COMMUNITY ACTION COMMISSION (CAC) OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

2018-2019

Youth Needs Assessment

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Table of Contents

Goals, Objectives, & Executive Summary

Goal 1. To inform the youth programming of Santa Barbara County by reporting the met and unmet needs of youth.

Objective 1.1. To report on the youths' concerns about themselves, their family, and their community.

Objective 1.2. To describe barriers to youth engagement in community programs.

Objective 1.3. To explore the youths' concerns for their safety in their community.

Goal 2. To report the participants' youth programming interests and preferences to inform the allocation of resources.

Objective 2.1. To provide a voice to youth and their vision for the future of their community.

Executive Summary

Surveys (*n* = 290) and focus groups (*n* = 66) were gathered with youths ages 11-24 years across Santa Barbara County in order to obtain a diverse representation of youths' needs and concerns to evaluate how the community can better serve youth.

Survey Results

Youth Programming
- Preferred timing for after-school programming was 3:00-5:00 pm Monday through Thursday.
- Barriers to attending programs were time, homework, and family responsibilities.
- Motivators were doing something fun, learning new things, and help getting into college.
- Youth were most interested in movie nights, teen nights, entrepreneurship, and photography activities.

Neighborhood Safety
- Youth on average reported that they liked their neighborhood and would not like to leave.
- Youth reported that substances ranged from easy (marijuana) to hard (cocaine, LSD, or amphetamines) to obtain in their neighborhood.
- Most youth reported feeling safe at home and having healthy adult relationships at home and in the community.

Stress and Mental Health
- Top areas of concern were finding a current or future job, college preparedness, and family stress.
- Responding to mental health screeners, a large proportion of youth scored above the cut-offs for depression (41%) and anxiety (38%).
- Many responded that they should handle problems on their own (61%) and just under half of youth felt a therapist might not understand them and they wouldn't want others to know they were meeting with a therapist.
- When they needed support, youth were most likely to have spoken to a friend (70%), a parent or other adult (57%), a school counselor (46%), or an adult at school (39%). Youth were less likely to have called a crisis hotline (6%), talked to a coach or club advisor (15%), or spoken with a school nurse (17%).

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Focus Group Results

Issues Faced by Youth

Youth consistently mentioned ***substance use*** as an issue they face. Peer pressure and stress or to forget problems were the most common reasons cited why youths use substances. Drinking, smoking marijuana, and vaping were most common across the county.

Many participants cited ***community violence***, which manifested differently in various parts of the county. Youth across regions felt they lacked a voice in their community and are not represented in community decision-making.

Youth from all regions expressed stress about their ***financial situation***. They cited difficulty with housing, food, and transportation and they felt that these concerns are barriers to after-school program participation. The mentioned a lack of financial literacy, feeling stress over their family's bills, and needing to help support their family.

Youth expressed concerns about ***mental health struggles*** among peers and stigma that surrounds getting help. At multiple alternative schools, students noted that the school staff was welcoming and supportive to these mental health needs due to the small environment and caring school staff. Participants from both regions connected mental health to social media. While some partially attributed pressure from social media to teenagers' increasing mental health issues, others described it as a place to share and connect about their struggles. Some participants suggested that counselors that share backgrounds and experiences with youth or peer-to-peer support might dispel some of youth's fears in seeking counseling.

Safety

The majority of participants in both regions responded that they ***did not feel safe***. Youth in both regions cited community violence as a primary reason. Participants in both regions also mentioned poor lighting within their communities as a reason why they feel unsafe. Youth from both regions mentioned that they would like to see more interaction between community members to build understanding and provide more support for one another. When talking about safety in their communities, participants talked about theft and cited financial issues as the motivators behind misbehavior.

Participants from both regions mentioned they felt unsafe and uncomfortable around ***police and other law enforcement***. Some youth from Isla Vista had different beliefs and felt that law enforcement can actually help the community feel safer despite some bad interactions with police. Youth in North County expressed concern about a lack of support and resources for undocumented youth.

School Experiences

Youth cut school because of boredom in school and a preference to meet with friends and use substances. Participants also expressed: transportation due to packed bus schedules, inconvenient bus stops, needing to provide child care to younger siblings, and financial issues as all impacting school attendance. Participants noted that having staff and faculty members who were caring and supportive helps and that they could be better supported if they had more mental health support.

Barriers to Program Engagement

Participants from all focus groups portrayed a range in their **knowledge of community resources** and programs: some were aware of some programs, some did not know of any, and some already are or have been involved. Those participants that did participate or know of programs had learned about them through friends or at school. Some participants felt that programs were only available to certain people.

All participants noted a space to meet and hang out with friends as a strong motivator. They also noted mentorship and counseling as needed services for their peers. They described wanting to feel supported, understood and comforted by the counselors or the community center. They emphasized the importance of feeling respected.

Barriers included transportation, lack of interest in offered programs, childcare, program costs, and needing to work instead. Some youth expressed concerns to joining after-school programs, such as racial profiling or forced attendance.

Suggestions for Future Programming

Youth suggested that programming could be better promoted with language that resonates more with youth. Youth wanted programs that provide career mentorship and to prepare them for life after high school. They recommended creating a community center for them to read, do their homework, learn how to cook, and participate in recreational activities like video games and sports.

Both the survey and the focus groups described the similarities and the differences between county regions to further inform how services can address the unique needs of their communities. As a whole, Mid-County youth reported significantly more risks and less strengths than North or South County youth.

In sum, youth provided valuable information about their needs, such as mental health, community violence, safety issues, and financial concerns, that can be addressed through services provided by CAC and community partners.

Data Collection

To gather a diverse representation of youths' needs and concerns, the research team conducted both focus groups and surveys.

Survey

A survey, available in English and Spanish, was created to gather anonymous information on the youths' needs, concerns, and interests to evaluate how the community can better serve youth. The survey was offered in online and paper formats. Using evidence-based measures, the survey asks about home and neighborhood safety, concerns, as well as about mental health needs, access, and stigma. Additionally, the survey explores possible barriers and motivations to program engagement.

Survey Recruitment

Youth in at-risk situations or who have been historically underserved were the target of recruitment. At each focus group site, youth were asked to also fill out the survey after the focus groups. To ensure that a diverse body of youth were filling out the surveys, CAC and the research team also reached out to a variety of schools and community centers across the county to diversify the sample of survey respondents.

Survey Measures

Survey measures covered a variety of domains in order to capture youth attitudes, experiences, and preferences regarding current and future programs. The final survey instrument was compiled using a variety of different sources from previous studies investigating youth needs. Individual survey items were adapted on occasion in order to tailor each domain of the survey to our local context. The full survey is available in the appendix. Examples of specific survey items are provided below when relevant.

1. **Demographics**

   The survey asked about Age, Gender, Sex, Race, Region of Residency, Generational Status, Parental Education, and Vulnerable Group Membership (including LGBTQ+, exposure to the foster system, familial incarceration experience, and disability status).

2. **After-School Programming[1]**

   This set of four items measured *Program Time Preferences* in terms of the best days of the week and times of day to meet for community programming. These items also

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[1] Source: Cornelli, Sanderson, & Richards, 2010

measured *Barriers* (e.g., transportation, need to work) and *Motivators* (e.g., making new friends, helping me get into college) *to Program Engagement*. Feedback from the CAC team contributed to the specific options designated to each category.

3. **Program Characteristics Preferences & Program Needs[2]**

Youth were asked to rate how *interested* they would be to get involved in numerous activities if they were offered in their communities. Examples of activities include academics (e.g., programming), music/arts (e.g., painting, dance), sports (e.g., basketball, soccer), and social activities (e.g., movies, cultural centers). Youth also reported on the degree to which they perceived specific programs or services would be *useful* for their community. Examples include mental health programs, emergency housing, sexual health programming, and job training. Feedback from the CAC team offered a simplified language that all youth will understand.

4. **Safety and Healthy Relationships**[3]

Youth safety was assessed across numerous settings in order to get a deeper sense of how safety may be experienced differently in each setting. Firstly, *Neighborhood Safety* was assessed by asking questions that measured neighborhood attachment (e.g., "I'd like to get out of my neighborhood"), perceived availability of drugs and alcohol, and community disorganization. Next, *Home Safety* was assessed by asking youth to rate how true specific statements were for them. Examples include "I am scared to be at home when other people are home" and "I worry that something bad might happen at home." Lastly, *Healthy Relationships* were assessed by asking the degree to which youth felt that there were adults at home and in school who cared about them and believed in their success. In combination, these measures capture a holistic picture of youth safety concerns in various settings.

5. **Hotline Resources**

Based on responses for specific online survey items regarding safety, some participants received a notice that read, "*If you don't feel safe at home or if you would like to talk to someone for any other reason, here are some contacts.*" Numerous resources and contact information were provided including the phone number for the local Safe Alternatives for Treating Youth (SAFTY) Hotline (youth crisis & compassion response) as well as a website for mental health facts. The paper version of the survey included these resources after the home safety questions.

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[2] Sources: compiled list from extensive literature search on youth needs assessments
[3] Sources: Glaser et al., 2005; California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)

6. **Areas of Concern and Mental Health**[4]

Areas of Concern were assessed by asking youth the degree to which they worry about various areas (e.g., fitting into US culture, sexual health, learning how to manage stress and emotions). In order to expand upon this assessment, specific *Mental Health Needs*—specifically depression and anxiety symptoms—were screened using the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 2-item (GAD-2) and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2). Both questionnaires are validated as shortened screeners of the full assessment. Since mental health stigma can often deter youth from seeking treatment, *Mental Health Stigma & Access* were assessed. Example items include "A therapist might not understand me or the challenges I was having," "If I had a problem, I don't think counseling would help," and "I wouldn't want my parents/guardians to know I was meeting with a therapist." Questions assessing access asked youth to report on the number of times they sought help from different people in their lives (e.g., school counselors, coaches).

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[4] Sources: Corona et al., 2009; Green, Oblath, Schneider, & Miller, 2019; Kroenke, Spitzer, & Williams, 2003; Kroenke, Spitzer, Monahan, & Löwe, 2007

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Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted at various youth sites across Santa Barbara County (see Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptions of the focus group sites across Santa Barbara County.

Site	Location	Description of Site	Participants
Fitzgerald Community School	Santa Maria	Alternative school serving 7th to 12th grade	2 groups: 1. Middle school group - 4 girls, 4 boys, 2 staff 2. High school group - 2 girls, 5 boys
Community Action Commission	Santa Maria	Community-based nonprofit that aids programs for low-income individuals & families	2 groups: 1. Young adult group - 2 women, 1 man 2. Young adult group - 4 women, 1 man
Rincon High School	Carpinteria	Alternative high school serving 7th to 12th grade	5 girls, 3 boys
La Cuesta High School	Santa Barbara	Alternative high school serving 9th to 12th grade	7 girls, 2 staff members
Isla Vista Teen Center	Isla Vista	After-school center that provides cultural, recreation, and leadership activities	2 groups: 1. Middle school group - 1 girl, 7 boys, 1 staff member 2. High school group - 2 girls, 3 boys
Maple High School	Lompoc	Alternative high school serving 9th to 12th grade	7 girls, 6 boys

Focus Group Recruitment

The Community Action Commission organized focus group sites through their ongoing collaboration with many community schools and organizations across the county that serve youth. Focus group participants were recruited by the staff on each site. Any youth (between the ages of 13 to 24) that currently resided in Santa Barbara County was eligible to participate as long as consent was obtained. Focus group sites were chosen to specifically highlight the voices of youth who are in at-risk situations or may have been previously underserved.

Focus Group Methods

Every focus group began with food and light small talk between students and the moderators to create comfort and familiarity. Once the moderators explained the goals and structure of the focus group, consent (from participants who were 18 years or older) and assent (from youth under 18) was attained from all participants. Each focus group was recorded. The moderators led the focus group guided by the questions displayed below. However, youth were encouraged to focus on topics that they felt were important to bring up. In most focus groups, a CAC staff member or a staff member from the school or community center chose to participate in the group as well in both asking and answering questions as appropriate. We found that including a trusted staff member helped put participants at ease and encouraged their participation. At the end of the focus group, participants were thanked for their participation with a gift card.

Focus Group Questions

The focus group questions were created to encourage conversations about the participants' concerns, needs, and hopes for the future of their community's youth. The questions covered topics on safety in their community. Additionally, the team asked youth about the types of programming and services that they would like to see in the community and potential barriers to engagement for these programs. The team made the questions open-ended to avoid priming for specific answers. Also, the team prioritized youths' comfort in answering the questions in a public space. The primary question, "What do you like to do?" was intended to help participants warm up. Similar to the survey, the research team reached out to the CAC team for their expertise on the content of the questions. Additionally, high school and university students working with the research team provided feedback about the reading level and the approachability of the questions. The full list of questions can be found in the appendix.

Focus Group Analysis

A team of graduate and undergraduate students transcribed all focus group recordings to script. Then the team followed a coding technique based on consensual qualitative coding (Hill et al., 1997) to extract the themes and main ideas from the focus groups. In the qualitative coding section, the results are split into North and South County given that there was only one focus group in Mid County.

Outcomes

Survey Outcomes

1. Demographics

A total of 290 youth participated in the survey. Of the 290 youth, 16 youth did not complete the full survey. At the end of the survey, youth reported their region of residency, race, age, gender, generational immigration status, parental education, and vulnerable group membership. As seen in Table 2, girls made up roughly half of the participants (56.3%), 42.9% identified as a boy, and 2 participants (~0.8% of the total) identified as gender-queer. For sex, 43.0% identified as male, 56.6% identified as female, and 1 participant (~0.4%) identified as intersex. On average, youth were about 15 years old (SD=2.21), with a range of 11 to 24 years old.

