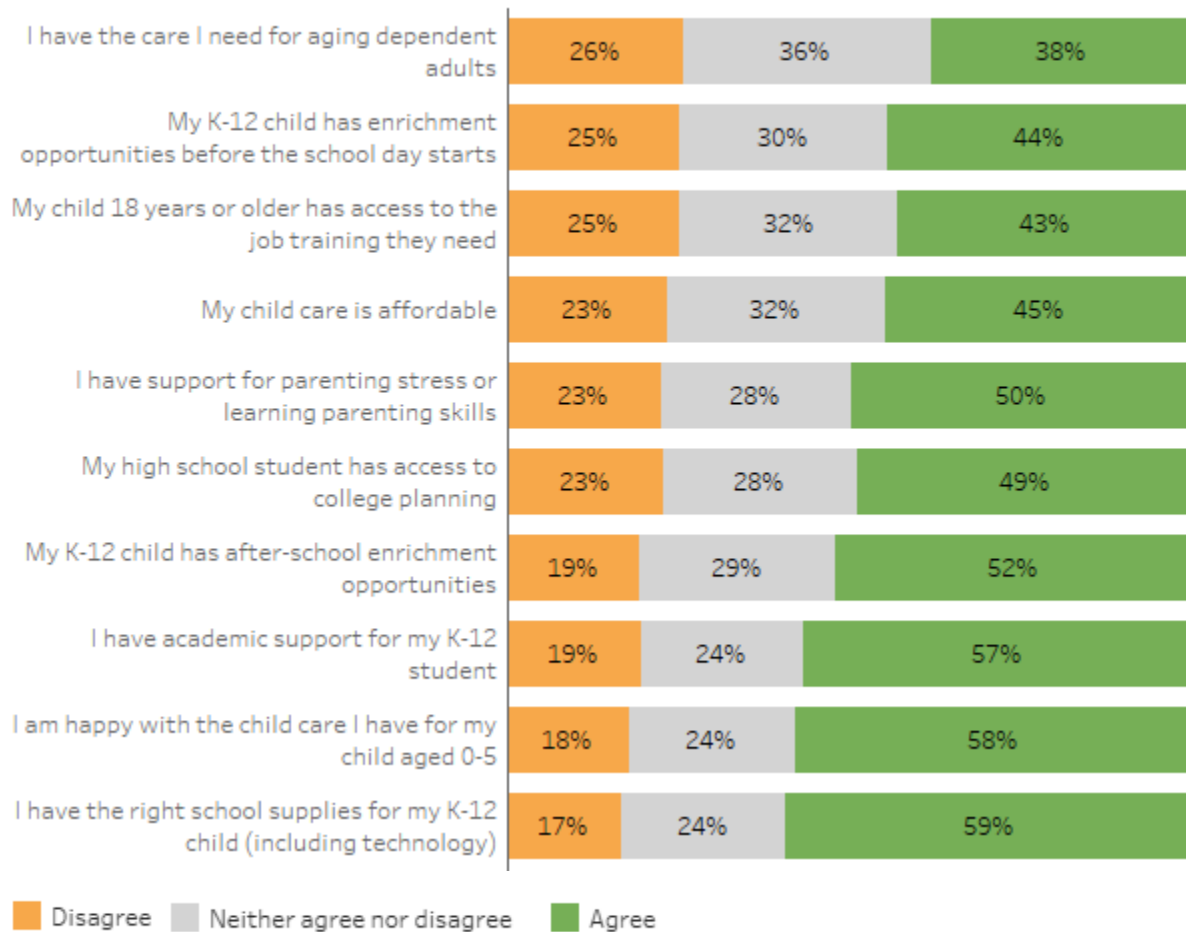
N=498-522. ZIP codes with small number of responses (<10) are not presented.

Support and Care Needs

Only 38% agreed that they had the care for aging dependent adults that they need, while roughly one-fourth of respondents do not have the care they need for aging dependent adults.

Between two and three out of ten respondents reported needs for enrichment opportunities before the school day starts (25%) for their K-12 children, job trainings for 18+ year old children (25%), affordable childcare (23%), parenting support (23%), and access to college planning for their high school student (23%).

Support and Care Needs



N=425-559. N varied because only those who were applicable to each question responded to it. N/A and missing responses were excluded in the calculations.

In open-ended responses about care and support needs, challenges around finding quality and affordable childcare were most frequently mentioned. Respondents also mentioned needing before- and after-school programs, and care for aging adults, as the following write-in responses illustrate:

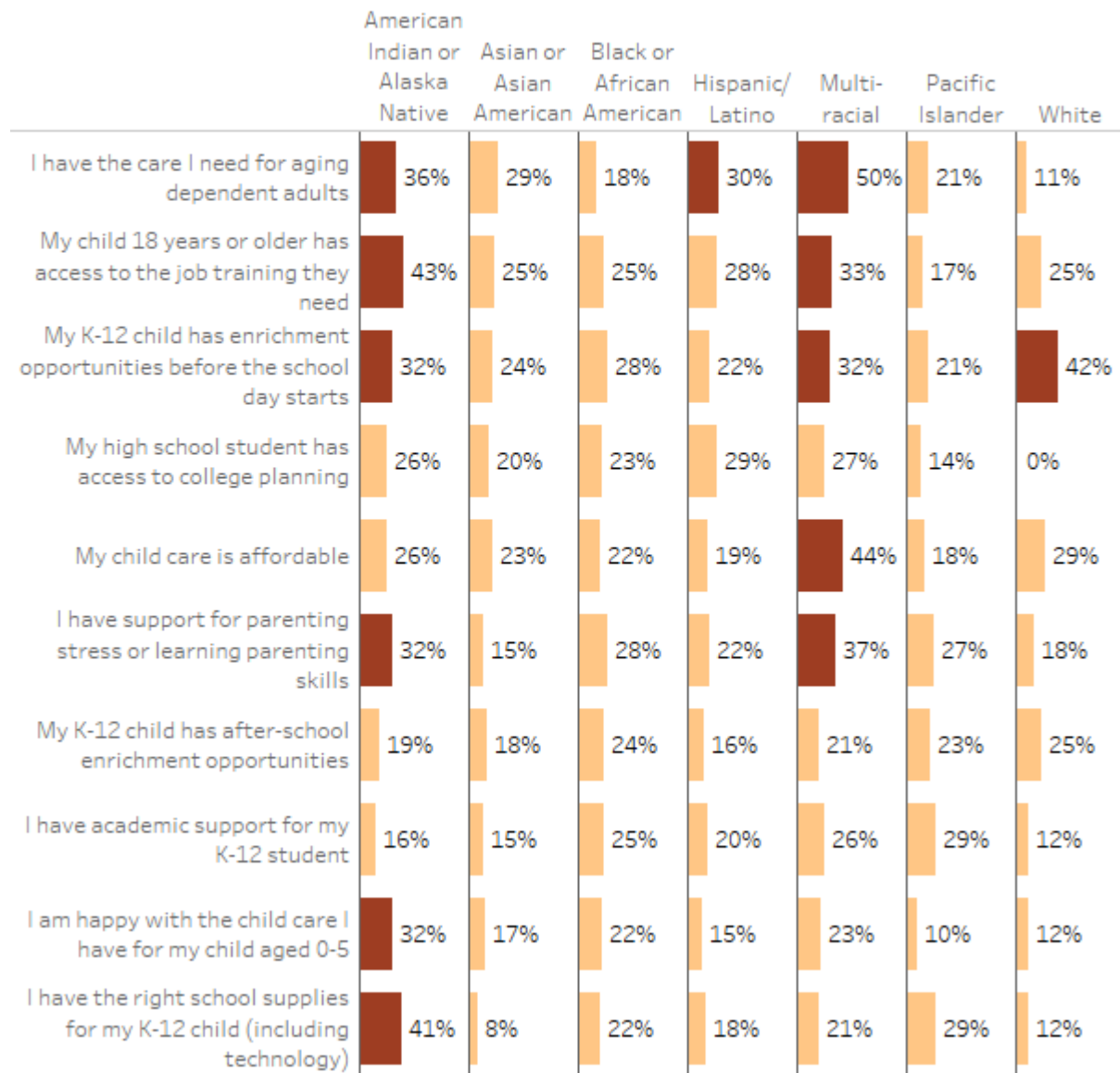
“Daycare/pre-school is incredibly expensive. We can only afford it since we do not pay rent. I wish there were affordable/free childcare for kids under 5.”

“After school and before school care programs are limited this year due to COVID.”

58% of respondents indicated they did not need any of the 10 support and care needs listed, whereas 10% indicated a need in 6 or more support and care areas listed. On average, respondents indicated 1.5 needs.

Support and care needs also vary by respondent race/ethnicity, as illustrated below.

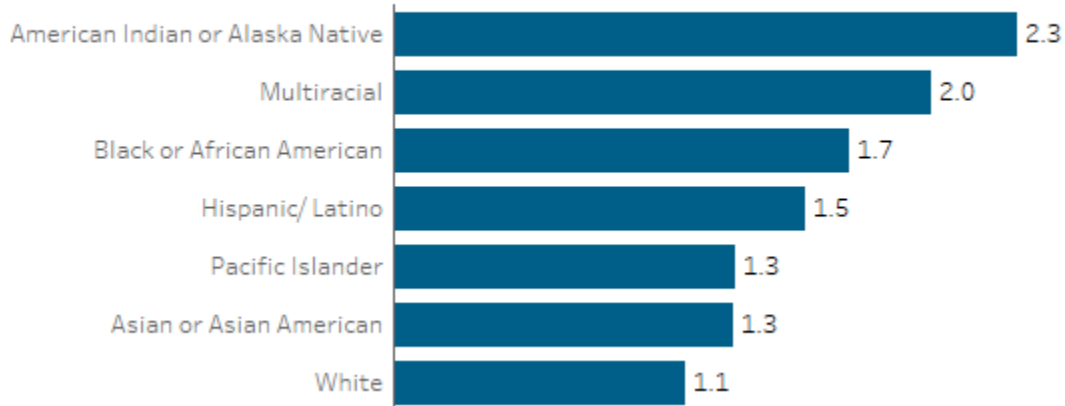
Support and Care Needs by Race/Ethnicity(percent of respondents who DISAGREED with each statement)



N=334-498. Percentages larger than 40% are in dark red. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

Again, American Indian/Alaska Native respondents indicated having the greatest number of needs among the support and care needs listed.

