CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO: Sabrina B. Landreth
City Administrator

FROM: Tonya Gilmore
Assistant to the
City Administrator

SUBJECT: Oakland Unite Evaluation: Year 2 and 3 Strategy Report by Mathematica Policy Research

DATE: October 21, 2019

City Administrator Approval Date: 10/31/19

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That City Council Receive Informational Reports By Mathematica Policy Research Of The Oakland Unite Services Funded Through The Safety And Services Act Of 2014 (Measure Z).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached reports represent two sub-strategy evaluations of Oakland Unite services by Mathematica funded through the Safety and Services Act of 2014 (Measure Z). New services under Measure Z began in January 2016. The Year 2 strategy evaluation: 2017-2018 Life Coaching and Employment and Education Support for Youth at Risk of Violence Report ***(Attachment A)*** was presented to the Public Safety and Services Oversight Commission (SSOC) on July 22, 2019, and the Year 3 strategy evaluation: 2018-2019 Crisis Intervention for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth Report ***(Attachment B)*** will be presented to the SSOC on November 25, 2019.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

In October 2016, the Safety and Services Oversight Commission forwarded a recommendation to the City Council, who subsequently approved a contract in November 2016 with Mathematica Policy Research to evaluate the Oakland Unite violence intervention programs and services annually and to provide a four-year comprehensive evaluation. As required by the Measure Z legislation, Mathematica is an independent research organization. The evaluation includes the following components as requested by the Commission and City Council:

- **Annual strategy-level report.** Each year, the strategy-level report assesses the effectiveness of a selection of Oakland Unite strategies.

- **Annual agency-level snapshots.** The agency-level evaluation summarizes descriptive findings for each Oakland Unite agency.
- **Comprehensive evaluation**. The comprehensive evaluation assesses the impact of youth and adult life coaching on individual delinquency, education, and employment outcomes over a four-year period.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The City selected two sub-strategies to be the focus of the Year 2 strategy evaluation: youth life coaching and employment/education support services. Commercially sexually exploited youth was selected for the Year 3 strategy evaluation, and the Year 4 strategy evaluation will focus on the on Violent Incident and Crisis Response Network.

The Life Coaching and Employment and Education Support for Youth Report presents findings concerning the implementation and short-term impacts on arrests within these two selected sub-strategies. The Crisis Intervention for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth Report presents an in-depth analysis of the implementation of the sub-strategy and the City's role in the local policy context.

FISCAL IMPACT

This report is for informational purposes only and does not have a direct fiscal impact or cost.

PUBLIC INTEREST /OUTREACH

No pubic outreach was conducted in the preparation of this report.

COORDINATION

No coordination was deemed necessary for this report.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic: Mathematica has an office in Oakland that employs Oakland residents.

Environmental: Reducing violence in communities improves the overall quality of life and safety in Oakland neighborhoods.

Social Equity: City of Oakland Municipal Code Chapter 2.29.170.1 specifies that "the City of Oakland will intentionally integrate, on a Citywide basis, the principle of "fair and just" in all the City does in order to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and communities. To this

end, the Oakland Unite programs funded by Measure Z and evaluated by Mathematica directly affect those most impacted by violence.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That City Council Committee Receive An Informational Report by Mathematica Policy Research of the Oakland Unite Services Funded Through The Safety and Services Act of 2014 (Measure Z).

For questions regarding this report, please contact Tonya Gilmore, Assistant to the City Administrator, at 510-238-7587.

Respectfully submitted,

TONYA GILMORE
Assistant to the City Administrator

Reviewed by: Peter Kim, Oakland Unite Manager

Prepared by: Mailee C. Wang, Planner

Attachments (2):

A: Oakland Unite: 2017—2018 Strategy Evaluation: Life Coaching and Employment and Education Support for Youth at Risk of Violence
B: Oakland Unite 2018—2019 Strategy Evaluation: Crisis Intervention for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

Attachment A

Oakland Unite 2017–2018 Strategy Evaluation:

Life Coaching and Employment and Education Support for Youth at Risk of Violence

July 11, 2019

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the staff of Oakland Unite who provided input and assistance for this evaluation. Although we cannot name everyone, we especially want to thank Josie Halpern-Finnerty, Valerie Okelola, Mailee Wang, Peter Kim, Mark Henderson, Dan Simmons, and Kentrell Killens. We also thank Tonya Gilmore of the Office of the City Administrator. We are grateful to all of the agencies that shared data for this evaluation, including Cityspan, Alameda County Probation Department, Alameda County Office of Education, Oakland Police Department, Oakland Unified School District, and all of the Oakland Unite agencies. We thank Steven Raphael of the Goldman School of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley for providing technical suggestions. Several staff at Mathematica in addition to the authors also contributed to this report. We thank Kevin Conway for his technical review of the report and Esa Eslami for overseeing the creation of the administrative database used in the analyses. John Kennedy and Mike Donaldson provided editing services. Sheena Flowers formatted the report to prepare it for public release.

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Contents

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FIGURES

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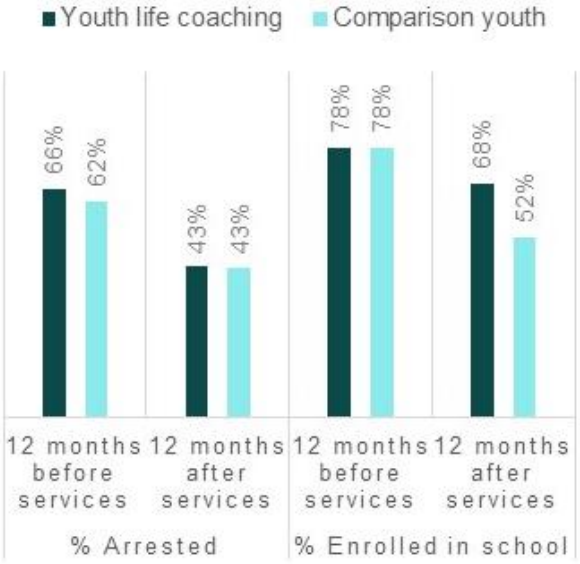
Oakland Unite Youth Services:

New insights on youth life coaching & youth employment and education support services

Youth life coaching

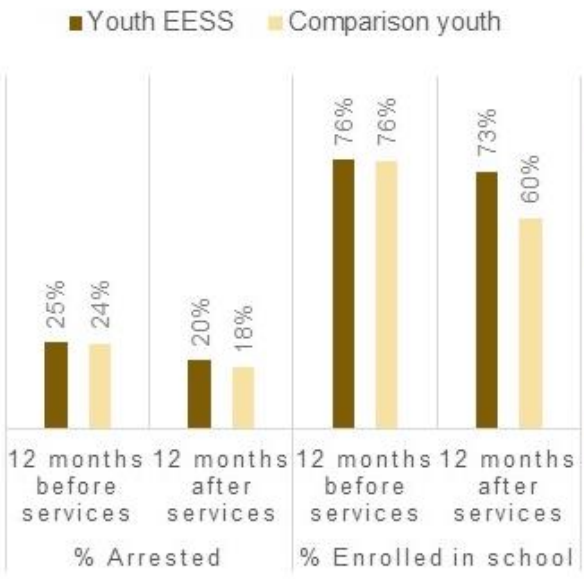
Aims to re-engage high-risk youth in school and help them reduce contact with the justice system



- Youth life coaching reduces school dropout and short-term arrests for violence, but has limited impact on 12-month arrest rates
- Most youth have histories of justice system contact and experiences with violence
- Room for improved collaboration between life coaching agencies and Probation Department
- High cost of living and job-related stress are challenges for agency staff
- Participation drops significantly after first month of life coaching services
- Need for a more unified approach to address substance use and mental health

Youth employment and education support services (EESS)

Aims to improve the economic self-sufficiency and career readiness of high-risk youth



- Youth EESS reduce school dropout, but have limited impact on 12-month arrest rates
- Many youth were disengaged from school and/or had contact with justice system before services
- Need for coordination between youth EESS and life coaching on referrals and substance use
- High staff turnover due in part to low salaries and other competitive options
- Program attrition in early months due in part to competing demands for youth time
- No standard youth EESS model and agencies offer a variety of programs and services

Arrest and enrollment outcomes are regression-adjusted from a propensity-score matching analysis of participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and May 30, 2017. See the report for full results, including additional outcome measures.

CITY OF OAKLAND

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACOE	Alameda County Office of Education
ACPD	Alameda County Probation Department
BACR	Bay Area Community Resources
the City	the City of Oakland
CSEC	commercially sexually exploited children
CYO	Community & Youth Outreach
EBAC	East Bay Agency for Children
EBAYC	East Bay Asian Youth Center
EESS	employment and education support services
GED	general equivalency diploma
GPA	grade point average
JJC	Juvenile Justice Center
MISSSEY	Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth
OPD	Oakland Police Department
OUSD	Oakland Unified School District
PEPNet	Promising and Effective Practices Network
SSYI	Safe and Successful Youth Initiative
YAIP	New York Young Adult Internship Program
YEP	Youth Employment Partnership, Inc.

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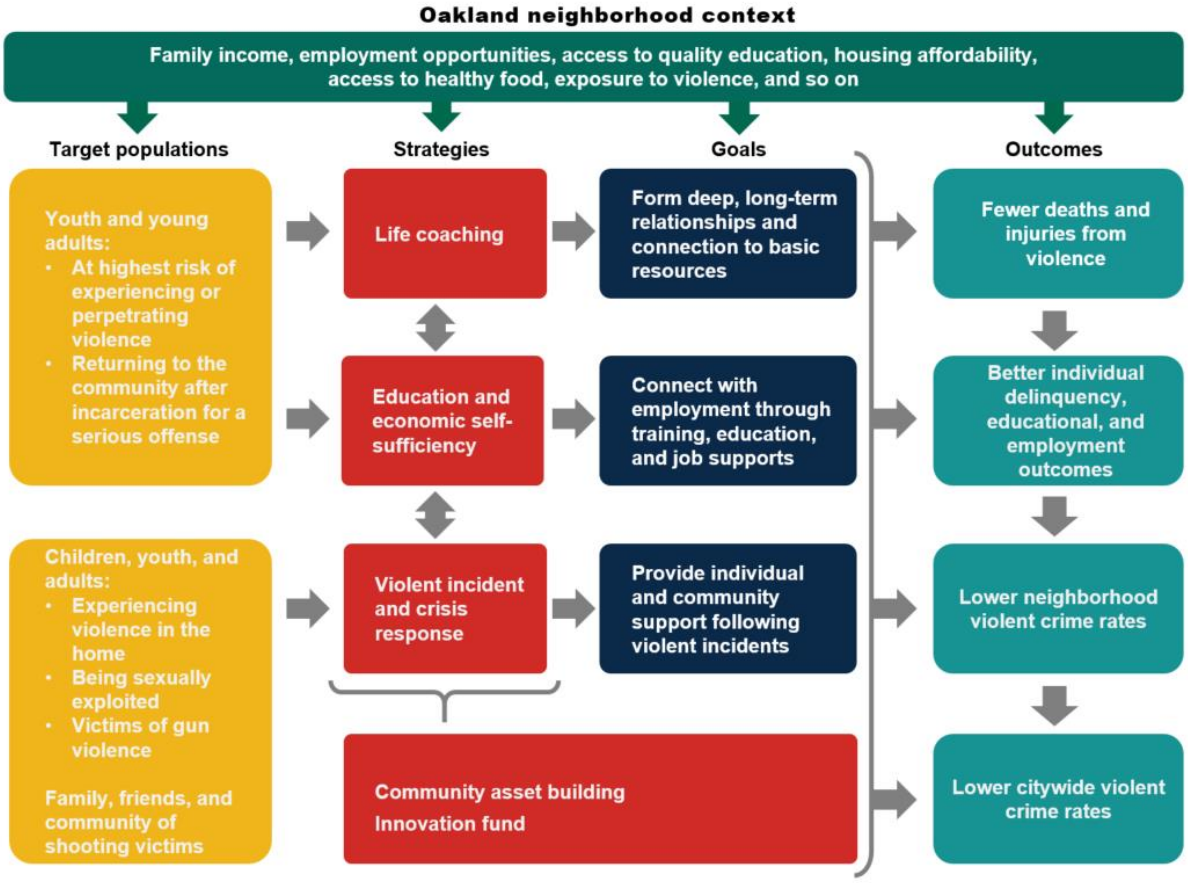
I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Oakland Unite administers and supports grants to agencies offering community-based violence prevention programs in Oakland, California. The Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2004, also known as Measure Y, raised funds for community-based violence prevention programs and policing and fire safety personnel through a parcel tax on Oakland property and a parking tax assessment. In 2014, Oakland residents voted to extend these levies for 10 years through Measure Z, which now raises about $27 million annually, to focus efforts on specific types of serious violence, including gun violence, family violence, and sex trafficking. Measure Z funds violence prevention programs, police officers, fire services, and evaluation services. Forty percent of these funds are invested in community-based violence prevention programs through Oakland Unite, which is part of the City of Oakland (the City) Human Services Department.

Figure I.1. Conceptual model of Oakland Unite

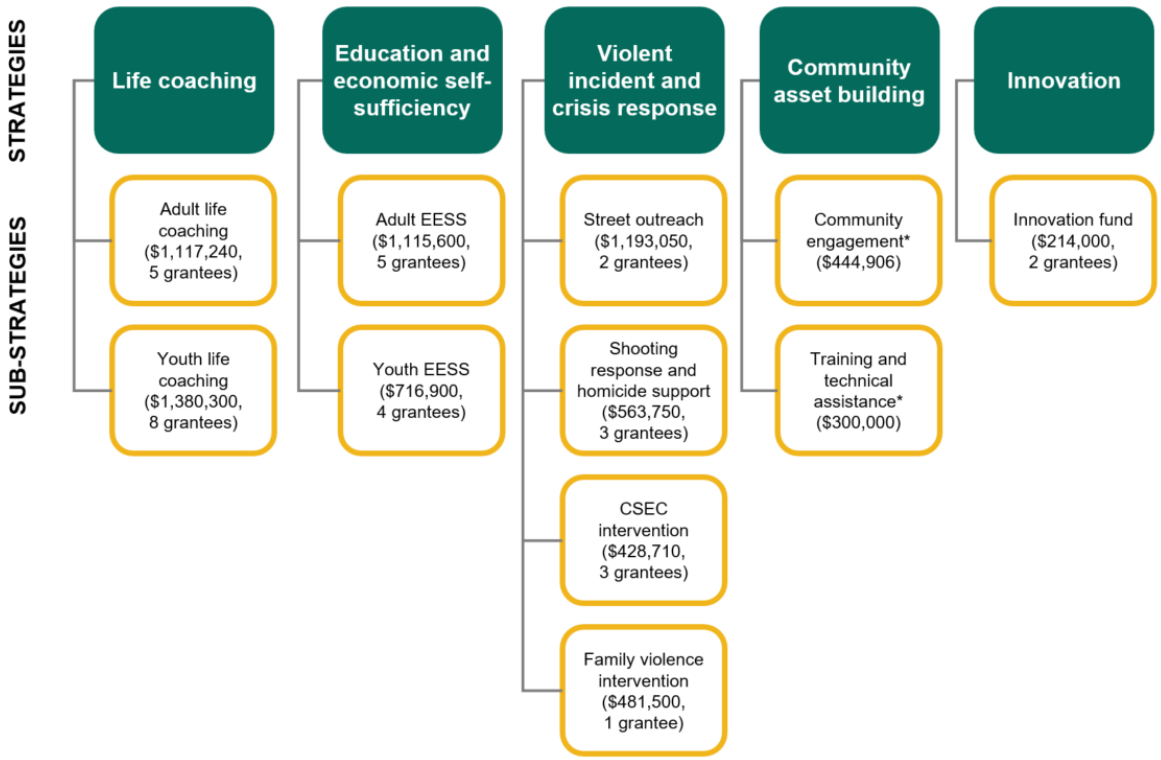


As part of this citywide effort to reduce violence, Oakland Unite aims to interrupt and prevent violence by focusing on the youth and young adults in Oakland who are at the highest risk of

direct exposure to violence, violent victimization, and active involvement in violence. Figure I.1 illustrates the relationship between Oakland's neighborhood contexts, Oakland Unite strategies, and the outcomes Oakland Unite is designed to affect. The model highlights how neighborhood context, including communities' exposure to violence and access to quality education, affordable housing, and employment opportunities affects the population served by Oakland Unite. The strategies employed thus focus on improving outcomes for those most disproportionately affected by these factors. Other parts of Measure Z, such as Ceasefire, crime reduction teams, community resource officers, and emergency response through the Oakland Fire Department, are outside of the purview of Oakland Unite and this evaluation, but play important roles in the city's efforts to reduce violence.

Oakland Unite administers grants through a diverse set of strategies and sub-strategies to accomplish violence prevention and reduction. Every two to three years, Oakland Unite prepares a new spending plan based on community input and evaluation findings. Figure I.2 presents the five strategies (life coaching, education and economic self-sufficiency, violent incident and crisis response, and community asset building) and the 11 sub-strategies supported by Oakland Unite in the 2018–2019 fiscal year. A new 2019–2021 spending plan will refine the current strategies going forward.[1]

Figure I.2. Oakland Unite funding amounts for fiscal year 2018–2019



[1] See http://oaklandunite.org/blog/oakland-unite-spending-plan/ for more information.

*These sub-strategies are administered by the Human Services Department.
EESS = employment and education support services; CSEC = commercially sexually exploited children.

Under Measure Z, the City also funds an independent evaluation of Oakland Unite. The four-year evaluation conducted by Mathematica includes (1) annual strategy-level evaluations that assess the implementation and effectiveness of a selection of Oakland Unite strategies, (2) annual agency-level snapshots that summarize the work of each Oakland Unite agency, and (3) a comprehensive evaluation that will study the impact of select Oakland Unite programs on participant outcomes from 2016 to 2020.

In this 2017–2018 strategy evaluation, we present in-depth analyses of the two youth sub-strategies selected by the City as the focus of this report:

- ***Youth life coaching*** aims to reengage high-risk youth in school and reduce their engagement with the juvenile justice system. Life coaches work closely with youth to set goals, develop service plans, and connect them to other services.
- ***Youth employment and education support services (EESS)*** aims to strengthen the academic success and career readiness of youth at risk of violence by offering youth academic support and subsidized work experience.

In 2016–2017, the strategy evaluation focused on the life coaching and EESS sub-strategies for adults (Gonzalez et al. 2017). A key finding of that report was that participating in adult life coaching or adult EESS services decreased the likelihood of arrest for a violent offense in the six months after enrollment by 1 percentage point relative to a comparison group but had limited effects on other outcomes. In future years, other sub-strategies will be selected for in-depth analysis. Detailed information about the services provided by Oakland Unite agencies across all strategies is available in the 2016–2018 agency report (Eslami et al. 2019).

Overview of the report

The rest of this report is organized as follows: Chapter II provides an overview of the data collection and research methods, and discusses limitations. Chapter III presents the implementation and impact findings related to youth life coaching, and Chapter IV presents the findings related to youth EESS. Chapter V summarizes the key findings for each sub-strategy and provides suggested considerations for the future. A glossary of terms is presented at the end of the report. Appendix A includes additional information about data collection and processing, Appendix B describes the methodologies and results, and Appendix C includes a review of previous research and best practices for each sub-strategy.

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II. DATA, METHODS, AND LIMITATIONS

The strategy evaluation aims to assess the implementation of the youth life coaching and youth EESS sub-strategies and their impacts on relevant participant outcomes, including involvement with the juvenile justice system and engagement in school. Below we describe the data sources and analysis methods we used in the report, as well as potential limitations to our analyses.

Data sources

To learn about how the youth life coaching and EESS sub-strategies were implemented and assess their impacts on youth outcomes, we collected and analyzed qualitative and quantitative information about agencies and participants. Qualitative data collection included site visits and semistructured interviews at each agency funded by these sub-strategies, as well as a review of documents and materials provided by Oakland Unite and agency staff. In addition, we conducted a survey to gather information about Oakland Unite directly from a subset of participants. Finally, we collected multiple years of administrative data from various sources, as listed in Table II.1. Appendix A contains more-detailed descriptions of each data source.

Table II.1. Data sources

Data source	Description
Agency visits and semistructured interviews	During visits to each agency, the evaluation team conducted semistructured interviews with agency staff members, including managers and line staff. Visits took place in July and August 2017. Follow-up telephone interviews were then conducted in August and September 2018.
Review of documents and materials	The evaluation team reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite staff as well as materials collected directly from agencies during the site visits, such as scopes of work, agency budgets, and intake forms.
Participant survey	General topics of the participant survey included satisfaction with services, thoughts about the future, and experiences with violence. The surveys were fielded at each agency during September and October 2018. Across all agencies, 63 youth life coaching participants and 46 youth employment and education support services participants took the survey.
Administrative data	The evaluation team collected school enrollment, attendance, behavior, and academic data from the Oakland Unified School District and Alameda County Office of Education; information on arrests, convictions, and dispositions from the Alameda County Probation Department; arrest and victimization incidents from the Oakland Police Department; and service and participant information from Oakland Unite's Cityspan database.

To link individuals across the multiple sources of administrative data, we used identifying information, including first and last name, date of birth, gender, and address. Oakland Unite participants had to provide consent before their identifying information could be shared with evaluators. For youth life coaching participants who enrolled between January 2016 and May 2017, the consent rate was 90 percent. The consent rate for youth EESS during the same period was 91 percent. Individuals who did not consent to share their personal information are included

in descriptive statistics about services received but excluded from any analyses of outcomes, which require linking participants to other administrative data.

Analysis methods

We used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the implementation of each sub-strategy and its effect on participant outcomes in the 12-month period after beginning services. For the implementation analysis, we reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite, analyzed interview responses within and across agencies in the same sub-strategy to highlight key themes, and summarized participant survey and administrative data about services and participants.

For the impact analysis of each sub-strategy, we identified a comparison group of individuals who were similar to participants in that sub-strategy but did not receive any Oakland Unite services. These individuals were drawn from data from the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD), Oakland Police Department (OPD), and Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) data. To identify a similar comparison group, we used an approach known as propensity-score matching, which took into account individuals' demographics and prior juvenile justice, victimization, and educational histories based on the available administrative data. Propensity-score matching is a well-established approach for analyzing program impacts and has been found to approximate the results of experimental methods (Fortson et al. 2015; Gill et al. 2015).

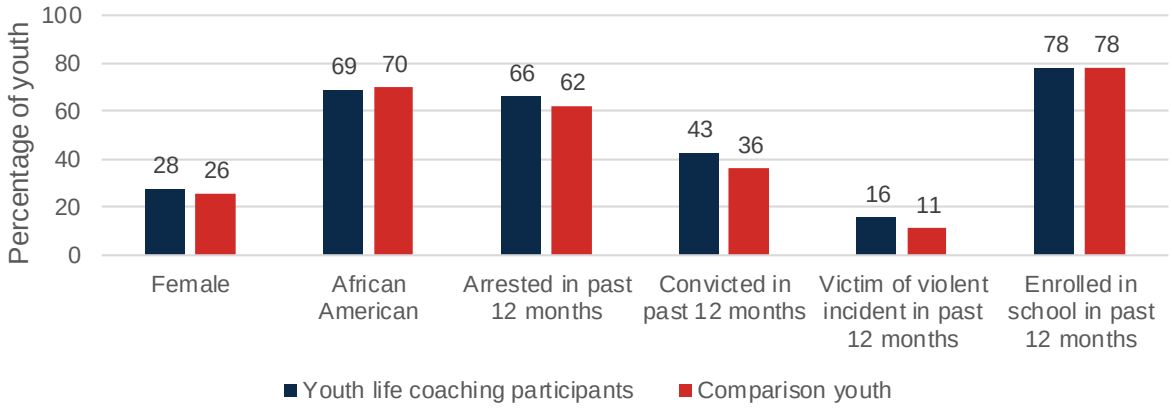
To be included in the impact analyses, participants had to (1) consent to share their personal information for evaluation, (2) receive services between January 2016 and May 2017, (3) meet a minimum service threshold (10 hours for youth life coaching and either 10 nonwork hours or 40 work hours for youth EESS), and (4) have recorded demographic data. After these restrictions were applied, there were 297 participants in youth life coaching and 209 participants in youth EESS available for matching. Of these, 260 youth life coaching participants were matched to an average of 16 comparison individuals each and 179 youth EESS participants received matches (19 each, on average).[2] A small number of participants did not receive matches because no comparison group members resembled them sufficiently.

After matching, participants and comparison youth had similar demographic characteristics and juvenile justice, victimization, and educational histories. Figures II.1 and II.2 compare selected baseline characteristics of Oakland Unite and comparison youth in the analysis sample after matching. In the regression analysis used to compare the two groups' outcomes, we also controlled for small remaining differences in individuals' characteristics and histories, taking into account the timing of their juvenile justice, victimization, and education experiences. Appendix B describes additional details about the sample and the matching and regression

[2] When examining chronic absence from school and school discipline after beginning Oakland Unite services, we further restricted the sample to youth who were enrolled in school in the outcome period and conducted a separate match for these subset of youth. See Appendix B for additional details.

methodology, and also presents additional data on the baseline characteristics of Oakland Unite participants and the comparison group.

