

# CITY OF OAKLAND

## AGENDA REPORT

FILED  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CITY OF OAKLAND

2004 FEB 11 PM 1:23

**To:** Office of the City Manager  
**Attn:** Deborah Edgerly  
**From:** Safe Passages  
**Date:** February 24, 2004

**Re: Informational Report on Pathways to Change**

---

### SUMMARY

Pathways to Change is an intensive intervention program aimed at reducing recidivism among juvenile offenders in Oakland. The program is sponsored by Safe Passages and is administered by The Mentoring Center. Pathways to Change receives funding from several sources, including the Oakland Police Department (OPD). OPD's contribution to the program is \$200,000 for the 2003-4 fiscal year. This contract between the City of Oakland and Safe Passages (whose fiscal sponsor is the East Bay Community Foundation) was approved by the Public Safety Committee on December 9, 2003 and forwarded to City Council for as a Consent Item for approval on December 16, 2003.

Along with its approval of the contract, the Public Safety Committee requested that staff return with a report on the success of Pathways to Change. This Informational Report provides an overview of the data collected thus far on the progress of the program. The data reported here is only preliminary, however, the program has seen success in several areas. Safe Passages has hired a noted evaluation firm, Berkeley Policy Associates (BPA), to conduct a thorough evaluation of Pathways to Change. As this evaluation is carried out, staff will continue to update the Committee on the results of the findings.

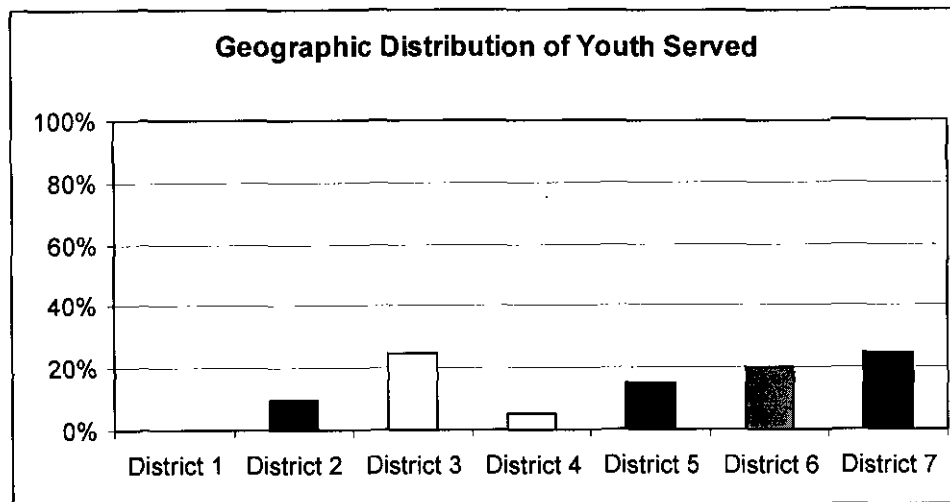
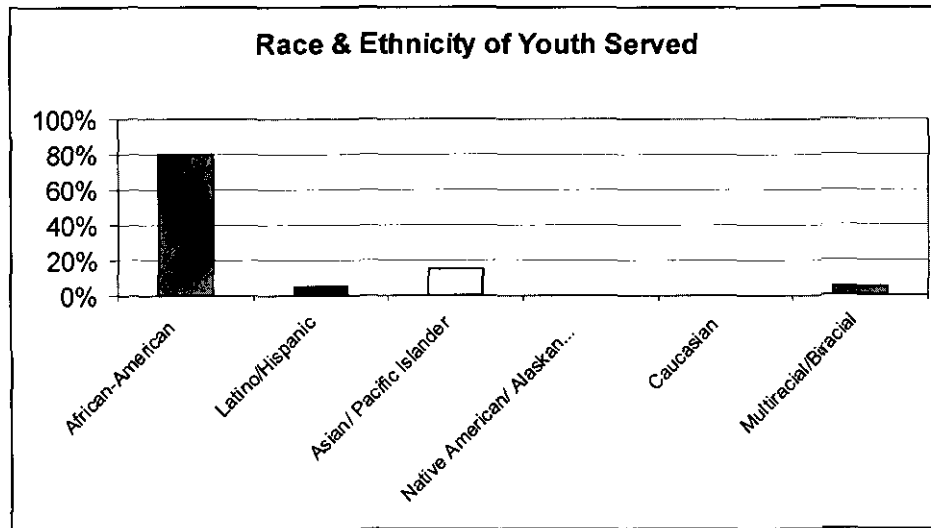
### FISCAL IMPACT