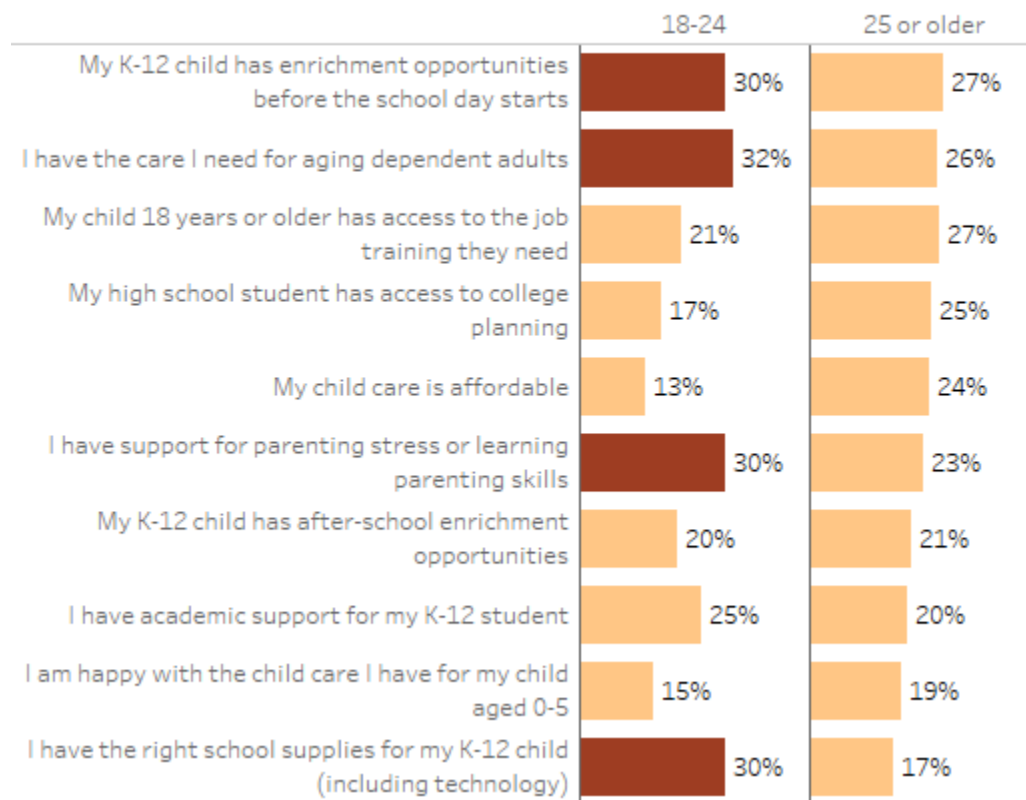
Average Number of Support and Care Needs by Race/Ethnicity



N=612. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

Younger respondents between the ages of 18 and 24 tend to have more needs around child care, aging adult care, and parenting compared to respondents aged 25 and older.

Support and Care Needs by Age



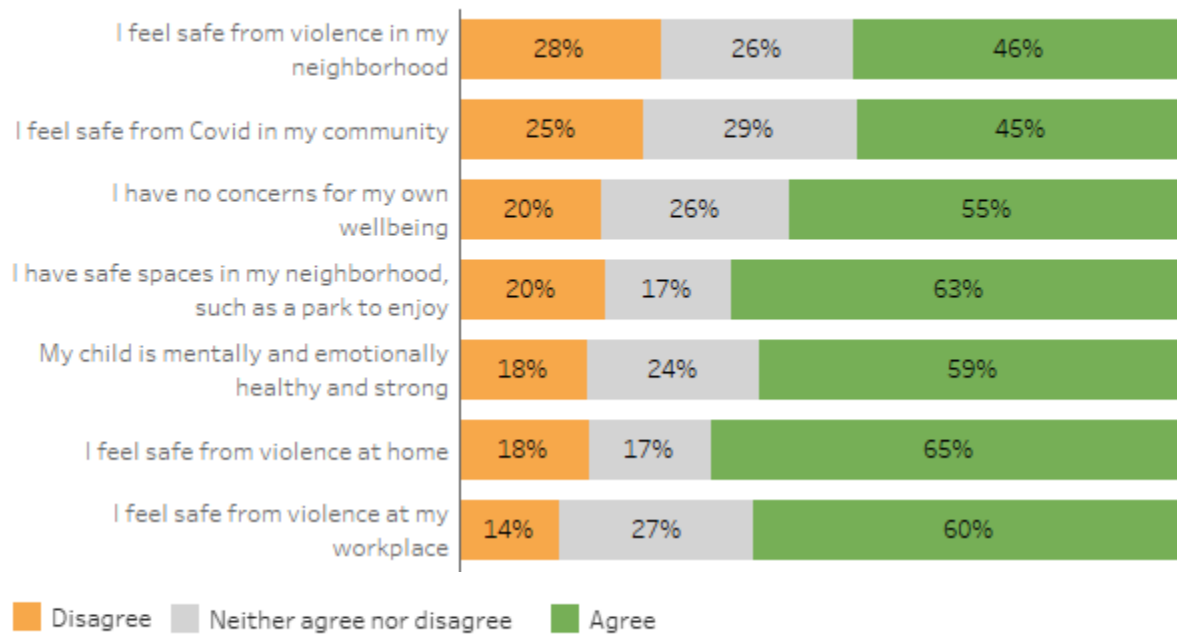
N=330-486

Safety Needs

About 28% of respondents do not feel safe in their neighborhood. This was also mentioned by many in their write-in responses: increased crime in their neighborhood, racism, and gun violence were featured in open-ended responses.

One-quarter of respondents do not feel safe from COVID in their neighborhood.

Safety Needs



N=535-681

In their write-in responses about safety and wellness concerns, many respondents were worried about increased neighborhood violence and crimes (n=24). Some mentioned COVID safety concerns, getting medical care/therapy or affordable health insurance, concerns around neighborhood hygiene, worries about homeless people in their neighborhood, mental health concerns violence at home, and lack of police enforcement.

“Healthcare costs and overwhelmed healthcare services, healthcare tied to employment.”

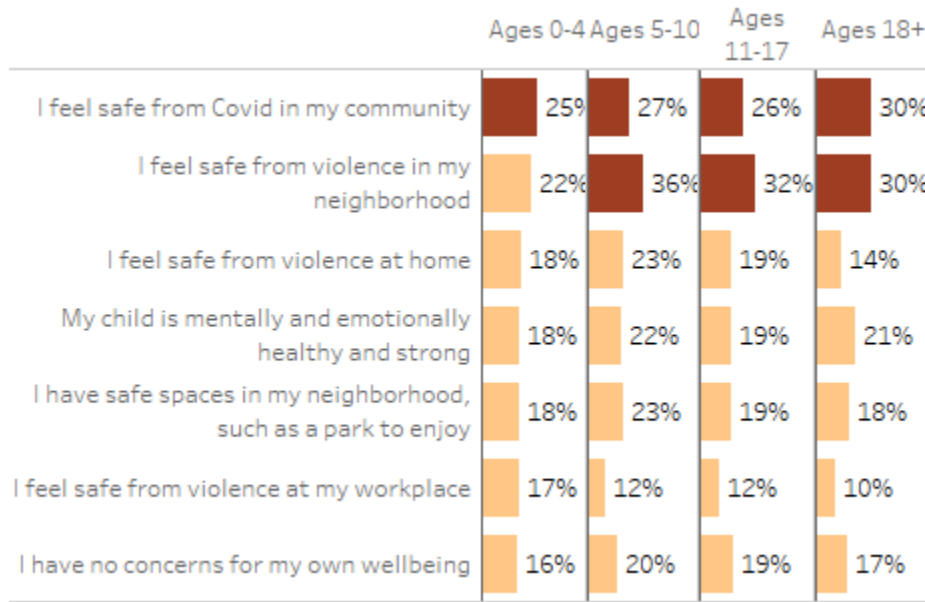
“Being Asian, there has been significantly more awareness on the racially targeted violence that’s happening around the city. I feel not directly impacted, but that’s because we’d chosen to stay home rather than to risk.”

“There have been more garage break ins in my neighborhood and it makes us feel less safe than before.”

The average number of general safety needs was 1.3. Over half (55%) did not indicate needs in any of the general safety areas listed, while 9% identified five or more needs.

General Safety Needs by Child Age Groups

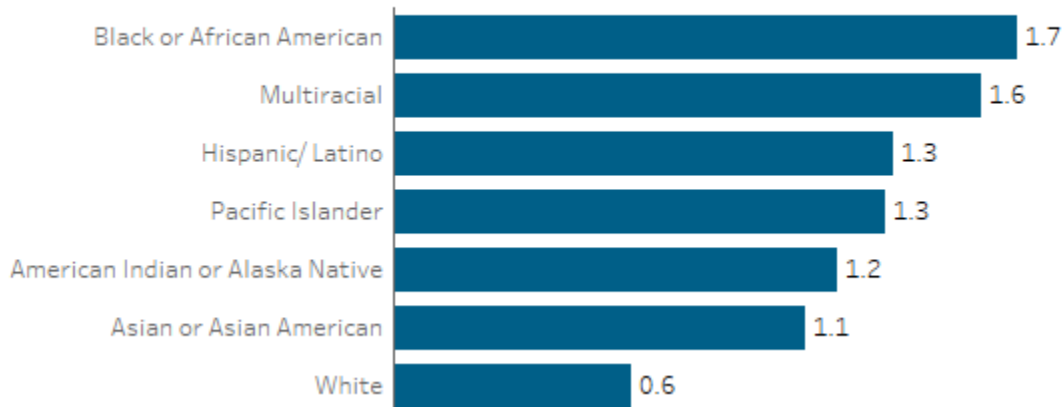
COVID safety was a priority safety need identified by respondents with children of all ages. Parents of school-aged and older children also indicated needs around safety from violence in their neighborhoods.