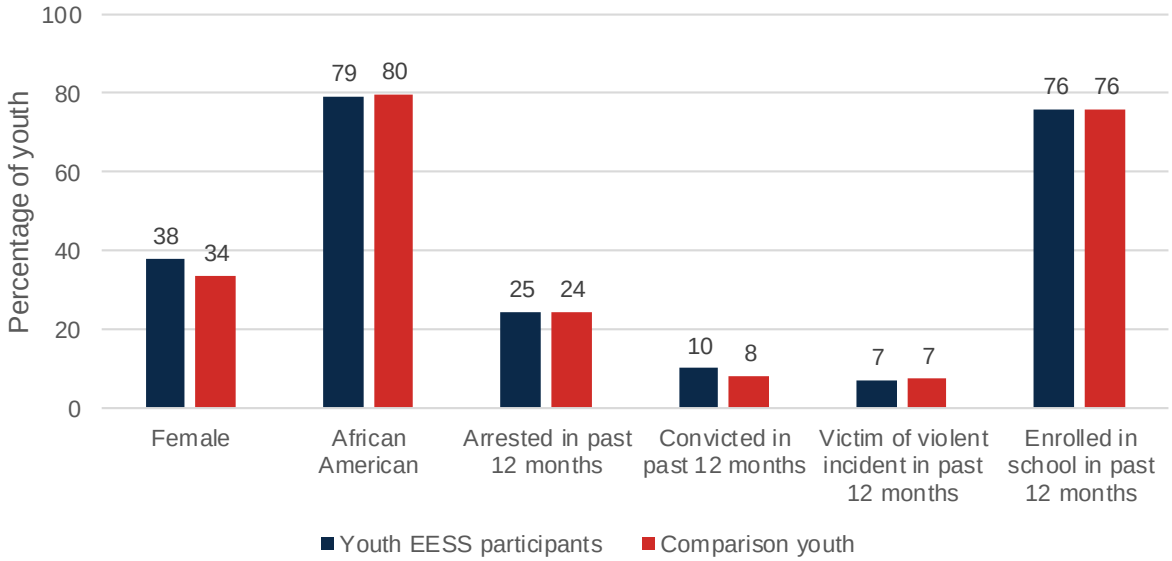
Figure II.1. Youth life coaching participants and comparison youth after matching



Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: The total sample is 4,138, including 260 youth life coaching participants. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of services between January 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The school enrollment rate is based on youth who were under 18 years of age when they began services. None of the differences in the figure are statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Figure II.2. Youth EESS participants and comparison youth after matching



Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: The total sample is 3,496, including 179 youth EESS participants. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services or 40 work hours between January 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The school enrollment rate is based on youth who were under 18 years of age when they began services. None of the differences in the figure are statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

After conducting the match, we analyzed outcomes in the 12-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. Table II.2 lists the confirmatory and exploratory outcomes of the impact analyses that were determined before beginning the analyses.[3] Participants began receiving services between January 2016 and May 2017 and therefore had different follow-up periods, ranging from February 2016–February 2017 to June 2017–June 2018.[4] The follow-up period for the comparison individuals corresponded to the same follow-up period for the Oakland Unite participant they were matched to. We measured the impact of participating in Oakland Unite on these outcomes using regression analyses.

Table II.2. Outcomes examined in the 12 months after starting Oakland Unite services

Domain	Confirmatory outcomes	Exploratory outcomes
Arrests	• Had an arrest for any offense in Alameda County	• Had an arrest for an offense involving a gun in Alameda County • Had an arrest for a violent offense in Alameda County
Recidivism	• Had any delinquent finding or conviction in Alameda County	• Was sentenced to formal probation supervision in Alameda County • Violated probation in Alameda County
Victimization	• Was a victim of any violent crime reported to OPD	
School enrollment	• Enrolled in an OUSD or ACOE school	
School attendance	• If enrolled in school, was chronically absent (missed 10 percent or more of school days)	
School discipline	• If enrolled in school, had a recorded violent incident in school	

OPD = Oakland Police Department; OUSD = Oakland United School District; ACOE = Alameda County Office of Education.

[3] As an additional exploratory analysis, we examined short-term arrest, victimization, and recidivism outcomes in a 6-month, rather than 12-month, window after the start of services. The results of all exploratory analyses are reported in Appendix B.

[4] Some people who received services in the early months of 2016 had begun participating in Oakland Unite in the previous year. However, we did not have information about services received before January 1, 2016 (the start of the Measure Z funding period) for this report.

Limitations

Although the data sources and methods used for this evaluation provided rich information about the youth life coaching and EESS sub-strategies, they have some limitations:

The impact results may reflect differences between participants and comparison individuals that were not captured in the available data, particularly for the youth life coaching strategy. We matched Oakland Unite participants to similar comparison individuals using a large number of characteristics, but in any non-experimental analysis it is possible that some differences could remain. In particular, youth life coaching programs are designed to serve youth judged to be at greatest immediate risk for violence, which was difficult to account for in the analysis. Although they had similar rates of contact with law enforcement in the 12 months before starting services (Figure II.1), youth life coaching participants were more likely than comparison youth to be arrested, convicted, or be placed in juvenile hall in the period immediately preceding the start of services (see Table B.3 in Appendix B). As a result, the analysis might underestimate the impact of services on their outcomes.

The report could exclude educational, criminal justice, and victimization data not reported in the available sources. The available education data only included public, non-charter schools in OUSD and ACOE. Youth enrolled in other types of schools in Alameda County or beyond would be missing from these sources. Similarly, the report used criminal justice data reported by ACPD or OPD, which could exclude incidents outside of these jurisdictions (for example, arrests and court processing in neighboring cities). Finally, victimization data only reflected incidents reported to OPD, and frequently had incomplete personally identifiable information needed to link to other records.

The impact analyses were limited to participants who consented to have their information matched to other data sources. About 10 percent of participants in each sub-strategy did not consent to share their identifiable information. People who do not consent to participate in the evaluation may differ from those who do. For example, Oakland Unite data show that both youth life coaching and EESS participants who did not consent received fewer service hours, on average, than those who consented.

The participant and staff perspectives collected may not reflect the perspectives of all participants and staff. Participant surveys were conducted with a small convenience sample of participants who happened to be present or were selected by the agency. In addition, participants (as well as the staff who were interviewed) could have provided responses that they felt would reflect favorably upon themselves or their agencies. Although we informed participants and staff that their answers would be kept confidential, we cannot rule out this possibility.

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III. YOUTH LIFE COACHING

Overview of the youth life coaching sub-strategy

The youth life coaching sub-strategy aims to reengage high-risk youth in school and help them reduce or eliminate their contact with the juvenile justice system. This sub-strategy is a partnership among Oakland Unite, ACPD, OUSD, and Alameda County Health Care Services. The OUSD education services coordinator, along with Probation Department staff, refer youth who live in Oakland and are being released from the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) to agencies for life coaching services. The life coaching model is centered on building transformative relationships between youth and trained peer professionals with similar life experiences through high-frequency contacts and extended service periods of 12 to 18 months. Life coaches develop detailed life maps with participants and families that identify needs and strengths, guide connections to other services and supports, and use financial incentives to support positive action.

Oakland Unite currently funds six life coaching agencies, for a total annual grant award of $1,380,000.[5] The agencies that offer youth life coaching services are identified in Figure III.1. In this chapter, we present implementation and impact findings for this sub-strategy. A summary of related evidence-based programs and Oakland Unite recommended best practices for youth life coaching is available in Appendix C.

[5] In addition to these six agencies, two partners that provide referral and placement coordination (Alameda County Juvenile Probation Department and OUSD Enrollment Coordinator) also receive funding. We did not interview the Probation Department.

Figure III.1. Youth life coaching agencies

east bay agency for children	**East Bay Agency for Children** (EBAC) specializes in addressing the mental health needs of youth with trauma. EBAC staffs a part-time mental health clinician to work with participants, refers them to other in-house support programs (such as its family resource centers), and partners with Bay Area Legal Aid to connect them to legal assistance.
EBAYC	**East Bay Asian Youth Center** (EBAYC) provides life coaching services with a focus on helping youth enroll in school, complete the terms of their probation, connect to a supportive adult, and access career pathway employment programs and academic learning support. EBAYC also offers multilingual services.
MISSSEY	**Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth** (MISSSEY) aims to support sexually exploited youth. Life coaches provide trauma-informed support and mentoring and connect youth to wraparound services. Youth can also spend time in MISSSEY's drop-in center, which provides a safe space for them.
THE MENTORING CENTER	**The Mentoring Center** draws on its mentoring curriculum, which is designed to encourage character development, cognitive restructuring, and spiritual development, and includes life skills, employment, and anger management training. In addition, Mentoring Center staff facilitate prosocial learning groups for youth.
	OUSD Alternative Education, in partnership with Community and Youth Outreach (CYO) and the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), supports youth in their transition back to school. Youth are connected to life coaches based on their placement in an OUSD or ACOE alternative school. Life coaches are hired by CYO, which is a subgrantee.
Youth ALIVE!	**Youth ALIVE!** life coaches provide mentorship and connect youth to wraparound services. Staff also assess participants' need for substance abuse and mental health counseling and offer clinically supported, gender-specific support groups and links to ongoing mental health services both in-house and through outside referrals.

Source: Documents provided by Oakland Unite, agency websites, and interviews with agency staff.

Note: The Alameda County Juvenile Probation Department and the OUSD enrollment coordinator provide referral and placement coordination. Because they do not provide direct services, they are not included in this figure.

Implementation findings

In this section, we discuss a number of key findings about how Oakland Unite agencies implemented the youth life coaching sub-strategy. These findings are summarized in Table III.1.

Table III.1. Summary of implementation findings for youth life coaching

Category	Summary of implementation findings
Target population	• Youth life coaching agencies primarily serve high-risk African American and Hispanic youth with high rates of contact with the juvenile justice system, direct or indirect exposure to violence, and low engagement with school. • The youth life coaching sub-strategy expanded eligibility criteria to take a more preventive approach to reducing violence. • Along with the expanded eligibility criteria, a task force headed by the Alameda County District Attorney's office helped agencies identify commercially sexually exploited children.
Collaboration and referrals	• Agency staff report that having additional information from the Probation Department about youth when they are initially referred to life coaching services would improve the process.

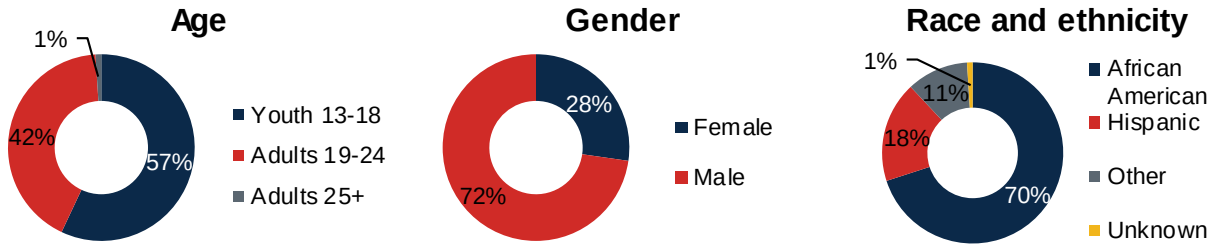
Category	Summary of implementation findings
	• Frequent communication between the enrollment coordinator and life coaching agencies helps ensure that youth are referred to the right agency and life coach. • Semimonthly case conferencing meetings organized by Oakland Unite help life coaches receive feedback on challenging cases and share knowledge and expertise.
Materials and trainings	• Life coaches have found the tools and trainings offered by the Human Services Department useful, but identified some areas for improvement.
Staffing	• Most agencies have experienced staff turnover and report that it is difficult to identify and retain candidates with the right skills, training, and personal background for the position.
Participant satisfaction and retention	• Participants are expected to remain engaged for up to 18 months under the program model, but more than a quarter drop out in the first month. • Participants report high levels of satisfaction with life coaching services and hold positive outlooks for the future.
Service provision	• Although Oakland Unite recommends caseloads of up to 15 participants, life coaches said they typically work with 10 to 12 cases at a time due to the intensity of program services. • Among the subset of youth who continue to engage in services over time, service intensity is typically 8 to 10 contacts per month.
Financial support and incentives	• Life coaches report that financial incentives help motivate youth, but incentive amounts are too low or run out too quickly for some participants.
Substance abuse and mental health	• Life coaches find it challenging to stop substance abuse and employ a harm reduction approach to address the problem. • Life coaches use their discretion to refer participants to counseling services when they do not feel equipped to address youth's trauma.
Family engagement	• Agencies connect parents and youth with children to other support services and help youth improve relationships with their families when this is a stated goal.

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents and administrative data provided by Oakland Unite.

Target population

Youth life coaching agencies primarily serve high-risk African American and Hispanic youth with high rates of contact with the juvenile justice system, direct or indirect exposure to violence, and low engagement with school. Figure III.2 describes key background characteristics of youth who enrolled in life coaching. Over two-thirds of participants were African American, and 18 percent were Hispanic. Seventy-two percent of participants were male. Notably, one agency that serves youth who have experienced or are at risk of experiencing commercial sexual exploitation primarily works with African American girls and young women. Although the majority of youth life coaching participants are in the 13- to 18-year-old target age range, 42 percent were older than 18 at the time of enrollment.

Figure III.2. Youth life coaching participant characteristics at enrollment



86%	Arrested before receiving services	**49%**	On formal probation supervision before receiving services	**39%**	Reported being a victim of violence before receiving services
80%	Enrolled in school in the year before receiving services	**67%**	Chronically absent from school in the year before receiving services	**36%**	Suspended from school in the year before receiving services

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: Demographic information is based on 625 participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2018. Measures of arrest, victimization, and school engagement are based on the 87 percent of these participants who consented to share their identifying information for evaluation.

Most participants (86 percent) had been arrested before receiving services, and almost half were on formal probation supervision. In addition to having previous contact with the juvenile justice system, many participants had been directly or indirectly affected by violence. Thirty-nine percent were victims of violence or assault reported to OPD (39 percent). On the participant survey (not reported in the figure), almost half of youth life coaching respondents reported having lost a loved one to violence in the last year.

Among school-aged participants, many had limited engagement with school before starting services. Approximately 20 percent of school-aged participants were not enrolled in either OUSD or ACOE in the 12 months before starting services. Among those who were enrolled in school, 67 percent were chronically absent from school, and 36 percent had been suspended or expelled during that period. Their academic performance (not reported in the figure) was also low—youth life coaching participants who were enrolled in school had a GPA of 1.29 (of 4.0) in the most recent school year.

The youth life coaching sub-strategy expanded eligibility criteria to take a more preventive approach to reducing violence. Youth life coaching originally targeted youth who had been referred by the JJC Transition Center. However, as of July 2018, the sub-strategy has broadened the eligibility criteria to include youth who are at risk of engaging in or being victims of violence. The JJC and several life coaches stated that they broadened the eligibility criteria because the number of youth being detained decreased, yet each agency was still responsible for meeting enrollment targets. The Human Services Department confirmed that this change was implemented to address several factors, including a decrease in the number of eligible referrals

and the number of youth that life coaching agencies encountered who demonstrated risk factors but were not justice-involved.

Along with the expanded eligibility criteria, a task force headed by the Alameda County District Attorney's office helped agencies identify CSEC. Identifying CSEC requires coordination across several partners, as criminal charges alone may not indicate whether youth are at risk of sexual exploitation. The SafetyNet Committee, a task force headed by the District Attorney's Office, plays an important role in identifying CSEC and referring them for life coaching and other services. The committee convenes weekly and includes social workers, case managers, Oakland Unite life coaches, the JJC Transition Center enrollment coordinator, as well as District Attorney's Office staff and public defenders. In addition to traditional referrals from the JJC Transition Center, the expanded eligibility criteria now allow MISSSEY to receive referrals from other Oakland Unite agencies, such as Bay Area Women Against Rape, or from other organizations that attend the SafetyNet meetings, such as Bay Area Legal Aid.

Collaboration and referrals

Agency staff report that having additional information from the Probation Department about youth when they are initially referred to life coaching services would improve the process. Previously, the Probation Department would inform the JJC Transition Center whether youth were at high, medium, or low risk of reoffending, either in writing or through a phone conversation. The detailed results of the risk assessment (including the score) were not shared. Most recently, the Probation Department no longer shares information from the assessment with the JJC Transition Center. Staff reported that a change to the Probation Department's policies around data sharing has limited the flow of information to life coaching agencies.

After the initial referral, life coaches are supposed to contact the youth's family within two days of receiving the referral. However, agencies shared that missing contact information in Oakland Unite's database (Cityspan) makes this protocol difficult to follow. One program manager said, "If I go into Cityspan and look at the baseline information, there is only the youth name and date of birth—no address, nothing. So how do I know how to call this kid?" Similarly, when describing the challenges around contact information, a life coach at another agency shared that phone numbers are often incorrect, and addresses do not reflect where the youth live.

Additionally, staff reported challenges in contacting probation officers and receiving information from them that could help during the referral process. One life coach shared, "The attempt to contact probation officers is part of our protocol but much of the time there is no returned call." Some of the agencies have established relationships with probation officers through personal connections and previous work experience. Agencies without such informal connections shared that they are focused on developing these relationships because greater involvement by the Probation Department helps life coaches make their initial contacts.

Frequent communication between the enrollment coordinator and life coaching agencies helps ensure that youth are referred to the right agency and life coach. Several factors determine the agency to which the JJC Transition Center refers youth, including geographic area, gender, safety concerns, race, language, gang/group affiliation, identification as CSEC, and other

specific needs. The JJC enrollment coordinator meets with all life coaches when they are first hired to learn about their background, language fluency, and other information useful for referral purposes. The enrollment coordinator then maintains frequent communication with all life coaches, checking in about once a week to discuss caseloads and learn whether life coaches are able to receive referrals.

Semimonthly case conferencing meetings organized by Oakland Unite help life coaches receive feedback on challenging cases and share knowledge and expertise. Semimonthly case conferencing meetings have helped agencies establish a tight-knit, supportive community. Several life coaches reported that staff across agencies share information, resources, and experiences during monthly case conferencing meetings, as well as informally in between meetings. One life coaching supervisor shared, "It is helpful to feel the sense of community through Oakland Unite between the [life coaching agencies] and Transition Center staff." In particular, life coaches shared that the feedback they receive from their peers and the skills developed in trainings make the monthly case conferencing meetings a valuable opportunity.

Materials and trainings

Life coaches have found the tools and trainings offered by the Human Services Department useful, but identified some areas for improvement. Life coaches engage with youth to develop a life map within the first 30 days of services, which includes goals that youth work to address during their time with an agency. Most life coaches said this tool helps them plan services and measure participants' progress. However, some mentioned that it is difficult to track youth's outcomes related to their life map goals in Cityspan.

Life coaches found the all-day seminar—popularly referred to as the Oakland Unite Summit—as well as the trauma, burnout, and motivational interviewing trainings helpful. Life coaches shared that the Oakland Unite Summit in particular offered a macro-level perspective for Oakland Unite and the opportunity to connect with other agencies. However, life coaches noted that the times trainings are held tend to conflict with peak service hours, which are after school when youth are most vulnerable. Two life coaches shared that some presenters could have been more informative. Lastly, life coaches from one agency said that the trainings tend to focus on working with male youth and young adults only.

Staffing

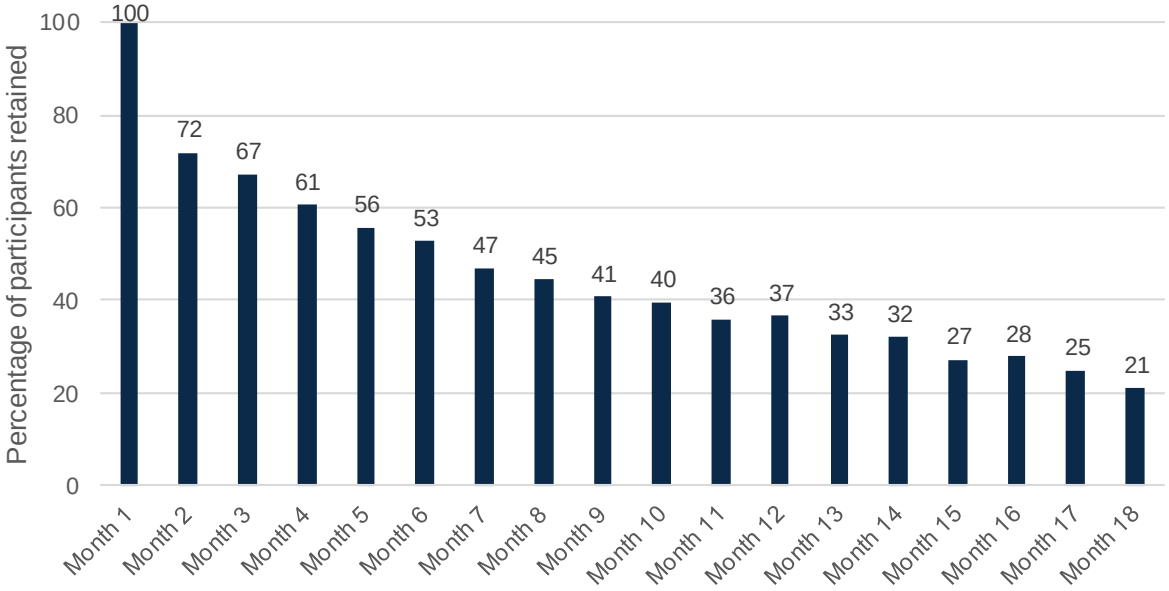
Most agencies have experienced staff turnover and report that it is difficult to identify and retain candidates with the right skills, training, and personal background for the position. All but one agency (EBAYC) reported challenges with staff turnover. One program manager shared that since receiving the grant, the agency had gone through three different life coaches, which affected the agency's ability to meet grant deliverables and provide services to participants. The agencies attributed turnover to their inability to match the salaries offered by other organizations, the high cost of living in the Bay Area, and the stressful and dangerous nature of the life coaching position. Life coaches shared that they are frequently exposed to high-crime areas and work with youth to address difficult situations. One life coach shared that more "self-help" days

would allow the life coaches to manage burnout because they frequently work beyond their regular hours and on weekends.

Participant satisfaction and retention

Participants are expected to remain engaged for 12 to 18 months under the program model, but more than a quarter drop out in the first month. According to Cityspan data, 72 percent of youth who begin receiving life coaching services return in the following month (Figure III.3). By the third month, one-third of youth have dropped out. Although participant retention continues to decline over time, the largest drop-off occurs between the first and second months. At 12 months, only 37 percent of youth continue to receive life coaching services. On average, youth engage with life coaching agencies for over 9 months, although this can include some inactive periods. Taking into account only months in which at least some services were received, the average length of active participation is 8 months.

Figure III.3. Youth life coaching participant retention over time



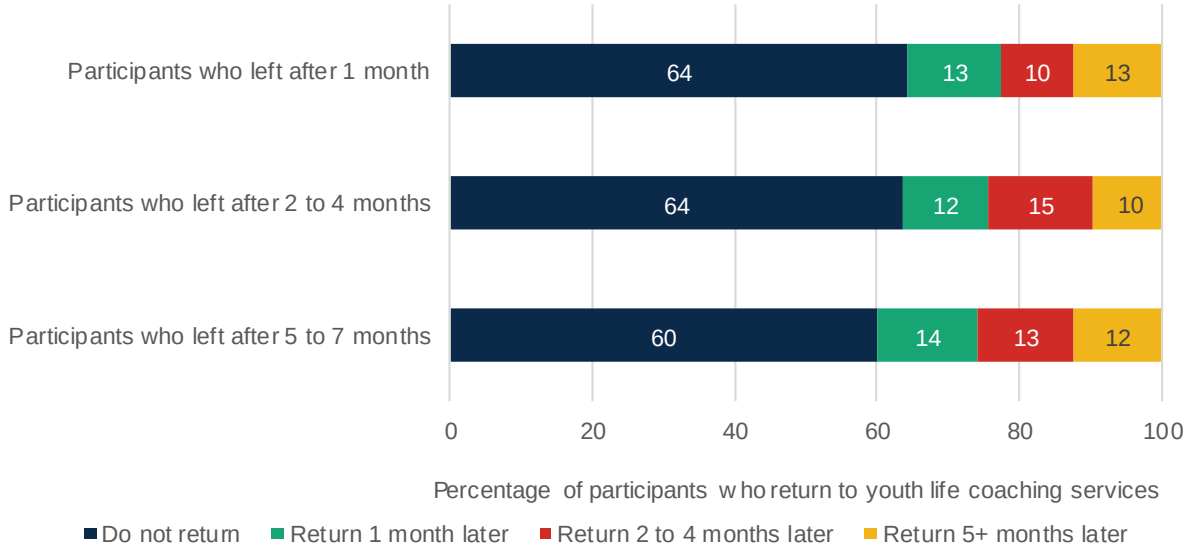
Source: Cityspan data.

Note: This figure is based on 417 participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017, so that all participants could be tracked for at least 18 months, through December 31, 2018. The pattern of retention is very similar for youth who began receiving services more recently.

Service duration varies significantly across participants and can include multiple periods of active engagement for some. Life coaches explained that sometimes participants engage in services for a few months, drop off, and then reengage. This is apparent in the retention patterns in Figure III.3. In some months, such as month 12, retention increases slightly as more youth return to services than leave. About 30 percent of youth engage in services during multiple service periods, separated by one month or more of inactivity. Figure III.4 summarizes the percentage of youth who return for services after leaving life coaching early, depending on the

length of their first service period. Although 60 to 64 percent of these youth do not return for services, the other 36 to 40 percent of youth do return, typically within a few months of their first contact with life coaching.

Figure III.4. Percentage of youth life coaching participants who return after leaving services



Source: Cityspan data.

Note: This figure is based on 625 participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2018.