As shown in Figure 1, youth represented all regions of Santa Barbara County, with 30.7% from North County (including Santa Maria, Guadalupe, Orcutt, Los Alamos, Casmalia, Garey, and Sisquoc), 12.4% from Mid County (including Lompoc, Santa Ynez, Solvang, Buellton, Los Olivos, and Ballard), and 55.8% from South County (including Santa Barbara, Goleta, Carpinteria, Montecito, Isla Vista, Hope Ranch, Summerland, and Mission Canyon). For those who reported living outside of Santa Barbara County, they live primarily in San Luis Obispo County. One participant lived in Lancaster, CA.

Table 2. The gender, sex, and age make-up of the survey sample.

Gender	N	%
Boy	112	42.9%
Girl	147	56.3%
Gender-queer	2	.8%
Sex	N	%
Male	116	42.9%
Female	153	56.6%
Intersex	1	.4%
Average Age	15 years old	
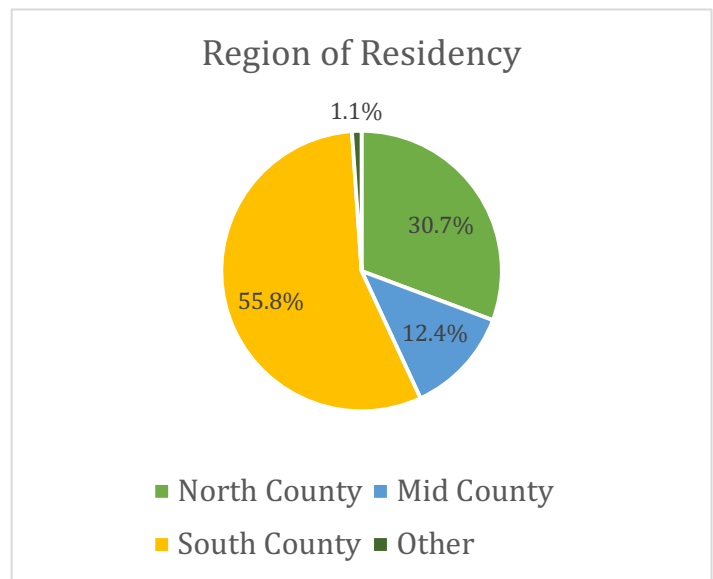
Figure 1. The region of residency of the survey participants.

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

Figure 2 demonstrates the breakdown of the respondents' race. Majority of youth (86.2%) who responded to the survey identified "Latino/a/x or Hispanic" as their racial identity. The second largest represented racial group is "White" at 17.6% of the total sample population. As students can identify as multiple races, the total will not equal to 100%.
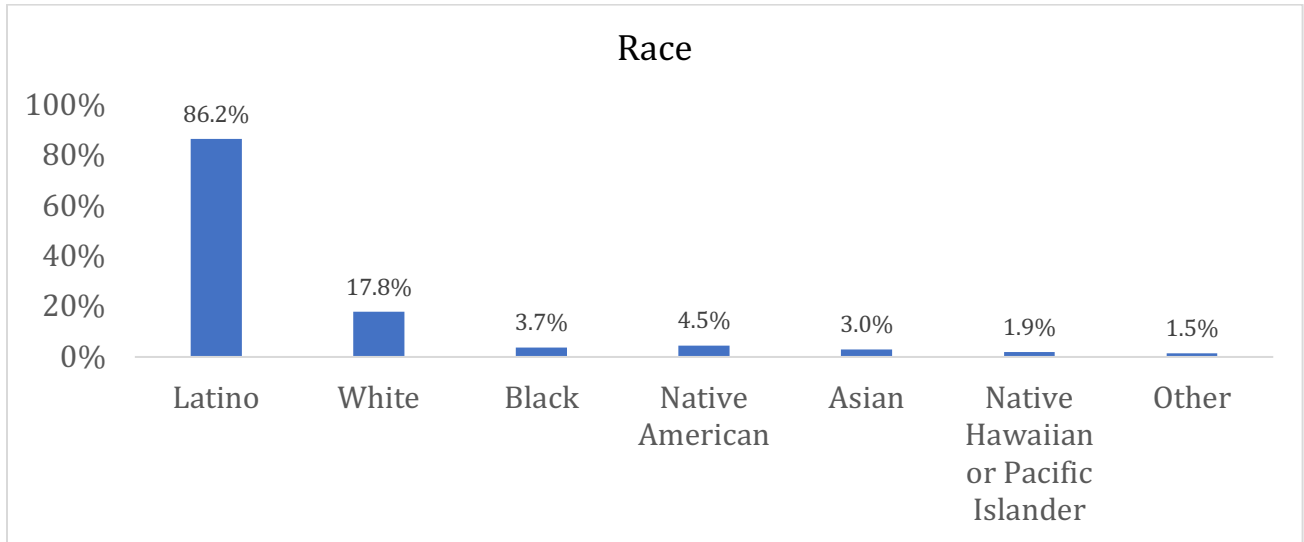
Figure 2. The percentage of participants in each racial category.

Generational immigration status breakdown is demonstrated in Figure 3. Almost half (42.6%) reported being 2nd generation immigrants (i.e., their parents' generation immigrated to the United States); 27.0% identified as 3rd generation immigrants, and 11.3% reported that their family immigrated before their grandparents. When comparing regions (as seen in Figure 4), Mid County had the most participants who were 3rd generation or earlier, North County included the most 1st generation immigrants, and South County contained the most 2nd generation.
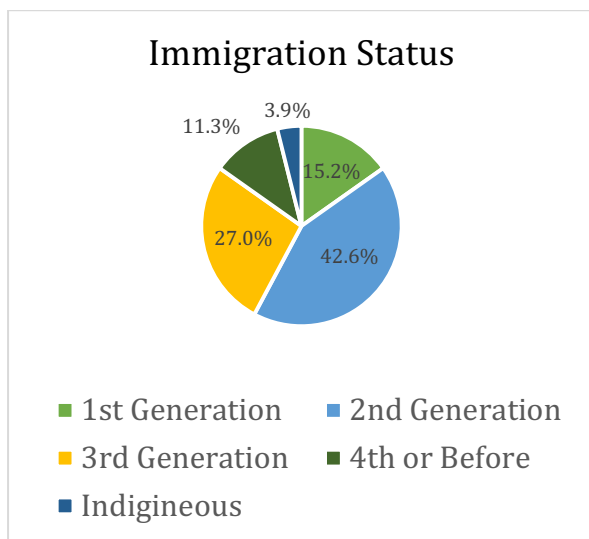
Figure 3. Generational immigration status.
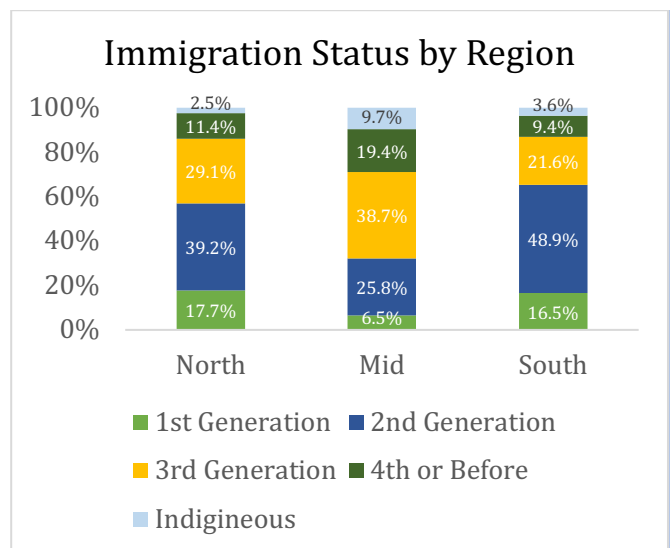
Figure 4. Generational immigration status of participants separated by region.

14

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

In response to parental education (Figure 5), 32.2% of youth reported that their parents received no education or up to a middle school education and 40.4% of youth reported the highest level of education among their parents was high school. When comparing by region (Figure 6), Mid County had the greatest representation of parents whose highest educational achievement was high school. North County had the most parents who only reached an elementary or middle school education. South County contained the most participants with parents who received a college education of some level.
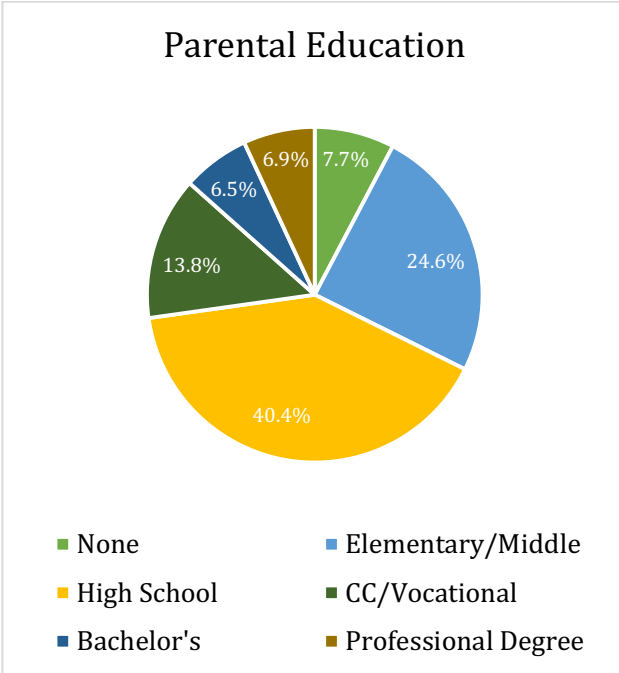
Figure 5. Percentage of highest parental education of survey participants.
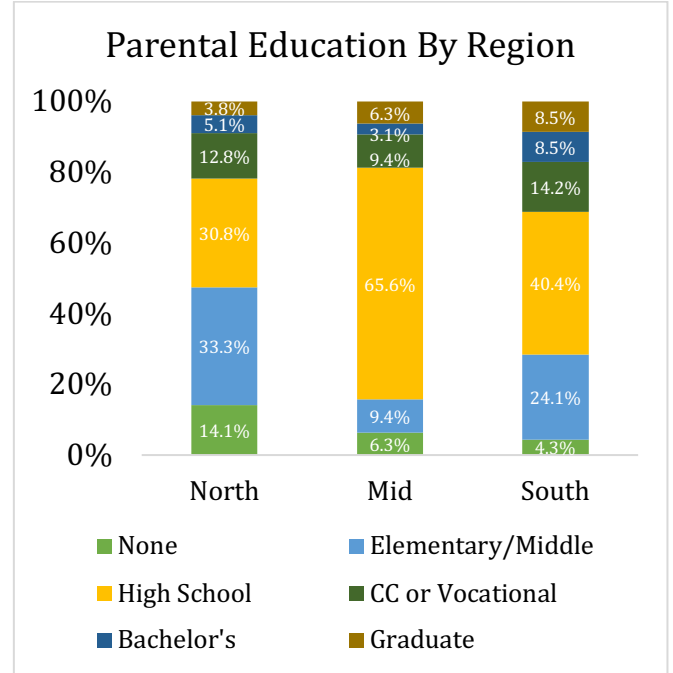
Figure 6. Parental education separated by region.

Figure 7 demonstrates the percentage of youth that fall into categories that may need additional or specific support. 59.9% of youth reported that they have a family member who was or is incarcerated. 6.0% identified that they had previous or current contact with the foster care system. 14.4% identified that they had a disability or special need (such as a physical, learning, or hearing disability). 9.7% identified as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, etc.). When compared by region, Lompoc demonstrated a greater percentage of participants with: incarcerated family (93.9%), contact with the foster system (21.2%), disability status (21.9%), and LGBTQ+ identities (18.8%).

At-Risk Criteria
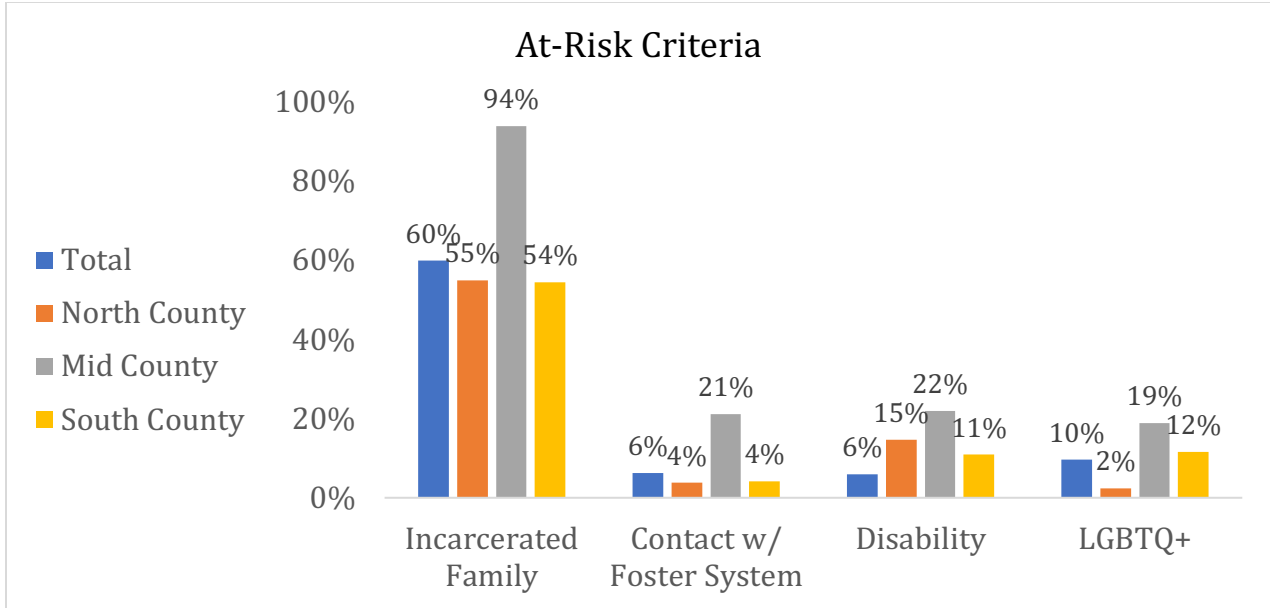
Figure 7. Percentage of youth in certain at-risk categories.