Since this report is informational only, no fiscal impacts are included.

### BACKGROUND

Pathways to Change is a pre-adjudication program that operates within the Juvenile Court system. The program is designed to provide intensive community-based case management services to repeat offenders, with a goal of reducing recidivism and decreasing the number of youth referred to out-of-home placement. Pathways to Change has been providing direct case management services to Oakland's repeat juvenile offender population since May 2002. The target population of Pathways to Change consists of male and female juveniles between the ages of 11-17 having two or more arrests within a three-year period. The racial/ethnic profile of the program participants thus far have been 80% African-American, 15% Asian/Pacific Islander and 5% Hispanic/Latino youth. Geographically, the youth enrolled in the program reside primarily in East and West Oakland.

Item: 5  
Public Safety Committee  
February 24, 2004



The majority of the referrals to Pathways to Change come from the Public Defender’s Office. Other referral sources include private attorneys, Juvenile Court judges and commissioners, and families. The Juvenile Court must approve all enrollments in Pathways to Change.

Pathways to Change is a collaborative program of community-based organizations that are building upon each other’s resources in order to provide a network of services and support to young repeat offenders. The Mentoring Center has served as the lead agency for the collaborative since July 2003. The other partnering agencies include Youth ALIVE!, East Bay Asian Youth Center, Center for Family Counseling, George P. Scotlan Center, and Thunder

Road. Each agency brings a wealth of knowledge and its unique expertise to the collaborative, which compliments the other partners. Pathways to Change case managers are subcontracted through these agencies and are supervised by a centralized Program Director. As prescribed in best practice research, the case managers reflect the population of youth that they serve in all aspects, including race, ethnicity, gender, and language. Building on their own backgrounds and past experiences, the case managers are familiar with the challenges that youth in the target population face and are credible mentors who are able to build trusting relationships.

The program pairs repeat offenders with case managers who serve as mentors and role models, while providing on-going supervision. The case managers provide intensive monitoring for youth on their caseloads and are responsible for brokering appropriate services in the community, as outlined in individualized service plans. The individualized plans are designed to help the youth to not re-offend by connecting the youth to useful programs and other caring adults. Case plans include educational programming, drug/alcohol treatment, anger management, counseling, job training/placement, life skills, and family support services. Case managers are also encouraged to plan monthly activities for youth on their caseloads that provide opportunities for personal development. These activities may include cultural, academic, or recreational activities and field trips.

Since their caseloads cannot exceed ten youth at any given time, case managers are able to develop strong relationships with the youth. Case managers are in contact with youth on their caseloads twice daily by phone and twice weekly in person, and are available to respond to crisis calls 24 hours a day. In addition, case managers accompany clients to all court hearings and assist minors in keeping appointments and participating in other positive activities. The contacts provide an opportunity for general check-in with the youth and with his or her family. The contacts also allow the case managers the opportunity to observe the youth's progress, monitor attendance at planned activities, and ensure compliance with probation orders. If a youth falters while in the program, supervision levels may be adjusted until the situation stabilizes and progress is demonstrated. The case managers provide monthly progress reports to the Court, the Probation Department, the Public Defender's Office or the defense counsel and the District Attorney's Office for each youth enrolled in the program.