Life coaches said that some participants who are referred to life coaching are not ready for services and either drop out early during the process or take some time before fully engaging in services. Exit reasons were not tracked in Cityspan, but life coaches said that youth who drop out commonly have difficulty getting out of their comfort zones, have families move away from Oakland, or are incarcerated for violating the terms of their probation. Life coaches try to make contact with youth for up to 30 days after they have disengaged from life coaching services, but noted that they are not notified when youth are incarcerated, which makes it difficult for them to maintain contact when this occurs.

Participants report high levels of satisfaction with life coaching services and hold positive outlooks for the future. Ninety-four percent of surveyed participants indicated that they are satisfied with their life coaching agency, with two-thirds strongly agreeing that they were satisfied. Satisfaction was similarly high (above 90 percent) with the kinds of services offered, staff availability, and how the staff listen, understand, and treat participants with respect. More than three-quarters of life coaching survey respondents (87 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that their situation is better because of the Oakland Unite services.

Despite the number of challenges faced by life coaching participants, when asked what they thought their lives would be like one year in the future, the vast majority of respondents

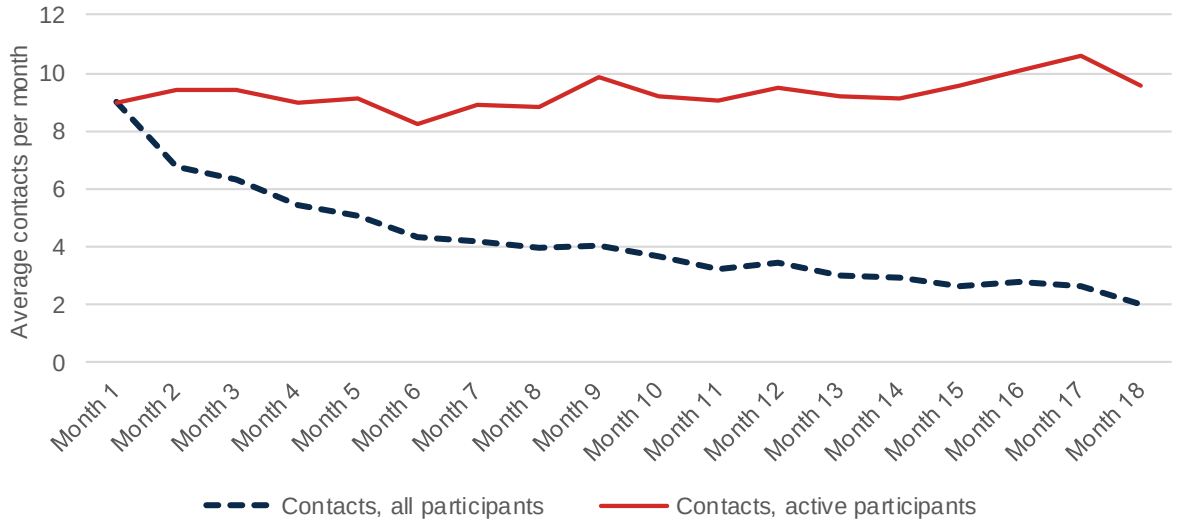
expressed positive outlooks. All survey respondents indicated that it was likely or very likely that they would have a safe place to live, avoid unwanted contact with the police, and be able to resolve conflicts without violence. At least 90 percent of respondents noted that they would likely or very likely finish their education, be more hopeful about life, be better able to deal with a crisis, avoid unhealthy drug or alcohol use, have a steady job, contribute to their community, have stronger relationships, and resolve their legal problems.

Service provision

Although Oakland Unite recommends caseloads of up to 15 participants, given the frequency of contacts required and the varying needs of program participants, most life coaches said that working with about 10 to 12 participants at a time was preferable to the recommended 15:1 ratio. However, some life coaches noted that their number of actual cases might reach up to 16 participants if they are currently managing some out of services. Staff reported that in addition to providing services, other tasks such as entering case notes and tracking data in Cityspan, conducting outreach, tracking down participants during the referral process, meeting with supervisors, and attending case conferencing meetings contribute to their overall workload.

Among the subset of youth who continue to engage in services over time, service intensity is typically 8 to 11 contacts per month. Figure III.5 depicts the service trajectory over time for all participants (in the dotted line) and for participants who continue to engage in services in that month (in the solid line). The decline in service intensity for all participants, as measured by the average number of contacts received in each month, reflects the attrition of youth from life coaching services as time progresses.

Figure III.5. Youth life coaching service intensity over time for all participants and active participants



Source: Cityspan data.

Note: This figure is based on 625 participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017. Active participants are youth who continued to receive services in a given month.

Over the duration of their participation, the average participant receives a total of about 61 hours of case management and 7 hours of peer support counseling. However, because of the significant variation in the length of participation across participants, many youth receive varying amounts of service dosage. Overall, 26 percent of youth receive fewer than 10 hours of services, whereas 24 percent receive more than 100 hours.

Financial support and incentives

Life coaches reported that financial incentives help motivate youth, but also said that incentive amounts are too low or run out too quickly for some participants. While working on the life map, life coaches and participants review each step toward a goal and determine which steps to incentivize. One life coach said this process "helps kids build self-advocacy skills and talk about what they really want to have incentives for." Other life coaches shared similar thoughts on incentives, with one life coach remarking that some youth "wouldn't come if they didn't get the incentives." About 13 percent of the sub-strategy's budget is allocated for participant financial support and incentives.

Life coaches also identified some challenges with incentives. First, the incentive amount is not sufficient for some youth. Some youth have told life coaches that they can earn more money on the streets than from the incentives. Other participants are motivated and work through their milestones quickly, which means they quickly max out on their incentives. Life coaches noted that some participants lose motivation and leave services when the incentives are exhausted. Some agencies try to find additional funds for youth by leveraging other funding streams or incentivizing youth to obtain employment. A different challenge is that undocumented participants cannot receive incentive checks, so life coaches find other ways to support them. Finally, a program manager suggested that agencies should provide a financial literacy component before allocating incentives.

Substance abuse and mental health

Life coaches find it challenging to stop substance abuse and employ a harm reduction approach to address the problem. Life coaches explained that it is important for participants to feel safe and not perceive that they are being judged for engaging in substance use or abuse. In particular, staff acknowledged that it is unlikely that youth will stop occasional use of marijuana, and generally find the harm reduction approach is appropriate for youth who are able to understand and mitigate the risks. Typically, the biggest challenge with the occasional use of marijuana relates to participants' terms for probation. Although life coaches work with youth to develop a detox plan or encourage youth to at least stop using marijuana until they are off probation, some refuse or are unable to follow through with their plan. Youth who use other controlled substances such as heroin or demonstrate an addiction to a substance are referred to additional services, including outpatient treatment centers.

Life coaches use their discretion to refer participants to counseling services when they do not feel equipped to address youth's trauma. Life coaches said they often mentor youth around how to cope with violence, working with them to prevent potential retaliation and referring them to mental health counseling services if necessary. For example, if youth were arrested for

possession of a firearm because they felt unsafe, life coaches may encourage those youth to avoid areas where they feel unsafe. If participants' experience with violence is more personal, such as having a parent who was shot or witnessing domestic violence, they may refer them to therapy and counseling or recommend a change to their living environment. Life coaches acknowledged that they do not always feel equipped to address youth's trauma.

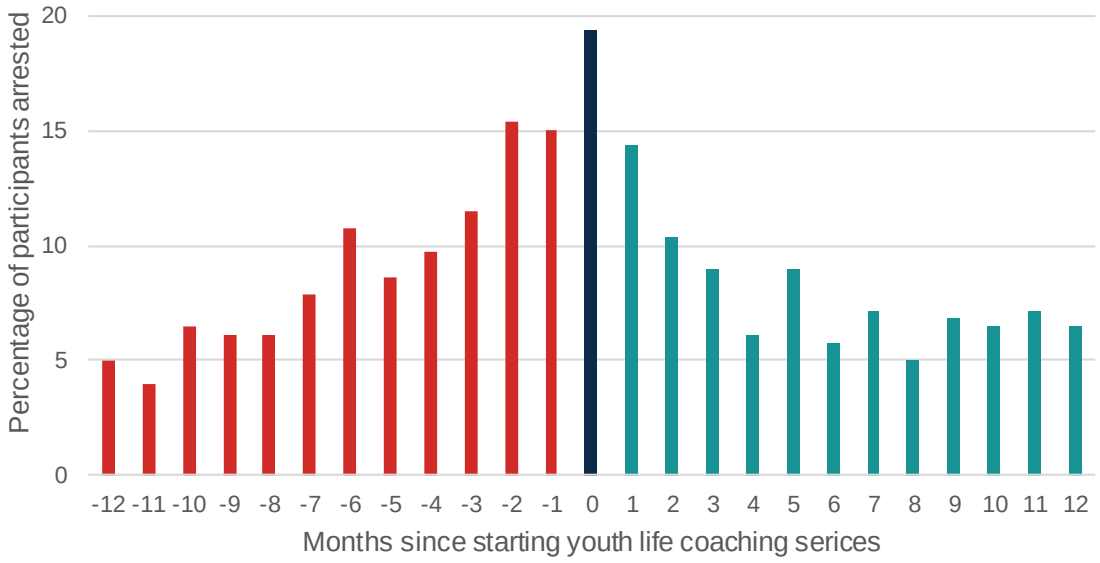
Family engagement

Agencies connect parents and youth with children to other support services and help youth improve relationships with their families when this is a stated goal. Life coaches from five of the agencies shared that they connect families to supportive services such as food banks, utility assistance, counseling around mental health or substance use, health care services, and legal services. Agencies also connect participants with children to public benefits and child care services, and one of the agencies allows youth to bring their children with them to life coaching meetings. Staff shared that about half of families are very involved and like to keep informed on their child's progress, but the other half are disengaged. Life coaches from two agencies shared that if youth are disrespectful toward family members, one of the life coaching goals may include improving relationships with family. However, they said this goal is not always appropriate and depends on the youth's family dynamics.

Impact findings

As described in Chapter II, we analyzed the impacts of participating in youth life coaching on outcomes in the 12-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. Among participants included in the impact analysis, 66 percent were arrested in the 12 months before starting services, with a notable spike in arrest rates in the months just before beginning youth life coaching services (Figure III.6). This pattern is consistent with the youth life coaching model, which enrolls youth primarily through direct referrals from the juvenile justice system. In contrast, in the 12 months after starting services, 43 percent of participants were arrested. To assess whether this decline was a result of participating in youth life coaching, we matched youth life coaching participants to other Oakland youth with similar demographics and juvenile justice, victimization, and schooling histories and compared their outcomes in the same 12-month follow-up period.

Figure III.6. Participant arrest rates by month, before and after starting youth life coaching services

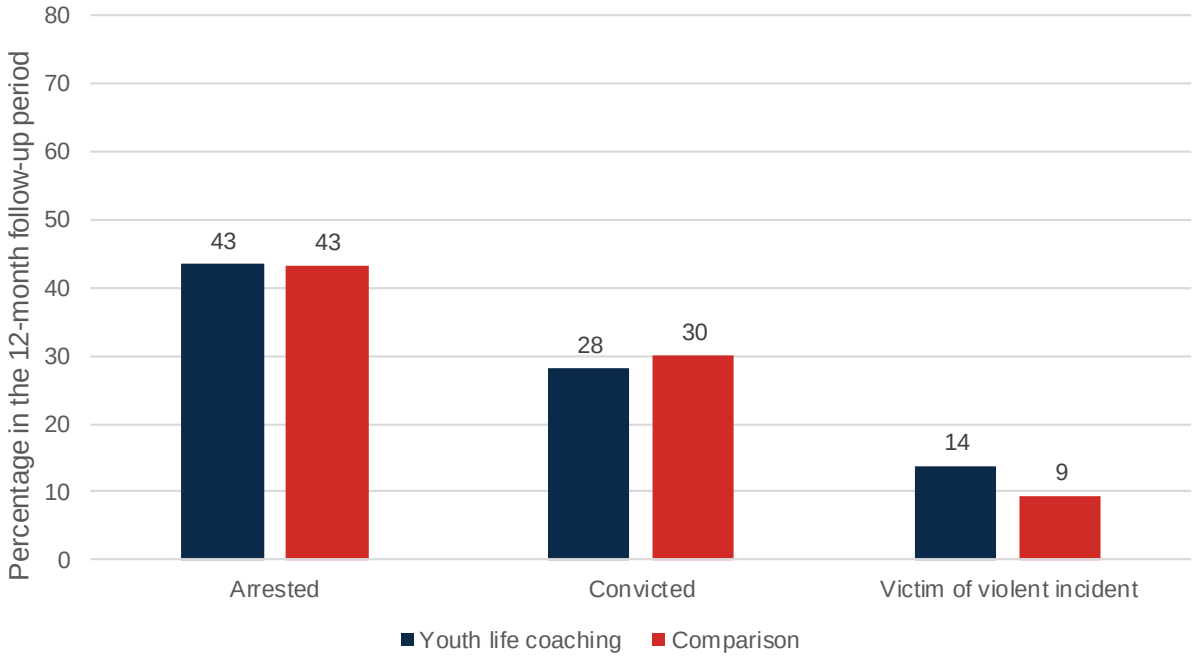


Source: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD data.

Note: This figure is based on 260 youth life coaching participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and May 31, 2017, consented to share their information for evaluation, and were included in the impact analysis.

Youth life coaching participants had similar rates of contact with law enforcement as the comparison group in the 12 months after beginning services. During the 12-month follow-up period, 43 percent of youth life coaching participants were arrested, 28 percent were convicted for a new offense, and 14 percent were victims of a violent offense reported to OPD (Figure IV.7). These rates were similar for the matched comparison group over the same follow-up period (that is, none of the differences between the two groups was statistically significant). When we examined additional exploratory measures of contact with law enforcement during this period, including arrests involving a gun or violent offense and violations of probation, these rates were also similar for the comparison group (see Table B.5 in Appendix B).

Figure III.7. Impact of youth life coaching 12 months after enrollment on arrest, conviction, and victimization rates



Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and ACPD administrative data.

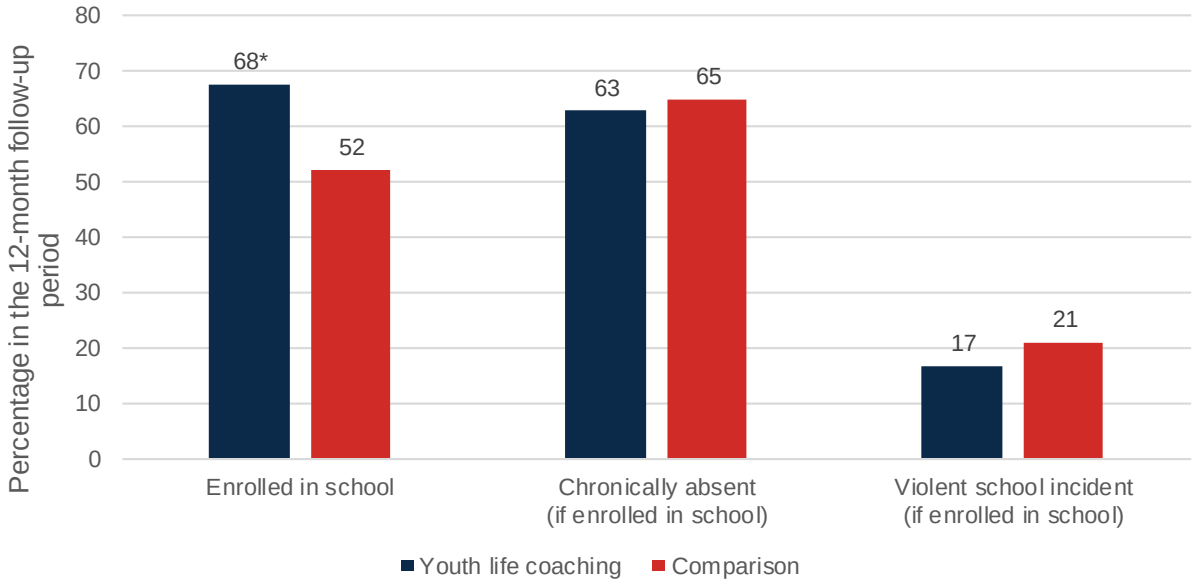
Note: The total sample is 4,138, including 260 youth life coaching participants. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of services between January 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. Comparison group rates were adjusted using ordinary least square regressions that account for remaining baseline differences between Oakland Unite participants and youth in the comparison group. None of the differences in outcomes in the figure are statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

However, youth life coaching participants were 3 percentage points less likely to be arrested for a violent offense in the six months after beginning services. As an additional exploratory analysis, we also examined all arrest, victimization, and recidivism outcomes during a shorter six-month follow-up period. During those first six months, approximately 3 percent of youth life coaching participants were arrested for a violent offense, compared to 6 percent of youth in the comparison group (the difference is statistically significant). Other short-term outcomes were similar between the two groups (see Table B.6 in Appendix B). These findings are comparable to the results of the adult life coaching analysis (Gonzalez et al. 2017), which found that participating in adult life coaching decreased the likelihood of arrest for a violent offense in the six months after enrollment by 1 percentage point, but had limited impacts on other outcomes.

School-aged life coaching participants were 16 percentage points more likely to be enrolled in school in the 12 months after starting services and had similar school attendance and discipline as the comparison group. In the 12 months after beginning services, 68 percent of school-aged life coaching participants were enrolled in an OUSD or ACOE school, compared to 52 percent of similar comparison youth (Figure IV.8). This 16-percentage-point difference between the two groups is statistically significant. In the 12 months prior, 78 percent of both life

coaching and comparison youth had been enrolled in school. Thus, although some life coaching youth who were under 18 when they began services dropped out of school in the 12 months after starting services, participating in life coaching led to a large reduction in their likelihood of dropping out. Among those who were enrolled in school in the outcome period, 63 percent of youth life coaching participants were chronically absent (defined as missing at least 10 percent of enrolled days for any reason) and 17 percent had a reported violent incident in school. Although there were no statistically significant differences between life coaching and comparison youth, these rates are substantially higher than the average. Among all high school students in OUSD and ACOE, 25 percent were chronically absent and 5 percent had a violent school incident in the most recent school year.

Figure III.8. Impact of youth life coaching 12 months after enrollment on school enrollment and engagement



Source: Oakland Unite, OUSD, and ACOE administrative data.

Note: The total sample for the school enrollment outcome is 4,138, including 260 youth life coaching participants. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of services between January 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The school enrollment rate is based on youth who were under 18 years of age when they began services. To examine chronic absence and violent school incidents, the sample was restricted to 1,473 youth who were enrolled in school in the outcome period, which included 114 youth life coaching participants. Comparison group rates were adjusted using ordinary least square regressions that account for remaining baseline differences between Oakland Unite participants and youth in the comparison group.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

Although we found limited impacts of participating in youth life coaching on contact with law enforcement, there are some caveats to this analysis. First, finding comparison youth who have not participated in Oakland Unite but have similar histories with the juvenile justice system as life coaching participants is inherently challenging. The majority of youth processed through the

JJC are referred to Oakland Unite life coaching services if they express interest. Further, youth life coaching participants begin services at a particularly high-risk period in their lives, as illustrated in the spike in arrest rates around the month of enrollment in services (Figure III.6). Youth in the comparison group did not experience a comparable spike in those months. Although we control for differences in the timing of prior arrests when comparing their outcomes, it is possible that youth life coaching participants represent a higher-risk population than the comparison group. Second, many of the youth who participate in this sub-strategy participate for a limited time and therefore receive much less than the intended service intensity. These findings reflect the average impact for all participants who received at least 10 hours of services, for outcomes measured starting in the first month after they began participating in life coaching. Third, some individuals in the comparison group may have received services from other organizations, including case management and referrals to support services from the Probation Department, which are not recorded in our available data. Future research, discussed in Chapter V, will further explore some of these limitations.

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IV. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Overview of the youth EESS sub-strategy

The youth EESS sub-strategy seeks to improve the economic self-sufficiency and career readiness of high-risk youth through academic support, subsidized work experience, job training, and community service. Oakland Unite currently funds four agencies to provide services in youth EESS, for a total annual grant award of $716,900. The agencies that offer youth EESS are identified in Figure IV.1. Each agency's service model varies, but services usually begin with a vocational or life skills training component, which is followed by transitional employment. Most agencies also provide academic support and formal case management services. In this chapter, we present implementation and impact findings for this sub-strategy. A summary of related evidence-based programs and Oakland Unite recommended best practices for youth EESS is available in Appendix C.

Figure IV.1. Youth employment and education support agencies

Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), in collaboration with Youth Employment Partnership (YEP), serves youth who need additional supports not available in the 19 school districts in Alameda County. Youth are referred to ACOE either by their home district or their probation officer. ACOE manages these referrals, and YEP provides most program services. ACOE staff also offer academic support and crisis response.

Bay Area Community Resources (BACR) provides school-based education and employment services, including case management, career coaching, employment training, experiential learning/internships, and paid work experience to high-risk youth. BACR aims to help prepare youth for postsecondary education or job placement.

Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) helps youth with multiple barriers to employment to develop job readiness skills and connects them to employment opportunities during the summer and after school. YEP provides a range of on-the-job vocational training opportunities in high-demand fields such as construction and warehouse logistics.

Youth Radio is an after-school job training program that offers career exploration, experiential learning/internships, and paid work experiences. Participants receive hands-on education in media, technology, and the arts and must complete a six-month keystone project before applying to paid internships in fields such as journalism and music production.

Source: Documents provided by Oakland Unite, agency websites, and interviews with agency staff.

Implementation findings

In this section, we discuss a number of key findings about how Oakland Unite agencies implemented the youth life coaching sub-strategy. These findings are summarized in Table IV.1.

Table IV.1. Summary of implementation findings for youth EESS

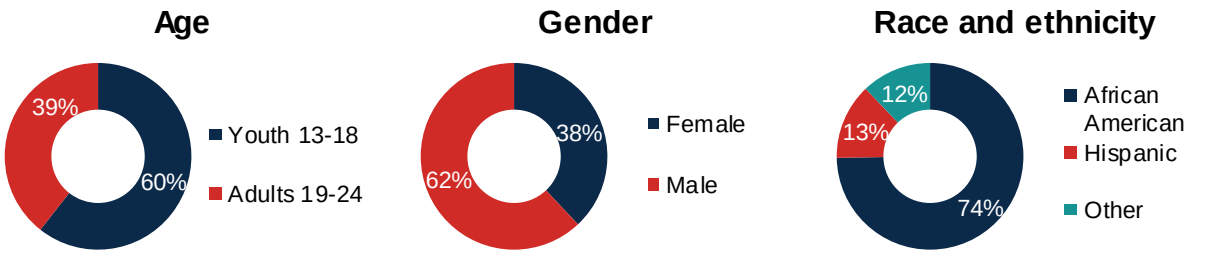
Category	Summary of implementation findings
Target population	• Youth EESS agencies primarily serve African American and Hispanic youth who have low commitment to school and/or have been exposed to violence. • Although agencies report that they target youth who meet at least five of the risk factors approved by Oakland Unite, only 33 percent of participants met this requirement.
Collaboration and referral networks	• Although the Oakland Unite model intends for the majority of referrals to come from life coaches, agencies report that most of their referrals result from their own outreach efforts. • Competition for youth's time and differences in approaches to serving youth have stifled collaboration between the youth EESS and youth life coaching sub-strategies.
Materials and trainings	• Although staff have found trainings provided by the Human Services Department to be helpful, senior staff recommend that future trainings be tailored to staff's experience level.
Staffing	• Agencies report that they cannot match salaries offered by other employers in the Bay Area, which they say has contributed to staff turnover.
Participant retention and satisfaction	• By the third month of services, about one-third of participants have stopped receiving youth EESS services. • Staff report that some youth obtain full-time employment before completing program requirements, but that early exits for positive outcomes are not easily reflected in Cityspan. • Almost all survey respondents report being satisfied with the services provided by their EESS agency and holding positive outlooks for the future.
Service provision	• Each agency addresses youths' needs for developing hard and soft skills, as well as non-skills-related barriers to employment. • Agencies partner with employers and postsecondary institutions to offer youth meaningful work and education experiences. • Participants receive varying amounts of work experience and services, reflecting differences both in retention and program models.
Financial support	• Youth are connected to opportunities to earn income almost immediately, and may earn additional financial incentives after completing programmatic milestones.
Substance abuse and mental health	• Workforce agencies do not allow onto a job site youth who are under the influence, which staff say contributes to cultural differences between their programs and life coaching. • To address trauma, substance use or abuse, and mental health issues, youth EESS agencies refer participants to other services.
Family engagement	• Aside from obtaining parental or guardian consent for youth to receive services, engaging family members is not a key element of the program models.

Target population

Youth EESS agencies primarily serve African American and Hispanic youth who have low commitment to school and/or have been exposed to violence. Figure IV.2 describes key baseline characteristics of youth who enroll in youth EESS services. Agencies in this sub-strategy serve a mix of male and female youth, most of whom are African American (74 percent) or Hispanic (13 percent). Although the sub-strategy targets youth who are ages 13 to 18, 39 percent of participants were older than 18 at the time of enrollment.

According to risk assessment data entered into Cityspan, 70 percent of youth demonstrated low commitment to school (not shown in the figure). Only 54 percent of school-aged EESS youth were enrolled in an OUSD or ACOE school in the 12 months before starting services. Among these students, 50 percent were chronically absent from school and 22 percent were suspended or expelled during that period. On average, youth EESS participants had a GPA of 1.55 (of 4.0) in the most recent school year (not shown in the figure).