2. **After-School Programming**

Youth reported information regarding their *Program Time Preferences* in various formats. First, on average, youth reported that their ideal program would occur 3.18 (SD=1.67) days per week. Figure 8 represents the spread according to each day of the week and time period. For weekdays, the most popular time that youth reported for their ideal program was from 3-5 pm with responses ranging from 32.8% of youth to 45.5% of youth depending on the day of the week. In general, for weekdays, youth preferred earlier program times compared to later ones. Figure 8 shows minimal differences in youth responses according to weekday with the exception of Friday, which was only endorsed by 32.8% of youth.

Preferred Weekdays & Times
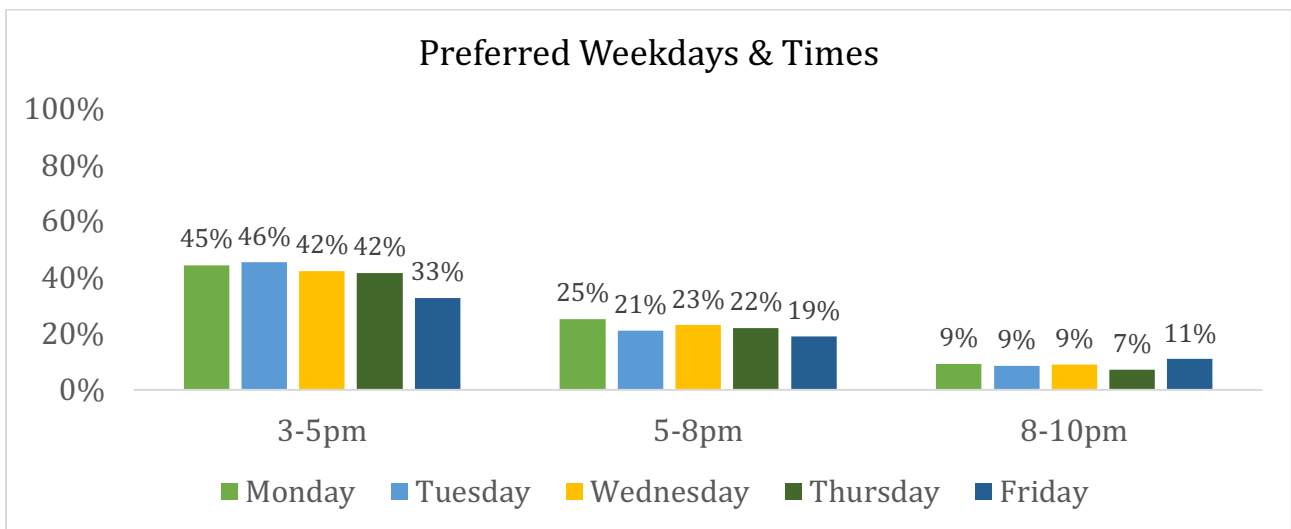
Figure 8. The distribution of preferred days and times for youth programming.

Figure 9 shows that for weekends, earlier times (i.e., morning, afternoon) were preferred over later ones (i.e., evening, night), and Saturday was generally preferred to Sunday.
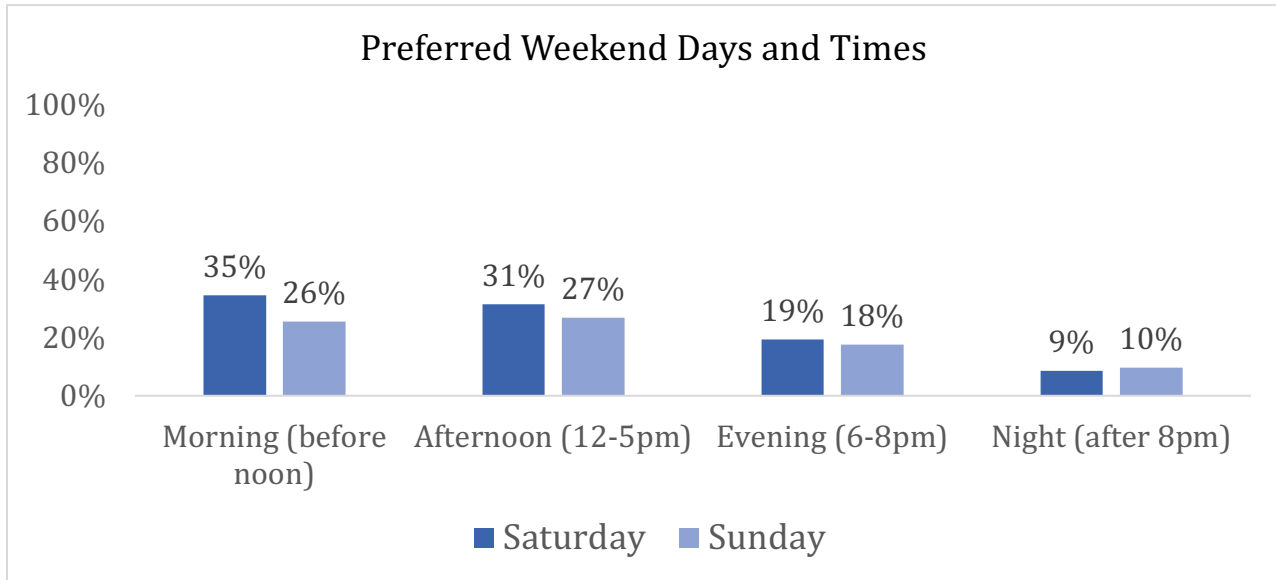
Figure 9. Preferred weekend days and times.

Figure 10 shows a report of *Barriers* to after-school program engagement by the percentage of youth who endorsed each barrier as either *somewhat* or *very much* getting in the way of joining an after-school program. The three most common *Barriers* were **time** (78.6%), **homework** (69.8%), and **family responsibilities** (69.3%). **Safety** and **parent permission** were less commonly endorsed as barriers at 39.0% and 49.1% respectively. Qualitative write-ins for the "other" selection included "taking care of child", "after-school sports", and "SBCC classes".

When comparing regions, youth from Mid County rated family responsibilities, transportation, chores, work, parent permission, and safety travelling to and from the program as higher than other groups. North County endorsed time and homework as more concerning than the participants from other regions. South County youth were more likely to report their desire to hang out with their friends as a barrier to program engagement.
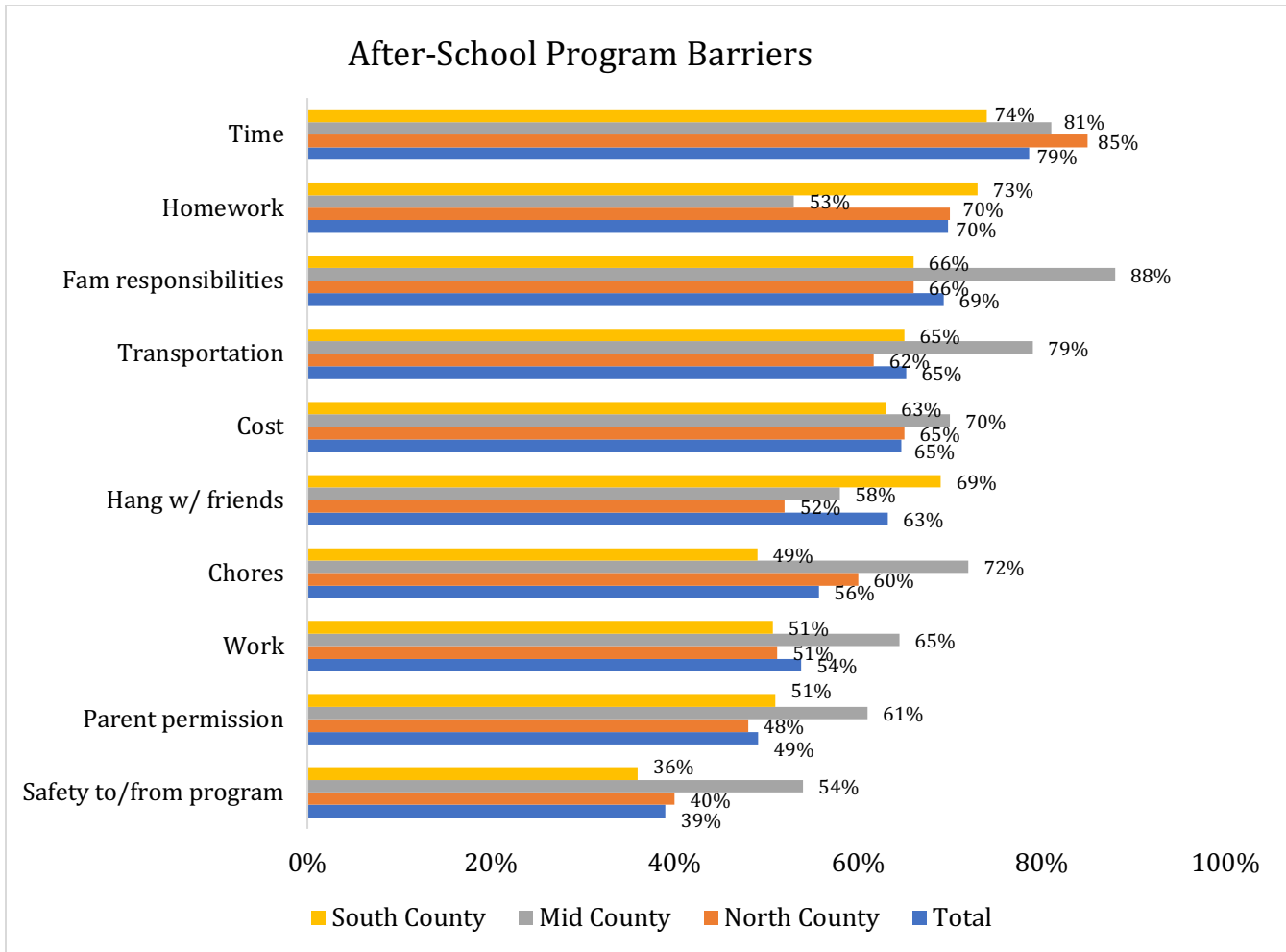
Figure 10. Percentage of youth that endorsed each barrier as "somewhat" or "very much" getting in the way of joining an after-school program.

Figure 11 shows a report of *Motivators* of after-school program engagement by the percentage of youth who endorsed each motivator as either *somewhat* or *very much* a factor which influences their participation. Notably, all the motivators listed in the survey were endorsed as somewhat or very motivating to the vast majority of youth (75.3 to 96.2%). The three most commonly endorsed motivators for after-school program involvement were **doing something fun** (96.2%), **learning new things** (92.6%), and **helping youth get into college** (91.6%). Qualitative write-ins for the "other" selection included "community service", "having food and snacks", and "traveling and getting out more in nature."

When comparing regions, Mid County rated help with finding a job or getting into college as greater motivators than the other regions. South County participants endorsed doing something fun, making new friends, and help with schoolwork as slightly more motivating than other regions. North County students rated having a safe space as less motivating than other regions. They also felt that help with a job and help with schoolwork were important motivators.

After-School Program Motivators
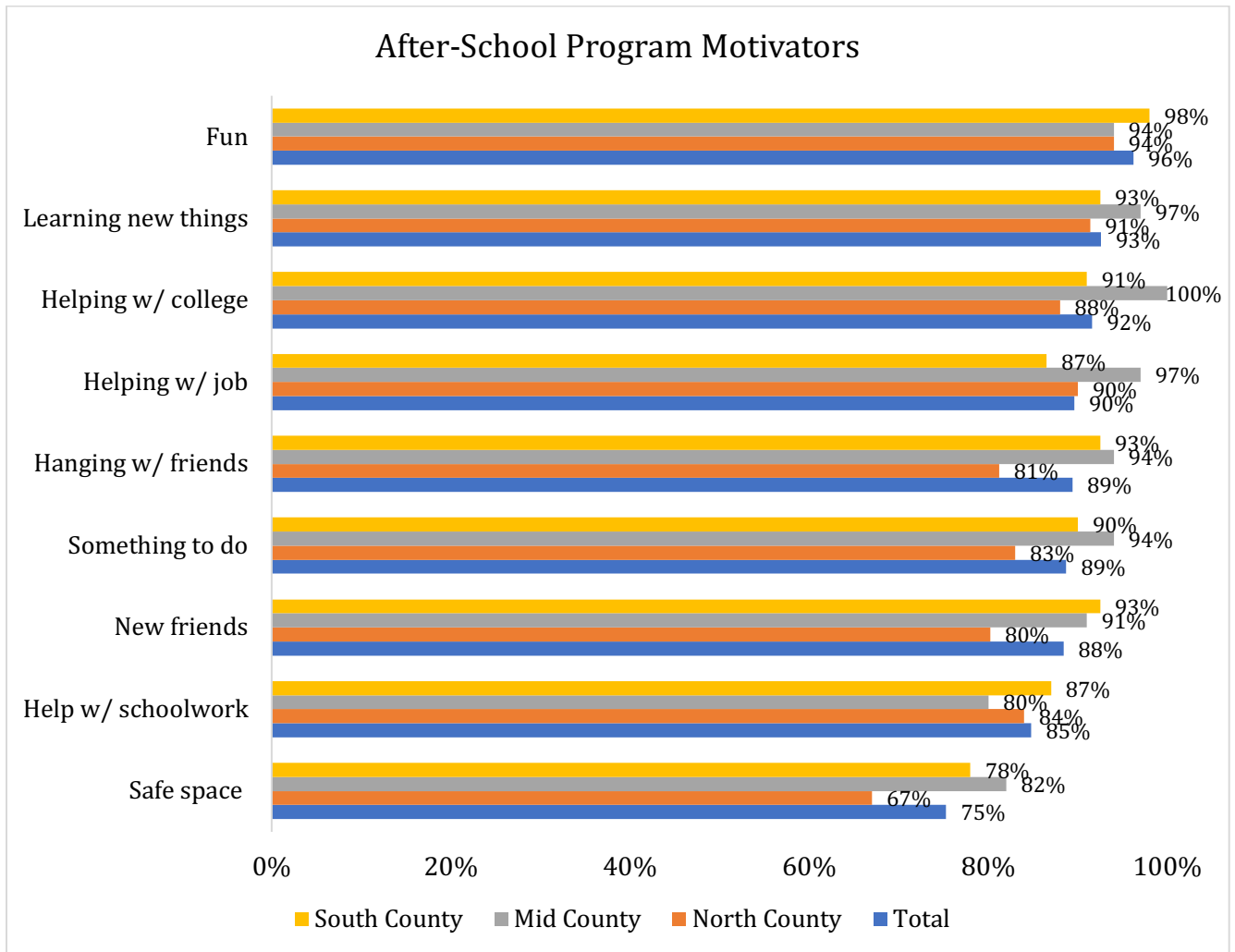
Figure 11. Percentage of youth that endorse reasons to join program.