Youth involved with Pathways to Change participate in the program for approximately three to four months, depending on a case manager's individual assessment of each young person's progress. The case manager's assessment determines if the youth is ready for a "scaling down" of intensive monitoring. If appropriate, the youth is transitioned to another agency that offers a program that can address any remaining needs the youth may have. These transition agencies generally provide a specific program that can offer services to the youth beyond the time that a minor is participating in Pathways to Change. Most of the community-based agencies that are part of the Pathways to Change collaborative also act as the transition agencies and the youth is

transferred to another case manager within that agency. However, additional agencies may be enlisted to provide on-going support during and after a minor's participation in Pathways to Change depending on the individual needs of the youth. The transition component is critical in determining how successful Pathways to Change is in decreasing recidivism rates of the youth enrolled in the program. The case manager and/or program that the youth is transitioned to must have the capacity to effectively serve this population. For that reason, one of the ancillary goals of Pathways to Change is to work with Oakland community-based organizations to build up this capacity.

### KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Pathways to Change is an appropriate approach for reducing recidivism because it is based on best practices that have proven to work in other cities throughout the country. The program is based on a model developed by the Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, which has reduced recidivism rates for repeat youth offenders in San Francisco by 77% for nearly ten years.<sup>1</sup> Preliminary data has also shown that the program will be effective in Oakland as well, once it is taken to scale. We have defined scale for Pathways to Change as having the capacity to serve all of Oakland's juvenile repeat offenders, which is estimated to include over 500 youth per year. Since its inception, Pathways to Change has served 98 youth and has reported a low 14% recidivism rate for youth while enrolled in the program. This means that only 14 of the youth were re-arrested for another crime, which is significant given that research shows that 50% of youth are re-arrested within 12 months, with most arrests occurring in the first 3 months. The recidivism rates for youth returning from out-of-home placements are even higher. In 1997, Alameda County reported that over 70% of youth released from group homes and Camp Sweeney were re-arrested within 12 months.<sup>2</sup> The evaluation of Pathways to Change being conducted by Berkeley Policy Associates will track re-arrest rates up to one year after enrollment in the program to allow for a more long-term analysis of the program's success. The evaluation will also track changes over time in risk and protective factors and youth competencies for youth enrolled in the program. The tested measures that will be administered have been used as predictors of future engagement in criminal activities. Safe Passages will present evaluation findings to the Public Safety Committee annually.

### SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

In its focus on reducing recidivism, Pathways to Change seeks to prevent youth enrolled in the program from committing new offenses by brokering appropriate wrap-around services that give the youth tools to make better choices. The program's focus on prevention makes it cost-

<sup>1</sup> Shelden, Randall G., Detention Diversion Advocacy: An Evaluation, U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Juvenile Justice Bulletin, September 1999

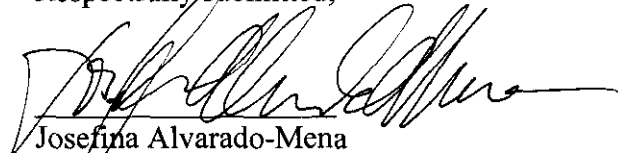
<sup>2</sup> Alameda County Probation Department and National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Alameda County Probation Department Juvenile Justice Local Action Plan and Update, 1997 and 1997

effective in both the short and long term. A cost-benefit analysis of Pathways to Change estimated that if operated at full capacity, the program could deliver **over \$2.00** in fiscal benefits to the City of Oakland and the County of Alameda for **every \$1.00 spent**. These fiscal benefits would appear as reduced costs associated with re-arresting and detaining youth who continue to commit new offenses.<sup>3</sup> Since a primary focus of Pathways to Change is to re-engage youth in the school system, there would also be additional benefits to the Oakland Unified School District in Average Daily Attendance (ADA) revenue.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Since this report is informational only, no recommendations are included.

Respectfully submitted,



Josefina Alvarado-Mena  
Executive Director, Safe Passages

Prepared by: Dana Inman, Senior Policy Associate,  
Safe Passages

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO  
THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE:



for Office of the City Manager

---

<sup>3</sup> Madjd-Sadjadi, Zagros. Cost/Benefit Analysis Performed for the Center for Juvenile and Criminal Justice, June 2003