Figure IV.2. Youth EESS participant characteristics at enrollment



39%	Arrested before receiving services	**17%**	On formal probation supervision before receiving services	**24%**	Reported being a victim of violence before receiving services
54%	Enrolled in school in the year before receiving services	**50%**	Chronically absent from school in the year before receiving services	**22%**	Suspended from school in the year before receiving services

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: Demographic information is based on 503 participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2018. Measures of arrest, victimization, and school engagement are based on the 92 percent of these participants who consented to share their identifying information for evaluation.

A number of participants in youth EESS also had direct or indirect exposure to violence. Almost a quarter reported being a victim of violence to OPD before receiving services. Not shown in the figure, 59 percent reported at intake that they had a peer or family member who had been shot or seriously injured. Some youth also had previous contact with the juvenile justice system. Thirty-nine percent had been arrested, and 17 percent were on formal probation supervision before receiving services.

Although agencies report that they target youth who meet at least five of the risk factors approved by Oakland Unite, only 33 percent of participants met this requirement. Oakland Unite eligibility rules indicate that youth must meet at least 5 of 9 risk factors specified by the program. For each participant, agencies are required to assess these risk factors and enter that information into Cityspan. However, according to Cityspan data, only 33 percent of participants met 5 or more risk factors. On average, youth met a total of 3.5 risk factors. Staff at one agency suggested that Oakland Unite should include risk factors related to housing and food insecurity because these conditions could contribute to risky or violent behaviors.

Collaboration and referral networks

Although the Oakland Unite model intends for the majority of referrals to come from life coaches, agencies report that most of their referrals result from their own outreach efforts. Cityspan data show that about 23 percent of youth EESS participants also participated in life coaching, although the data do not indicate whether the participants were referred to youth EESS from life coaching. During agency interviews, two of the agencies shared that the majority of their referrals were from probation officers; one agency, which runs a school-based program, receives referrals directly from school sites. Agencies shared that they also engage in community outreach efforts to recruit youth. Most agencies have been so successful in recruiting participants that they have either paused recruiting efforts or created waiting lists. However, one agency reported a decrease in the number of referrals due to a drop in enrollment at ACOE schools, which is the population it serves.

Agencies said that they would like to collaborate more with other Oakland Unite strategies in serving youth and acknowledged that the City has responded to their concerns about cross-strategy collaboration. For example, the City has organized several meetings on the topic of how to increase collaboration across agencies, held a summit during the summer, and conducted a speed-dating–like event, all of which allowed agency staff to learn about each other's programs. Most of the agencies recommended that the City continue to conduct events that promote services available through other agencies.

***Competition for youth's time and differences in approaches to serving youth have stifled collaboration between the youth EESS and life coaching sub-strategies*.** Agencies sometimes receive referrals from the Probation Department that do not already have a life coach. A program manager detailed that agency staff will attempt to refer these youth to life coaching agencies, but referrals are not always successful due to competing demands for youth's time: "There is a real breakdown in the conflicting deliverables category. If youth are in school all day, receive workforce training, and then have to log 16 hours of activities with their life coaches, there just is not enough time to do so." In addition to competing demands for service hours, staff said that differences between the youth EESS and life coaching approaches to serving youth, such as how to address substance use or abuse issues and tardiness to program services, have stifled collaboration. Despite noting these differences, youth EESS staff said that there is potential for the two sub-strategies to work together. For example, a program manager noted that life coaches have helped to de-escalate potentially violent situations at youth EESS sites, and that life coaches are instrumental in supporting youth through trauma.

Materials and trainings

Although staff have found trainings provided by the Human Services Department to be helpful, senior staff recommend that future trainings be tailored to staff's experience level. Staff mentioned that the speed dating event and trainings around compassion fatigue and trauma have been particularly helpful. However, staff said that trainings could be improved if the City took into account the different educational and career levels of the staff across the youth EESS agencies. In particular, senior staff with previous training and experience in this area said many of the topics offered were already familiar to them after several years of working in the field. Therefore, tailoring trainings to newer versus more senior staff could provide a better overall experience.

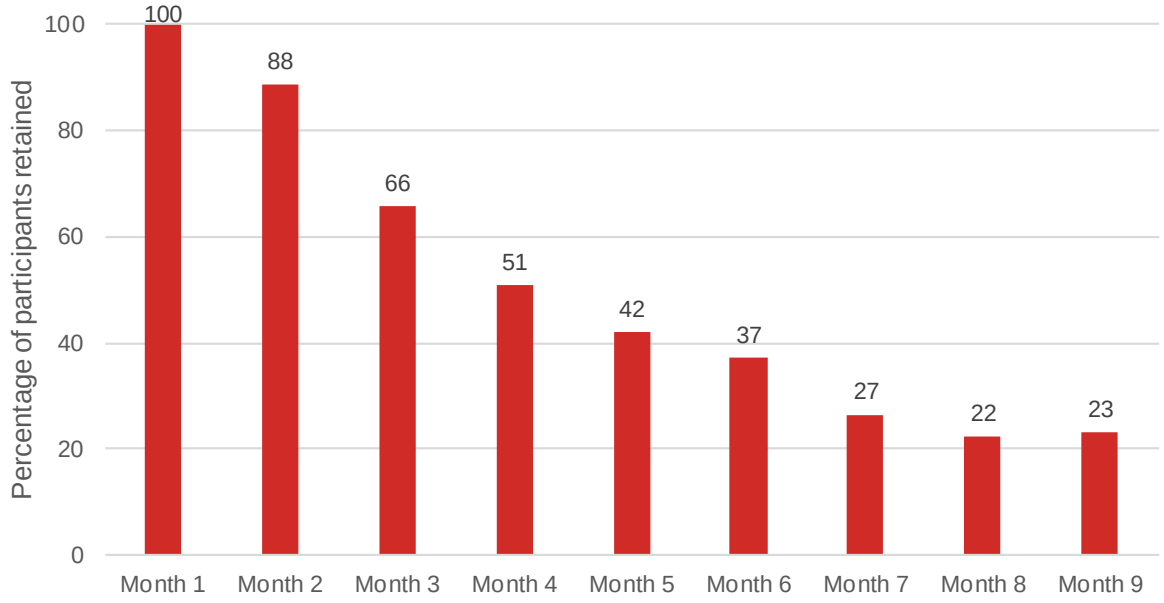
Staffing

***Agencies report that they cannot match salaries offered by other employers in the Bay Area, which they say has contributed to staff turnover*.** Agencies report that their staff are often sought by other employers in the Bay Area because of their skills. One agency in particular shared that although some of its staff stay for a while, their organization feels like a "farm system" for other government or nonprofit organizations. Staff from another agency shared that the short grant cycles contribute to staff turnover. To address staff turnover, agencies hire previous participants, promote internally, and engage in regular hiring activities (posting job openings, interviewing, and hiring). They also provide extensive trainings to those who may share a similar background with youth and are a good organizational fit but lack skills in another area. ACOE employs AmeriCorps members to tutor, but most only stay for a short period. Therefore, the agency hires more tutors than are needed in anticipation of attrition.

Participant retention and satisfaction

***By the third month of services, about one-third of participants have stopped receiving youth EESS service*s.** Figure IV.3 shows participant retention over time. Although participant retention declines consistently after the start of services, the largest drop off in participation occurs between the second and third months of services. On average, youth EESS participants engage with agencies for 5.5 months, although this can include some inactive periods. Taking into account only months were at least some services were received, the average length of active participation is 5 months.

Figure IV.3. Youth EESS participant retention over time

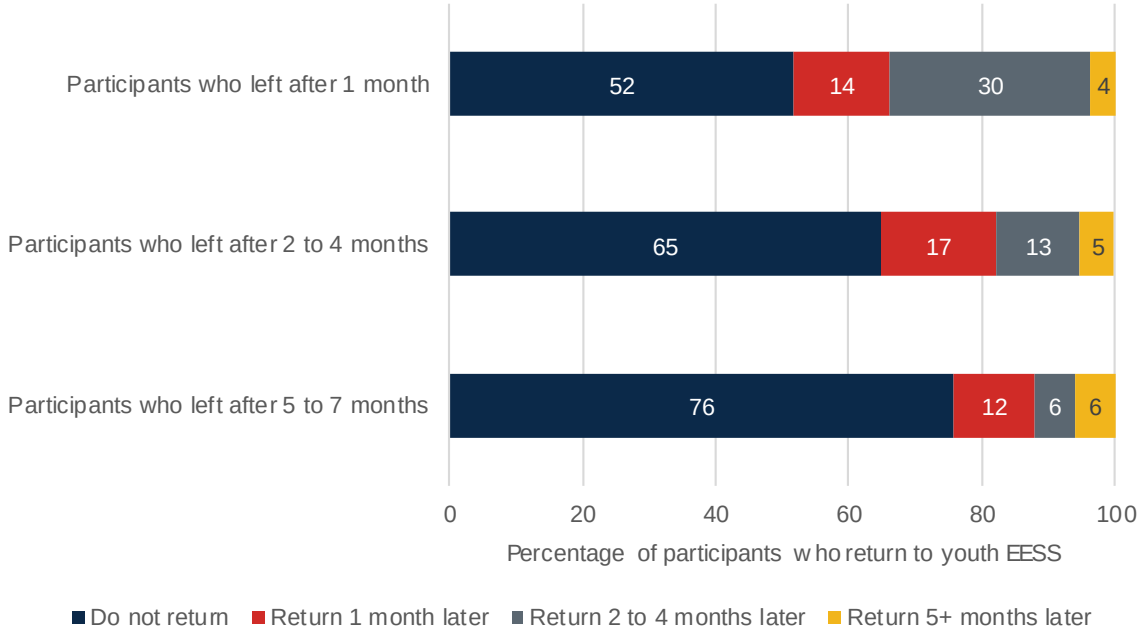


Source: Cityspan data.

Note: This figure is based on 373 participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and March 31, 2018 so that all participants could be tracked for at least 9 months, through December 31, 2018. The pattern of retention is very similar for youth who began receiving services more recently.

Service duration varies significantly across participants and can include multiple periods of active engagement for some. Thirty-two percent of youth engage in services during multiple service periods, defined as service periods separated by one or more months of inactivity. Figure IV.4 summarizes the percentage of youth who return to EESS after leaving services. Among youth who leave services after one month, 52 percent do not return to EESS. The remaining 48 percent typically return after a few months (usually 2 to 4 months later). A smaller proportion of youth who initially participate in EESS for 2 to 4 months return for services (35 percent), whereas a quarter of youth who initially participate for 5 to 7 months come back.

Figure IV.4. Percentage of youth EESS participants who return after leaving services



Source: Cityspan data.

Note: This figure is based on 503 participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018.

Multiple staff noted that the abundance of available services and activities for youth in the area made it difficult to keep some participants engaged. Youth are often tied to many different systems, including the Probation Department, life coaching, school, and other support services outside of Oakland Unite. In addition to those obligations, youth sometimes want to work and participate in after-school or sports activities. Staff also shared that their geographic locations present some challenges to maintaining engagement because they may be difficult for youth to reach or may be considered unsafe. Staff at one agency also noted that the sub-strategy as a whole lacks bilingual services, which could be helpful in engaging non-English speaking youth.

Staff report that some youth obtain full-time employment before completing program requirements, but that early exits for positive outcomes are not easily reflected in Cityspan. Two agencies shared that some of the youth who engage in services but do not complete the work experience component have obtained employment elsewhere. This phenomenon is both a success and a challenge for agencies. At times, the minimum wage and number of hours youth are allowed to work each week are not enough to meet their financial needs, and youth who are parents or whose families need additional income may leave the program to obtain employment in retail or fast food, where they can work more hours at the same wages and therefore earn more money. On the positive side, agencies report that some youth demonstrate during the work experience component that they are ready to enter the workforce and obtain employment elsewhere. Although agencies consider this readiness for work a success, they note that it is reflected as youth not completing their required hours in Cityspan.

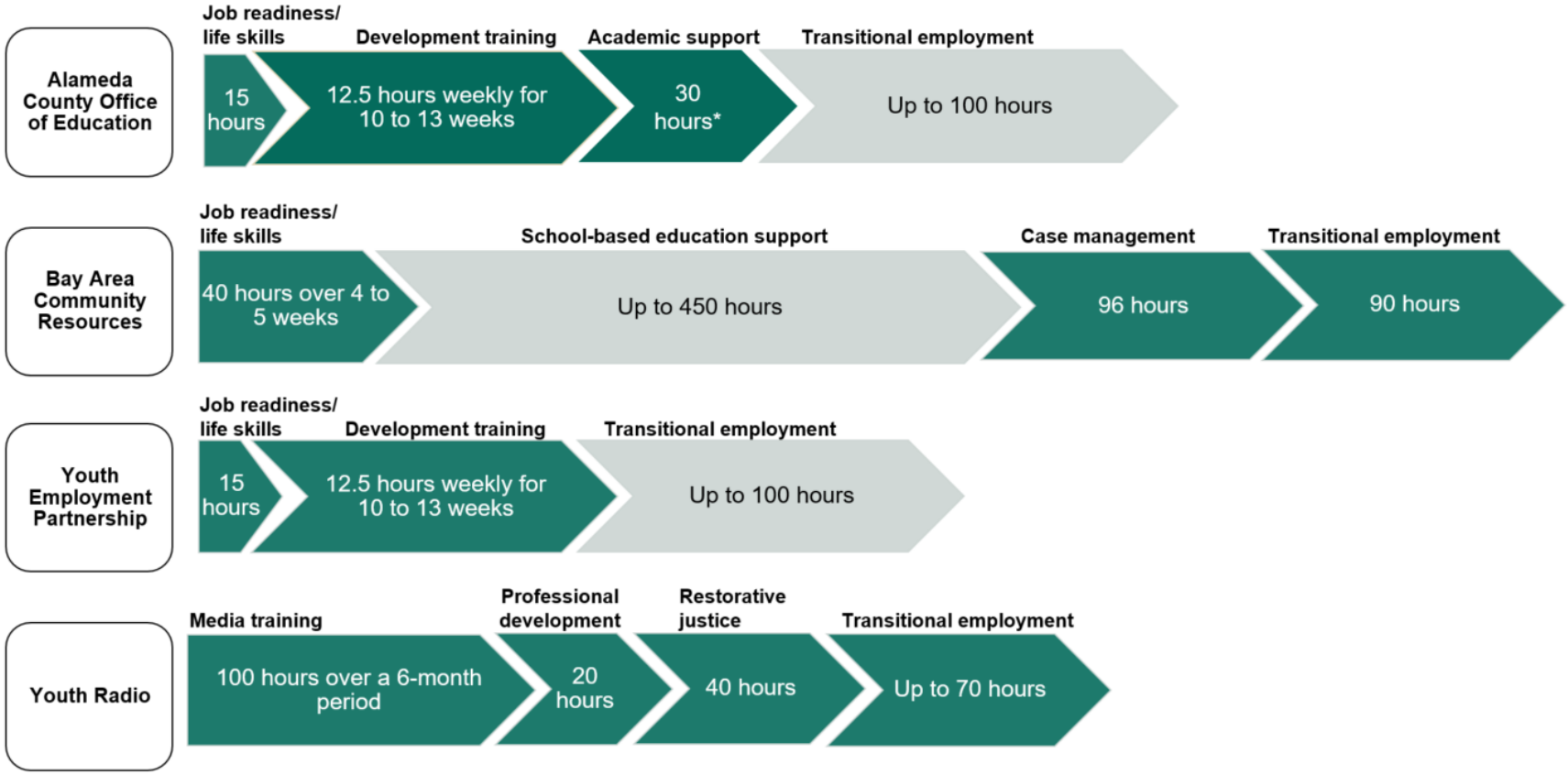
Almost all survey respondents report being satisfied with the services provided by their EESS agency and holding positive outlooks for the future. About 90 percent of EESS participants who responded to the survey reported being satisfied with their agency, with 48 percent strongly agreeing that they were satisfied. The level of satisfaction was similar for many of the specific topics asked about in the participant survey, including the kinds of services offered, staff availability, and how the staff listen and show respect to participants. About three-quarters of participants think that their situation is better because of the Oakland Unite services they've received, with 35 percent strongly agreeing with that statement. When asked about what they thought their lives would be like one year in the future, at least 90 percent of youth EESS participants thought it was likely or very likely they would have a safe place to live, a steady job, and be more hopeful about their lives. At least 90 percent also thought it was likely or very likely that they would be able to avoid unwanted contact with the police and avoid unhealthy drug or alcohol use, whereas more than 80 percent thought it was likely or very likely they would finish their education within the next year.

Service provision

Each agency addresses youths' needs for developing hard and soft skills, as well as non-skills-related barriers to employment. The intake process varies across agencies, but it typically includes assessments of risk, educational needs, and job readiness, all of which are used to individualize program services. Program services usually begin with a vocational or life skills training component, and participants have the opportunity to engage in transitional employment as well as other service offerings after completing this phase. Most agencies also provide academic support as well as formal case management services to address other barriers to employment, such as transportation, legal, and health care needs. The length of time and content of each of these components can vary widely based on program requirements (Figure IV.5).

Agencies partner with employers and postsecondary institutions to offer meaningful work and education experiences to youth. Agencies are responsive to youth's interests when developing employer partnerships. For example, at one agency, youth expressed an interest in entrepreneurship, so the program developed a partnership with Beast Mode clothing, where youth are exposed to how a small business operates and work on developing customer service skills. Agencies also collaborate with postsecondary institutions where youth are connected to educational and vocational training opportunities. If youth are interested, they are also connected to career technical education and vocational schools where they can enroll to obtain other certifications. Agencies said they prioritize programs that may lead to careers in in-demand and growth industries.

Figure IV.5. Length and dosage of youth EESS program services



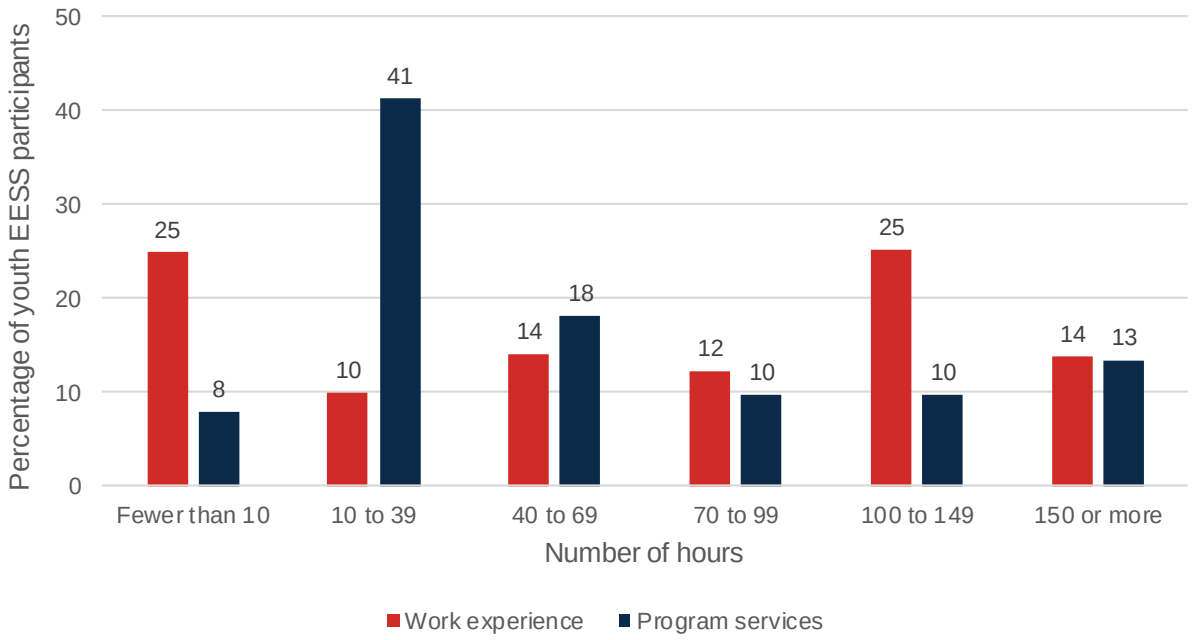
Source: Grantee documents provided by City of Oakland, site visits, and agency interviews.

Note: Program components shaded in green are required for program completion.

* ACOE academic support hours do not include regular academic support provided during the school day.

Participants receive varying amounts of work experience and services, reflecting differences both in retention and program models. Figure IV.6 illustrates the total number of work experience and service hours that participants receive, which can vary widely. One-quarter of participants completed fewer than 10 hours of work experience. On average, participants who completed fewer than 10 hours of work experience received 74 hours of nonwork services (which includes vocational and preemployment training and case management) over approximately three months. This disparity suggests that a number of participants complete the training component but not the work experience component. In contrast, 51 percent of participants completed at least 70 hours of work experience, which is the minimum number of work experience hours offered by any of the agencies. On average, these participants received 72 hours of nonwork services but engaged with agencies for a longer period—just over seven months. Agencies may provide youth with up to 100 hours of paid work experience, although one agency shared that work experience hours are flexible.

Figure IV.6. Total youth EESS work and service hours received



Source: Cityspan data.

Note: This figure is based on 503 participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2018.

Service hours vary across agencies depending on the agency's model. For example, participants at BACR receive a high number of case management hours—108 hours, on average, compared to 8 hours in the other three agencies—because BACR requires youth to complete at least 96 hours of case management. Conversely, BACR does not require job skills or vocational training for program completion, so its participants receive less than 1 hour of training, on average, compared to 21 hours in the other three agencies. Youth Radio also differs from other agencies by requiring 100 hours of job skills or vocational training. In addition to differences in service

models across agencies, the total number of service hours participants receive also varies due to the length of time they engage with services.

Financial support

Youth are connected to opportunities to earn income almost immediately, and they may earn additional financial incentives after completing programmatic milestones. About 30 percent of the youth EESS budget is allocated to participant wages, financial support, and incentives. During their transitional work experience, youth receive paid stipends at the City's minimum wage and are paid every two weeks. Youth are allowed to work up to 100 transitional work experience hours, although agencies shared that this is not a hard cap, and some youth will work more hours and earn more wages. On average, youth complete about 80 hours of individual and group work experience, thus leaving funds available for youth who need to work more hours. The average wages per participant ranged from $941 to $2,441 across the four agencies, based only on funding from Oakland Unite.

Each agency also provides youth the opportunity to earn additional paid incentives for achieving program milestones such as attendance, completing their trainings, and obtaining their high school diploma or a credential/certificate. For example, one agency helps participants set goals and action steps for achieving those goals; for each action step the youth complete, they earn an incentive. Another agency follows a similar incentive structure but deducts from the total potential incentive earned for excessive tardiness or absences and any behavioral problems. Generally, agencies find the incentives helpful for keeping youth engaged in programming. Across the four agencies, the average financial support or incentive awarded to youth ranged from $268 to $477, based only on funding from Oakland Unite. Some agencies are able to leverage other funding streams.

Substance use and mental health

Workforce agencies do not allow onto a job site youth who are under the influence, which staff say contributes to cultural differences between their programs and life coaching. Youth EESS agencies employ a behavior modification strategy, which is unlike the harm reduction approach used by life coaches. Youth EESS staff said that youth cannot come to work late, smelling of marijuana, or under the influence, and that youth are turned away until the issue is corrected. Youth sometimes share with their life coach that they were turned away, and their life coach may then call the youth EESS agency to advocate on behalf of the youth. Youth EESS staff acknowledged that marijuana in particular is challenging to address because it is now legal in California. Youth EESS staff said they try to instill the point that a real job will not tolerate this behavior, but noted that life coaches do not always agree with youth being turned away from services. Staff suggested that Oakland Unite should help foster a complementary, rather than conflicting, dynamic between the two sub-strategies.

To address trauma, substance use or abuse, and mental health issues, youth EESS agencies refer participants to other services. Several youth EESS staff stated that their sub-strategy does not directly address trauma and that many of their participants demonstrate significant trauma as well as the need for more intensive case management. Although all of the agencies provide some

case management services, they typically refer youth to other agencies for supportive services around substance use and mental health. As noted above, youth EESS agencies also connect youth who have experienced trauma to life coaching.

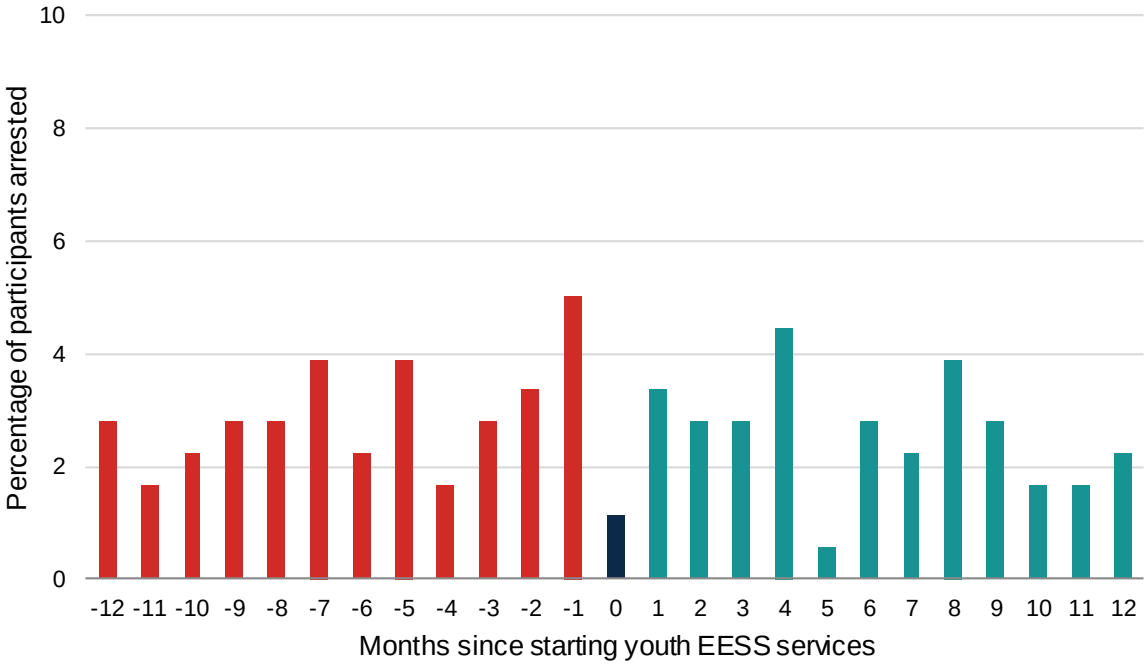
Family engagement

Aside from obtaining parental or guardian consent for youth to receive services, engaging family members is not a key element of the program models. Staff reported that not all parents are receptive to programming. One agency said that some parents perceive the programs as invasive, whereas another agency shared that some parents do not see the value in the services they provide. Aside from contacting parents to obtain their consent, the agencies do not typically engage families in programming. One agency shared that engaging with families is difficult because some parents are not involved at all and others may be too involved.