3. **Program Characteristics Preferences & Program Needs[5]**

Figure 12 shows the results of how *interested* youth reported they would be in various activities. The blue bars indicate social activities, yellow indicates academic activities, green indicates activities involving the arts, and purple indicates sports. Generally, youth were more likely to be interested in social and academic activities. The most common activities that youth expressed interest in were **movies** (83.3%), **teen nights** (75.5%), and **entrepreneurship** (69.2%). As some of the categories with the highest percentage of youth already involved were also ranked lower, it is possible that these youth did not indicate their interest because they were already engaged.

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[5] Sources: Compiled list from extensive literature search on youth needs assessments

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

Program Interests

Activity	Already Involved	Somewhat or Very Interested
Movies	8%	83%
Teen Nights	5%	76%
Entrepreneurship	5%	69%
Photography	7%	67%
Board Games	2%	64%
Computer Skills	3%	64%
Cultural Centers	2%	60%
Programming/app design	3%	59%
Social Dances	3%	59%
Hiking	6%	58%
Painting	8%	58%
Swimming	5%	57%
Hip Hop	3%	52%
Basketball	7%	51%
Dance Classes	6%	50%
Soccer	9%	49%
Ceramics	2%	46%
Football	2%	43%
Yoga	5%	43%
Surfing	4%	42%
Theater	4%	36%
Poetry	3%	29%
Choir	1%	25%
Orchestra	2%	19%

Figure 12. Percentage of youth who were interested in programming. Lighter coloring indicates the percentage that is "Already Involved", while the darker color indicates "Somewhat or Very Interested." The color groups indicate the category of the activity. Blue = Social Activities; Yellow = Academic Activities; Green = Arts & Music; Purple = Sports.

Figure 13 shows the degree to which youth perceived how specific programs or services would be *useful* for their community. Youth reported that **job training** (89.3%), **homework support/tutoring** (87.7%), and **access to basic needs (such as clothing, food, & bus fare)** (86.5%) were among the most useful programs listed. All program choices were reported as somewhat useful or very useful by at least 77.0% of youth. A request for programs that support immigration was listed in the qualitative write-in.

Ratings for program usefulness did not differ between region, as demonstrated in Figure 13. However, South County participants rated access to basic needs as most useful for youth in their community. Participants from Mid County requested homework support and tutoring, mentoring, and emergency housing slightly higher than those from South County. North County represented the most youth to request substance use programs.

Program Usefulness
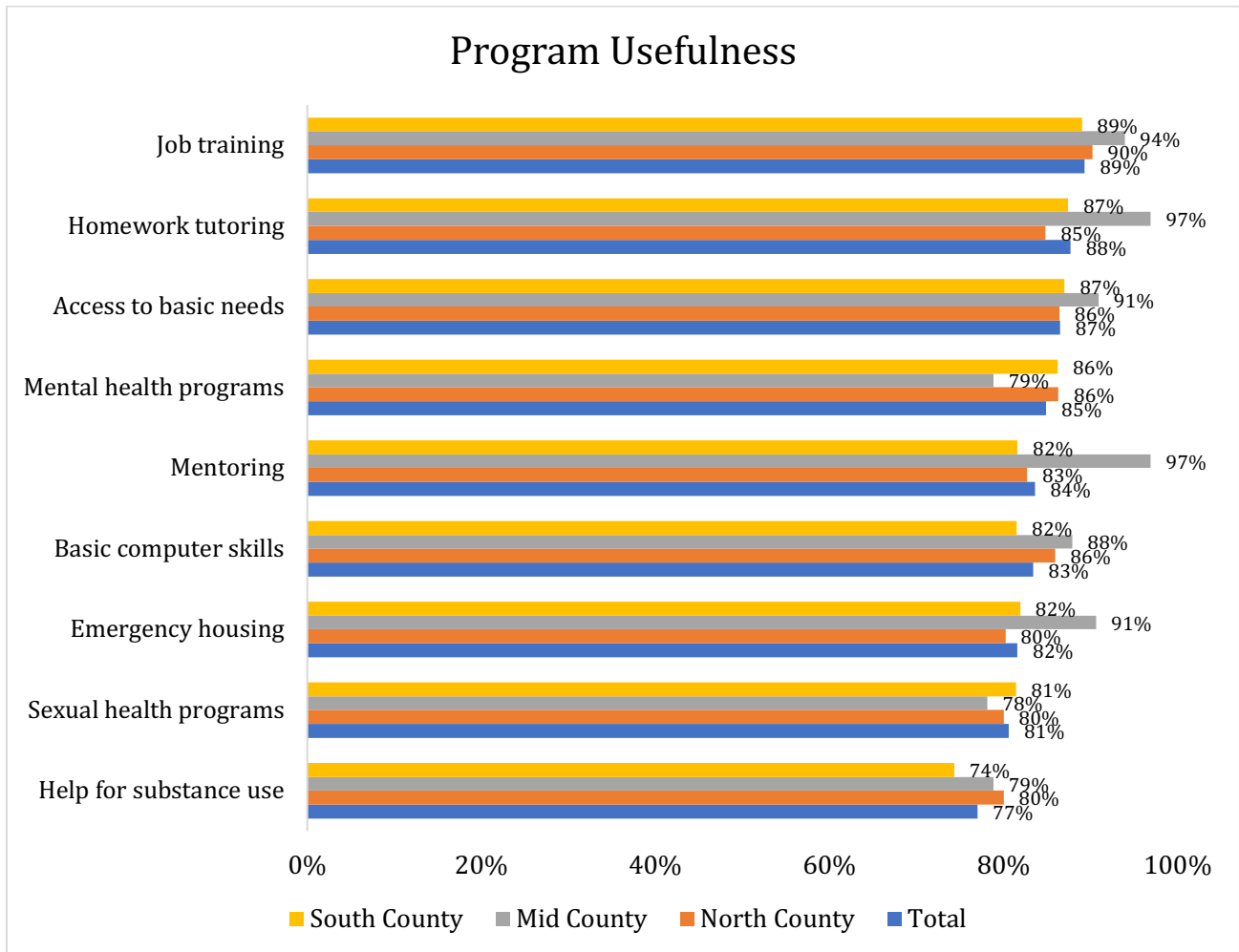
Figure 13. Percentage of youth who perceived that these types of programs would be useful for youth in their community.

4. Safety and Healthy Relationships[6]

Neighborhood Safety was assessed by asking questions that measured neighborhood attachment, perceived availability of substances, and community disorganization. Figures 14-16 show the degree to which youth agree with statements about their neighborhood. Slightly more than a quarter (29.6%) of youth agree to some extent that they would like to get out of their neighborhood. However, majority (84.0%) of youth reported liking their neighborhood.

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[6] Sources: Glaser et al., 2005; CA Healthy Kids Survey
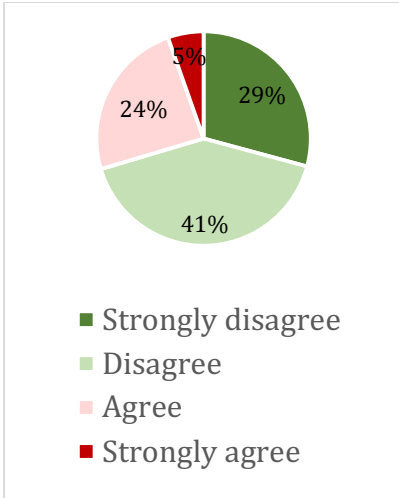
Figure 14. Participants response to how much they agree with, **"I'd like to get out of my neighborhood."**
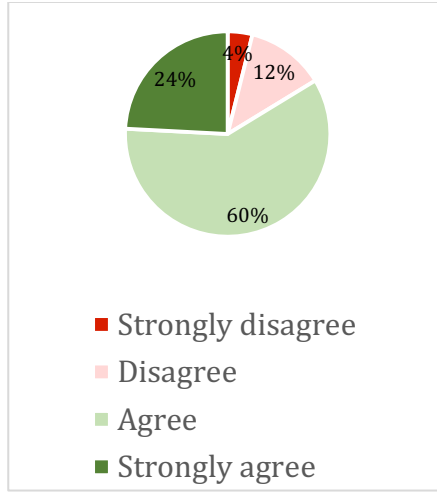
Figure 15. Participants response to how much they agree with the statement, *"I like my neighborhood."*
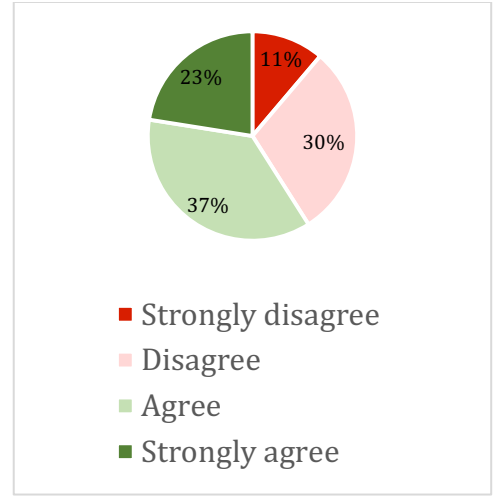
Figure 16. Participants' agreement to, ***"If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood I now live in."***

The following figures (17-20) represent youth report of community disorganization. Youth reported on how common each factor of community disorganization was in their neighborhood. The profiles for each factor of community disorganization are very similar with the exception of empty/abandoned buildings which less than one quarter of youth (23.0%) reported as a common concern in their neighborhood. Roughly 60% of youth reported no problem with fights, graffiti and drug selling. However, over one third of youth (22.7 - 41.1%) identified these factors as somewhat or very common in their neighborhood.
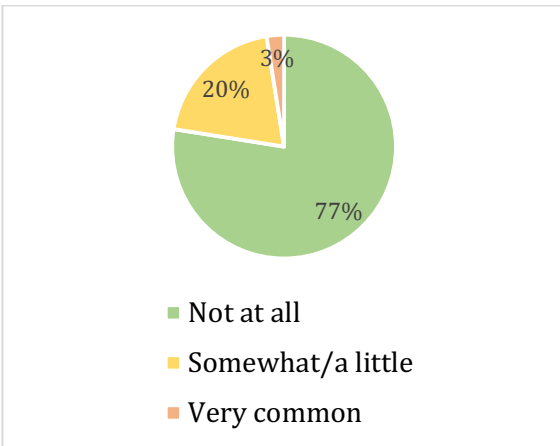
Figure 17. Participants' perception of how common empty or abandoned buildings are in their community.
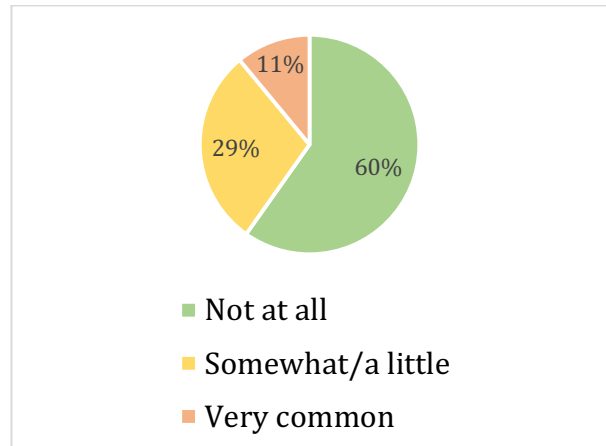
Figure 18. Participants' perception of how common fights are in their community.
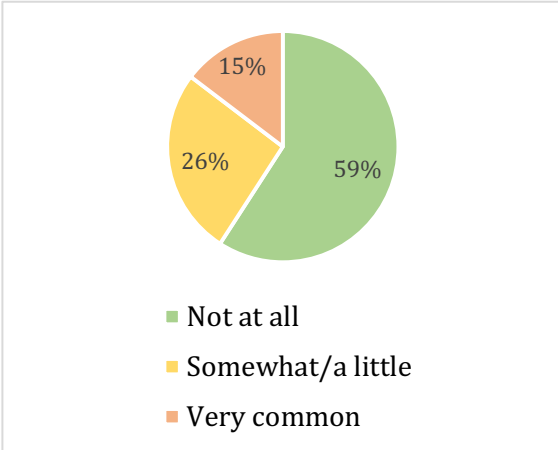
Figure 19. Participants' perception of how common graffiti is in their neighborhood.
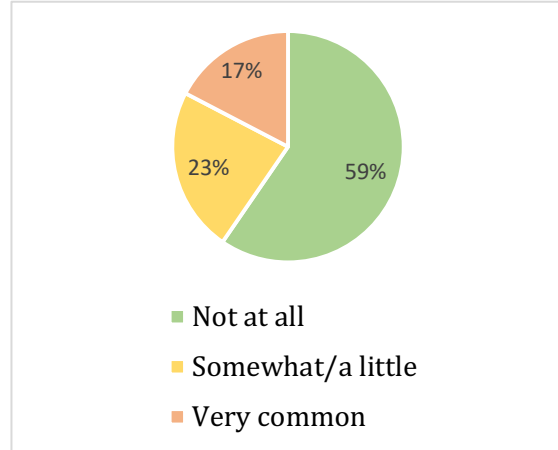
Figure 20. Participants' perception of how common selling drugs are in their neighborhood.