N: Ages 0-4=116-132; Ages 5-10=160-211; Ages 11-17=133-188; Ages 18+=135-152. Respondents were allowed to choose multiple age groups for their multiple children.

African American/Black and Multiracial respondents identified a higher average number of safety needs as compared to other respondents.

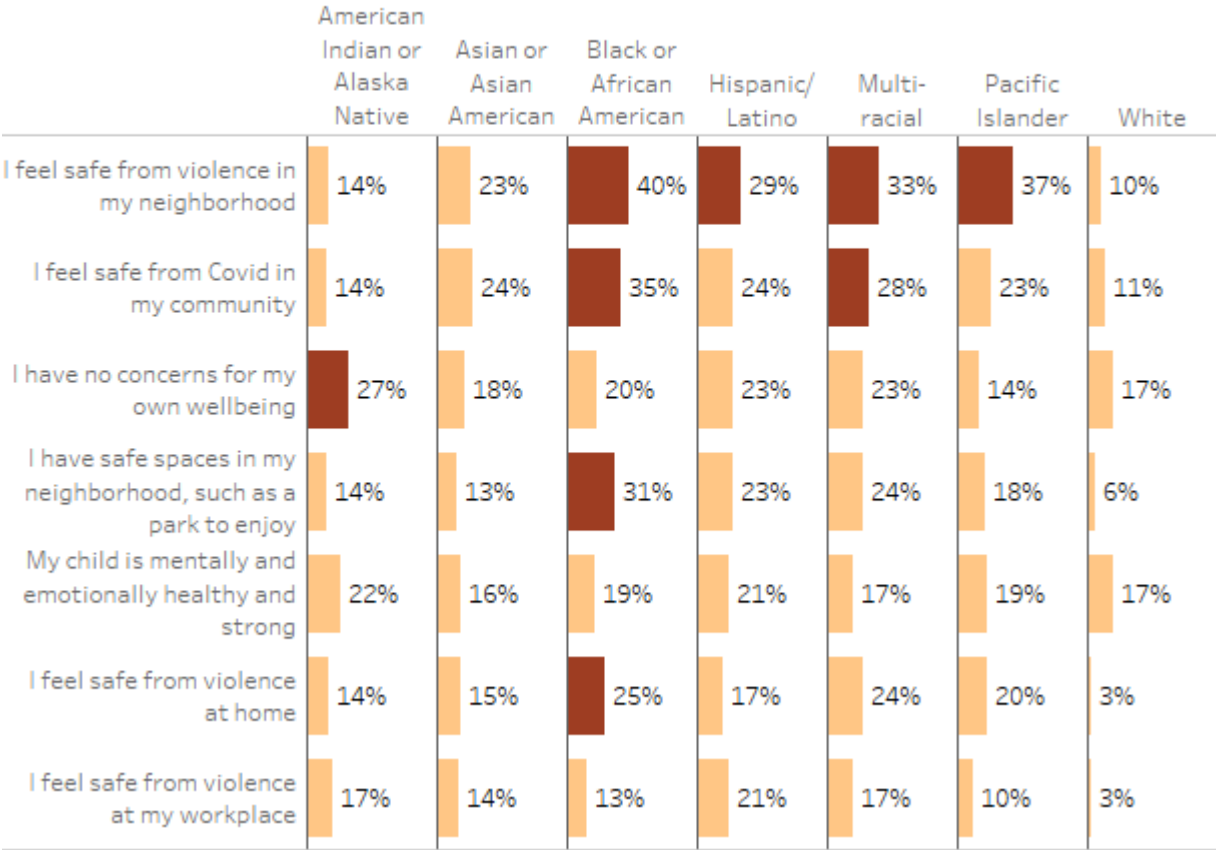
Average Number of General Safety Needs by Race/Ethnicity



N=612. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

Among African American/Black respondents, the greatest proportion of respondents disagreed that they feel safe from violence in their neighborhood. Pacific Islander, Multiracial, and Hispanic/Latinx respondents were also most likely to indicate needs around neighborhood violence.

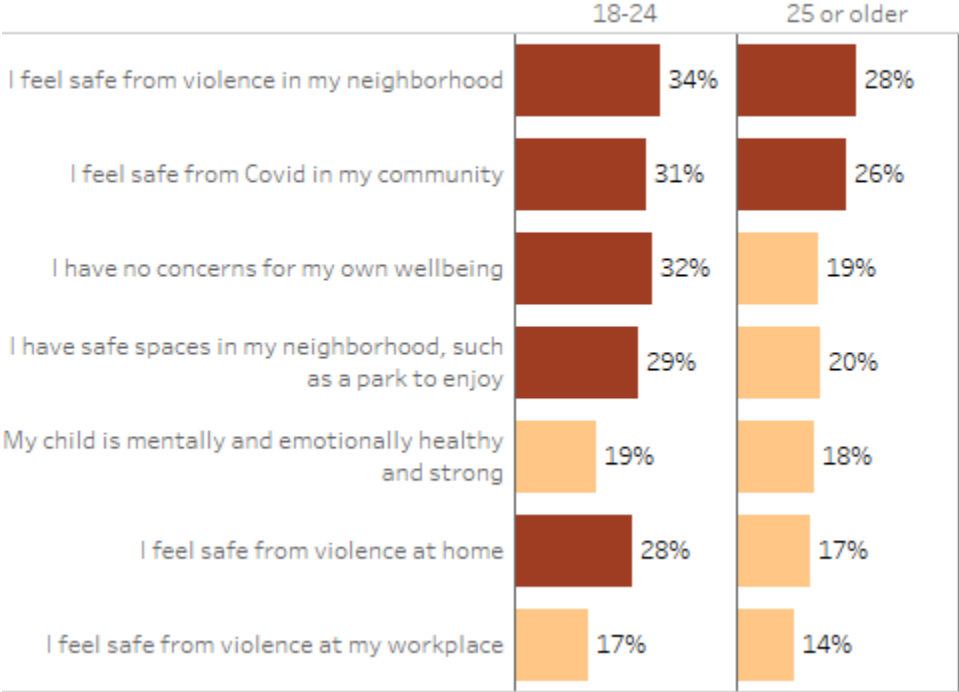
Safety Needs by Race/Ethnicity (percent of respondents who DISAGREED with each statement)



N=482-608. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

A greater proportion of younger respondents reported needs around neighborhood violence, COVID safety, their own well-being, safe places in their neighborhood, and a home safe from violence, as compared to older respondent.

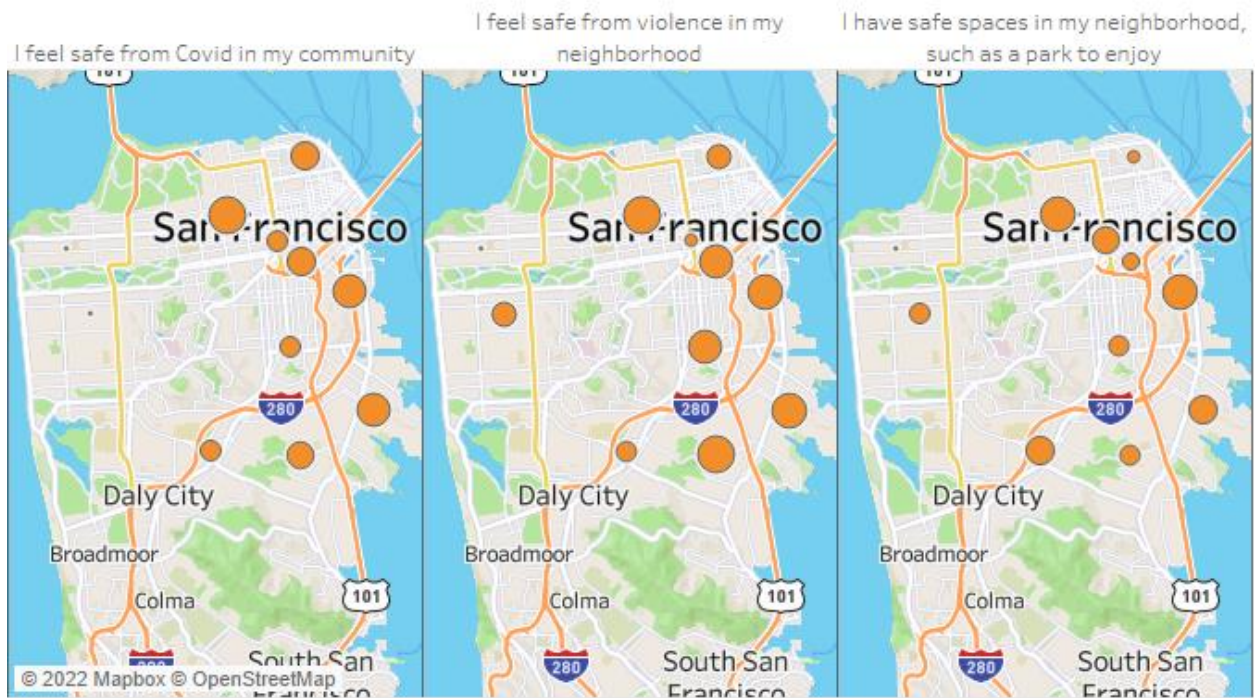
Safety Needs by Age



N=482-600

The three statements related to community safety below were analyzed by the ZIP code of residence. The ZIP codes with highest percentages of respondents who did not feel safe from COVID included 94115 (38%), 94124 (30%), and 94107 (30%). The ZIP codes with highest percentages of respondents who did not feel safe from violence in their neighborhood were 94115 (38%), 94134 (38%), 94124 (33%), and 94107 (32%). Lastly, the ZIP codes with highest percentages of respondents who did not feel that they had safe spaces included 94115 (33%) and 94107 (31%).