Impact findings

As described in Chapter II, we analyzed the effects of participating in youth EESS on outcomes in the 12-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. Among youth included in the impact analysis, 25 percent were arrested in the 12 months before starting services, compared to 20 percent in the 12 months after starting services. Unlike in the youth life coaching sub-strategy, there is no clear pattern of arrests in the period surrounding the start of youth EESS services (Figure IV.7). This is expected, because referrals to youth EESS do not generally come directly from the JJC. To assess whether there was an impact from participating in youth EESS, we matched participants to other Oakland youth with similar demographics and juvenile justice, victimization, and schooling histories and compared their outcomes in the same 12-month follow-up period.

Figure IV.7. Participant arrest rates by month, before and after starting youth EESS services

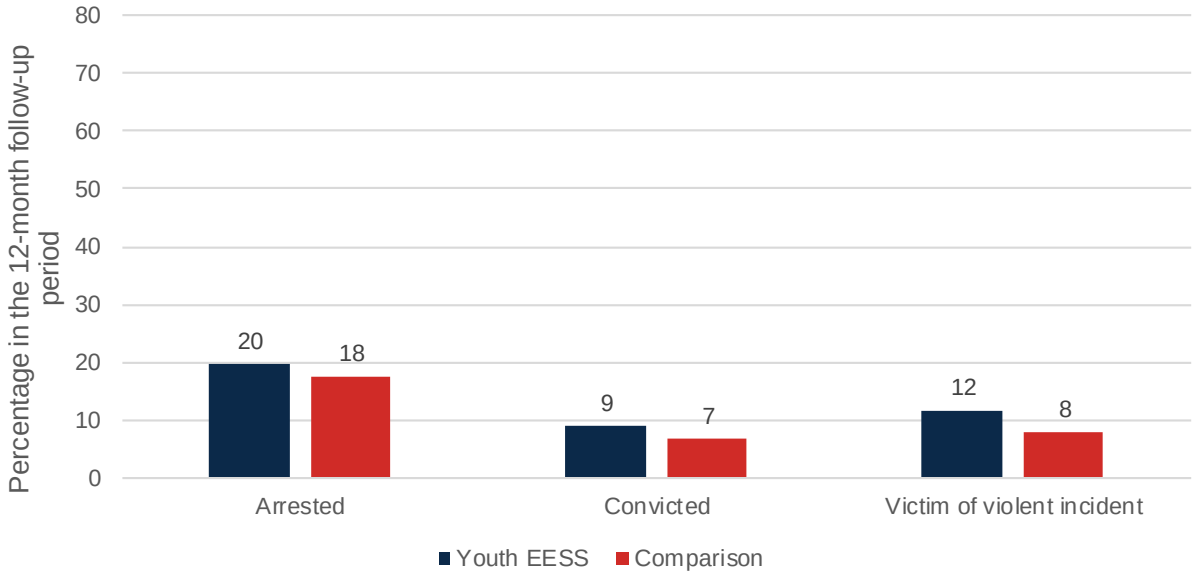


Source: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD data.

Note: This figure is based on 179 youth EESS participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and May 31, 2017, consented to share their information for evaluation, and were included in the impact analysis.

Youth EESS participants had similar rates of contact with law enforcement as the comparison group in the 12 months after beginning services. During this period, 20 percent of youth EESS participants were arrested, 9 percent were convicted for a new offense, and 12 percent were victims of a violent offense reported to OPD (Figure IV.8). These rates were similar for the matched comparison group over the same follow-up period (that is, none of the differences between the two groups were statistically significant). When we examined additional exploratory measures of contact with law enforcement, including arrests involving a gun or violent offense and violations of probation, and shorter-term outcomes during a six-month follow-up period, these rates were also similar for the comparison group. Appendix B includes more detailed results, including all exploratory outcomes. Overall, we found no impact of participating in youth EESS programs on the likelihood of coming into contact with law enforcement in either the short or medium term after beginning services.

Figure IV.8. Impact of youth EESS 12 months after enrollment on arrest, conviction, and victimization rates



Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and ACPD administrative data.

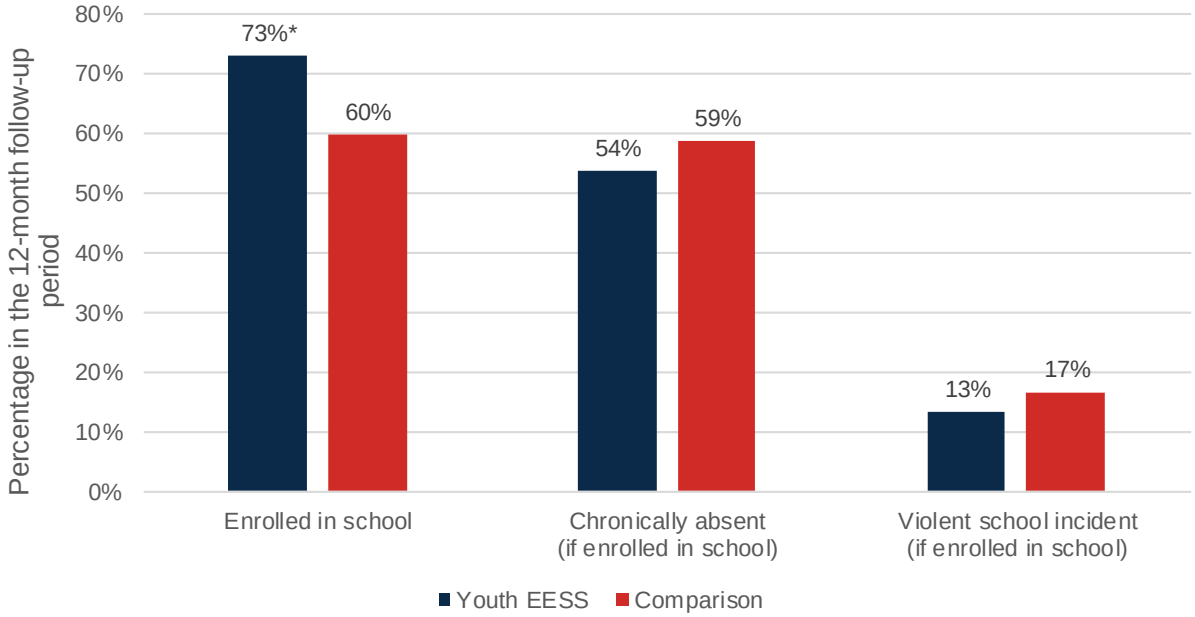
Note: The total sample is 3,496, including 179 youth EESS participants. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services or 40 work hours between January 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. Comparison group rates were adjusted using ordinary least square regressions that account for remaining baseline differences between Oakland Unite participants and youth in the comparison group. None of the differences in outcomes in the figure are statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

School-aged EESS participants were 13 percentage points more likely to be enrolled in school in the 12 months after starting services, and had similar school attendance and discipline as the comparison group. In the 12 months after beginning services, 73 percent of EESS participants who were under 18 when they began services were enrolled in an OUSD or ACOE school, compared to 60 percent of similar comparison youth (Figure IV.9). This 13-percentage-point difference is statistically significant.[6] In the prior 12 months, approximately 76 percent of both EESS and comparison youth had been enrolled in school. Thus, compared to youth in the comparison group, few EESS youth dropped out of school during this period. Among those who were enrolled in school in the outcome period, 54 percent of youth EESS participants were chronically absent (defined as missing at least 10 percent of enrolled days for any reason) and 13 percent had a reported violent incident in school. Although there were no statistically significant differences between youth EESS participants and comparison youth, these rates are substantially

[6] Among all youth, including those who were 18 and older at the time of starting services, the difference in school enrollment rates between EESS and comparison youth is 18 percentage points (see Table B.5 in Appendix B). This larger difference suggests that participating in EESS also helps older youth stay in school.

higher than the average. Among all high school students in OUSD and ACOE, 25 percent were chronically absent and 5 percent had a violent school incident in the most recent school year.

Figure IV.9. Impact of youth EESS 12 months after enrollment on school enrollment, attendance, and discipline



Source: Oakland Unite, OUSD, and ACOE administrative data.

Note: The total sample for the school enrollment outcome is 3,496, including 179 youth EESS participants. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services or 40 work hours between January 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The school enrollment rate is based on youth who were under 18 years of age when they began services. To examine chronic absence and violent school incidents, the sample was restricted to 2,656 youth who were enrolled in school in the outcome period, which included 113 youth EESS participants. Comparison group rates were adjusted using ordinary least square regressions that account for remaining baseline differences between Oakland Unite participants and youth in the comparison group.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

Although we found limited impacts of participating in youth EESS on contact with law enforcement, there are some caveats to this analysis. First, many of the youth who participate in this sub-strategy do not complete the program requirements. These findings reflect the average impact for all participants who completed at least 40 hours of work experience or received at least 10 hours of services, for outcomes measured starting in the first month after they began participating in youth EESS. Second, as with any non-experimental analysis, it is possible that there could be differences between the two groups that we could not account for using the available data. Namely, some of the individuals in the comparison group could have received similar services from other organizations outside of Oakland Unite. However, relative to the youth life coaching analysis, we were able to identify a comparison group for youth EESS participants that had very similar histories of contact with law enforcement.

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V. CONCLUSION

This report describes the services provided by youth life coaching and youth EESS agencies funded through Oakland Unite. In summary, we offer the following key findings:

Youth life coaching key findings

Youth life coaching participants have histories of justice system involvement and experiences with violence. Youth life coaching agencies primarily serve high-risk African American and Hispanic youth with high rates of contact with the juvenile justice system, direct or indirect exposure to violence, and low engagement with school. The life coaching agencies have had success identifying youth for services through close communication with the JJC Transition Center, collaboration with the Alameda County District Attorney's Office (particularly for identifying CSEC), and most recently, expanded eligibility criteria.

There is a need for improved collaboration between youth life coaching agencies and the Probation Department. Agencies could benefit from improved communication and data sharing with the Alameda County Probation Department. Agency staff reported that a change to the Probation Department's policies around data sharing has limited the flow of information to life coaching agencies. Giving agencies access to youth's contact and risk assessment information and increasing communication between agency staff and probation officers could improve the referral process and the effectiveness of service provision.

High cost of living and job-related stress are challenges for agency staff. Most life coaching agencies have experienced staff turnover and report that it is difficult to identify and retain candidates with the right skills, training, and personal background for the position. Agency staff attributed turnover to their inability to match the salaries offered by other organizations, the high cost of living in the Bay Area, and the stressful and dangerous nature of the job. Although staff said they found the burnout training offered by Oakland Unite to be helpful, additional support and time for self-care could help staff cope with burnout.

Many participants leave life coaching services after the first month. Life coaching participants are expected to remain engaged for 12 to 18 months under the program model, but more than a quarter drop out in the first month. At 12 months, only 37 percent of youth continue to receive life coaching services. Attrition is the primary reason why a large number of youth do not receive the intended service dosage. Efforts to increase youth engagement should be focused on the first month, when the largest share of youth leave services.

There is a need for a more unified approach to substance use and abuse. Life coaches find it challenging to stop substance abuse and employ a harm reduction approach to address the problem, which can create tension with other stakeholders in youth's lives, such as probation officers or EESS agency staff. Life coaches also sometimes feel unequipped to address youth's more serious trauma and use their discretion to refer participants to therapy or counseling services. Youth-serving strategies may consider developing a more coordinated approach to meeting youth's substance abuse and mental health needs.

Youth life coaching participants were significantly more likely to be enrolled in school but had similar rates of arrest, conviction, and victimization in the 12 months after starting services as a similar comparison group of youth. Participating in life coaching prevented school dropout. It also reduced the likelihood of arrests for a violent offense, but only in the six months after starting services. Over a longer 12-month follow-up period, participating in life coaching had little impact on contact with law enforcement. Further, life coaching participants who were enrolled in school had high rates of chronic absence and violent school incidents. These findings could partly reflect that youth who participate in life coaching begin services at a particularly high-risk period in their lives (which makes it difficult to match them to a comparable set of youth) and that many do not receive the intended amount of services due to high rates of attrition.

Youth EESS key findings

Many youth EESS participants have disengaged from school, and about 40 percent have had contact with the justice system. Although youth EESS agencies serve a high-risk population, they face fewer challenges than the youth served by life coaching. For instance, youth EESS participants were half as likely to have been arrested before enrollment as youth life coaching participants. Both groups had high chronic absence rates and suspension rates at school, but a greater proportion of youth life coaching participants faced these challenges. Although agencies report that they target youth who meet at least five of the risk factors approved by Oakland Unite, only 33 percent of participants met this requirement, according to Cityspan data.

There is a need for greater coordination between the youth EESS and life coaching sub-strategies around referrals and their approaches to substance abuse. Although the Oakland Unite model intends for the majority of youth EESS referrals to come from life coaches, youth EESS agencies report that most of their referrals have resulted from their own outreach efforts. About one-quarter of youth EESS participants also participated in youth life coaching. Youth EESS agencies have been successful in recruiting participants from other sources, but these youth are not as high risk as life coaching participants. Improved coordination and communication may also help alleviate the tension between the life coaching and EESS approaches to substance abuse and harm reduction.

Because there is no standard youth EESS model, agencies offer a variety of services and programs. Although service models vary across agencies, each agency provides support for hard and soft skill development and addresses individual barriers to employment. Variation across the agencies results in a wider range of service options for youth in Oakland. However, without a standard youth EESS model and clear program requirements, defining successful completion of a youth EESS program can be difficult.

***A competitive market for youth EESS staff drives staff turnover*.** Agencies report that their staff are often sought by other employers in the Bay Area because of their skills, contributing to staff turnover. Staff develop valuable skills and receive on-the-job training at youth EESS agencies, but the agencies cannot always match the salaries offered to their staff by other employers in the

Bay Area, including government employers. To improve staff retention, agencies try to hire former participants, promote internal candidates, and engage in regular hiring cycles.

Youth participation drops between the second and third month of services. Challenges with participant engagement and retention include competing demands on youths' time, including other activities and programs. Staff also report that some participants stop attending the program because they have successfully met their goals—either reenrolling in school or finding a job. Other participants return to the program later on. Although family engagement is not an integral part of the youth EESS agencies' services, agencies might consider ways in which working with families may help improve youth retention and engagement.

Youth EESS participants were significantly more likely to be enrolled in school, but their rates of arrest, conviction, and victimization in the 12 months after starting services were comparable to those of a similar comparison group of youth. Participating in EESS prevented school dropout but had little impact on contact with law enforcement in the short or medium term. Further, youth EESS participants who were enrolled in school had high rates of chronic absence and violent school incidents. These results reflect the average impacts across all participants, which include youth who engaged in services for a short period of time and then disengaged as well as those who completed all program requirements.

Programmatic considerations

Based on these findings, we offer some possible considerations for continuing to improve program services in these sub-strategies:

1. **Make the first month of youth life coaching more intensive and comprehensive.** The high rate of rearrest among life coaching participants highlights not only the fact that youth life coaching agencies are serving the most high-risk youth in Oakland, but also that serving this population is particularly challenging. Oakland Unite should consider how to bolster initial service delivery to participants in the first weeks of program participation to improve participant engagement beyond the first month and reduce the rate of rearrest. Approaches may include much more intensive contact in the first weeks, a high level of coordination with justice system stakeholders involved in the youth's life (including probation officers and lawyers), and setting very short-term goals with youth to identify their strengths and help them avoid situations that may lead to violence.
2. **Focus on improving participant connections to school.** Although youth in both strategies are enrolling in school at higher rates than similar youth who did not participate in Oakland Unite, both life coaching and EESS participants continue to have high chronic absence rates following participation in the programs. Addressing barriers to school success is a primary area for Oakland Unite to focus on to strengthen the protective bond between youth and school, help them avoid police contact and delinquent activity during school hours, and support youth to reach the goals they have for their futures. To do this, Oakland Unite could consider convening a working group of youth involved in life coaching, EESS, and/or CSEC to ask about their transition back to school, the barriers they face, and ideas they have to improve their school experiences and those of their peers.

3. **Update data systems to reflect the possible successful exits from programs and reasons for program exits.** As Cityspan is refined, Oakland Unite might consider adding additional fields to record reasons for program exit, as well as reasons that participants come back, and making these fields required. Agencies could also benefit from being able to track participants' progress over time in achieving key milestones. Further, including functionality within the database to allow tracking of participants across agencies would allow Oakland Unite to better understand referrals and sorting across agencies. This information may shed light on primary drivers of attrition for both youth life coaching and EESS agencies.
4. **Amplify efforts to engage trusted members of participants' families and social circles.** Although family members and friends are not a focus of current agency services, Oakland Unite could consider asking agencies to engage these key supports in participants' lives to encourage positive messages and choices and improve participant retention and engagement. Focus groups with family members that will be held this summer as part of the evaluation could offer an opportunity to hear from them about how best to engage families in service provision.
5. **Support agencies to address staff turnover and burnout.** Oakland Unite already offers many opportunities for staff to gather, learn together, and share best practices and challenges. The City could consider ways these training and meeting activities could be strengthened to further support community building among agency staff and provide them with additional benefits to being a part of Oakland Unite. In addition, the City could provide guidance to agencies about pay scales for government and nongovernment employees so agencies can identify areas where they may need to increase compensation to retain employees.

Areas for future research

There are several areas for additional research and analysis that could support the City in understanding and improving program effectiveness in the coming years. The following areas of inquiry will be explored in the upcoming comprehensive evaluation, focused on youth and adult life coaching:

- Explore how impacts may vary for youth who participate in life coaching for longer periods of time or participate in multiple Oakland Unite services.
- Explore measures of socio-emotional function for life coaching participants relative to participants in other strategies to learn whether short-term changes in socio-emotional skills are associated with longer-term changes in other outcomes, such as arrest or victimization.
- Take a deeper dive into the challenges youth life coaching participants face in the months surrounding enrollment, including legal issues, contact with law enforcement, detention in the juvenile justice center, and disengagement from school, and the time trends in their key outcomes.

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GLOSSARY

Case management: Individual service coordination helping people access multiple health care, social work, disability insurance, employment, and law services.

Dosage: The length or frequency of service contacts, such as the number of service hours.

Experimental: A research design that compares outcomes between a program group and a group not participating in the program, where group status is determined by random chance (for example, by a coin flip).

Life coaching: A process for empowering individuals to gain greater awareness of their choices, set goals, and cultivate strong connections to others.

Qualitative research: A research method relying on interviews, focus groups, and observations to draw conclusions about a research question.

Quantitative research: A research method relying on analysis of numeric data, including administrative or survey data, to draw conclusions about a research question.

Quasi-experimental: A research design that compares outcomes between a program group and a group not participating in the program, where group status is not determined by random chance.

Recidivism: A measure of repeat involvement in the criminal or juvenile justice system, such as rearrest, reconviction, or reincarceration.

Risk assessment: A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in an activity or a decision, often used in the criminal and juvenile justice system to assess risk of failure to appear in court or risk of reoffense.

Statistically significant: A description of a quantitative result meaning the likelihood that a relationship between two variables, such as participation in a program and arrest rates, is due to something other than random chance.

Strategies: The primary approaches to violence prevention employed by Oakland Unite, including (1) life coaching, (2) education and economic self-sufficiency, (3) violent incident and crisis response, (4) community asset building, and (5) innovation fund.

Sub-strategies: The specific approaches to violence prevention within the primary strategies. For instance, within the violent incident and crisis response strategy, agencies are funded under five sub-strategies to address distinct sources of violent victimization, exposure, and perpetration: street outreach, shooting response, homicide support network, commercially sexually exploited children intervention, and family violence intervention.

Transitional employment: An employment-based model that provides short-term subsidized employment for individuals to build their experience and skills.

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Appendix A:

Data sources

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This report is based on a mix of qualitative and quantitative analyses of multiple data sources. We discuss both the qualitative and administrative data sources in detail below. All data collection procedures were reviewed and approved by the Health Media Lab Institutional Review Board.

QUALITATIVE DATA

The qualitative component of this report included primary data collection through a participant survey, site visits and interviews with agency staff, and a review of materials provided by Oakland Unite and collected during site visits.

Survey data

The purpose of the survey data collection was to gather information about Oakland Unite directly from strategy participants. The general topics of study included experiences and satisfaction with services, importance of agency characteristics, thoughts about the future, experiences with violence, and demographic characteristics. Before the survey was administered, it was pretested with former Oakland Unite participants in two strategies. The pretest focused on whether respondents understood the questions, whether anything was difficult to answer, and the time required to complete. Based on this pretest, the survey was revised and a final version was translated into Spanish.

Table A.1. Participant survey summary

Sub-strategy	Number of agencies	Number of completed surveys
Youth life coaching	6	63
Youth EESS	4	46

The surveys were fielded with participants at each agency during September and October 2018. Survey administration was typically conducted on two back-to-back days where any Oakland Unite participant who visited that agency on one of the days was asked to complete a survey. Due to the differences in services provided and the number of participants at each agency, some sites delayed the start of data collection or included additional days. Nearly all surveys were conducted using a paper copy of the survey, with 5 percent of respondents electing to use a web version. The survey took approximately 5 minutes to complete. No identifying information was included on the survey, so all responses were anonymous. In total, 109 participants completed a survey across the 10 agencies providing services in the focal strategies (see Table A.1 for survey counts by sub-strategy). Because the number of surveys varied by agency, the responses were weighted proportional to the number of completed surveys at each agency. This means that each agency contributed equally to the sub-strategy averages regardless of the number of participants who completed a survey.

Site visits and interviews

The purpose of the site visits and interviews was to gather information about Oakland Unite strategy implementation from agency staff. The general topics of study included participant engagement, program implementation, program progress and tracking, collaboration networks, and successes and challenges. Site visits took place in July and August 2017 and were followed by telephone interviews in August 2018. During each visit, Mathematica staff conducted semistructured interviews with grantee staff members, including managers and line staff. In total, we conducted 48 interviews at the 10 agencies providing services in the focal strategies, plus the JJC Transition Center (see Table A.2 for interview counts by sub-strategy).

Table A.2. Site visit and interview summary

Sub-strategy	Site visits conducted	Director or program manager interviews	Frontline staff interviews
Youth life coaching	7	15	15
Youth EESS	4	8	10

At each site, we interviewed site directors and/or managers for approximately 45 to 60 minutes. These interviews focused on topics such as defining and reaching the program's target population, program performance measures, and staffing. We also conducted interviews with frontline staff members at each site. These interviews were typically 30 to 45 minutes and focused on participant engagement, service provision, and program data. For agencies with grants across multiple strategies, we interviewed frontline staff members for each of the strategies.

The interview protocols varied depending on the Oakland Unite sub-strategy. Interviews at all agencies included a set of topics, with questions varying depending on which type of respondent was interviewed. The protocol also included targeted questions about the focal strategies, which asked about best practices specific to each sub-strategy and additional details about services and outcomes. The youth life coaching protocol included questions about implementing the life coaching model, staff workload, and client communication. The youth EESS protocol focused on skills assessment and development, as well as engagement with local employers and schools.

The interviews were semistructured, meaning the evaluation team asked the same questions during each interview, but responses were open-ended and the interviewer had flexibility to probe for details or clarification in the responses. During the site visits, a notetaker recorded responses in a standardized template, which linked the responses to specific interview questions and to broader topics for analysis. The evaluation team analyzed responses across interviewees within the site and across agencies within the same sub-strategy. The goal was to highlight key themes about the implementation of the sub-strategy, as well as identify similarities and differences between agencies.

In addition to the site visits, the evaluation team reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite staff and collected directly from agencies during the site visits. The documents included the scope of work statement, agency budgets, quarterly reports, and intake forms. We used this information to better understand the types of services offered by each agency, as well as their benchmarks and performance measures.

Although the qualitative data provided a rich source of information about the agencies and the Oakland Unite program, this evaluation approach has some limitations. In particular, the participant surveys were done with a convenience sample of clients who happened to be on-site, or with clients specifically selected for participation by the agency, so their responses may not reflect the experiences of all clients. As with all data from interviews, particularly those including sensitive topics, there is also a potential for social desirability bias, where staff may provide responses that reflect favorably upon themselves. Although we specifically informed each interviewee that their answers would be kept confidential and that there would be no impact on their employment or the agency's participation in Oakland Unite, respondents may still have felt that negative responses could have repercussions. We designed our site visit procedures to minimize the potential for this bias, including interviewing in private spaces and emphasizing the confidential nature of the research in the consent language, but we cannot rule out the effect of these factors in the results.

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

The quantitative analyses in this report used administrative data from Oakland Unite, OPD, ACPD, OUSD, and ACOE that were linked together (Table A.3).