When compared by region, participants from Mid County rated their neighborhood as less safe than the other regions as seen in Figure 21. North County also reported higher rates of drug selling and other crimes than South County.
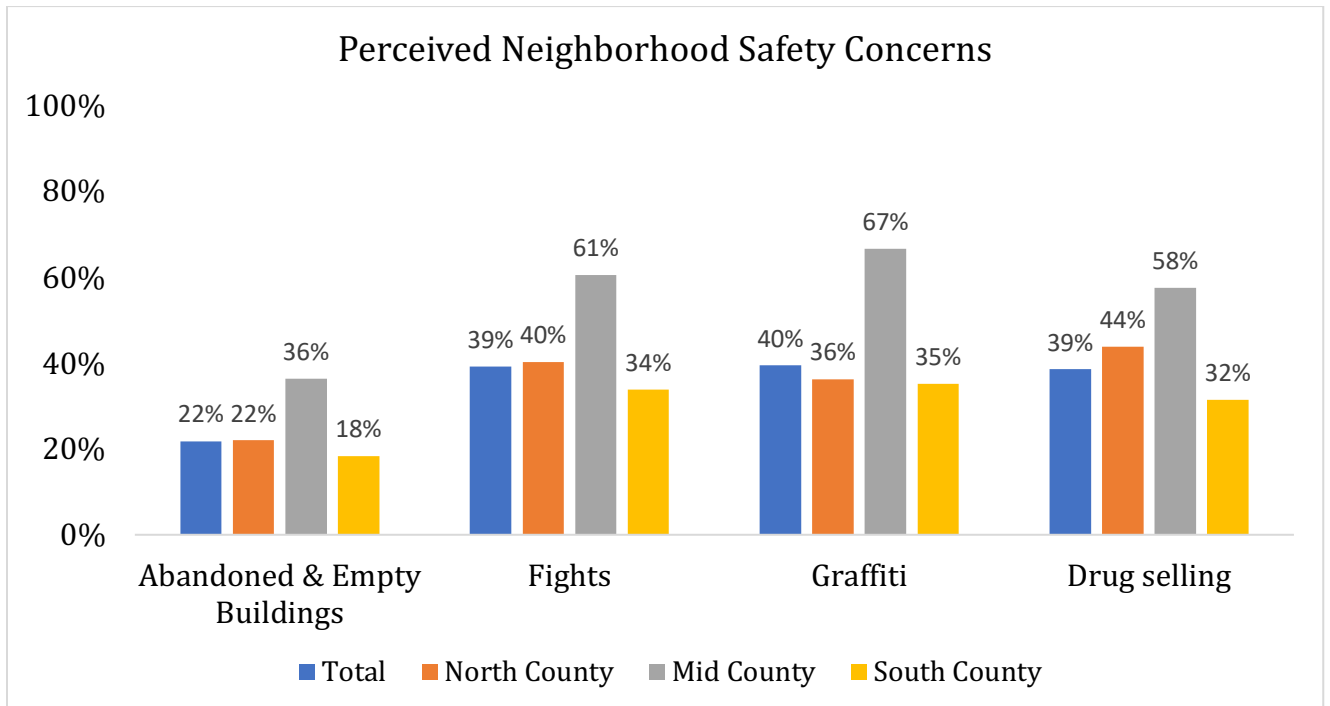
Figure 21. Percentage of youth who responded "Somewhat" or "very common" to different variables about their neighborhood.

Average ratings of youth-perceived availability of substances are compiled in Figure 22, with ratings ranging from "very easy to obtain" to "very hard to obtain." 63.0% of youth reported that marijuana was very easy or easy to obtain in their community, whereas only 39.1% of youth reported that cocaine, LSD, or amphetamines was easy to obtain. When compared by region, participants from North County rated all substances as easier to obtain than other regions, while South County participants rated getting all substances as more difficult.

Perceived *Difficulty* of Substance Availability
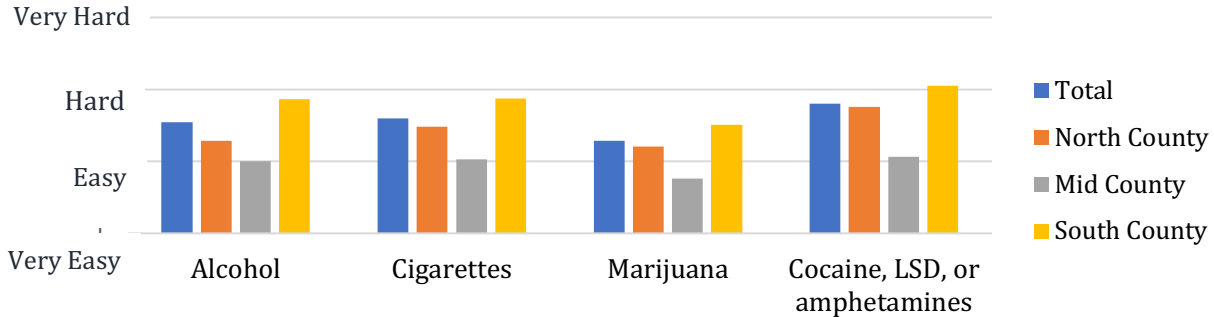
Figure 22. Average of participants' ratings of how easy or difficult it is to obtain certain classes of substances.

Next, *Home Safety* was assessed by asking youth to rate how true specific statements were for them. The figures below show how true youth reported each of the following statements were for them: I am scared to be at home when other people are home (Figure 23); I worry that something bad might happen at home (Figure 24); I feel safe at home (Figure 25); and I like being at home (Figure 26). Overall, the majority of youth seem to feel safe at home. Note: Figure 25 is color coded in reverse to represent the inverse rating, meaning that participants who chose the responses of "Pretty much true" and "Very true" as safer at home.
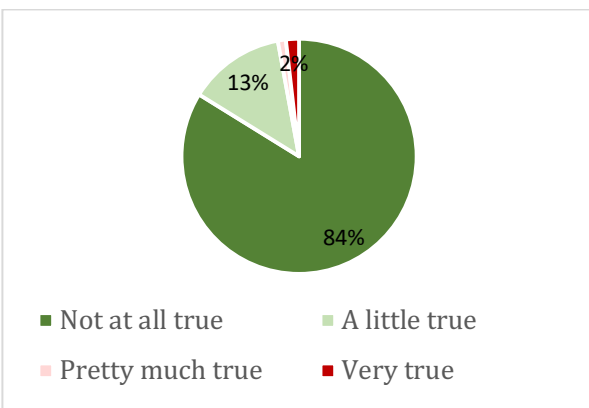
Figure 23. *Participants' rating of how much they agree with the statement, "I am scared to be at home when other people are home."*
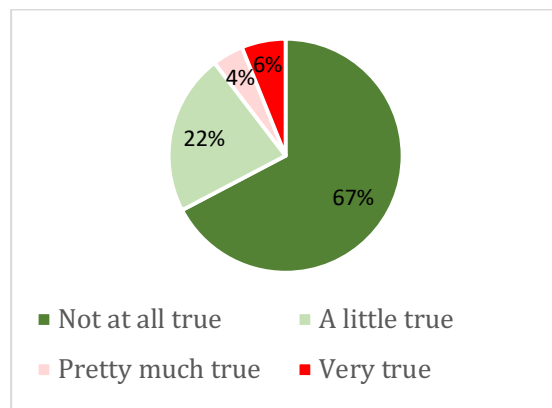
Figure 24. *Participants' rating of how much they agree with the statement, "I worry that something bad might happen at home."*
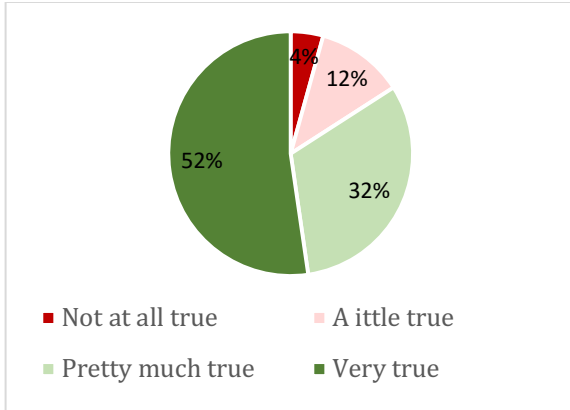
Figure 25. Participants' rating of how much they agree with the statement, **"I feel safe at home."**
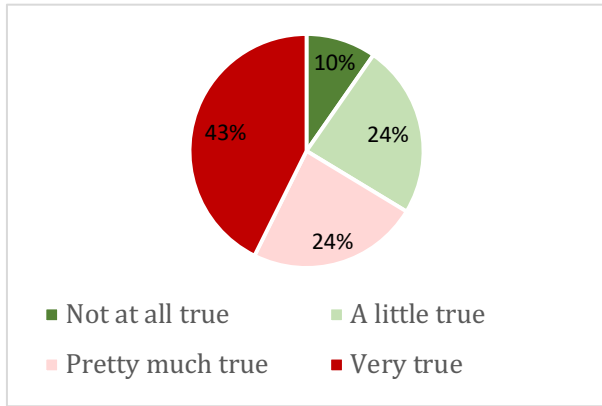
Figure 26. Participants' rating of how much they agree with the statement, **"I like being home alone."**

Lastly, *Healthy Relationships* (demonstrated in Figure 27) were assessed by asking the degree to which youth felt that there were adults in their life who cared about them and believed in their success. In combination, these measures capture a holistic picture of youth safety concerns in various settings. Overall, youth reported that adults at home and in their community cared and supported them.
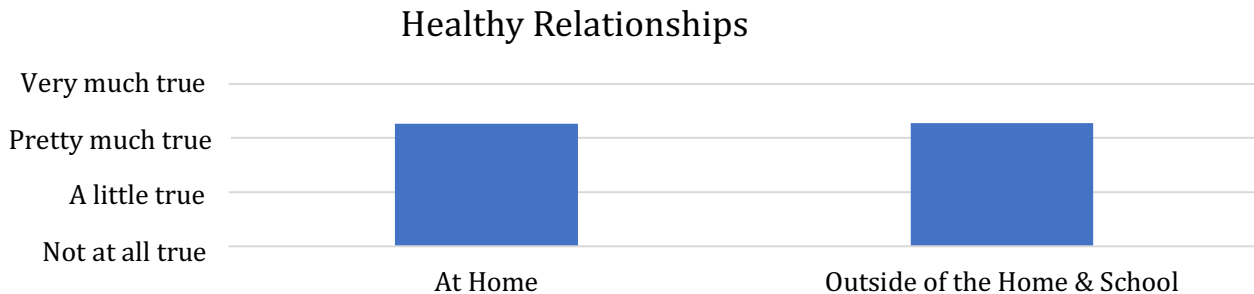
Figure 27. Average of participants' response to the Healthy Relationships questionnaire.

5. **Areas of Concern & Mental Health**

As seen in Figure 28, *Areas of Concern* were assessed by asking youth the degree to which they worry about various areas (e.g., fitting into US culture, sexual health, learning how to manage stress and emotions). The top three areas of concern reported by youth were: **finding a current or future job** (79.0% of youth reporting they are somewhat or very worried), **college preparedness** (78.0%), and family stress (75.1%).