Percentage of Disagreement by ZIP Code

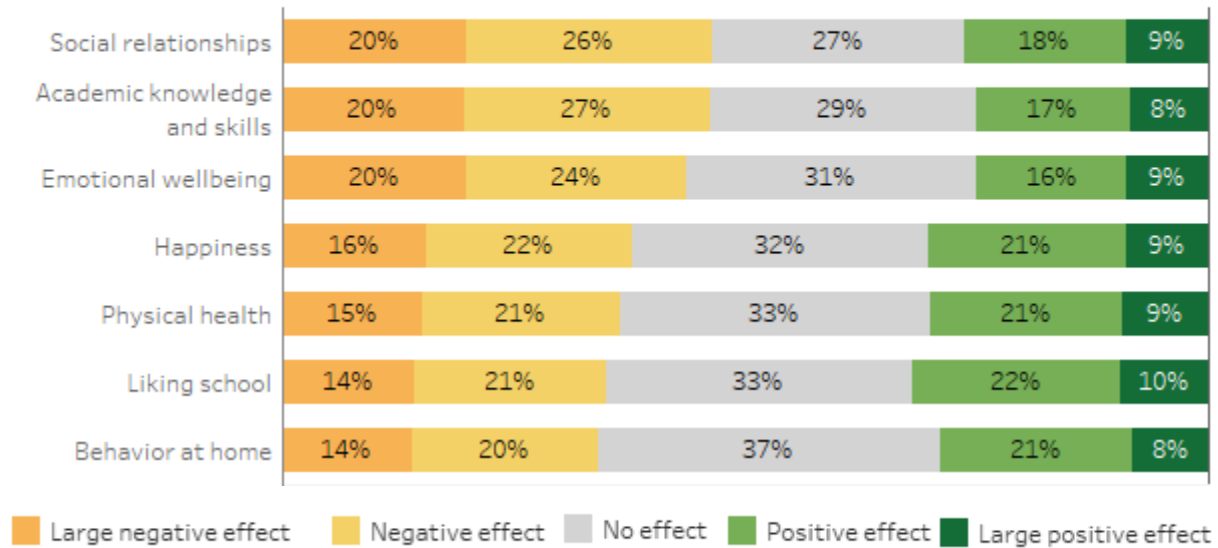


N=536-666. ZIP codes with small number of responses (<10) are not presented.

Effects of COVID

Between 40% to 47% of respondents reported negative effects of COVID on social relationships, academic knowledge and skills, and emotional well-being.

What effect did Covid-19 pandemic and year of distance learning have on your child?



N=619-627

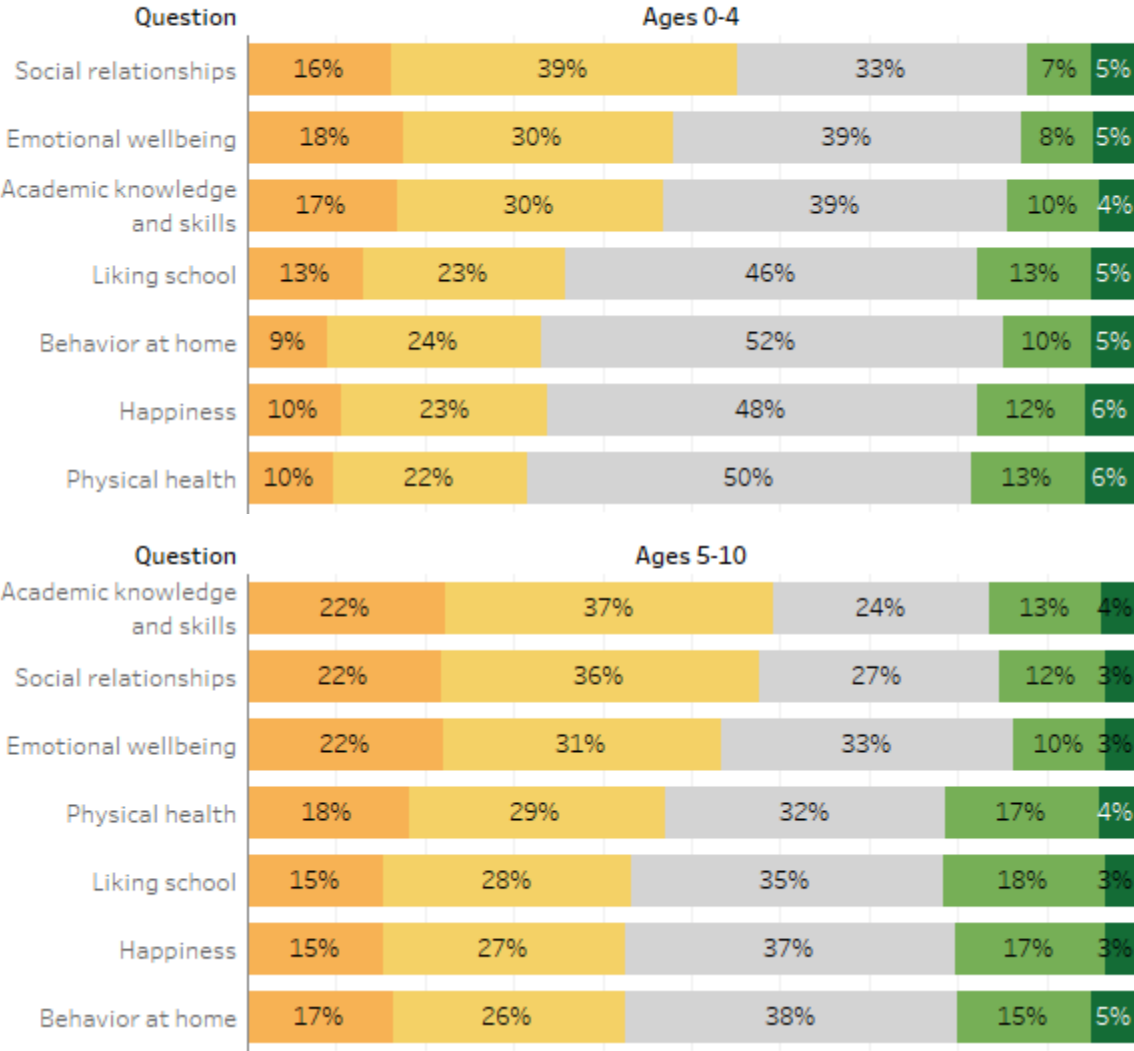
In terms of returning to school, many parents looked forward to having their children regain social interactions, structured education, and physical activities after a year of distance learning. Some respondents specifically mentioned that they were expecting their children to regain learning and to be happier by meeting their friends and teachers in person.

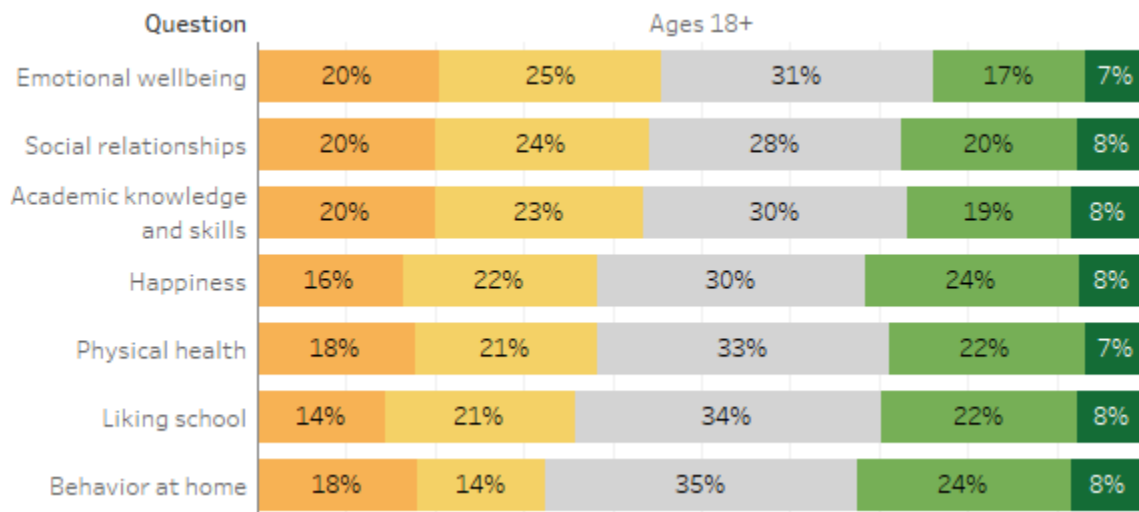
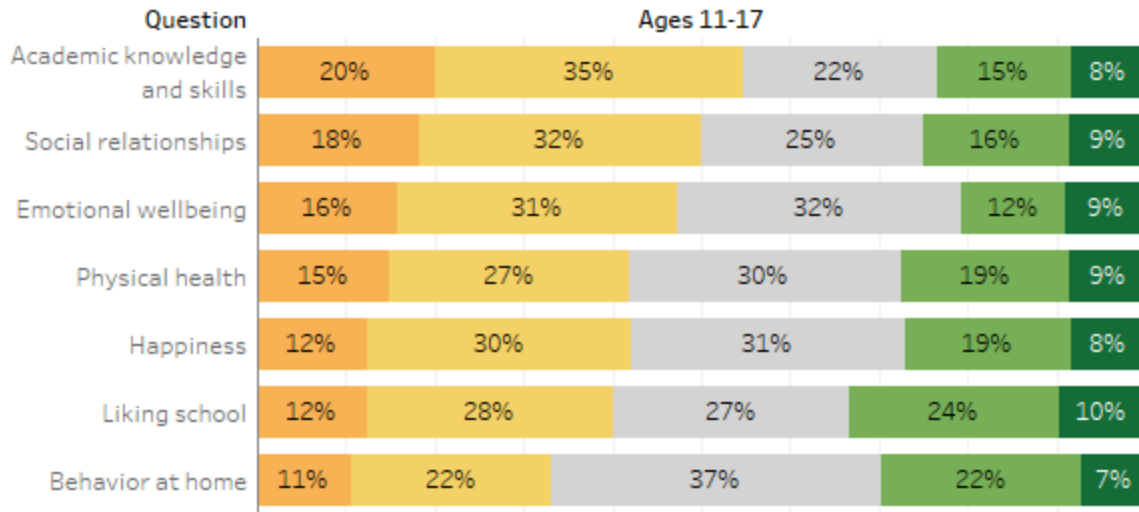
“Socialization, building friendships, and finding work during the day.”