Table A.3. Administrative data sources

Data source	Total number of individual records retrieved	Date range
Alameda County Office of Education	1,492	August 1, 2014 to June 30, 2018
Alameda County Probation Department	23,377	January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2018
Oakland Unite Cityspan data	8,631	January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2018
Oakland Police Department arrest incidents	76,630	January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2018
Oakland Police Department victimization incidents	392,680	January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2018
Oakland Unified School District	82,028	August 1, 2010 to June 30, 2018

Oakland Unite data

All Oakland Unite agencies are required to maintain administrative records in a common database managed by Cityspan. Agencies use the database to record service contacts and hours, milestones reached, incentives received, referral sources, and demographic and risk information

about each participant. The data extract we received from Cityspan included participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018. Although some individuals may have begun participating in Oakland Unite in the prior year, we did not have information about services received before January 1, 2016.

Between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018, about 90 percent of participants in each sub-strategy consented to share their personal information for evaluation purposes (see Table A.4).[7] Accordingly, Cityspan did not provide names, dates of birth, or addresses for participants who did not consent. Although nonconsenting participants are included in most descriptive statistics about Oakland Unite, they are excluded from any analyses of outcomes, because the analyses require identifying information so participants can be linked to outside records.

Table A.4. Participant consent rates by sub-strategy

Sub-strategy	Number of participants	Consent rate (%)
Youth EESS	503	92
Youth life coaching	625	87

Source: Oakland Unite administrative data, based on participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018.

OPD data

OPD provided data on arrests and victimization incidents that occurred between January 1, 2006, and December 31, 2018. The arrest data included information about each arrest incident, including its location, statute code, and Uniform Crime Reporting statute category code, as well as information about the arrestee, including name, date of birth, address, and demographics. The victimization data included similar information for each incident involving a victim of a crime. We used the Uniform Crime Reporting statute categories and statute codes to determine each arrest or victimization incident's type. For example, we classified incidents by whether they involved a gun or other weapon, public order, property, drugs, a violent offense, or a violation of probation. For victimization incidents, we also identified a broader category of violent incidents, including whether they involved homicide, rape, robbery, assault, offenses against the family and children, prostitution, or sex offenses. For arrest or victimization incidents with multiple offenses, we used the most serious offense to determine the severity.

ACPD data

ACPD provided data on state and local Criminal Offender Record Information for individuals age 13 and older served through the Juvenile Division between 2010 and 2019, and records for

[7] For the impact analysis, we restricted participants to those who received services between January 2016 and May 2017 so that we could examine all outcomes during a 12-month follow-up period (the last available schooling data ended in June 2018). These participants had consent rates similar to those in the longer service period: 91 for youth EESS and 90 percent for youth life coaching

individuals age 18 to 40 served through the Adult Division, including realigned populations, also between 2010 and 2019. The Juvenile Division data files included arrest date and arrested offenses, sustained offenses, disposition, and facility information. These files included juveniles arrested throughout Alameda County, including the City of Oakland. The Adult Division file included only information on sustained offenses for individuals who were on formal probation. The ACPD data was matched to the other data sources using first and last name, date of birth, race and ethnicity, and gender. Mathematica conducted the match on-site at ACPD and removed identifying information from the matched file before conducting the analysis.

OUSD data

OUSD provided data on all individuals enrolled in the district at any point between August 1, 2010, and June 30, 2018. For each academic year, the data included information about the student's school, days enrolled, days absent, days suspended, and academic performance. In addition, the data contained demographic and identifying information about each student.

ACOE data

ACOE provided data on all individuals enrolled in the county's community schools at any point between August 1, 2014, and June 30, 2018. For each academic year, the data included information about the student's days enrolled, days absent, days suspended, and academic performance. In addition, the data contained demographic and identifying information about each student.

Data matching

To conduct the analyses, we needed to link individuals within and across data sets. To conduct these matches, we used an algorithm to assign individuals a unique identifier both within and across data sets. The algorithm used consenting individuals' identifying information, including their first and last name, date of birth, gender, and address, to perform matches. All of these data points did not have to be available or match exactly for records to be matched. Instead, the algorithm was designed to take into account the likelihood that two or more records represented the same person, even if there were minor differences across records (such as in the spelling of names). The algorithm placed the most weight on name and date of birth but also used gender and address, if available. These weights were carefully calibrated to avoid erroneous matches while still allowing flexibility.

There were 9,700 unique Cityspan IDs in the Oakland Unite data. The matching algorithm identified 8,631 individuals, which reflects that a number of people received services from more than one Oakland Unite agency. However, this number may still overcount the unique individuals served by Oakland Unite, because we were only able to identify participants who received services from more than one agency if they consented to sharing their identifying information for evaluation. Of the 8,631 individuals identified in the Oakland Unite data, we matched 1,780 records to OPD arrest data, 1,627 to OPD victimization data, 1,625 to ACPD

data, 1,319 to OUSD data, and 273 to ACOE data; 4,074 did not consent to share their identifying information with evaluators and thus could not be linked to other records.

Data security

Mathematica exercises due care to protect all data provided for this evaluation from unauthorized physical and electronic access. Per our current data-sharing agreements, we do not share identifiable data with Oakland Unite or any other entity. All data are stored in an encrypted project-specific folder in a secure server. Access to this folder is restricted to authorized users through access control lists that require approval from the evaluation's project director. Only staff members needed to complete the evaluation objectives were granted access to the restricted data folder: three researchers (including the project director) and a lead programmer. These staff members have all completed data security training and background checks and are up to date on Mathematica's data storage and security policies.

Appendix B:

Methods and results

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In this appendix, we describe the sample selection, matching, and analysis steps for the impact analyses and present the impact estimates that form the basis of the results summarized in the main text.

Sample selection

We applied a number of sample selection criteria to the Oakland Unite data before matching participants to comparison individuals. First, we restricted the sample to Oakland Unite participants who began receiving services by May 2017 because we wished to examine outcomes in a 12-month follow-up window and outcome data were consistently available only through June 2018 at the time we began the analyses. We then excluded participants who did not consent to share their personally identifiable information for evaluation purposes. Consent rates were 90 percent for both youth life coaching and EESS. We also required participants to meet a minimum service threshold to be included in the analyses. For participants in youth life coaching, the service threshold was 10 hours. Participants in youth EESS needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services *or* 40 work hours. Oakland Unite participants also had to have demographic information in order to be matched.

After these restrictions were applied, there were 297 participants in youth life coaching and 209 participants in youth EESS available for matching. For the analyses of school attendance and discipline outcomes specifically, participants further had to be enrolled in school in the outcome period. Under this additional restriction, 195 participants in youth life coaching and 141 participants in youth EESS were available to be matched. Table B.1 describes how each restriction affected the sample sizes, where each row includes a new restriction added to the previous restriction(s) listed.

Table B.1. Summary of Oakland Unite sample size restrictions for the outcomes analyses

		Youth life coaching	Youth EESS
(1)	Number of youth who received services by May 2017	411	241
(2)	Those in (2) who consented to share data for evaluation	371	218
(3)	Those in (1) and (2) who met the minimum service hour threshold	299	209
(4)	Those in (1) through (3) who had demographic data (that is, those available for matching)	297	195
(5)	Those in (1) through (4) who were enrolled in school in the outcome period (that is, those available for matching for the analysis of schooling outcomes)	195	141

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

We also applied some criteria to the potential comparison group, drawn from OPD, ACPD, ACOE, and OUSD data, before conducting the matching. First, comparison individuals could not participate in any Oakland Unite sub-strategy during the period available in the Cityspan data

(January 1, 2016, to May 31, 2017). We then restricted the age range of comparison individuals to overlap with the age range of Oakland Unite participants in the relevant sub-strategy. We also restricted the potential comparison group to individuals residing in Oakland to increase the likelihood that any future outcomes would occur in Oakland and thus appear in the available data. In addition, we removed a small number of individuals who were arrested or convicted for homicide or rape in the months leading up to the service window, because they were likely to be incarcerated during the follow-up period. As with Oakland Unite participants, comparison individuals had to have demographic information recorded to be matched.

After these restrictions were applied, there were 29,816 potential comparison individuals for the youth life coaching analysis and 28,138 potential comparison individuals for the youth EESS analysis. For the analyses of school attendance and discipline outcomes, comparison youth also had to be enrolled in school in the outcome period. Under this additional restriction, 16,346 potential comparison individuals were available for the youth life coaching analyses of school attendance and discipline. For the youth EESS analyses of these outcomes, 13,528 potential comparison individuals were available to be matched.

Matching

We matched Oakland Unite participants in each sub-strategy to similar comparison individuals using an approach known as propensity-score matching. For each sub-strategy, we estimated a propensity score for each eligible Oakland Unite participant and comparison individual using a logistic regression model. This propensity score indicates an individual's likelihood of participating in a particular Oakland Unite sub-strategy given his or her gender, ethnicity, age, area of residence, and prior educational and juvenile justice histories before participation in Oakland Unite. Due to the wide range of start dates (spanning 17 months) and the fact that some youth are referred to Oakland Unite shortly after an arrest or other incident, we divided participants into three groups of time frames based on their service start dates, with each time frame being five or six months.[8] We then generated three sets of covariates for each potential comparison member that measured their baseline data relative to each of these start windows. To find matches with similar patterns of behavior over time, we matched on juvenile justice and education history data in the previous 3, 6, and 12 months from the start month of each window, as well as baseline data before the 12-month baseline period. We then estimated propensity scores separately for each group. Table B.2 lists the variables used to estimate the propensity scores.

[8] Ideally we would have liked to match Oakland Unite youth separately by each start month to identify comparison youth with the most similar patterns of behavior around the exact same time period. However, monthly sample sizes were too small to reliably predict program participation.

Table B.2. Baseline variables used in the propensity-score models

- Demographics (gender, race/ethnicity, age)
- Area of residence (east Oakland, west Oakland, central Oakland, other)
- Indicators of whether the individual had been arrested, convicted, incarcerated, in juvenile hall, or monitored with a GPS or electronic tracking device at any time before the start of Oakland Unite services, as well as in the 3, 6, and 12 months before the start of services. Arrests and convictions were counted both overall and by type of offense (felony, misdemeanor, gun, violent, violation of probation, and other offenses)
- Categories of the number of arrests, convictions, and times in juvenile hall in the 3, 6, and 12 months before the start of Oakland Unite services
- Indicators of whether the individual had been a victim of any crime or a violent crime specifically any time before the start of Oakland Unite services, as well as in the 3, 6, and 12 months before the start of services
- Categories of the number of times the individual had been a victim of any crime in the 12 months before the start of Oakland Unite services
- Indicators of whether the individual was enrolled in OUSD or ACOE before 2015 and in the year before the start of Oakland Unite services, as well as whether they were enrolled in an alternative school during these periods
- School attendance rate before 2015 and in the year before the start of Oakland Unite services (if enrolled in school)[a]
- Indicators of whether the individual was chronically absent, suspended, involved in a school discipline incident, involved in a violent school incident, or had a GPA below 2.0 before 2015 and in the year before the start of Oakland Unite services (if enrolled in school)[a]
- Categories of the number of school discipline incidents in the 12 months before the start of Oakland Unite services[a]
- Interactions of whether the individual was African American and various demographic, justice, and education variables

Note: The covariates used to estimate the propensity scores were generally the same for all groups and sub-strategies. However, in some instances we modified this list and constructed different interactions to achieve better matching results.

[a] For individuals who were not enrolled in school during the baseline periods, we imputed all education-related baseline data to zero and controlled for an enrollment indicator in the matching.

After estimating these propensity scores, we matched each Oakland Unite participant with up to 20 comparison individuals for youth life coaching and up to 25 comparison individuals for youth EESS who had similar propensity scores within a given threshold, or radius, of the Oakland Unite participant's propensity score. After conducting the match, we recalculated baseline measures for each participant and all of his or her matched comparison individuals to align with that participant's start month (rather than the longer start window used in the matching). Using these realigned data, we then combined all participants and their matches and reassessed the quality of the baseline match for the combined treatment and comparison groups.

A small number of Oakland Unite participants did not resemble any comparison individuals closely enough and therefore were not matched. Of the 297 participants in the youth life coaching sample, 260 were matched to an average of 18 comparison individuals each. In youth

EESS, 179 out of 195 participants received matches (19 each, on average).[9] We matched comparison individuals to Oakland Unite participants with replacement, meaning that the same comparison individual could be matched to more than one Oakland Unite participant. Table B.3 presents summary statistics showing how well Oakland Unite participants were matched to comparison individuals on baseline characteristics. On average, comparison individuals were not significantly different from Oakland Unite participants in either sub-strategy on most of the baseline characteristics used in the analyses. However, youth in the life coaching sub-strategy were more likely than the matched comparison group to have contact with law enforcement in the 3 and 6 months before the start of services. Unfortunately, we were unable to identify a comparison group for the youth life coaching sub-strategy that had the same juvenile justice experiences in that exact time period. Thus, we control for the timing of youth's juvenile justice histories in the regression model described below.

Table B.3. Baseline characteristics of matched Oakland Unite participants and comparison youth

	Youth life coaching	Matched comparison	Youth EESS	Matched comparison
Total number of arrests 3 months before OU (mean)	0.72**	0.47	13.4	13.6
Any arrest 3 months before OU (%)	44.2**	29.8	10.6	10.4
Any gun offenses 3 months before OU (%)	17.7*	10.2	3.9	2.7
Any violent offenses 3 months before OU (%)	10.8	7.0	2.2	1.6
Any new conviction 3 months before OU (%)	25.8**	15.6	3.9	3.6
Any probation 3 months before OU (%)	20.8**	10.4	1.7	2.2
Any violation of probation 3 months before OU (%)	16.9**	8.0	2.2	2.2
Ever a victim of violent incident 3 months before OU (%)	7.3	3.8	3.9	2.4
Any juvenile hall 3 months before OU (%)	35.0**	20.4	6.1	6.5
Total number of arrests 6 months before OU (mean)	0.9	0.7	0.2	0.2
Any arrest 6 months before OU (%)	51.2	43.2	15.6	14.0
Any gun offenses 6 months before OU (%)	20.4	15.4	6.7	3.7

[9] Fifty-nine percent of youth life coaching participants received the maximum number of allowable matches (25), whereas about one quarter matched with 10 or fewer comparison individuals. Meanwhile, 90 percent of youth EESS participants matched with the maximum number of allowable matches (20), whereas the remaining 10 percent matched with between 1 and 13 comparison individuals.

	Youth life coaching	Matched comparison	Youth EESS	Matched comparison
Any violent offenses 6 months before OU (%)	11.5	9.9	3.9	2.3
Any new conviction 6 months before OU (%)	29.2	22.0	5.0	4.8
Any probation 6 months before OU (%)	25.4**	14.4	5.0	3.1
Any violation of probation 6 months before OU (%)	20.0**	10.8	2.2	2.7
Ever a victim of violent incident 6 months before OU (%)	9.6	6.1	5.0	3.9
Any stay in juvenile hall 6 months before OU (%)	39.2*	28.3	7.8	9.6
Total number of arrests 12 months before OU (mean)	1.4	1.3	0.4	0.4
Any arrest 12 months before OU (%)	66.2	62.4	24.6	24.4
Any gun offenses 12 months before OU (%)	29.6	26.3	9.5	9.2
Any violent offenses 12 months before OU (%)	15.0	15.8	5.0	4.6
Any new conviction 12 months before OU (%)	42.7	36.0	10.1	8.3
Any probation 12 months before OU (%)	32.3	26.3	8.9	7.1
Any violation of probation 12 months before OU (%)	25.0	18.9	3.4	3.6
Ever a victim of violent incident 12 months before OU (%)	15.8	11.3	7.3	7.4
Any stay in juvenile hall 12 months before OU (%)	50.8	43.7	13.4	16.0
Total number of arrests before OU (mean)	2.9	3.1	1.1	1.1
Any arrest any time before OU (%)	84.6	82.2	46.4	46.5
Any gun offenses any time before OU (%)	45.0	42.4	17.3	18.1
Any violent offenses any time before OU (%)	25.4	25.6	8.9	8.8
Any new conviction any time before OU (%)	55.8	50.0	20.7	21.6
Any probation any time before OU (%)	43.8	41.5	16.2	18.2
Any violation of probation any time before OU (%)	33.8	30.0	8.9	6.6
Ever a victim of violent incident any time before OU (%)	40.4	37.9	26.3	26.5
Any stay juvenile hall any time before OU (%)	60.0	52.7	22.9	24.4

	Youth life coaching	Matched comparison	Youth EESS	Matched comparison
Enrolled in OUSD or ACOE 12 months before OU (%)	77.3	73.6	74.9	72.5
Enrolled in an alternative school 12 months before OU (%)	8.8	11.1	5.6	7.0
Chronically absent in the 12 months before OU (%)	40.1	40.7	13.6	20.8
Any violent school incidents 12 months before OU (%)	15.8	14.5	10.1	10.5
Female (%)	27.7	25.6	38.0	33.6
White (%)	0.4	0.8	1.1	0.7
African American (%)	68.8	69.8	79.3	79.8
Asian or Pacific Islander (%)	4.2	3.6	1.7	2.1
Hispanic (%)	20.8	21.4	11.7	12.3
Other race/ethnicity (%)	5.8	4.4	6.1	4.8
Age (mean)	15.6	15.7	15.9	15.9
Resides in west Oakland (%)	23.1	21.6	21.2	20.7
Resides in central Oakland (%)	25.8	26.0	25.7	24.8
Resides in east Oakland (%)	47.3	48.2	44.1	46.8
Other area of residence (%)	3.8	4.1	8.9	7.7
Number of individuals	**260**	**3,878**	**179**	**3,317**

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

*Difference is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

**Difference is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

To analyze school attendance and discipline outcomes, we repeated the process described above on a subset of treatment and comparison youth who were enrolled in school in the 12-month outcome period. To account for additional educational background characteristics, we also matched on student's grade in the baseline year, free and reduced-priced school lunch recipient status, special education status, English language learner status, total credits earned in the baseline year, whether the student transferred schools in the past, and whether the student was behind the expected grade level for his or her age. The summary statistics for this match are presented in Table B.4. Of the 195 participants in the youth life coaching sample who were enrolled in school in the outcome period, 114 were matched to an average of 15 comparison

individuals each. For youth EESS, 113 out of 141 participants received matches (23 each, on average).[10]

Table B.4. Baseline characteristics of matched Oakland Unite participants and comparison youth, for those enrolled in school in the outcome period

	Youth life coaching	Matched comparison	Youth EESS	Matched comparison
Enrolled in OUSD or ACOE 12 months before OU (%)	89.9	86.9	89.3	88.7
Enrolled in an alternative school 12 months before OU (%)	3.7	6.3	4.5	5.0
Attendance rate 12 months before OU (mean)	87.3	86.0	94.2	94.1
Chronically absent in the 12 months before OU (%)	35.7	39.6	13.2	15.4
Any violent school incidents 12 months before OU (%)	22.0	24.4	13.4	14.9
Any school incidents 12 months before OU (%)	45.0	42.0	38.4	39.6
Any suspensions 12 months before OU (%)	25.7	19.7	17.9	17.3
GPA 12 months before OU (mean)	1.3	1.4	1.6	1.6
GPA less than 2.0 12 months before OU (%)	85.7	81.3	74.7	76.6
Transferred or left school 12 months before OU (%)	75.2	68.9	51.4	50.1
Ever special education (%)	35.8	37.4	24.1	24.7
English language learner before 2015 (%)	13.8	12.2	11.6	12.2
Behind expected grade level (%)	6.4	5.0	6.3	6.7
Ever free or reduced price lunch recipient (%)	92.7*	83.6	92.9	93.1
Any arrest 12 months before OU (%)	54.1	50.4	24.1	23.5
Any new conviction 12 months before OU (%)	33.0	30.1	8.9	9.8
Ever a victim of a violent incident 12 months before OU (%)	18.3	12.1	8.0	10.5
Female (%)	22.9	19.8	36.6	36.3
African American (%)	70.6	71.8	77.7	75.3

[10] We matched each Oakland Unite participant enrolled in school with up to 25 comparison individuals for youth life coaching and 30 comparison individuals for youth EESS who were also enrolled in school in the outcome period.

	Youth life coaching	Matched comparison	Youth EESS	Matched comparison
Asian or Pacific Islander (%)	0.9	1.2	1.8	2.1
Hispanic (%)	23.9	20.7	14.3	15.7
Other race/ethnicity (%)	4.6	6.3	6.3	6.7
Age (mean)	15.2	15.5	15.6	15.8
Resides in west Oakland (%)	21.1	21.3	21.4	21.7
Resides in central Oakland (%)	23.9	29.0	21.4	20.9
Resides in east Oakland (%)	50.5	46.0	50.0	50.8
Other area of residence (%)	4.6	3.7	7.1	6.6
Number of individuals	**109**	**1,263**	**112**	**2,409**

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

*Difference is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

Impact model

After conducting the match, we analyzed outcomes in the 12-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. Participants began receiving services between January 2016 and May 2017 and therefore had different follow-up periods. Follow-up periods ranged from February 2016–January 2017 (for youth who began services in January 2016) through June 2017–May 2018 (for youth who began services in May 2017).[11] The follow-up periods of comparison individuals corresponded to the same follow-up periods of the Oakland Unite participants to which they were matched. In these follow-up periods, we determined whether individuals had any of the outcomes listed in Table II.2 in the main text. With input from the Human Services Department, we classified outcomes as either confirmatory—indicating the main outcomes used to assess these sub-strategies' effectiveness—or exploratory, indicating additional outcomes that could shed light on these main impacts. As an additional exploratory analysis, we examined short-term arrest, victimization, and recidivism outcomes in a 6-month, rather than 12-month, window after the start of services, following the same procedure as described below for 12-month outcomes.

To measure the impacts of participating in youth life coaching and youth EESS on these outcomes, we estimated an ordinary least squares regression model that accounted for any remaining differences between Oakland Unite and comparison individuals in their juvenile justice and educational histories and other baseline characteristics:

[11] Some youth who received services in the early months of 2016 had begun participating in Oakland Unite in the previous year. However, we did not have information about services received before January 1, 2016 for this report.

$$y_i = \alpha + X_i\beta + \delta T_i + \varepsilon_i, \quad \text{(B1)}$$

where y_i is a 12-month outcome; X_i is a vector of baseline characteristics for individual i accounting for their demographic, educational, and juvenile justice histories that takes into account the timing of incidents relative to the start of services[12]; T_i is the treatment status, indicating whether individual i participated in the Oakland Unite sub-strategy of interest; ε_i is a random error term that reflects the influence of unobserved factors on the outcome; and δ and β are parameters or vectors of parameters to be estimated, with δ representing the impact of participating in Oakland Unite. We used a weighting scheme in which each Oakland Unite participant had a weight of one, and the total weight of each participant's matched comparison individuals also summed to one. To accomplish this, each comparison individual had a weight inverse to the number of other comparison individuals matched to the same Oakland Unite participant. The standard errors were clustered at the individual level to account for the fact that the same comparison individual could appear multiple times in the data depending on the number of Oakland Unite participants to which they were matched.

Results

Table B.5 presents the impact estimates for each sub-strategy and 12-month outcome in percentage point units. As discussed in the main text, youth life coaching and youth EESS participants were significantly more likely to be enrolled in school in the 12 months after starting services, but had rates of arrest, conviction, and victimization comparable to those of a similar comparison group of youth during this follow-up period. (The impact estimates presented in the main text were rounded to whole numbers.) The impact estimates for other 12-month outcomes were small and not statistically significant in either sub-strategy. Similarly, most of the impacts on 6-month outcomes (presented in Table B.6) were not statistically significant, with the exception of a reduction in the likelihood of arrests for violent offenses for youth life coaching.

[12] To better account for the timing of juvenile justice incidents in the months leading up to the start month, we additionally controlled for incidents that occurred in the 12 months before the start month by dividing them into 3-month windows.

Table B.5. Impacts of Oakland Unite in the 12 months after enrollment (percentage points)

Impact of Oakland Unite on the probability of:	Youth life coaching		Youth EESS	
	Impact	Sample size	Impact	Sample size
Confirmatory outcomes				
An arrest for any offense in Alameda County	0.3 (3.5)	4,138	2.3 (2.9)	3,496
Any delinquent finding or conviction in Alameda County	-1.9 (3.1)	4,138	2.3 (2.0)	3,496
Being a victim of any violent crime reported to OPD	4.4 (2.5)	4,138	3.8 (2.5)	3,496
Enrolling in an OUSD or ACOE school	16.5** (3.6)	4,138	17.7** (3.3)	3,496
Enrolling in an OUSD or ACOE school, school-aged youth only	15.4** (4.0)	3,263	13.2** (3.5)	2,764
If enrolled in school, being chronically absent	-2.2 (5.2)	1,274	-5.1 (5.0)	2,229
If enrolled in school, having a recorded violent school incident	-4.4 (3.6)	1,275	-3.3 (3.1)	2,231
Exploratory outcomes				
An arrest for an offense involving a gun in Alameda County	2.5 (2.7)	4,138	1.7 (2.3)	3,496
An arrest for a violent offense in Alameda County	-2.8 (2.1)	4,138	0.1 (1.5)	3,496
Being sentenced to formal probation supervision in Alameda County	1.7 (3.1)	4,138	0.9 (1.7)	3,496
Violating probation in Alameda County	0.2 (2.8)	4,138	2.1 (1.5)	3,496

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: The sample sizes include the total number of Oakland Unite participants and matched comparison youth. Standard errors appear below the impact estimates in parentheses. Impacts and standard errors are presented in percentage points. A negative number indicates that Oakland Unite participants had a lower rate than the comparison group.

**Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

Table B.6. Impacts of Oakland Unite in the 6 months after enrollment (percentage points)

Impact of Oakland Unite on the probability of:	Youth life coaching		Youth EESS	
	Impact	Sample size	Impact	Sample size
Confirmatory outcomes				
An arrest for any offense in Alameda County	1.3 (3.2)	4,138	1.0 (2.6)	3,496
Any delinquent finding or conviction in Alameda County	-3.0 (2.6)	4,138	0.0 (1.4)	3,496
Being a victim of any violent crime reported to OPD	2.1 (1.5)	4,138	0.4* (2.0)	3,496
If enrolled in school, having a recorded violent school incident	0.8 (2.0)	1,275	-2.4 (1.3)	2,231
Exploratory outcomes				
An arrest for an offense involving a gun in Alameda County	1.1 (2.2)	4,138	0.7 (1.9)	3,496
An arrest for a violent offense in Alameda County	-3.3* (1.6)	4,138	-0.2 (1.2)	3,496
Being sentenced to formal probation supervision in Alameda County	2.0 (2.8)	4,138	-1.0 (1.0)	3,496
Violating probation in Alameda County	-0.3 (2.5)	4,138	-0.6 (1.1)	3,496

Source: Oakland Unite, ACOE, ACPD, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: The sample sizes include the total number of Oakland Unite participants and matched comparison youth. Standard errors appear below the impact estimates in parentheses. Impacts and standard errors are presented in percentage points. A negative number indicates that Oakland Unite participants had a lower rate than the comparison group.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 5 percent level.

To illustrate these impacts relative to the matched comparison group in the report, we calculated the percentage of Oakland Unite participants with each outcome and then subtracted the impact estimates from this rate to obtain a counterfactual rate for the comparison group. These regression-adjusted rates are presented in Figures III.7 and III.8 for youth life coaching and Figures IV.8 and IV.9 for youth EESS in the main text.

To check the sensitivity of the results to our choice of a linear probability (ordinary least squares) model, we also estimated a logistic regression model. A logistic regression models a linear relationship between the log of the odds of the outcome and the dependent variables, whereas an ordinary least squares regression models a linear relationship between the probability of the outcome and the dependent variables. The results (not shown) were consistent with those obtained from the linear probability model.

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Appendix C:

Evidence-based programs and best practices

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YOUTH LIFE COACHING

Although many different types of programs target youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system, these programs tend to have minimal impact on recidivism. In a meta-analysis of 22 studies of reentry and aftercare programs for juvenile and young adult offenders, James et al. (2013) examined experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of therapeutically oriented programs that included skills training, counseling, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Overall, these programs achieved small reductions in recidivism (as measured by rearrests or reconvictions), although impacts varied across programs. More-effective programs were implemented at an individual rather than group level, were more intensive in terms of number of contacts per month although not necessarily longer in duration, and were targeted toward older youth and those at the highest risk of recidivism.[13]

A number of community-based programs targeting youth at risk of involvement in violence have been effective. An example is Roca, a Massachusetts-based program that works with high-risk men ages 17 to 24. Roca staff provide intensive case management, a CBT-based curriculum, and education and employment support through stage-based programming over a four-year period (Baldwin et al. 2018). In the first six months, staff focus on building meaningful, trusting relationships with participants. In the next 18 months, staff increase the dosage of programming and focus on building the skills and competencies participants need to meet their goals. In the last two years, staff follow up with participants and offer support in critical moments. Relative to a comparison group of system-involved young men, Roca participants demonstrated a 65 percent reduction in recidivism (Schiraldi et al. 2015).

Another successful community-based program is the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI), which operates in 11 cities in Massachusetts. SSYI serves male youth ages 14 to 24 at risk of being involved in firearms violence, based on local police data.[14] Street outreach workers engage these young men and use a comprehensive case management approach to assess their needs and connect them to other supports, including education, employment, and intensive supervision. Quasi-experimental studies of SSYI found that the program reduced violence both at the individual level and citywide. Participants were 58 percent less likely to be incarcerated in the two years after starting services than a matched comparison group (Petrosino et al. 2014). In addition, the program decreased the number of victims of violence ages 14 to 24 by about five victims per month per 100,000 residents, compared to other cities in Massachusetts with similar previous trends in violent crime that did not receive SSYI funding (Bradham et al. 2014).

[13] The authors of the meta-analysis categorized the risk levels of the study samples using the available sample characteristics, including age of first arrest, number of prior offenses, proportion ethnic minority, gang involvement, and drug abuse.

[14] Youth were deemed to be at risk if they met one or more of the following characteristics: committed a violent crime using a gun or knife, was victimized by violent crime and prone to retaliation, or was a known gang member.

In Chicago, the Becoming a Man curriculum, which incorporates many elements of CBT, as well as role playing and experiential activities, has been administered in school and detention center settings to youth at risk of experiencing or participating in violence. Experimental studies of these interventions found large decreases in arrests and recidivism for participants (Heller, Pollack, et al. 2017).

Juvenile mentoring is another common type of program for high-risk youth, although evidence about its effectiveness is mixed. One meta-analysis of 46 experimental or quasi-experimental studies of youth mentoring programs found that, overall, these programs reduced delinquency, aggression, and drug use and improved academic performance (Tolan et al. 2014). However, impacts varied across programs and were greater when mentors actively advocated for their mentee through the multiple systems and situations they needed to navigate, and paired this advocacy with emotional support and trust building. Other research has yielded less definitive results. An evaluation of six mentoring programs in Ohio that targeted juvenile offenders either on parole or probation found no significant differences in recidivism rates for participants (Duriez et al. 2017). Another meta-analysis found that there was not sufficient evidence to determine the effectiveness of mentoring on delinquency-related outcomes (Eddy and Schumer 2016).

The Arches Transformative Mentoring program, which is administered by the New York City Department of Probation, is an example of a promising mentoring intervention for justice-involved youth. Arches provides group mentoring to youth ages 16 to 24 who are on probation using an interactive journaling curriculum based on CBT principles and delivered by mentors with backgrounds similar to those of the youth in the program. Participants typically take 6 to 12 months to complete the program. Compared to a matched comparison group, Arches participants were less likely to have a felony reconviction within 12 months (1.8 to 5.9 percent) and 24 months (6.2 to 14.3 percent) of beginning probation (Lynch et al. 2018). The program was particularly successful for participants age 17 and younger, and had limited impacts on rearrests and reconvictions for any offense.

These and other studies have identified a number of best practices for programs serving high-risk and justice-involved youth.

Target youth at highest risk and assess their risk and needs before beginning programming. Several studies and policy briefs have concurred that programs have the most success when they target youth at highest risk (James et al. 2013; Howell and Lipsey 2012; Campie et al. 2013, Jannetta and Okeke 2017; Landenberger and Lipsey 2005). The National Institute of Corrections, Crime, and Justice's Integrated Model for Implementation of Evidence-Based Policy recommended that programs use risk and needs assessments to tailor their services and determine the necessary dosage of treatment (Guevera and Solomon 2009).

Integrate CBT and other behavioral approaches, as well as mental health and substance abuse treatment. Several meta-analyses have identified cognitive behavioral programs as a particularly effective intervention for reducing the recidivism of juvenile and adult offenders (Pearson et al. 2002; Wilson et al. 2005; Landenberger and Lipsey 2005). Strategies related particularly to anger

management and interpersonal conflict have demonstrated the strongest results (Landenberger and Lipsey 2005). The Council of State Governments Justice Center (2017) recommends both CBT and substance use and mental health treatment as best practices for reducing recidivism among young adults in the justice system because substance use and mental health conditions often emerge during this stage of development.

Hire individuals with a range of expertise and backgrounds and provide them with necessary training. Many successful programs—such as SSYI, CureViolence, Roca, and Arches—rely on staff who are local to the community or share similar backgrounds as the youth they serve to break down barriers with participants. Baldwin et al. (2018) found that successful programs do not need staff members to be highly educated. For example, Roca adapted its CBT intervention so that it could be delivered by paraprofessionals and provided them with the necessary training. Other training topics that could help staff deliver services include youth development and trauma-informed approaches (Council of State Governments Justice Center 2017).

Involve family members or other caring adults in youth's lives in service provision. The Justice Department's survey of programs serving justice-involved youth found that involving families is central to program success (Hayek 2016). In cases where a program is unable to engage with family members, either because the parent or guardian is absent or the relationship is dysfunctional, the program tries to connect youth with another caring adult who is committed to their success. Some evidence-based programs for justice-involved youth, such as Functional Family Therapy, focus specifically on repairing both individual behavior and familial relations (Hengeller and Schoenwald 2011).

Coordinate and collaborate with other providers working with youth. Programs should facilitate coordination and collaboration across other agencies, benefit providers, and government entities (Campie 2013; Council of State Governments Justice Center 2015; Jannetta and Okeke 2017). Many high-risk youth must navigate multiple systems and services, including those from which they are transitioning due to their age. Helping consolidate and smooth this complex and often fragmented network of services can be beneficial to participants. Partner organizations can also work together to share information and data.

Best practices recommended by the City of Oakland

Consistent with the evidence base, the City requires that agencies funded by Oakland Unite employ a defined set of best practices in their service delivery. The City's defined best practices for the life coaching strategy are detailed in Table C.1.

Table C.1. Oakland Unite best practices for youth life coaching

Category	Recommended best practices
Shared experience	• Life coaches share similar life experience or are otherwise intimately connected to the communities from which participants are drawn.
Dosage	• Services are intensive, with low caseloads (15:1), high-frequency contacts, and service periods of 12 to 18 months, adapted on the basis of risk.
Outreach and flexibility	• Frequent, persistent efforts are made to engage referred participants in services, including home visits and follow-up with those who have refused services, to reoffer support. Life coaches are responsive and strive to offer flexible availability to meet participants' emergency needs.
Family involvement	• Coaches get to know the families and loved ones of participants and involve them in planning and service provision.
Assessment	• Services include the use of an assessment tool (ideally one that is validated) or method to determine risks, particularly around violence, strengths, and needs of participants.
Focus on safety	• Services respond to immediate safety concerns and risks for violence by connecting to conflict mediation, discussing harm reduction, securing temporary emergency relocation services, etc.
Planning and follow-up	• Services include a comprehensive, individualized service plan based upon assessment information, developed in partnership with the participant and in coordination with other involved parties. Services include regular follow-up guided by the service plan that is jointly reviewed and updated.
Linkage and advocacy	• Participants and family members are referred to appropriate services to address identified needs, such as education, employment, mental health, substance use, legal aid, housing, and transportation. Coaches intercede on behalf of participants and their family members to ensure services are equitable and appropriate.
Documentation	• Coaches maintain organized case files and consistent, high quality documentation of case notes and milestones in a database, according to shared standards of practice.

Source: Oakland Unite January through June 2018 funding cycle request for proposals.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION SUPPORT

Research on the effectiveness of youth employment and education support programs has yielded mixed results. A review of the research literature on youth vocational training and employment programs by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2010) concluded that most of the programs evaluated had either negligible or mixed success, improving some but not all relevant outcomes for youth. However, the review also noted that much of the existing research is not rigorous or examines outcomes in follow-up periods that may be too short. Some of the best-known studies in this field, which overcome both of these limitations, are of Job Corps and YouthBuild, two nationwide programs for young adults ages 16 to 24 who are disconnected from school and work.[15] These programs showed positive effects, particularly in the area of education and training. Their impacts on employment, earnings, and criminal justice involvement were smaller and less consistent.

Job Corps provides remedial education, GED preparation, vocational training, job placement assistance, and other supports such as health care and meals, and most participants live on-site during the program. Participants typically receive more than 1,000 hours of education and training over eight months. Job Corps improved educational attainment, employment, and earnings and reduced criminal activity over a four-year follow-up period (Schochet et al. 2008). Participants were 21 percentage points more likely to obtain a GED certificate and 31 percentage points more likely to obtain a vocational, technical, or trade certificate than the control group. Also, the Job Corps program increased employment rates by 2 percentage points, but gains in earnings faded over time. Compared to the control group, participants were less likely to be arrested (29 to 33 percent), convicted (22 to 25 percent), and incarcerated (16 to 18 percent). These reductions were largest in the first year after random assignment and for less serious crimes. Although Job Corps was generally effective, the impacts were considered small relative to the cost per participant, which was about $16,500 in 1995.

YouthBuild provides participants vocational training (usually in the area of construction), educational services, leadership development, and other supports such as case management, life-skills training, and stipends. Youth typically participate for 6 to 12 months. YouthBuild improved educational attainment, but the program had limited effects on other outcomes (Miller et al. 2016). Thirty months after random assignment, YouthBuild participants were 14 percentage points more likely to earn a GED, 2 percentage points more likely to receive a trade license or training certificate, and had slightly higher earnings than the control group. However, there was no difference in program participants' employment, arrest, or conviction rates. The study also examined measures of youth development and attitudes, and found that YouthBuild increased civic engagement but had no effect on measures such as self-esteem, self-confidence, feelings about the future, and feelings of social support.

[15] About 27 percent of Job Corps and 25 percent of YouthBuild participants reported being arrested before starting the programs (Schochet et al. 2008; Miller et al. 2016). In contrast, 32 percent of Oakland Unite youth EESS participants had been arrested by OPD at baseline.

Many employment and education support programs for high-risk youth tend to be local and less intensive than Job Corps and YouthBuild. Rigorous evaluations of these programs are not widespread, but existing research tends to find mixed results (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 2010). One example of a promising local program is in King County, Washington, where juvenile offenders with moderate to high risk of reoffending received education and employment training. The program, which cost about $2,800 per participant in 2012, offered a total of 150 work hours, job readiness training, job placement services, and support reenrolling in school or obtaining a GED. On average, youth participated for 6 months. Relative to a matched comparison group, the program reduced recidivism rates in the 18 months after program start by 12 percentage points (39 percent to 51 percent), as measured by any misdemeanor or felony conviction (Washington State Institute for Public Policy 2015). There were no differences in felony or violent felony convictions.

Positive effects of employment and education programs can fade over longer follow-up periods. This phenomenon is illustrated by an evaluation of the New York Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP), which offers subsidized employment and support to youth ages 16 to 24 who are disconnected from school and work (Cummings et al. 2018).[16] A randomized study found that after one year, YAIP more than doubled earnings and increased employment by almost 30 percentage points. However, those benefits did not persist over time. After 30 months, there was no difference in the education, employment, or earnings outcomes of participants compared to the control group. YAIP cost $5,431 per participant in 2016, and offered a 10- to 12-week paid internship, job-readiness training, individual counseling and case management, and follow-up services. Summer youth employment programs, which provide short-term summer jobs to high school students, are available in many cities across the country. An experimental evaluation of summer jobs program in Chicago, which included a job for 8 weeks at minimum wage, a mentor, and some elements of CBT, found large differences in arrests for violent crimes between treatment and control group members in the first year following the program (Heller, Pollack, et al. 2017). However, the difference in violent arrests did not persist into the second year following the program, and the study found no differences in total arrests or arrests for property, drug, or other crimes, and no difference in employment.

A number of best practices has emerged for education and employment programs, though few have been rigorously evaluated. Many of these best practices align with those recommended by Oakland Unite.

Provide comprehensive, coordinated wraparound services to better serve high-risk youth. The State Council of Governments Justice Center (2017) concluded that programs with a narrow focus, such as employment and education only, are less likely to improve outcomes for justice-involved young adults, who tend to have multiple needs for support. Programs should be encouraged to provide wraparound services beyond their focus on vocational training and job placement, and to prioritize collaboration between the stakeholders surrounding each participant

[16] About 26 percent of YAIP participants had been arrested before starting the program.

(Task Force on Employment and Training for Court-Involved Youth 2000; Christman et al. 2016).

Take a long-term approach to services. The Promising and Effective Practices Network (PEPNet), a group that identified promising initiatives in connecting juvenile offenders to education and employment, found that successful programs included at least 12 months of support (O'Sullivan et al. 2001). The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2010) also found that short-term summer career development programs had few positive outcomes for youth.

Uphold participant accountability, but be prepared to deal with setbacks. O'Sullivan et al. (2001) reported that promising PEPNet programs upheld high expectations surrounding attendance, drug testing, and other benchmarks, promoting positive youth development while stressing young people's strengths and assets. However, programs should also be prepared to deal with challenges, barriers, and relapses that may arise (Schiraldi et al. 2015). In particular, participants should be allowed to exit and return as needed if they are not yet ready to fully engage in programming (Council of State Governments Justice Center 2017).

Develop strategic partnerships with employers. Greater success is found when there are established partnerships with employers that ensure a positive work experience for participants (O'Sullivan et al. 2001). In particular, the National Employment Law Project (Christman et al. 2016) found that partnerships with smaller- to mid-sized community-based employers are more successful than those with larger companies that are less likely to hold a stake in the surrounding area. Social enterprises can also allow young people to gain work experience while embedded in a supportive, community-based environment (Hayek 2016). Finally, programs can take advantage of government contracts, local industry partnerships, and other initiatives to increase access to subsidized employment for participants (Christman et al. 2016).

Tailor job and school placements to participants' characteristics and needs. Given the at-risk nature of the populations served, programs should carefully address the issue of participants' criminal records and focus on the training they have received when working with potential employment partners (Juvenile Sanctions Center 2005). A focus on strategic placement is essential in the realm of education as well because success is more likely when placement into schools is not automatic and programs take into account each participant's background and needs (National Juvenile Justice Network 2016).

Offer financial incentives to participants to promote success. The Juvenile Sanctions Center (2005) recognizes incentives and subsidies for participants are central to promoting job retention. In one model, programs set up so-called trust accounts for participants, paying them to stay in the program but deferring that payment until they have obtained and retained employment for a specific period. In an environmental scan of programs serving justice-involved young adults, Hayek (2016) also found that incentives can be useful for motivating participants.

Best practices recommended by the City of Oakland

Consistent with the evidence base, the City requires that agencies funded by Oakland Unite employ a defined set of best practices in their service delivery. The City's defined best practices for the employment and education support strategy are detailed in Table C.2.

Table C.2. Oakland Unite best practices recommended for youth EESS

Category	Recommended best practices
Participant engagement	• Develop deep levels of participant engagement through consistent relationship-building and mentoring that focus on pro-work behaviors and attitudes.
Assessments	• Assess job readiness needs and barriers and develop job placements that anticipate challenges and obstacles to employment.
Connections with Employers	• Develop connections with employers and use those connections to leverage resources such as training, wages, and operational needs.
Academic Support	• Support academic development (through program design or formal partnerships) and ensure work activities do not conflict with school.
Job readiness training	• Promote job readiness, including motivation, soft skills, and hard skills. • Address non-skill-related barriers to employment, including with other community-based programs to provide access to concrete supports. • Help clients increase their social capital through participation in social activities where working people congregate.
Employment services	• Offer transitional job placement, which is usually temporary, subsidized, income- and skill-generating, and often combined with other financial incentives. • Offer learning work environments, such as internships or on-the-job experience. • Focus on finding and retaining employment, including career planning, job coaching, connecting to work opportunities, and development of retention plans.
Incentives	• Incentivize educational attainment and provide funds to support job readiness and retention (travel, attire, tools, and certification).
Follow-up	• Provide comprehensive follow-up with participants, families, and employers to address any issues quickly and celebrate success.

Source: Oakland Unite, January through June 2018 funding cycle request for proposals.

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Progress Together

Oakland Unite 2018–2019 Strategy Evaluation:

Crisis Intervention for Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth

October 18, 2019

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Contents

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Assessment Center	Alameda County Assessment Center
AC United	Alameda County United Against Human Trafficking Advisory Council
ACDAO	Alameda County District Attorney's Office
ACDCFS	Alameda County Department of Children and Families Services
ACGC	Alameda County Girls' Court
ACOE	Alameda County Office of Education
ACPD	Alameda County Probation Department
ACT	Acknowledge, Commit, Transform (Massachusetts)
BAWAR	Bay Area Women Against Rape
CASE Act	California Against Slavery and Exploitation Act
(the) City	City of Oakland
CSE	commercial sexual exploitation
CSEC	commercially sexually exploited children
CSE youth	commercially sexually exploited youth
CTVPA	California Trafficking Victims Protection Act
DCFS	Department of Children and Family Services (of Los Angeles County)
DreamCatcher	DreamCatcher Youth Services (a program of Covenant House)
EESS	education and employment support services
GEMS	Girls Educational and Mentoring Services
HEAT Watch	Human Exploitation and Trafficking Watch
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, or intersex
MISSSEY	Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth
OPD	Oakland Police Department
OUSD	Oakland Unified School District
RIP	Runaway Intervention Program
RYSE	Resilient Young Adult Survivor Empowerment program
SARC	Sexual Assault Resource Center
STAR	Sisters Transforming and Rising
STRYDE	Survivors Together Reaching Your Dreams Empowerment
TAY	transitional age youth

TVPA	Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act
VSAC	Victim Service Advisory Committee
WCCC	WestCoast Children's Clinic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Insights on Oakland Unite's commercially sexually exploited youth intervention

Background

Oakland Unite aims to interrupt and prevent violence by focusing on the youth and young adults in Oakland who are at highest risk of direct exposure to violence, violent victimization, and active involvement in violence. Oakland Unite administers grants to community-based organizations through a diverse set of strategies and sub-strategies to accomplish this goal.

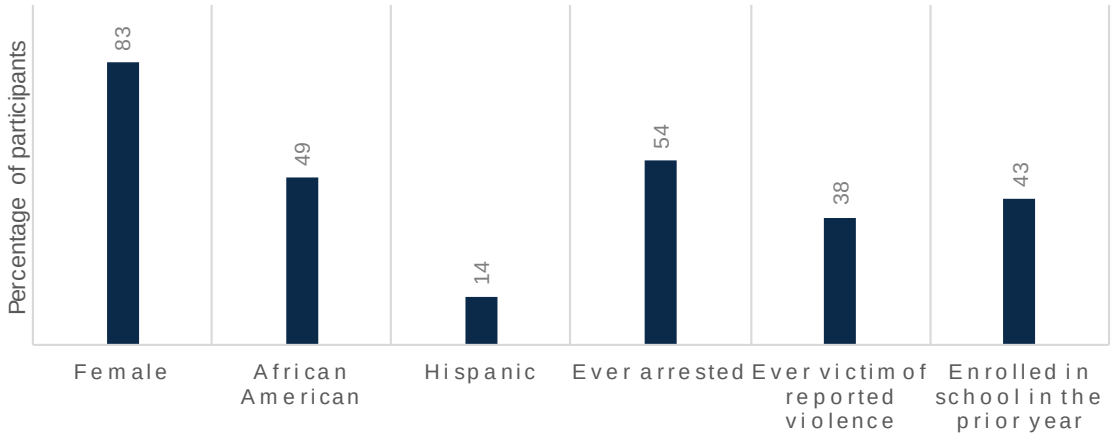
The commercially sexually exploited youth (CSE youth) intervention sub-strategy offers funding for services that support youth at risk of or experiencing commercial sexual exploitation. In particular, it aims to help survivors meet their immediate needs for safety and be connected to resources to aid them on their path to healing and stability. The sub-strategy funds outreach and crisis response, emergency housing, safe spaces, and wraparound supports. In addition, it funds training efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Oakland Unite network and local law enforcement agencies to identify and respond to CSE youth.

This 2018–2019 strategy evaluation report provides an in-depth analysis of the implementation of the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy and its role in the local policy context.

Key Findings

Agencies serve the intended population of girls and young women of color with a history of victimization, contact with law enforcement, and school disengagement. The profile of participants was consistent with other research on CSE youth, suggesting that agencies are serving the intended population.

Figure E.1. Background characteristics of CSE youth participants in Oakland Unite



Best practices for supporting CSE youth

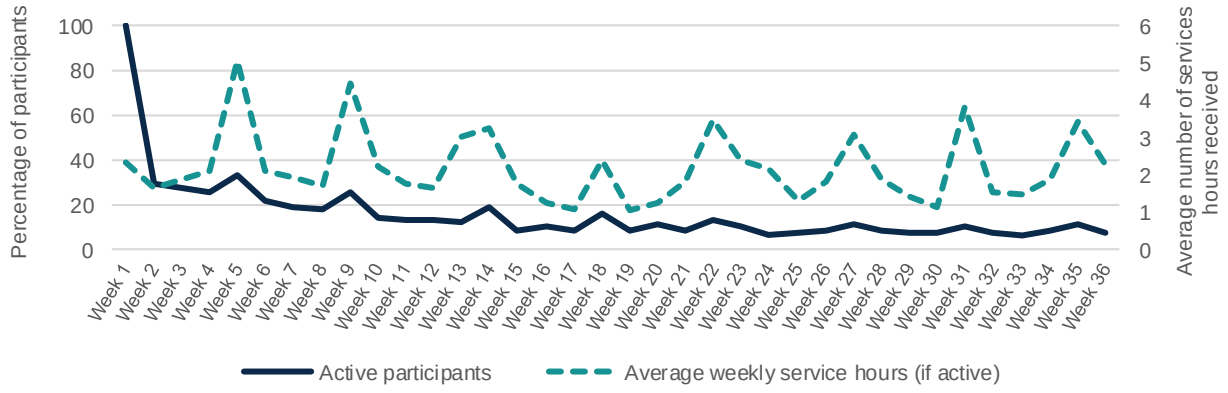
- Develop a shared definition and validated method to identify CSE youth
- Take a trauma-informed approach to services
- Assess CSE youth's readiness for change and tailor services to their needs
- Take a long-term, flexible approach to services
- Provide a reliable, stable relationship with a caring adult
- Employ providers with expertise in CSE or lived experience
- Help youth rebuild family and community ties

Agencies are following many best practices in their work. Agencies have a shared understanding of the CSE youth population, which is grounded in the expertise and lived experience of providers. Staff take into account participants' readiness for change and tailor services to the individual. In addition, the agencies have a flexible open-door policy that allows youth to return for services as needed.