When compared by region, Mid County participants reported more concern about college plans, housing, food security, and arrest, probation, or police interaction. South County and

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

North County both shared concerns over mental health issues, such as managing stress or emotions. South County specifically reported more concern over losing home culture, sexual health, and physical health. North County reported the highest concern about family stress.
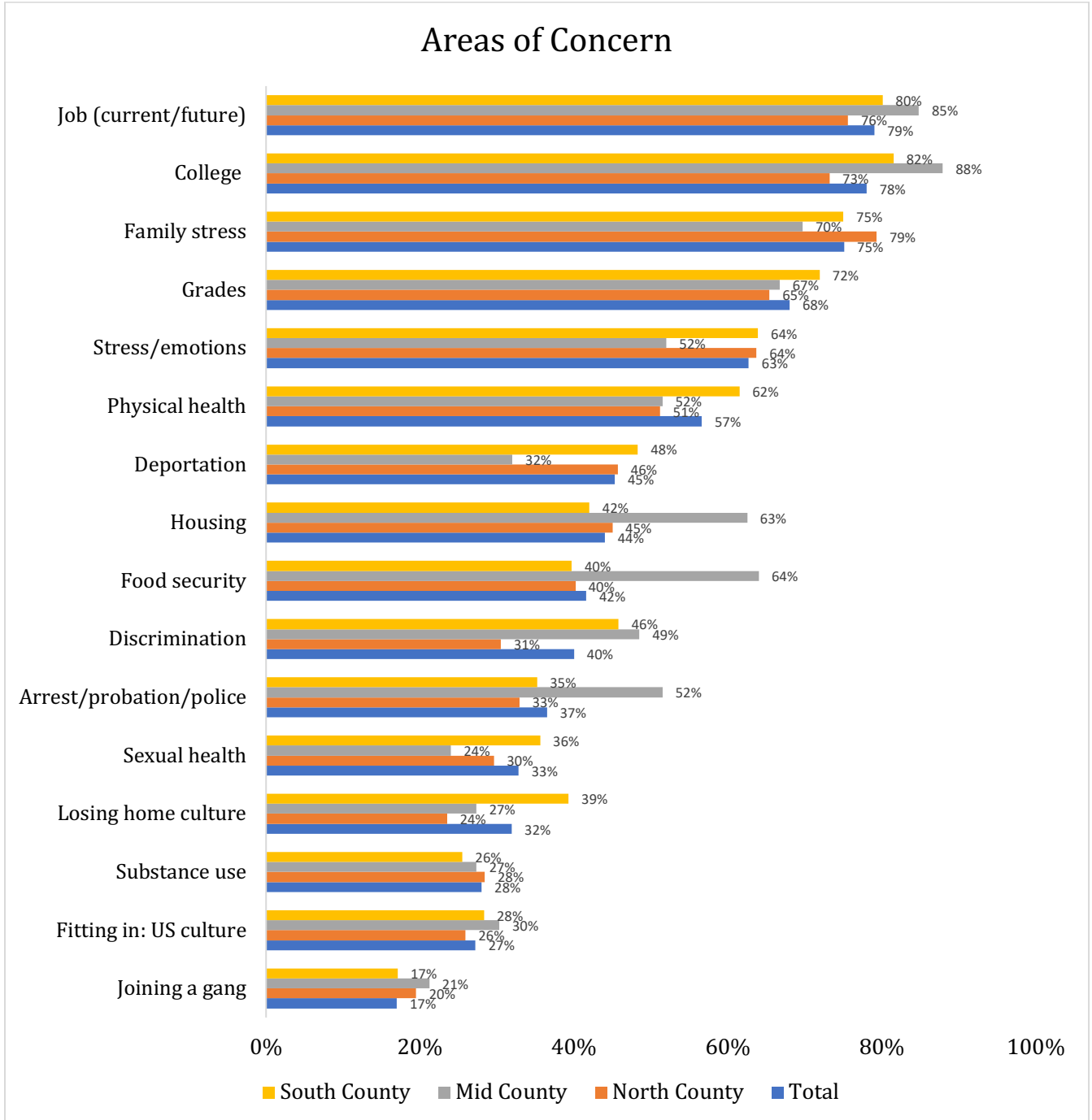
Figure 28. Percent of youth that reported they are "somewhat" or "very worried" about each area of concern.

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

The survey also implored about *Mental Health Needs*, specifically depression and anxiety symptoms. Depression was screened by the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2) through questions about depressed mood and anhedonia. Anxiety was screened using the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 2-item (GAD-2). For both these screeners, a score of 3 is considered the cutoff for determining if there are possible mental health issues. As seen in Figure 29, 41.4% of youth met criteria for depression and 38.0% for anxiety.
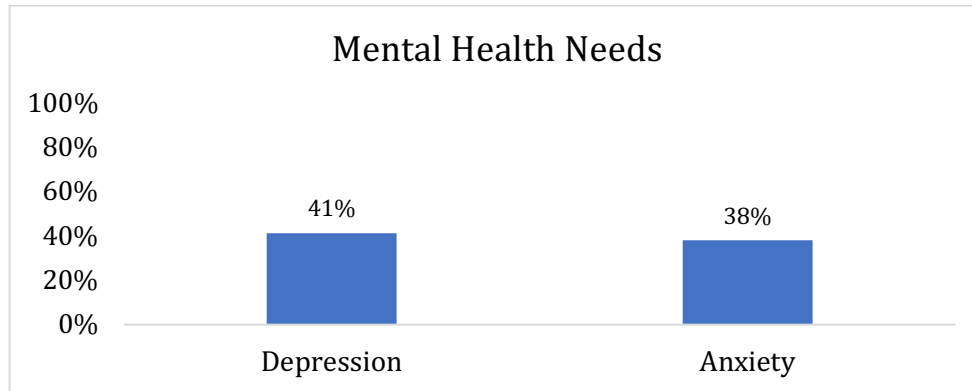
Figure 29. Percentage of youth that scored a 3 or higher (the cutoff score) in short mental health screeners.

Since mental health stigma can often deter youth from seeking treatment, *Mental Health Stigma* were assessed as shown in Figures 30-35. Figure 30 shows that approximately 43.5% of youth agreed to some degree that counseling would not help if they had a problem. A majority (60.9%) of youth agreed to some degree that they should handle problems on their own. 46.6% of respondents said they would be too embarrassed or scared to talk about a mental health problem. Youth were split about whether a therapist might understand their challenges. Youth preferred for their parents, rather than their friends, to know if they were meeting with a therapist, which suggests that more stigma may be coming from social circles.
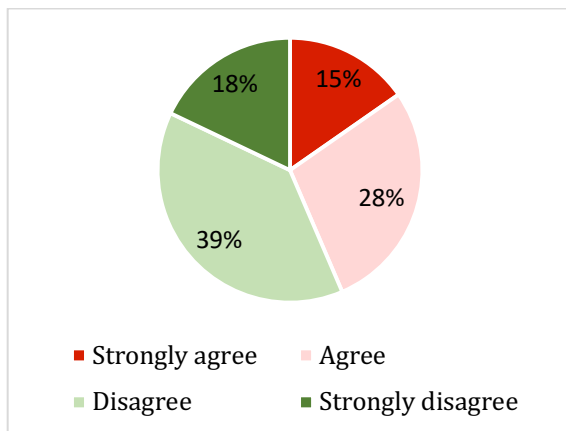
Figure 30. Degree that participants agreed to the statement, **"If I had a problem, I don't think counseling would help."**
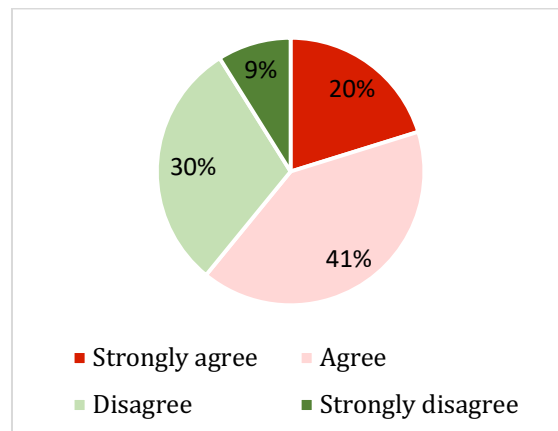
Figure 31. Degree that participants agreed to the statement, **"I think I should handle problems on my own."**
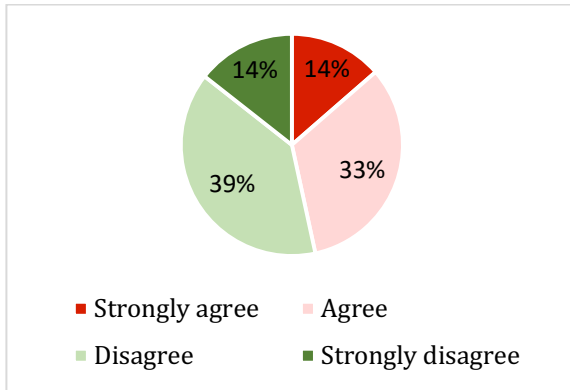
Figure 32. Degree that participants agreed to the statement, **"Even if I had a problem, I would be too embarrassed or scared to talk about it."**
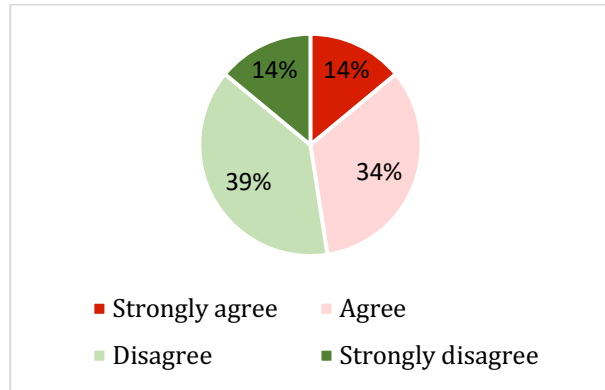

Figure 33. Degree that participants agreed to the statement, **"A therapist might not understand me or the challenges I was having."**
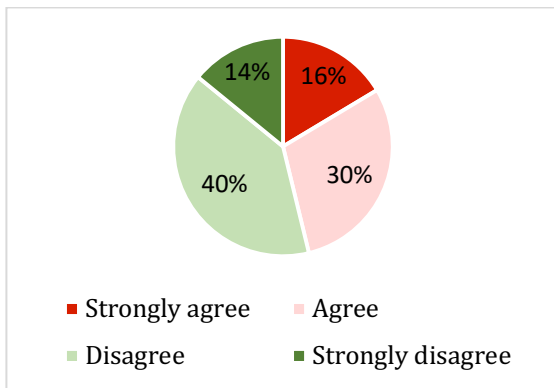

Figure 34. Degree that participants agreed to the statement, **"I wouldn't want others to know I was meeting with a therapist."**
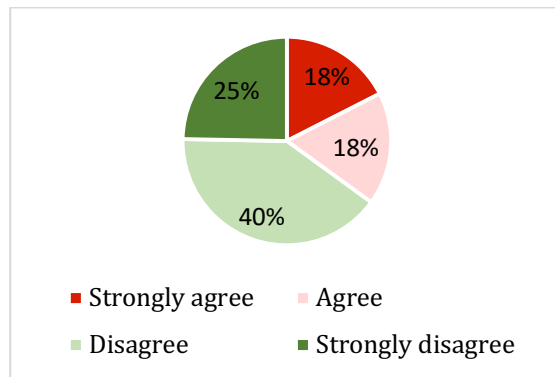

Figure 35. Degree that participants agreed to the statement, **"I wouldn't want my parents/guardians to know I was meeting with a therapist."**

Questions regarding *Mental Health Access* asked youth to report on the number of times they sought help from different people in their lives. As shown in Figure 36, most youth have not sought help from most of the people listed as possible choices in the survey. Youth were most likely (69.6% of the youth) to reach out to a friend at least once. Youth were least likely to reach out to a crisis hotline or a coach or club advisor. About a third (34.6%) of participants wanted to talk to a counselor, therapist, or psychologist about emotional challenges or problems and 17.1% of youth were not sure.

Mental Health Support & Access
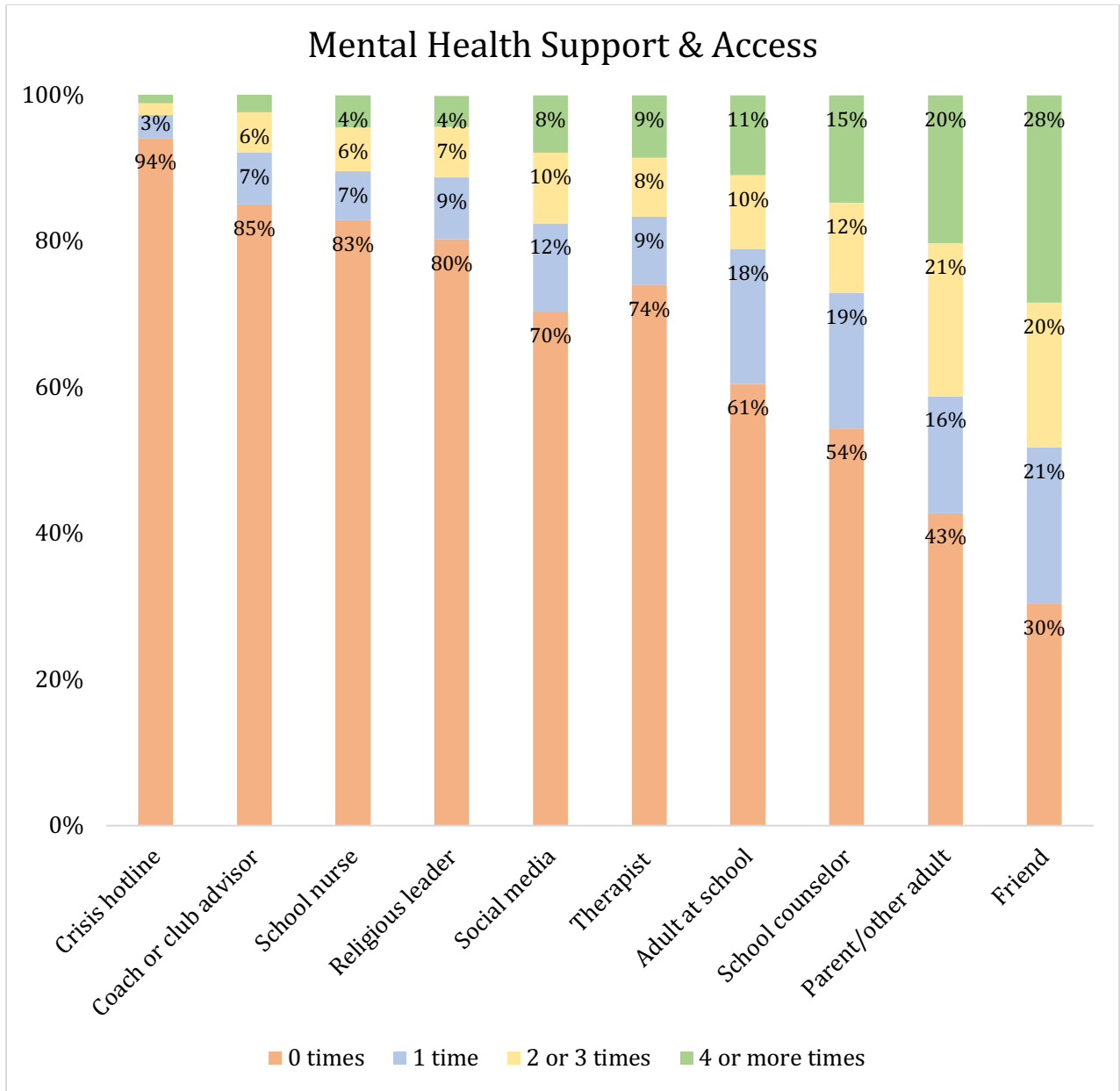
Figure 36. Percentage of youth who have sought support from a variety of categories.