“For her to be able to socialize with her classmates. Doing in-person school work for her is much better than virtual because she is an introvert and basically got lost in the virtual schooling. She is much better with on hands work.”

As illustrated by the following figures, parents of younger children (ages 0-4) were more concerned with the impact of COVID on their child/ren’s social relationships, whereas parents of school-aged children (5-17) were most concerned with their child/ren’s academic knowledge and skills, and parents of youth aged 18+ were most concerned about their child/ren’s emotional wellbeing.

What effect did Covid-19 pandemic and year of distance learning have on your child?

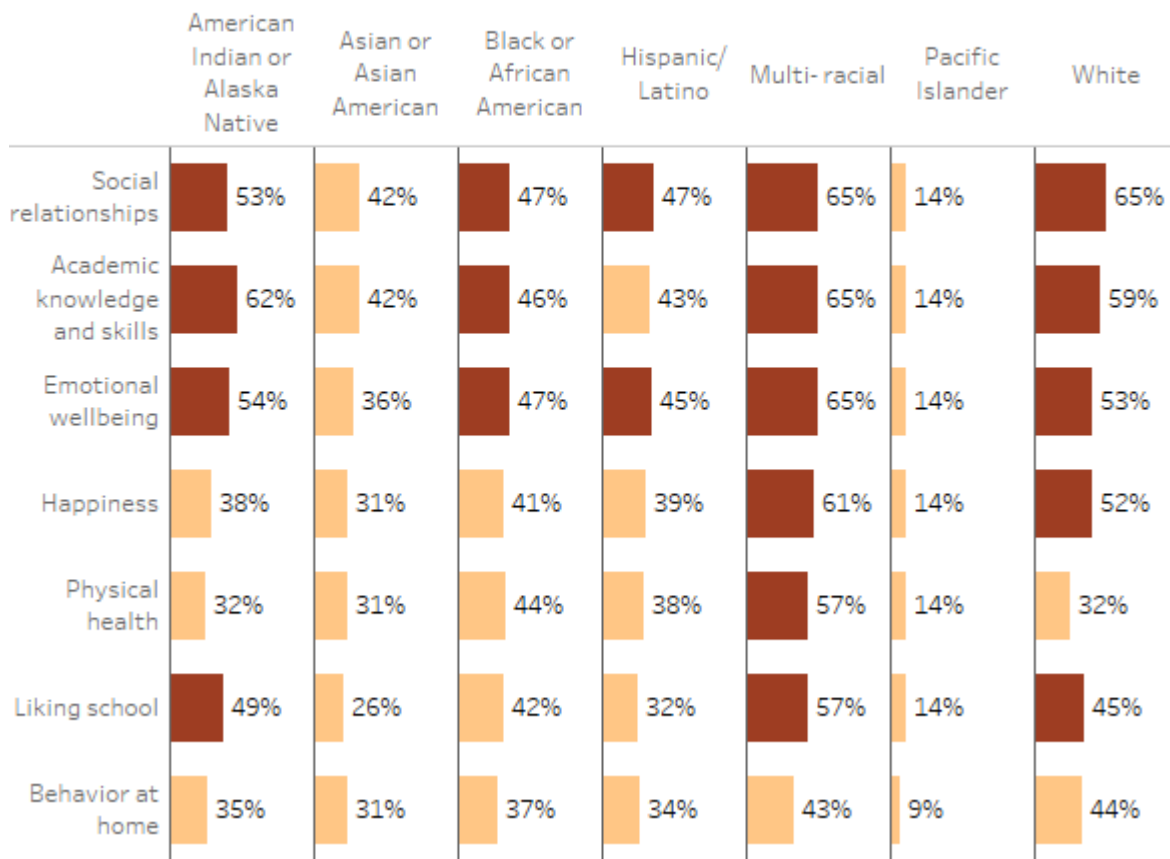




■ Large negative effect
 ■ Negative effect
 ■ No effect
 ■ Positive effect
 ■ Large positive effect

Parents' perception of the impact of the pandemic on their child/ren varies widely by race/ethnicity. While very few Pacific Islander parents indicated negative impacts in any of the areas listed in the survey, a substantial proportion of Multiracial and White parents indicated negative impacts across nearly all dimensions.

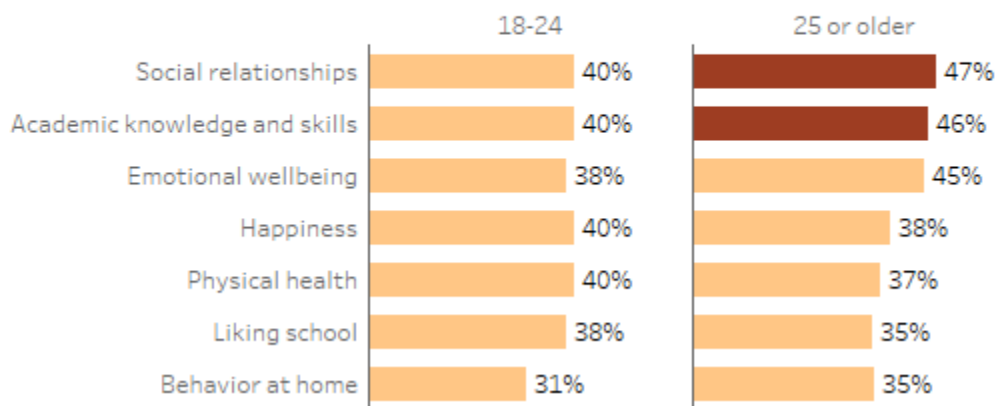
What effect did Covid-19 pandemic and year of distance learning have on your child? (Percent of negative effect + large negative effect)



N=568-575. Responses from Arab or Middle Eastern respondents were excluded due to the small sample size (<10).

Compared to younger parents, a greater proportion of older parents indicated concerns for the pandemic impact on their child/ren’s social relationships and academic knowledge/skills.

What effect did Covid-19 pandemic and year of distance learning have on your child? (Percent of negative effect + large negative effect)