Focus Groups – Qualitative Results

The qualitative coding process of the nine focus group transcripts yielded useful information about the issues that youth face, their sense of safety, their experiences at school, their interests, and their thoughts on program engagement.

1. Issues Faced by Youth

Substance Use

When asked about what issues youth face in their community (Table 3), all nine focus groups initially mentioned substance use. Youth from both regions of the county mentioned peer pressure and stress as reasons that youth engage in substance use. However, youth from North County emphasized mental health and avoiding school as other reasons to abuse substances; whereas one student from South County mentioned boredom. A participant indicated youth say they use because it "relaxes them because of all the stress of finals and stuff like that. But also, it's because of depression that is caused by something else, whether it's trouble at home, physically, mentally…" Although youth from both regions stated their friends drink and smoke marijuana, youth from North County also indicated that Xanax and meth use have increased in frequency. They describe these substances as common in their community and easily accessible. Additionally, participants noted that "Juul" (an e-cigarette or vape) is also commonly used across the county. They reported that youth are often misinformed about the potential harmful consequences of Juul.

Table 3. Youth's qualitative responses regarding substance use among youth.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Reason for use	• Peer pressure • Stress or to forget problems	• Mental health • To avoid school	• Boredom
Type of substances	• Alcohol, marijuana • Juul - misinformation	• Hard drugs, meth • High use of Xanax • Easily accessible	

Community Issues

Throughout the discussion, youth brought up various community issues they hope to see addressed, as seen in Table 4. Primarily, many participants brought up community violence as a concern, which will be further discussed in the safety section of this report. One student from the South County described her feelings as, "I can't escape it because everywhere you go there will be problems. Even in Santa Barbara." There were community concerns unique to each region. For example, youth in Isla Vista shared their concerns of undergraduates not respecting or showing awareness of families living in the community. They reported experiences of loud noises on weeknights, damaged property, and careless driving or biking.

In Carpinteria, youth felt that gentrification and services catered to tourists has made them feel unwelcome. One participant described it as, "The implants, that come here and try to act like they belong here, are not like that, because they come from somewhere else and don't understand it."

Youth from both regions also shared concerns about a lack of youths' voice in their community. One participant shared, "adults don't listen because we are still seen as kids. Legality wise we are minors, so our voice is not prioritized." They noted that many of their friends use social media as a way to share their frustrations and issues, especially through creating memes. In North County, some participants brought up issues with local government representatives who allowed ICE presence, which led to large community demonstrations. One participant described the protest, "everyone gave reasons on why not to put the ICE facility in here, yet our voices were not heard because of the people who make decisions who don't look like us, who don't interact with our community, who stay on the outskirts, who only look when they need to." Additionally, they noted that their peers sometimes fear community centers or services targeted to indigenous or Latino folks because ICE targets these types of places. Lastly, they noted that lack of Mixteco representatives that can translate may discourage true representation.

Table 4. Youth's qualitative responses regarding community issues.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Community	• Community violence common		• Undergrads not respecting community • Gentrification
Representation	• Lack of youth's voice in community • Use social media as a way to share frustrations (memes)	• Local representatives not truly part of community • ICE presence allowed • ICE targets community centers • Lack of translators to Mixtec at services	

Finances

As seen in Table 5, Youth from both regions expressed feeling stressed about their and their family's financial situation. A participant from North County said, "We're kind of on our own, because our parents have to work because if they don't work, we don't have a roof over our heads. And they don't have basic food." They shared concerns of the effects of poverty, such as worrying about having enough food or transportation if they were to join after-school programs. Participants from both regions shared that they would probably not be able to join an after-school program even if they were free and interesting because of their financial need to work. Additionally, they noted that poverty affects their family in ways other than

financial struggles. For example, they described their parents as unable to read, which limits the opportunities for their family or assistance with homework. Youth from North County also described that it was difficult to find a job because work places are more reluctant to hire high school students, especially those from alternative programs. Youth from both regions described housing issues as a major financial barrier. However, participants from the two counties reported different housing issues. While participants from North County described difficulty in finding housing big enough for families, participants from South County reported that housing costs were very high and difficult to afford. Lastly, some participants from South County expressed that many work environments exploit their financial need. They also expressed a desire to find a job that pertained to their interests (such as working as an assistant in a music production company rather than in food service).

Table 5. Youth's qualitative responses on issues stemming from finances.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
General Finances	• Feel sense of financial illiteracy • Feel family's stress over bills • Need to support family	• Financial pressures leave youth on their own • Food scarcity • Lack of transportation	
Housing	• Housing adds stress & financial problems	• Housing for families not available	• Housing very expensive
Employment	• Can't join after-school programs because of work	• Hard to find a job	• Some employers exploit financial need • Wish to get a job that matches interests

Mental Health

As shown in Table 6, youth also expressed concerns about mental health struggles among peers and the stigma that surrounds getting help. One participant from South County described the stigma as, "It's hard to talk about because people think you want attention, or they think you are crazy. Sometimes people take it to the extreme." At multiple alternative schools, students noted that the school staff was welcoming and supportive to these mental health needs due to the small environment and caring school staff. Participants from both regions connected mental health to social media. While some partially attributed pressure from social media to teenagers' increasing mental health issues, others described it as a place to share and connect about their struggles. Youth from North County expressed disinterest in counseling because many mental health providers might not understand their experiences. One participant said, "I can't sit there and like, you know, when I was at this age this and this happened to me, I just can't. I can't do that. Like it's hard for me to talk about my problem, I can't even tell like family members, the ones that you're supposed to trust with everything, I can't even do that." Some participants suggested that counselors that share

backgrounds and experiences with youth or peer-to-peer support might dispel some of youth's fears in seeking counseling.

Table 6. Youth's qualitative reports on mental health issues among their peers.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Mental health issues	• Excessive social media contributes to struggles	• Depression	
Seeking mental health support	• Stigma • Others don't take mental health issues seriously • School staff make youth comfortable to share	• Don't like idea of counselor • Need counselor to have similar experiences • Easier to talk to a peer	

2. Safety

Community Safety

As seen in Table 7, participants discussed community safety concerns. When asked if they feel safe in their communities some youth said that they did but the majority of the participants in both regions responded by saying that they did not feel safe. Youth in both regions cited community violence as one of the main reasons why they feel unsafe, and participants from North County mentioned gangs as a reason for the violence. Participants in both regions also mentioned poor lighting within their communities as a reason why they feel unsafe. This was especially true for participants in Isla Vista with one participant sharing "I would say having more lights. It's really dark here" after being asked what improvements could be made to make them feel safer. Participants in Isla Vista also stated that the recklessness of undergraduates makes them feel unsafe. One participant from South County mentioned domestic violence and shared, "I don't know if that is a big problem for people our age, but the victims I know are too afraid to speak up."

Youth from both regions mentioned that they would like to see more interaction between community members in order to build understanding and provide more support for one another. More specifically, participants in North County shared concern over the lack of youth voices in their community and a misunderstanding of their needs, while participants in South County shared concerns over a lack of community support.

When talking about safety in their communities, participants talked about theft and cited financial issues and money as the motivators behind misbehavior. One participant shared "Yeah, because no one is going to do something for free. If someone gave me a job right now, I wouldn't be out robbing people. Taking their stuff. I would be buying my own things."

Table 7. Youth's qualitative responses regarding safety in their communities.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Community	• Do not feel safe • Violence is common • Lack of communication between community members	• Lack of youth voice and understanding of their needs • Gang presence	• Undergrads recklessness make community feel unsafe • Lacking community support • Domestic violence
Financial Issues	• Financial issues are a big problem for youth • Not enough lighting	• Theft • Money as a motivator for misbehavior	

General Safety Concerns

When asked about other factors that make them feel unsafe, participants from both regions mentioned they felt unsafe and uncomfortable around police and other law enforcement (Table 8). Youth in North County shared that they have witnessed unethical behavior and have experienced racial discrimination from police. They also shared concerns of law enforcements' lack of understanding regarding the community needs and experiences. One participant shared, "It's like, you have a uniform. There's that person that's supposed to be protecting their community, but instead they're harassing our community where we don't feel safe with them." Some youth from Isla Vista had different beliefs and felt that law enforcement can actually help the community feel safer despite some bad interactions with police.

When asked about deportation and immigration, youth from North County shared concern for a lack of support and resources for undocumented youth. When talking about undocumented students in higher education one participant shared, "We've seen that after one semester, Dreamers don't come back because they don't have that resource, so our entire student body has been pushing for a Dream Center." While the majority of youth in South County believed that there were currently no concerns over deportation and immigration, one participant did share that they knew someone who was deported. One participant in South County shared concerns over the presence of undocumented people in their community; however, their statement did not fall in line with the majority of participants' views.

Table 8. Youth's qualitative responses regarding general safety concerns.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Law Enforcement	• Feel uncomfortable & unsafe around police	• Lack understanding of community needs • Experiences of racial discrimination from police	• Cops can help make the community feel safe
Deportation/ Immigration		• Lack of support for undocumented youth	• Know someone who has been deported • Fear of undocumented

3. School Experiences

As seen in Table 9, when asked why youth cut school, participants from both regions discussed boredom in school and a preference to meet with friends and use substances. Participants from North County credited skipping school to escape experiences of violence and bullying. The participants also brought up family issues, such as having to care for younger siblings and financial issues. One participant shared, "When I was going to school, I had the problem where I had like two pairs of clothes, so I would be embarrassed to go, like in the same clothes. Or I would decide not to go because I didn't have any clothes to wear." Participants also brought up transportation issues caused by packed bus schedules and inconveniently placed bus stops.

When asked how youth can be better supported in their academics, participants from both regions stated that having staff and faculty members who were caring and supportive helps. Youth in both regions also stated that they could be better supported if they had more mental health support. Participants from North County stated that a structured safe space for youth to go to would be helpful in supporting their academics and participants from South County mentioned that they would like to have counselors who are more helpful.

Table 9. Youth's qualitative responses regarding school.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Why youth cut school	- Boredom - Prefer to hang out with friends - Substance use	- Experiences of violence & bullying - Family issues - Transportation issues - Drug use - Financial concerns	
How youth can be supported in academics	- Caring and supportive faculty and staff - Mental health support and therapists	Having a structured safe space for students to go	Counselors who are more helpful

4. Barriers to Program Engagement

As shown in Table 10, participants discussed previous information, potential motivators and barriers to engaging in community services and after-school programs. Participants from all focus groups portrayed a range in their knowledge of community resources and programs: some were aware of some programs, some did not know of any, and some already are or have been involved. Those participants that did participate or know of programs had learned about them through friends or through school. Some participants from North County shared that many of the programs they were involved with or ever heard of were only available for parolees as part of their sentencing. They described these programs as supportive and effective only for some participants, but that other youth do not like the forced aspect. They hoped that future programs can provide these services to youth that are not on parole as they also may have high needs.

When discussing reasons that they would engage, all participants noted a space to meet and hang out with friends as a strong motivator. They also noted mentorship and counseling as needed services for their peers. They described wanting to feel supported, understood and comforted by the counselors or the community center. They emphasized the importance of feeling respected. In South County, the participants also mentioned other benefits of programs, such as opportunities to build leadership or other skills. However, these suggestions may have been mentioned by the participants because of their experience at a community center that offered these opportunities. Therefore, youth from North County may not have realized that such opportunities could be provided at an after-school program.

Lastly, youth discussed many potential barriers to program engagement. Youth from both regions described transportation to the community site and a lack of interest in some programs. Additionally, youth from North County described childcare and expenses as

barriers. In particular, they noted that program cost could be a barrier, but also their general lack of resources may force them to work rather than join a program. In the South County focus groups, participants described work or current involvement in school clubs as a reason to not join programs. They also shared concerns about limited freedoms, such as racial discrimination or forced attendance at the program. Lastly, one participant noted that he left a program due to overpopulation, meaning that he left when the enrollment in the program exceeded the available resources.

Table 10. Participants' reports on potential and current motivators & barriers to engaging in after-school programs.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Program Knowledge	• Unaware of resources/services • Some familiar programs • Learned of programs through school or friends	• Programs only available for parolees	
Reasons to Engage	• Socialization • Mentorship • Counseling		• Leadership opportunities • Build & practice skills
Barriers	• Transportation • Lack of knowledge about programs • Lack of interest	• Childcare • Lack of resources • Parents worry about youth safety • Expense	• Already in clubs at school • Go to work after-school • Concerns about racial profiling • Overpopulation in program • Forced attendance

5. Suggestions for Future Programming

Program Participation

During the focus groups, participants shared suggestions for future programming that they would like to see in their community. Table 11 describes participants' suggestions to increase participation. Students from both regions said that they had not heard about many resources or programs in their community. Participants in North County suggested resources be promoted more and with language that resonates with them. A student in South County said that their ideal program, "isn't mandatory to stay the whole time, but it's open for people who want to go."