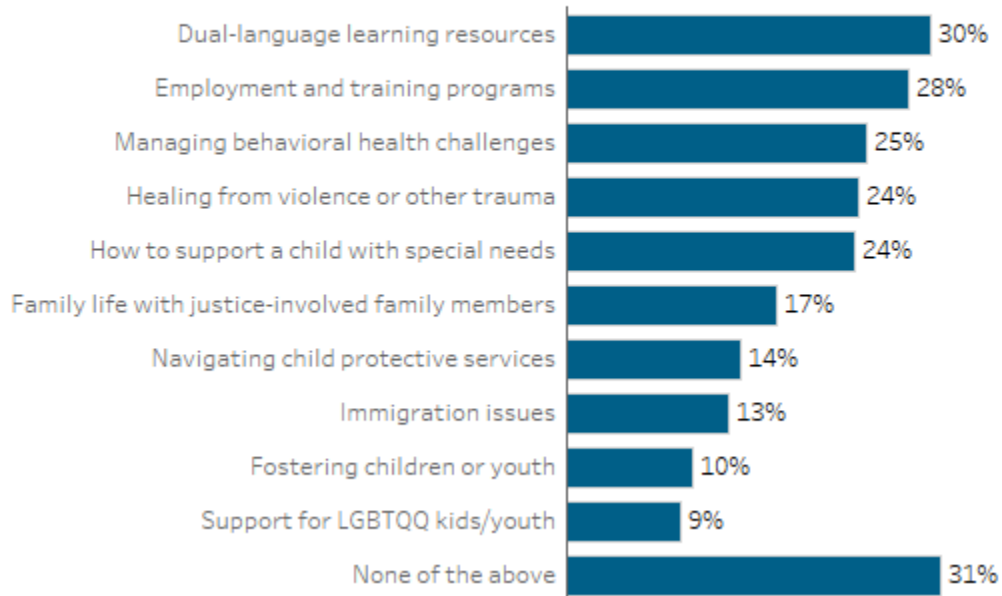


N=513-518

Information or Support Needs

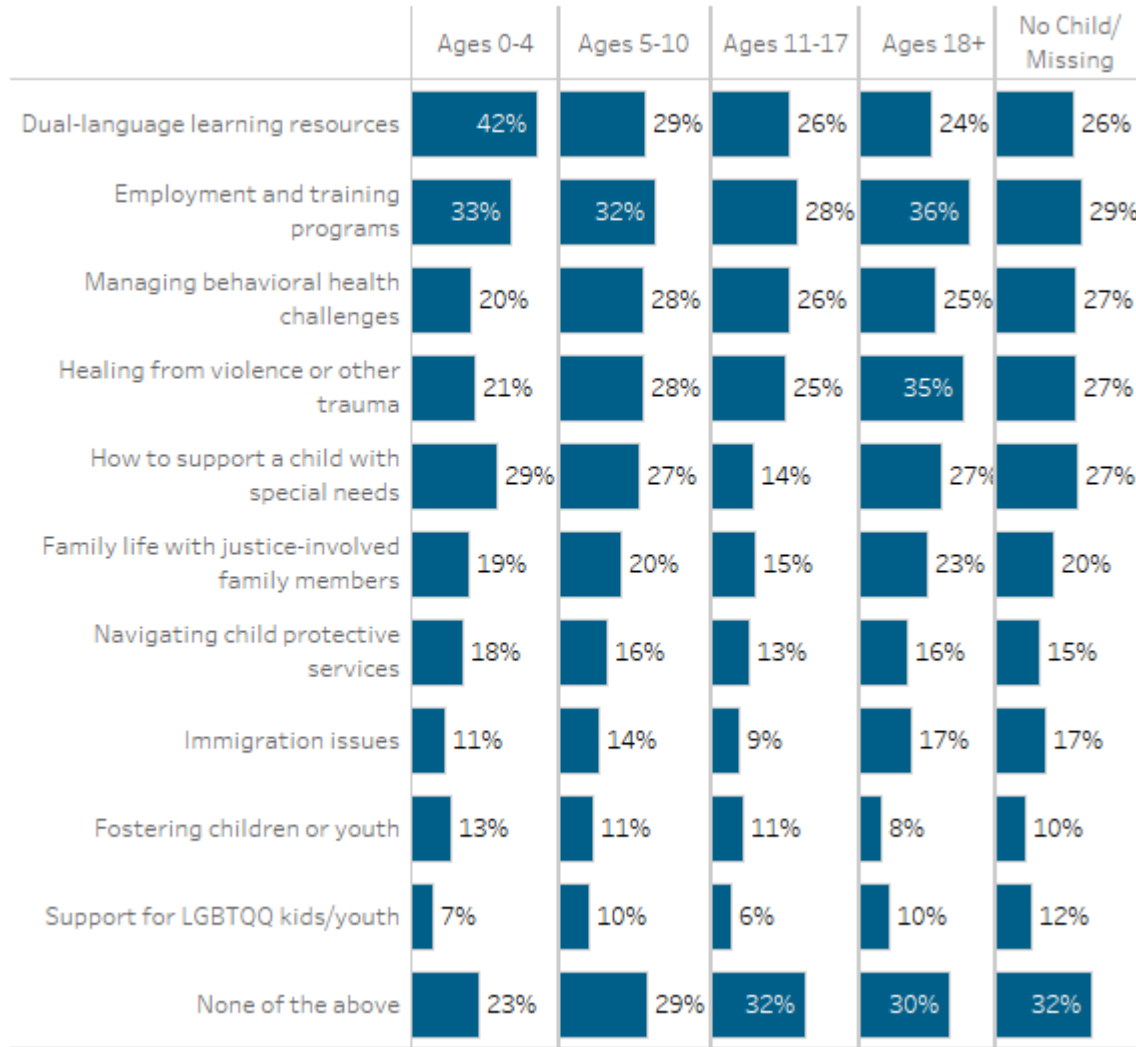
Overall, parents were most interested in information for support with dual-language learning resources and employment and training programs. Managing behavioral health challenges, healing from violence or other trauma, and supporting a child with special needs were also of interest to roughly one-quarter of parent respondents.

Please indicate if you have any interest in information or support with any of the following



N=536

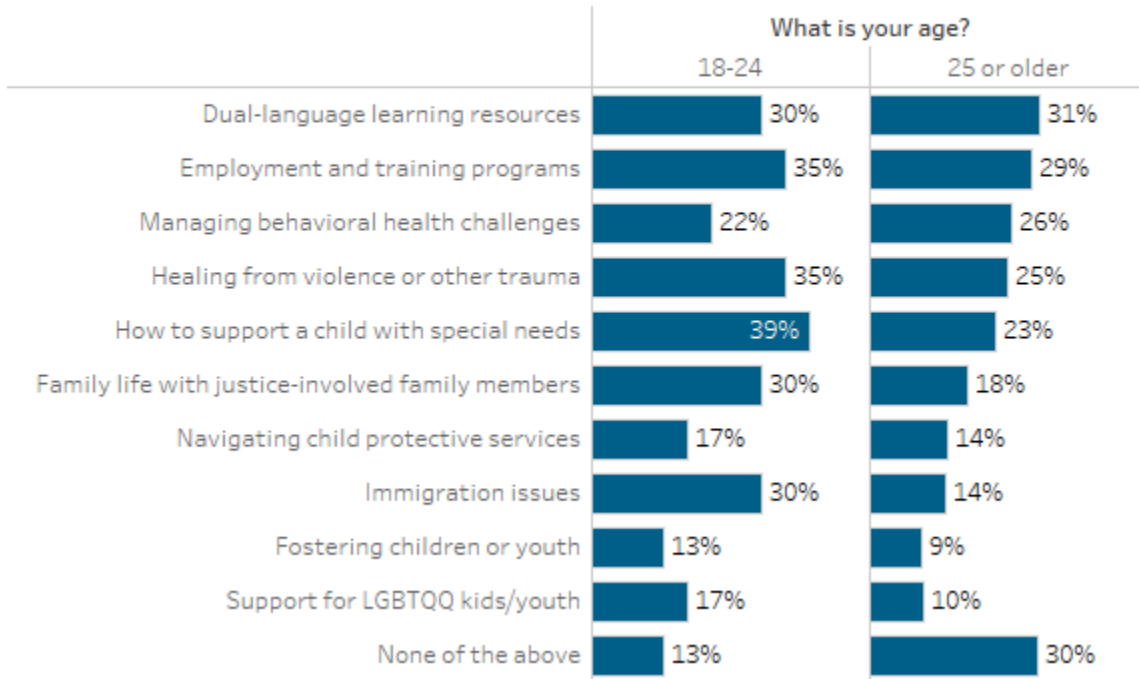
As illustrated in the next figure, parents of young children (ages 0-4) were more interested in dual-language learning resources (42%) and parents of older youth (ages 18+) were more interested in job training opportunities.



N: Ages 0-4=114; Ages 5-10=177; Ages 11-17=155; Ages 18+=132; No child/missing=214. Respondents were allowed to choose multiple age groups for their multiple children.

Younger parents (ages 18-24) were particularly interested in how to support a child with special needs (39%) and job training programs (35%).

Please indicate if you have any interest in information or support with any of the following



N=497

Asian parents were most interested in dual-language learning resources (49%) and American Indian or Alaskan Native parents were most interested in healing from violence or other trauma (47%). A large proportion of Pacific Islander parents (41%) indicated interest in information about how to support a child with special needs.

Please indicate if you have any interest in information or support with any of the following

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multi-racial	Pacific Islander	White
Dual-language learning resources	21%	49%	8%	31%	30%	29%	26%
Employment and training programs	38%	23%	33%	30%	35%	24%	7%
Managing behavioral health challenges	41%	23%	23%	33%	20%	18%	19%
Healing from violence or other trauma	47%	12%	31%	27%	35%	29%	19%
How to support a child with special needs	24%	21%	23%	32%	15%	41%	11%
Family life with justice-involved family memb..	26%	12%	22%	19%	15%	29%	7%
Navigating child protective services	21%	17%	9%	17%	0%	29%	7%
Immigration issues	3%	14%	9%	22%	5%	24%	7%
Fostering children or youth	15%	10%	8%	12%	10%	18%	11%
Support for LGBTQQ kids/youth	18%	3%	10%	16%	5%	12%	11%
None of the above	32%	26%	38%	26%	35%	41%	33%

N=499

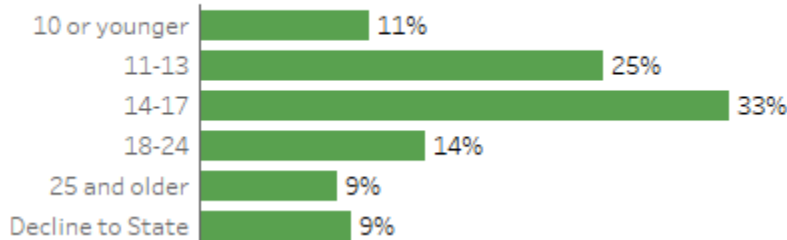
YOUTH SURVEY SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

- Although most youth felt academically prepared for school and have the right supplies, 32% reported that they might need one-on-one tutoring after school and 22% reported needing extra one-on-one support from teachers (particularly among elementary school students or college students).
- Over half of respondents indicate needing to be able to be at school before the school day starts, yet roughly one-quarter of respondents indicate that their school does not have before-school programs. This is particularly true for middle and high school students.
- 30% of youth do not feel safe from COVID while on public transportation (particularly among children 10 or younger).
- While most believed their school would follow safety protocols and have enough equipment to protect against COVID, older youth respondents tended to disagree with this statement more.
- While low percentages of needs were reported for safety in general, some indicate not feeling safe from violence and some worry about their mental health (particularly among high school and college students).
- Similar to parents' survey results, violence issues in the neighborhood were also brought up particularly by younger children (13 years or younger).

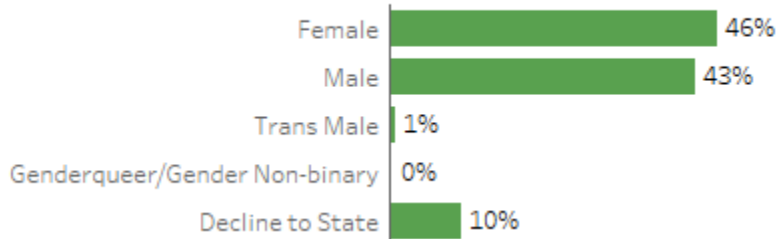
YOUTH SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Youth survey respondents tended to be between 14 and 17 years old. A slightly higher proportion of respondents identified as female, while 43% of respondents identified as male. An oversampling of Black/African American youth was achieved, though a lower proportion of youth respondents identified as Hispanic/Latinx relative to the general population of the city.

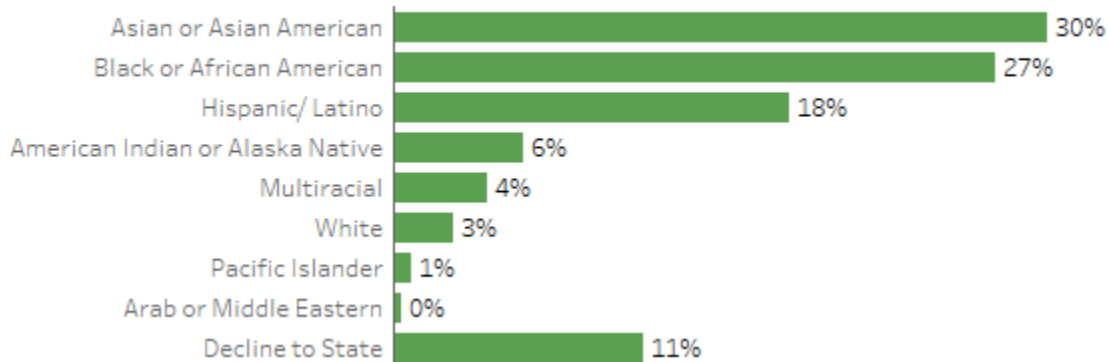
Age



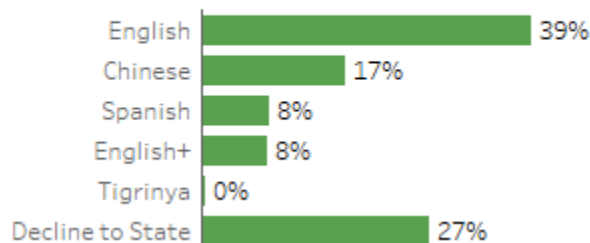
Gender Identity



Race/Ethnicity



Language



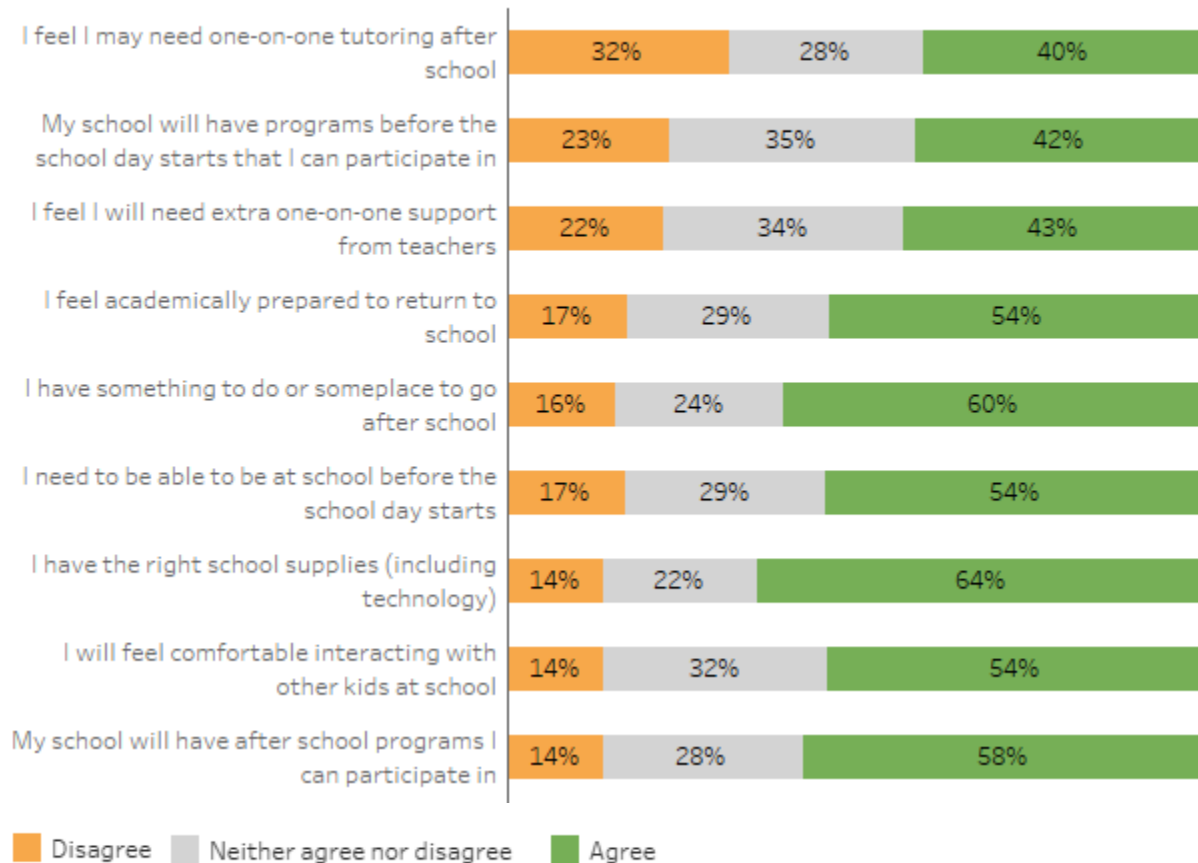
N=257. Note: "English+" indicates the respondent identified English and another language as the languages they speak most at home.

YOUTH SURVEY FINDINGS

Returning to School

Although most youth indicate having the right supplies for school and over half felt academically prepared for school, about four out of ten agree that they might need one-on-one tutoring after school or one-on-one support from teachers. While most youth indicate they have something to do or someplace to go after school, about one-quarter of respondents indicate their school does not have before-school programs, and over half of respondents indicate needing to be able to be at school before the school day starts.

Returning to School



N-245-254

In their write-in responses about returning to school, some expressed feeling excited about getting back to normal, but others also expressed feeling anxious about going back to school.

“It's been fun but challenging because there is a lot of work and it's sometimes hard to manage.”

“I'm sick of COVID and I'm sick of Zoom. I want to return to normal class.”

About returning to school, youth were looking forward to meeting people in person, having more connections, P.E. class, participating in clubs and events, etc.

“Meeting new people, exploring campus, and participating in clubs and events.”

“More connection towards school, friends, and the experience.”

“Seeing my friends and school community and participating in school activities.”

Returning to School by Age (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

	10 or younger	11-13	14-17	18-24	25 and older
My school will have programs before the school day starts that I can participate in	19%	26%	26%	22%	14%
I feel academically prepared to return to school	15%	16%	16%	22%	18%
I have something to do or someplace to go after school	16%	18%	14%	21%	10%
I have the right school supplies (including technology)	15%	10%	13%	18%	23%
I will feel comfortable interacting with other kids at school	12%	13%	18%	15%	9%
My school will have after school programs I can participate in	8%	19%	11%	17%	14%

N=222-230. Higher than 25% are colored in dark red to indicate higher needs.

Returning to School by Age (Percent of respondents who AGREE with the statement)

	10 or younger	11-13	14-17	18-24	25 and older
I feel I may need one-on-one tutoring after school	64%	28%	31%	40%	67%
I feel I will need extra one-on-one support from teachers	72%	33%	35%	50%	55%
I need to be able to be at school before the school day starts	58%	52%	56%	43%	68%

N=224-248. Higher than 40% are colored in dark green to indicate higher needs.

Returning to School by Race/Ethnicity (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial
My school will have programs before the school day starts that I can participate in	13%	19%	23%	31%	36%
I feel academically prepared to return to school	27%	9%	22%	9%	36%
I have something to do or someplace to go after school	27%	11%	17%	18%	18%
I have the right school supplies (including technology)	27%	10%	19%	14%	18%
I will feel comfortable interacting with other kids at school	13%	12%	18%	12%	9%
My school will have after school programs I can participate in	0%	14%	18%	9%	27%

N=207-215. Higher than 25% are colored in dark red to indicate the higher needs. Responses from Arab or Middle Easterners, Pacific Islander, and White respondents are not shown due to the small number of responses (<10).

Returning to School by Race/Ethnicity (Percent of respondents who AGREE with the statement)

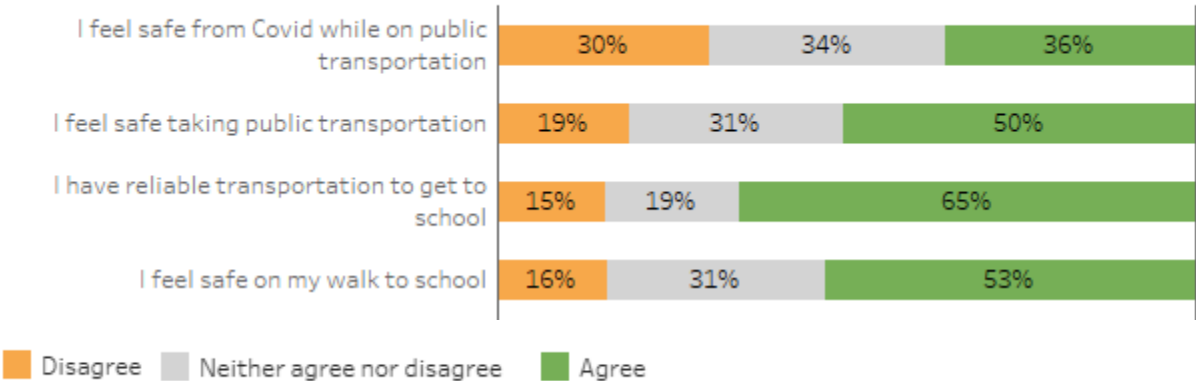
	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial
I feel I may need one-on-one tutoring after school	47%	42%	42%	25%	27%
I feel I will need extra one-on-one support from teachers	67%	39%	41%	36%	55%
I need to be able to be at school before the school day starts	67%	63%	48%	55%	45%

N=208-213. Higher than 40% are colored in dark green to indicate the higher needs. Responses from Arab or Middle Easterners, Pacific Islander, and White respondents are not shown due to the small number of responses (<10).

Getting to School

While half of youth respondents indicate feeling safe taking public transportation, only about one-third agree they feel safe from Covid while on public transit. And while 65% of respondents indicate having reliable transportation to get to school, nearly half do not agree that they feel safe on their walk to school.