Table 11. Participants' responses regarding participation in programs.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Suggestions for increasing participation		• Promote available resources • Use language that resonates with participants	• Voluntary participation • Raise awareness about families in IV

Community Resources

Participants also shared their thoughts on community resources (Table 12). In the discussions, all nine groups expressed wanting to engage in programs that provide career mentorship. In South County, many students mentioned wanting guidance to prepare for their lives after high school and programs to help build skills. When asked about hobbies, students in North County brought up entrepreneurialism and suggested programs that help them reach their goal. One participant mentioned they were focused on starting their own business and "creating automotive accessories." When asked about the services provided by counselors in their community, one participant said, "there needs to be more understanding and support from those people." A student (stet)also said that they would benefit from programs, "about finding a job or like daycare or resources that could help any teen about basically protection or knowing about different types of things." Another said, "what I'd like to see is someone help me be a better mom." In North County, students frequently brought up the need for supportive counseling for substance users.

Table 12. Youth's responses regarding community resources.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Preferred services & resources	• Career mentorship • Entrepreneurial help • Helpful counseling from adults • Supportive group discussions	• Inexpensive activities & financial support • School supplies • Cooking lessons & more food options • Childcare services	• Youth want programs that help them build & practice skills • Guidance to prepare for after high school
Services for substance users		• Safe space • Counseling for substance users • Counseling, recreational events, & school events can help reduce drug use	

Programs

As shown in Table 13, students specified wanting more programs that they enjoy. Students in North County suggested to "do programs where you do surveys about what you like to do after school." Another student suggested to "create more programs they like enjoy and that have nothing to do with your grades or things like that." Both regions mentioned creating a community center for them to read, do their homework, learn how to cook, and participate in recreational activities like video games and sports. In North County, students discussed wanting to participate in after school activities with younger children. These students also shared that they'd like to go on field trips to amusement parks, beaches, and other countries. In both regions, participants mentioned wanting to take trips to colleges.

Table 13. Youth's responses regarding community programs.

Category	Both Regions	North County Only	South County Only
Suggested events	• College-bound program	• Music & art programs	• Career Day to learn about a variety of careers
Suggested activities	• Community center to hangout, do homework, use computers, recreation (sports, video games, reading, dancing)	• After-school activities with younger children • Field trips to colleges, amusement parks, beaches, & different countries	

Discussion

Limitations

This analysis explores the met and unmet needs of youth across Santa Barbara County. However, there are a few limitations that should be considered in reviewing these results. Primarily, as with any research recruitment, youth who were willing to share their ideas and experiences may have some personality or demographic differences as compared to youth who opted out of the evaluation. The researchers tried to account for this self-selection by using two formats, questionnaire surveys and focus groups. Youth who struggle with literacy may prefer a focus group format. On the other hand, topics that may be difficult to discuss among peers can be addressed in the more anonymous format of a questionnaire. The research team also presented participants with two options for the survey: online or hard copy. Offering the two options accommodated possible technology limitations that some programs or schools face. Additionally, CAC and the research team mainly recruited from local youth organizations and alternative schools. Youth from these organizations may have different support systems, demographics, or other experiences than youth who were not recruited. The team tried to combat this disparity by reaching out to a variety of centers and allowing both surveys and focus groups to accommodate for Spanish-speakers. However, there may be youth in the county who speak other languages, such as Mixteco, who were not represented.

Future Directions

Future programming can use the information about youths' interests, struggles, and experiences to create programs that better match their needs. Youth provided valuable information about their needs, such as mental health, community violence, safety issues, and financial concerns, that can be addressed through services provided by CAC and community partners. Additionally, they provided information on their dreams and interests, so that community services can better connect and engage with the youth. Both the survey and the focus groups described the similarities and the differences between county regions to further inform how services can address the unique needs of their communities.

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Appendix

Focus Group Questions

1. What are your favorite things to do?

2. From your view, what are the issues that are facing youth your age?
   a. [prompt them unless already covered] what about…
      Friends, school, home life, violence, gender identity, sexuality, & mental health
   b. How much do you feel like youth are heard on these topics? E.g., at home, school, community?

3. What helps youth feel safe in your community?
   a. What makes kids feel unsafe?
   b. At home? At school? Your neighborhood? Your favorite place to hang out?
   c. How do you feel around law enforcement in your neighborhood?
   d. What concerns do you have about immigration and deportation in your community?

4. What would make a difference in making you feel safer in your community?
   a. How can adults make a difference?
   b. How can youth make a difference?

5. In designing programming, it would be helpful to better know what you're already doing and what you would like to do. After school ends, where do you go and what do you do?
   a. If you go home, what do you do at home?
   b. What would you rather do?

6. What programs and services are you familiar with for teens in our community (e.g., Youth Corps, Joven Noble/Xinachtli, CALM, Family Service Agency, Fighting Back, Future Leaders)?
   a. Why do kids come to these services?
   b. What keeps some kids from coming to these programs and services?

7. [remind from #2 if applicable] A lot is going on in the world and our community, what kind of programs would you like to see in your community to help give youth a voice?

8. If you could create the perfect program for you and your friends, what other types of programs and services would you like to see for teens in our community?
   a. Why? How could kids' lives be better if these services were in place?
   b. Where would you like to see these services located?

9. What else would you like to share about how to make your community better for youth?

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

Youth Needs Assessment Survey

After-School Programming

In an ideal youth program, how many days a week would you attend?
☐1   ☐2   ☐3   ☐4   ☐5   ☐6   ☐7

During the week, when (of the days and times below) would be best for you to go to a youth program? Please select all that apply.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 – 5 PM					
5 - 8 PM					
8 – 10 PM					

Over the weekend, when (of the days and times below) would be best for you to go to a youth program? Please select all that apply.

	Saturday	Sunday
Morning (before noon)		
Afternoon (12-5 PM)		
Evening (5-8 PM)		
Night (after 8 PM)		

How much would the following things get in the way of joining an after-school program or activity?

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very much
Transportation (getting to & from the program)			
Safety getting to & from the program			
Time			
Need to work			
Desire to hang out with friends			
Chores at home			
Family responsibilities (such as, caring for siblings/elderly, translating, etc.)			
Parent / family permission			
Cost			
Homework			

Other**: _____**

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How much would the following motivate you to participate in after-school programs?

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very much
Doing something fun			
Learning new things			
Hanging out with my friends			
Making new friends			
Getting help with schoolwork			
Having something to do			
Having a safe space after school			
Helping me get into college			
Helping me get a job			
Other: _____			

Program Characteristics

How interested would you be to get involved in each of the following activities if they were offered in your community?

	Not at all interested	Somewhat interested	Very interested	Already Involved
Academic				
Programming/app design				
Entrepreneurship (how to create & run your own business)				
Computer skills				
Music / Arts				
Orchestra				
Choir				
Hip Hop				
Painting				
Ceramics				
Dance				
Theatre				
Poetry				
Photography				
Other: _____				
Sports				
Basketball				
Soccer				
Hiking				
Surfing				
Yoga				

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

	Not at all interested	Somewhat interested	Very interested	Already Involved
Football				
Swimming				
Other: _____				
Social Activities				
Movies				
Board Games				
Dances				
Teen Night				
Cultural Center				
Other: _____				

How useful would the following programs be if they were offered in your community?

	Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful
Mental health programs			
Emergency housing			
Access to clothing, food, bus fare, etc.			
Homework support/tutoring			
Mentoring			
Sexual health programs			
Job training			
Basic computer skills			
Help for drug & alcohol problems			
Other: _____			

Neighborhood Safety

Please rate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I'd like to get out of my neighborhood.				
I like my neighborhood.				
If I had to move, I would miss the neighborhood.				

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How common are each of the following in your neighborhood?

	Not at all common	Somewhat / a little	Very common
Lot of empty or abandoned buildings			
Fights			
Lots of graffiti			
Drug selling			
Other crime			

How many times have you changed homes since kindergarten?

Never	Once or twice	Three or more times

Please rate the difficulty of the following activities.

	Very easy	Easy	Hard	Very hard
If you wanted to get some beer, wine or hard liquor, how easy would it be for you to get some?				
If you wanted some cigarettes, how easy would it be for you to get some?				
If you wanted to get some marijuana, how easy would it be for you to get some?				
If you wanted to get a drug like cocaine, LSD, or amphetamines, how easy would it be for you to get some?				

Please select yes or no for the following questions.

	Yes	No
My community notices when I am doing a good job and let me know.		
There are people in my community who encourage me to do my best.		
There are people in my community who are proud of me when I do something well.		

Please rate how true each of these statements is about your home.

	Not at all true	A little true	Pretty much true	Very true
I am scared to be at home when other people are home.				
I worry that something bad might happen at home.				
I feel safe at home.				
I like being home alone.				

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

If you don't feel safe at home or if you would like to talk to someone for any other reason, here are some contacts:
- SAFTY Hotline (Youth crisis & compassion response): 888.334.2777
- Text with a trained counselor: 741741
- Mental health facts: MHMYouth.org

Please rate how true each of the following statements is for you.

	Not at all true	A little true	Pretty much true	Very true
In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who **is interested in my schoolwork.**				
In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who **believes that I will be a success.**				
In my home, there is a parent or some other adult who **always wants me to do my best.**				

Please rate how true each of the following statements is for you.

	Not at all true	A little true	Pretty much true	Very true
Outside of my home and school, there is an adult who **really cares about me**.				
Outside of my home and school, there is an adult who **believes that I will be a success.**				
Outside of my home and school, there is an adult who **always wants me to do my best.**				

How worried are you about each of the following areas?

	Not worried	Somewhat worried	Very worried
Family stress			
College (applications, admissions, plans, etc.)			
Job (current or future plans)			
Current grades at school			
Drug & alcohol use			
Physical health			
Fitting in to US culture			
Losing my home culture			
Discrimination (experiences of being treated differently because of your race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation)			
Joining a gang			
Being arrested, probation, or police interaction			

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

	Not worried	Somewhat worried	Very worried
Sexual health (Access to resources & education on safe sex, STDs, sexual trauma, etc.)			
Legal status/deportation risk of you or a loved one			
Learning how to manage stress and emotions			
Having enough food with fresh, healthy options			
Steady and reliable housing			

Other: _____

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?

	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge			
Not being able to stop or control worrying			
Little interest or pleasure in doing things			
Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless			

These statements are about seeking help for emotional challenges or problems from a counselor, therapist, or psychologist. Emotional challenges include things that make you feel sad, angry, stressed or anxious, or that may make you have thoughts of hurting yourself.
How much do you agree with each statement about getting help?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I don't know who I would go to for help.				
If I had a problem, I don't think counseling would help.				
I think I should handle problems on my own.				
Even if I had a problem, I would be too embarrassed or scared to talk about it.				
A therapist might not understand me or the challenges I was having.				
I wouldn't want others to know I was meeting with a therapist.				
I wouldn't want my parents/guardians to know I was meeting with a therapist.				

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

During the past 12 months, did you want to talk to a counselor, therapist, or psychologist about emotional challenges or problems? (Do not include talking about class scheduling or college or career preparation.)

    Yes   No   Not Sure

During the past 12 months, how many times did you talk with any of the following for help with emotional challenges or problems?

	0 times	1 time	2 or 3 times	4 or more times
School counselor, therapist, psychologist (Do not include talking about class scheduling or college or career preparation.)				
Therapist, psychologist, or other mental health professional **outside of school**				
School nurse				
Another adult **at school** like a teacher or other school staff				
A parent, relative, or other adult **outside of school**				
A friend				
A coach or club advisor				
Religious or faith leader, including a religious youth group leader or mentor				
Crisis hotline/text line				
A person or group on social media (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat)				

Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

	Not bothered at all	Bothered a little	Bothered a lot
Back pain			
Pain in your arms, legs or joints			
Chest pain or shortness of breath			
Dizziness			
Feeling tired or having low energy			
Trouble sleeping			
Feeling like you are going to faint or pass out			

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

Demographics

How did you hear about this survey? _____

_____

How old are you? _____

What is your gender?
    Boy   Genderqueer / Gender Non-conforming
    Girl   Other: _____

What is your sex?
    Male   Intersex
    Female   Other: _____

What is your race? (Can select as many as apply)
    Latino/Latina/Latinx or Hispanic   White
    Black/African American   American Indian/Alaskan Native/Native American
    Asian   Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
    Middle Eastern   Other: _____

Where do you live?
    Santa Maria region - including Guadalupe, Orcutt, Los Alamos, Casmalia, Garey, & Sisquoc
    Lompoc region - including Santa Ynez, Solvang, Buellton, Los Olivos, & Ballard
    Santa Barbara region - including Goleta, Carpinteria, Montecito, Isla Vista, Hope Ranch, Summerland, Mission Canyon
    Other: _____

What is your zip code? (If don't know, leave blank) _____

What generation did your family move to the US?
    Your generation   Your grandparents' generation
    Your parent's generation   Before grandparents
    None – Indigenous to the U.S. (Native American)

Among your parent(s) / guardian(s), what is the highest level of education received?
    None   Elementary or Middle School
    High School   Community College or Vocational School
    4-year College (Bachelor's degree)   Professional Degree / Graduate School

CAC Santa Barbara County - Youth Needs Assessment Survey

Have you ever had a family member who was incarcerated (placed in jail or prison)?
     Yes   No

Have you ever had contact with the foster   Yes   No   system?

Do you have a disability or special need? (like a learning disability, ADHD, visual, hearing, etc.)
     Yes   No

Do you identify as LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, etc.)?
     Yes   No

How many of the questions on this survey did you answer?
     All of the questions   Some of the questions
     Most of the questions   None of the questions