Getting to School



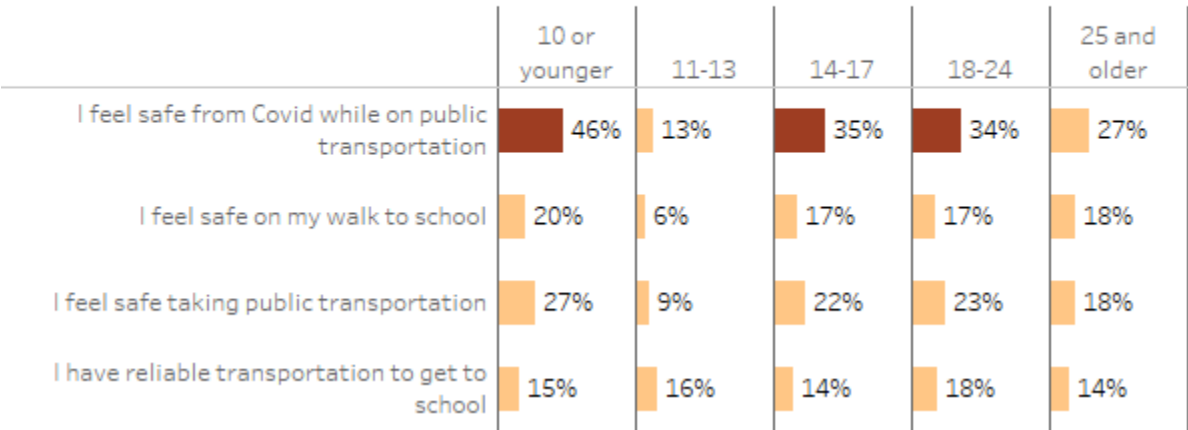
N=230-238

In their write-in responses, students described how they would go to school.

“My school is close so I walk.”

“My mom drives me everyday because my house is far and there is no direct public transportation to school or near school.”

Getting to School by Age (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)



N=228-230. Higher than 25% are colored in dark red to indicate the higher needs.

Getting to School by Race/Ethnicity (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

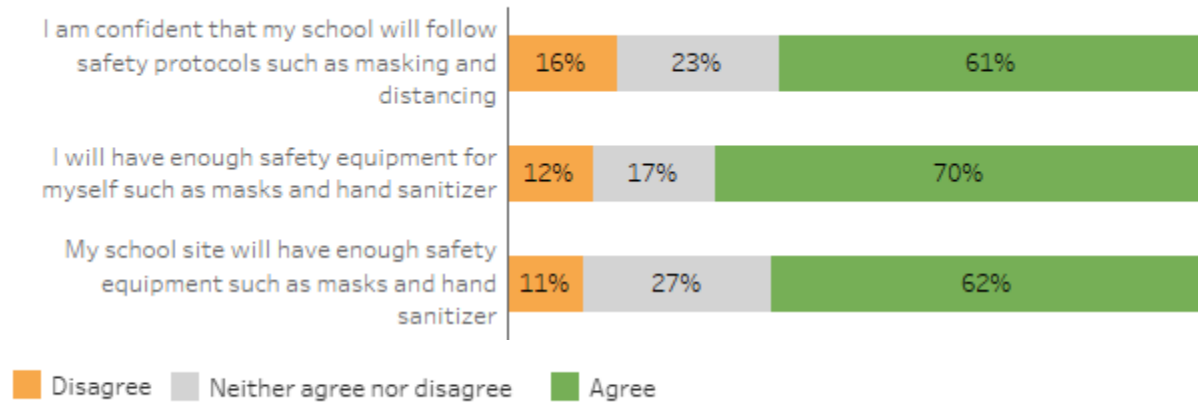
	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial
I feel safe from Covid while on public transportation	21%	32%	28%	27%	45%
I feel safe on my walk to school	7%	12%	20%	16%	9%
I feel safe taking public transportation	14%	17%	22%	24%	27%
I have reliable transportation to get to school	14%	10%	19%	25%	18%

N=212-215. Higher than 25% are colored in dark red to indicate the higher needs. Responses from Arab or Middle Easterners, Pacific Islander, and White respondents are not shown due to the small number of responses (<10).

COVID Safety

While a majority of students felt their schools had safety equipment and protocols available to them to provide safety from Covid, over one-third of students did not agree that they had confidence in their school safety protocols and equipment.

COVID Safety



N=249-252

In their write-in responses, some youth expressed worries about schools not following safety protocols or other people not wearing masks or not social distancing, while others commented simply with uncertainty.

“A lot of students have not taken safety protocols, many of them do not wear a mask.”

“I think my school does a pretty good job keeping us safe and adjusting to COVID safety requirements.”

“I am just unsure.”

COVID Safety by Race/Ethnicity (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial
I am confident that my school will follow safety protocols such as masking and distancing	0%	13%	23%	9%	36%
I will have enough safety equipment for myself such as masks and hand sanitizer	7%	4%	19%	13%	45%
My school site will have enough safety equipment such as masks and hand sanitizer	0%	13%	18%	5%	18%

N=213-216. Higher than 15% are colored in dark red to indicate the higher needs. Responses from Arab or Middle Easterners, Pacific Islander, and White respondents are not shown due to the small number of responses (<10).

COVID Safety by Age (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

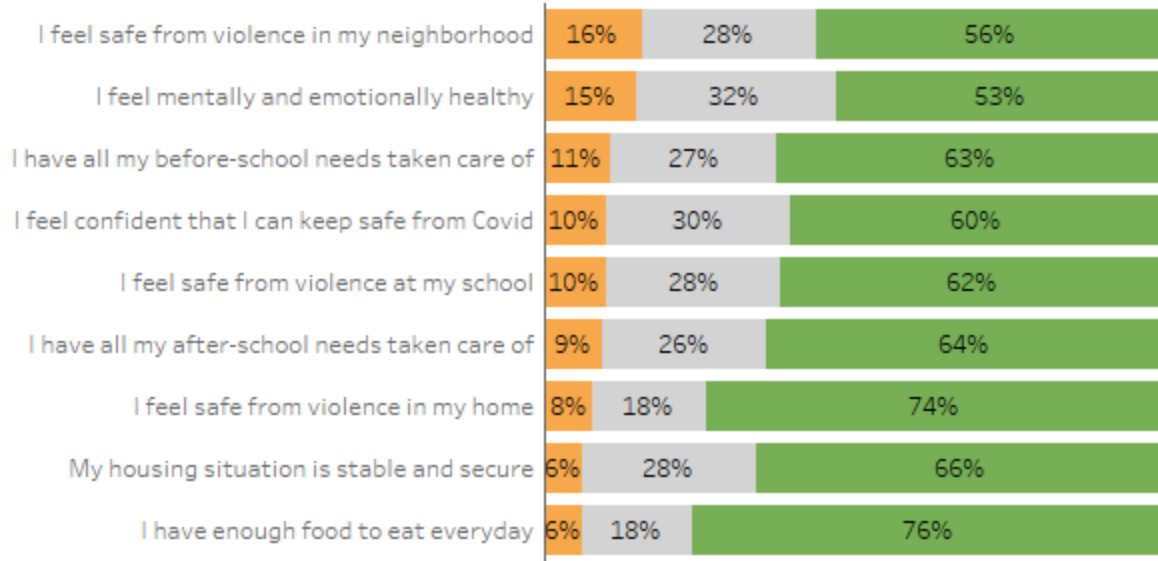
	10 or younger	11-13	14-17	18-24	25 and older
I am confident that my school will follow safety protocols such as masking and distancing	8%	11%	18%	19%	32%
I will have enough safety equipment for myself such as masks and hand sanitizer	8%	13%	13%	14%	18%
My school site will have enough safety equipment such as masks and hand sanitizer	12%	8%	10%	17%	18%

N=228-231. Higher than 15% are colored in dark red to indicate the higher needs.

General Safety

While most respondents agreed that their general safety needs are taken care of, and low percentages of needs were reported for safety in general, 16% of youth respondents indicate not feeling safe from violence and 15% worry about their mental health.

General Safety



■ Disagree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Agree

N=151-234

In their write-in responses about any other general concerns, most said none. However, some youth said they were worried about mental health and other concerns.

“Mental health with schools/friends/family”

“Just more on the violence and gun shootings, etc.”

General Safety by Race/Ethnicity (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian or Asian American	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	Multiracial
I feel confident that I can keep safe from Covid	7%	7%	18%	4%	18%
I feel mentally and emotionally healthy	20%	4%	20%	22%	18%
I feel safe from violence at my school	0%	2%	22%	13%	0%
I feel safe from violence in my home	13%	0%	13%	13%	11%
I feel safe from violence in my neighborhood	13%	9%	22%	31%	0%
I have all my after-school needs taken care of	13%	0%	15%	19%	11%
I have all my before-school needs taken care of	20%	5%	15%	13%	0%
I have enough food to eat everyday	7%	1%	14%	4%	9%
My housing situation is stable and secure	7%	3%	10%	7%	0%

N=137-215. Higher than 15% are colored in dark red to indicate the higher needs.

Similar to parents' survey results, violence issues in the neighborhood were also identified by youth. Needs around mental and emotional health are also indicated by youth responses.

General Safety by Age (Percent of respondents who DISAGREE with the statement)

	10 or younger	11-13	14-17	18-24	25 and older
I feel confident that I can keep safe from Covid	15%	9%	13%	3%	9%
I feel mentally and emotionally healthy	7%	13%	17%	17%	23%
I feel safe from violence at my school	11%	8%	8%	7%	24%
I feel safe from violence in my home	0%	4%	14%	3%	18%
I feel safe from violence in my neighborhood	26%	16%	14%	7%	24%
I have all my after-school needs taken care of	4%	4%	14%	7%	18%
I have all my before-school needs taken care of	4%	8%	18%	3%	12%
I have enough food to eat everyday	0%	7%	9%	0%	14%
My housing situation is stable and secure	4%	3%	7%	3%	14%

N=146-227