Oakland Unite's decision to expand age eligibility for this sub-strategy will allow agencies to support transitional age youth (TAY), who have been an underserved group with different needs. TAY appear less likely to be in a moment of crisis and are perceived to be more ready to make a change in their lives when they come to services. However, they often are too old to receive needed supports and have different needs related to housing, employment, and child care than younger participants. The recently expanded age eligibility should enable agencies to better support these older youth.

Although the services offered by Oakland Unite agencies focus on short-term crisis response, many youth return for support over time. Almost half of participants receive support over multiple service periods. Their engagement with services spikes every few weeks, with youth returning and receiving a higher intensity of services from time to time. These patterns suggest that some youth build a continuum of care by returning to the agencies as needed after their initial crisis has been addressed.

Figure E.2. CSE youth participants' weekly engagement and service hours received



CSE youth's unmet needs include mental health support; stable relationships with caring adults; and safe, stable housing. Oakland Unite agencies focus on helping youth through crisis response and stabilization. However, the unmet needs that were identified may require longer-term care and relationship building, either through Oakland Unite or other partners.

Despite strong collaboration within the sub-strategy, there is room for more cross-referrals as well as greater collaboration with other Oakland Unite strategies. Although the sub-strategy is designed to meet different needs of CSE youth, only 13 percent of participants received services from more than one CSE youth intervention agency. A larger share received services from another Oakland Unite sub-strategy (21 percent), but most were minors from a single agency offering services in two strategies.

Although agencies serving CSE youth have a shared understanding of the population, the broader violence prevention community does not have a standard identification process. Despite various efforts to develop protocols and tools to help youth-serving adults identify signs of CSE, the process of identifying and referring youth at risk of or experiencing CSE does not appear to be standardized in Oakland.

Multiple agencies and branches of government are tackling the issue of CSE in Alameda County, but a cohesive strategy is lacking. Various initiatives have attempted to create a more coordinated system of addressing CSE youth, but the county has not yet achieved a cohesive strategy. Different informants indicated that stakeholders need to have better communication and collaboration.

Considerations for Oakland Unite

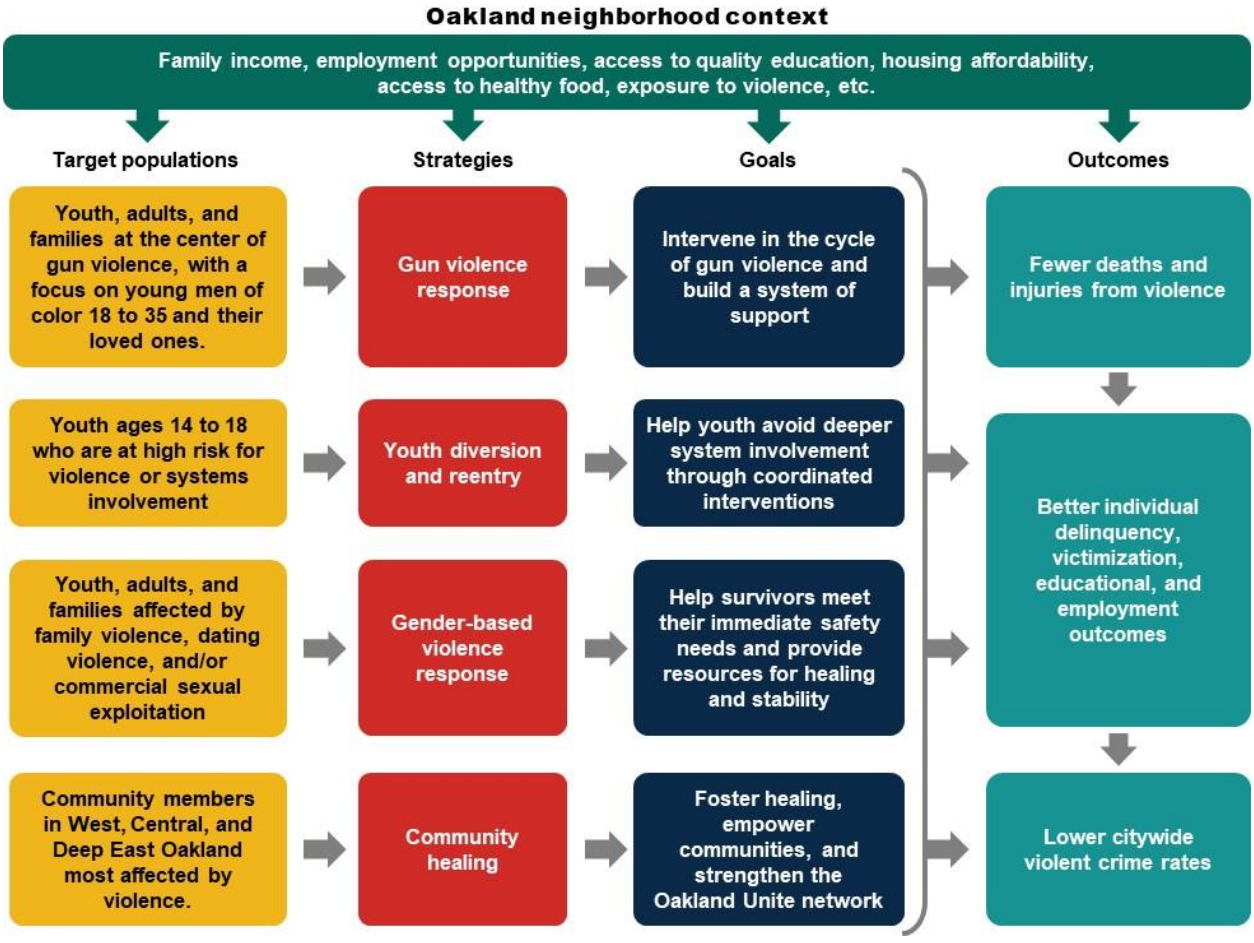
- Continue to develop standards of practice for CSE youth intervention agencies
- Support agencies in collecting additional participant data that can be used for continuous improvement
- Continue to integrate CSE and other gender-based violence responses into broader violence prevention efforts
- Promote a shared understanding of CSE youth identification and response across the county through advocacy, protocols, training, and research
- Explore areas for future research, such as assessing the effectiveness of crisis response services and identifying factors that predict youth CSE

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Oakland Unite administers and supports grants to agencies offering community-based violence prevention programs in Oakland, California. The Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2004, also known as Measure Y, raised funds for community-based violence prevention programs and policing and fire safety personnel through a parcel tax on Oakland property and a parking tax assessment. In 2014, Oakland residents voted to extend these levies for 10 years through Measure Z, which now raises about $27 million annually, to focus efforts on specific types of serious violence, including gun and gender-based violence. Measure Z funds violence prevention programs, police officers, fire services, and evaluation services. Roughly 40 percent of these funds are invested in community-based violence prevention programs through Oakland Unite, which is part of the City of Oakland (the City) Human Services Department.

Figure I.1. Conceptual model of Oakland Unite

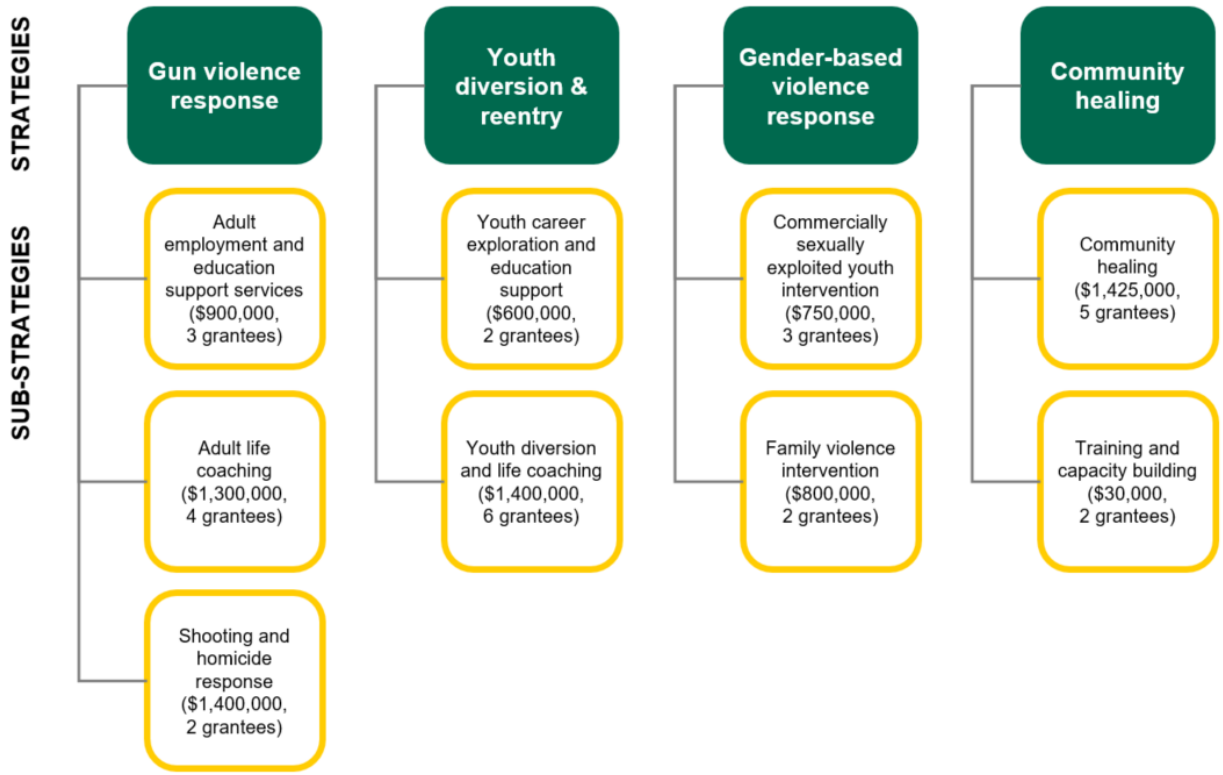


Note: Oakland Unite prepares a new spending plan every two to three years. This figure reflects the strategies in the 2019–2020 plan, which changed the strategy structure and names from previous years.

As part of this citywide effort, Oakland Unite aims to interrupt and prevent violence by focusing on the youth and young adults in Oakland who are at highest risk of direct exposure to violence, violent victimization, and active involvement in violence. Figure I.1 illustrates the relationship between Oakland's neighborhood contexts, Oakland Unite strategies, and the outcomes Oakland Unite is designed to affect. Neighborhood context—including exposure to violence and access to quality education, affordable housing, and employment opportunities—affect the population served by Oakland Unite. The strategies thus focus on improving outcomes for those most disproportionately affected by these factors. Other parts of Measure Z, such as Ceasefire, Oakland Police Department (OPD) crime reduction teams, community resource officers, and emergency response through the Oakland Fire Department, are outside of the purview of Oakland Unite and this evaluation, but play important roles in the city's efforts to reduce violence.

During fiscal year 2019–2020, Oakland Unite is administering $8,605,000 in 29 grants. Oakland Unite administers grants through a diverse set of strategies and sub-strategies to accomplish violence prevention and reduction. Every two to three years, Oakland Unite prepares a new spending plan based on community input and evaluation findings. Figure I.2 summarizes the four strategies (gun violence response, youth diversion and reentry, gender-based violence response, and community healing) and nine sub-strategies supported in the current period.

Figure I.2. Oakland Unite funding amounts for fiscal year 2019–2020



Source: Documents provided by Oakland Unite.

This most recent spending plan changed the structure and names of the strategies and sub-strategies. Previously, the strategies were life coaching, education and economic self-sufficiency, violent incident and crisis response, community asset building, and innovation. Detailed information about the services provided by Oakland Unite agencies in 2016–2018 is available in the 2016–2018 agency report (Eslami et al. 2019).

Under Measure Z, the City funds an independent evaluation of Oakland Unite. The four-year evaluation conducted by Mathematica includes three components: (1) annual evaluations that assess the implementation and effectiveness of a selection of Oakland Unite strategies, (2) annual snapshots that summarize the work of each Oakland Unite agency, and (3) a comprehensive evaluation that will study the impact of select Oakland Unite programs from 2016 to 2020. Table I.1 summarizes the main findings from the first two strategy-level evaluations. In this 2018–2019 strategy evaluation, we present an in-depth analysis of the implementation of the commercially sexually exploited youth (CSE youth) intervention sub-strategy and its role in the local policy context.[1] The report focuses on services provided from 2016 to 2018, described more fully in Chapter II.

Table I.1. Summary of past strategy-level evaluation findings

Evaluation year	Sub-strategies evaluated	Summary of main findings
2016–2017	Adult life coaching and employment and education support (Gonzalez et al. 2017)	• Adult life coaching reduces short-term arrests for violent offenses in the 6 months after services but has limited impact on arrests for any offense. • Adult EESS decrease short-term arrests both for any offense and for a violent offense.
2017–2018	Youth life coaching and employment and education support (EESS) (Gonzalez et al. 2019)	• Youth life coaching reduces school dropout and short-term arrests for violence but has limited impact on 12-month arrest rates. • Youth EESS reduce school dropout but have limited impact on 12-month arrest rates.

Data

To learn about how the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy was implemented, we collected and analyzed qualitative and quantitative information about agencies and participants. Qualitative data collection included site visits with semistructured interviews at each of the three agencies funded by this sub-strategy, interviews with key informants with expertise working with CSE youth, and a review of documents and materials provided by Oakland Unite and agency staff. In addition, we conducted a survey to gather information about Oakland Unite directly from a subset of participants. Finally, we collected multiple years of administrative data from various sources, as listed in Table II.1. Appendix A contains more detailed descriptions of each data source.

[1] Until the 2019–2020 fiscal year, the sub-strategy was known as the commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) intervention strategy.

Table I.2. Data sources

Data source	Description
Agency visits with semistructured interviews	During visits to each agency conducted in winter 2017 and summer 2019, the evaluation team conducted semistructured interviews with agency staff members, including managers and line staff.
Key informant interviews	In August 2019, the team conducted interviews with six key informants with backgrounds in policy and advocacy, law enforcement, community health, and coalition building.
Review of documents and materials	The team reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite staff as well as materials collected directly from agencies during the site visits, such as scopes of work, agency budgets, and intake forms.
Participant survey	General topics of the participant survey included satisfaction with services, thoughts about the future, and experiences with violence. The team fielded surveys at each agency during September and October 2018, with 28 CSE youth intervention participants taking part.
Administrative data	The team collected school enrollment, attendance, behavior, and academic data from the Oakland Unified School District and Alameda County Office of Education; information on arrests, convictions, and dispositions from the Alameda County Probation Department; information on arrest and victimization incidents from the Oakland Police Department; and service and participant information from Oakland Unite's Cityspan database.

To link information on the same individual across the multiple sources of administrative data, we used identifying information, including first and last name, date of birth, gender, and address. Oakland Unite participants had to provide consent before their identifying information could be shared with evaluators, which 69 percent of participants in the CSE youth intervention consented to do.[2] Individuals who did not consent to share their personal information are included in descriptive statistics about services received but excluded from any analyses of victimization, arrests, probation, and schooling, which require linking participants to other administrative data.

We used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the implementation of the sub-strategy, including reviewing materials provided by Oakland Unite, analyzing interview responses within and across agencies to highlight key themes, and summarizing participant survey and administrative data about services and participants.

Limitations

Although the data sources and methods used for this report provided rich information about the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy, our analysis has the following limitations:

- **The evaluation does not assess the impact of services on youth outcomes.** Although we have assessed the impact of services on participant outcomes in other strategy-level

[2] This consent rate is based on all participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018. Consent rates varied across the three agencies as follows: Bay Area Women Against Rape (66 percent), DreamCatcher Youth Services (79 percent), and Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting and Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (73 percent).

evaluations, we determined in partnership with Oakland Unite that an impact evaluation of the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy was not appropriate for this report. The services funded by Oakland Unite to date have focused on short-term crisis response, with over half of participants receiving fewer than five hours of services. Thus, we did not have a clear hypothesis about the impact of participation on victimization, arrest, and schooling outcomes measurable in the available administrative data. In addition, limited baseline data were available to match participants to an appropriate comparison group. Without a comparison group of youth at similar risk of exploitation who did not receive services from Oakland Unite CSE agencies, we could not reliably determine whether any changes in outcomes resulted from participation in Oakland Unite. Rather than assess the effectiveness of services, this report evaluates the implementation of those services and analyzes the role of Oakland Unite's CSE youth intervention sub-strategy in the local policy context.

- **The report excludes educational, criminal justice, and victimization data not reported in the available sources.** The available education data only included public, noncharter schools in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) and Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE). Youth enrolled in other types of schools in Alameda County or beyond would be missing from these sources. Similarly, the report used criminal justice data reported by Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) or OPD, which would not include incidents outside of these jurisdictions. Finally, victimization data only reflected incidents reported to OPD, which is subject to underreporting, and frequently lacked complete personally identifiable information needed to link to other records.
- **Analyses of educational, criminal justice, and victimization data were limited to participants who consented to have their information matched to other data sources.** Thirty-one percent of CSE youth intervention participants did not consent to share their identifiable information. Individuals who do not consent to participate in the evaluation may differ from those who do. For example, Oakland Unite data show that CSE youth who did not consent received fewer service hours, on average, than those who consented.
- **The perspectives collected through surveys and interviews may not reflect the perspectives of all stakeholders.** Participant surveys were conducted with a small sample of participants who happened to be present or were selected by the agency. In addition, participants (as well as the staff and key informants we interviewed) could have provided responses that they felt would reflect favorably upon themselves or their agencies. Finally, key informant interviews reflect the perspectives of a limited number of stakeholders.

Overview of the report

The rest of this report is organized as follows: in Chapter II, we present contextual information about the policy and evidence landscape in which Oakland Unite's CSE youth intervention sub-strategy operates. We describe the implementation findings for the sub-strategy in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, we conclude the report and suggest considerations and areas of research for the future. Appendix A has additional information on the CSE policy context and provides examples of related efforts and promising programs in other parts of the country. Appendix B has additional details about the evaluation's data collection and processing.

II. POLICY AND EVIDENCE LANDSCAPE

In this chapter, we provide contextual information about the policy and evidence landscape in which Oakland Unite's CSE youth intervention sub-strategy operates. After providing an overview of the sub-strategy, we discuss what is known about CSE youth in Oakland and Alameda County, summarize the local policy context, and present best practices for supporting CSE youth. Additional information on relevant policies and initiatives and promising programs is available in Appendix A.

Overview of the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy

The CSE youth intervention sub-strategy offers funding for services that support youth at risk of or experiencing commercial sexual exploitation. In particular, it aims to help survivors meet their immediate needs for safety and to be connected to resources to aid them on their path to healing and stability. The sub-strategy funds outreach and crisis response, emergency housing, safe spaces, and wraparound supports. In addition, it funds training efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Oakland Unite network and local law enforcement agencies to identify and respond to CSE youth. Given its focus on victims of CSE, the sub-strategy primarily (though not exclusively) focuses on young women, girls, and people who identify as LGBTQI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, or intersex). Referrals are intended to come from multiple sources, including OPD, Alameda County Juvenile Probation, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office (ACDAO), the Family Justice Center, Alameda County Girls' Court (ACGC)[3], OUSD and Highland Hospital. Figure II.1 provides a summary of the three agencies in this sub-strategy.

Over the years, the sub-strategy has expanded its focus and level of investment. During the 2016–2017 fiscal year, Oakland Unite funded these three agencies for a combined grant amount of $153,000. The following fiscal year, the combined amount grew to $428,710. In 2019–2020, the three agencies received a combined total of $750,000. In addition to reflecting a growing emphasis on gender-based violence by Oakland Unite, the increased funding level reflects Oakland Unite's decision to fund fewer grants overall for larger amounts and to support increases in indirect cost allowances and higher salaries for direct service staff.

The target population for the sub-strategy also expanded in the most recent grant period. Initially, the sub-strategy focused on children and youth age 18 and younger who were or had been sexually exploited. Figure II.2 presents the number of youth that received services in each calendar year covered in this report (2016 to 2018). Each year, a small share of youth 18 or older received services. As of July 2019, the priority population now includes children and young adults ages 12 to 25 who are at risk of exploitation or were or had been exploited.

[3] Alameda County Girls' Court (ACGC) is no longer in operation.

Figure II.1. CSE youth intervention agencies

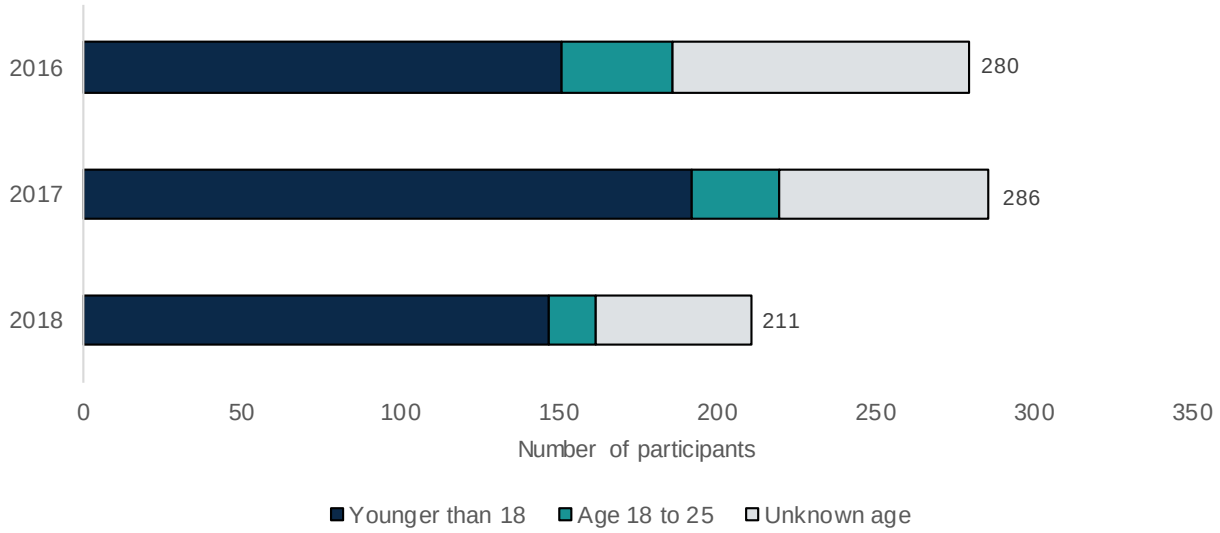
The **Bay Area Women Against Rape** (BAWAR) Sexually Exploited Minors program offers crisis response services to youth 18 and younger who have been sexually exploited or are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation. BAWAR staff conduct outreach in coordination with community partners. Following outreach, staff provide first responder crisis intervention and stabilization services. BAWAR also conducts community trainings and outreach events for local agencies and schools to increase awareness of sexual assault and exploitation.

DreamCatcher Youth Services, a program of Covenant House California, serves homeless youth ages 13 to 17 who are at high risk of commercial sexual exploitation, providing them with emergency shelter, crisis intervention, and stabilization support. This includes Nika's Place, an eight-bed shelter for female-identified youth escaping commercial sexual exploitation, a 12-bed DreamCatcher shelter (open to homeless youth more broadly), an adolescent medical clinic, and a drop-in wellness center.

Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting & Serving Sexually Exploited Youth (MISSSEY) offers the Sisters Transforming and Rising (STAR) Center, a daily drop-in center that serves as a safe space for female, femme, and nonbinary youth ages 12 to 25 impacted by commercial sexual exploitation. The drop-in center offers group activities for youth as well as a safe space where youth can spend time and develop positive relationships with peers and adults. Additionally, the drop-in center acts as a crisis response center for youth who need immediate assistance.

Source: Documents provided by Oakland Unite, agency websites, and interviews with agency staff.

Figure II.2. Number of participants served by the CSE youth intervention strategy, by year



Source: Cityspan.

Notes: Age is based on the date when the participant began receiving services.

Oakland Unite's approach to this sub-strategy is aligned to the California Department of Social Services CSEC Program guidelines, which state that commercial sexual exploitation should be understood as child abuse and therefore victims should not be criminalized (Child Welfare Council CSEC Action Team 2015). The state outlines a three-tiered response to support CSEC,

ranging from immediate crisis response in the first 72 hours, initial services provided within 10 to 14 days to address the youth's immediate safety needs, and ongoing support that involves case planning and coordination. The three programs funded by Oakland Unite—BAWAR, DreamCatcher, and MISSSEY—focus primarily on immediate crisis response and initial services and are intended to work together to serve youths' needs. BAWAR primarily offers immediate crisis response services, DreamCatcher offers emergency shelter and access to on-site medical and mental health support, and MISSSEY offers a drop-in center with group activities and access to case management.[4] All three agencies also refer youth to outside services.

CSE youth in Oakland

Sexual exploitation of youth is prevalent in the Bay Area, which has been identified as a high intensity child prostitution area by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, 2009). However, limited information exists on the current size of the CSE youth population in the region. Human Exploitation and Trafficking (HEAT) Watch, an initiative founded by ACDAO to combat human trafficking, reports that 851 minors identified as being at risk for or already involved in CSE were referred to case review meetings between January 2011 and December 2018—an average of 106 minors per year (HEAT Watch 2019). These numbers include, but are not limited to, youth who were involved in the juvenile justice system, social services, other government agencies, or community-based organizations. During this same period, an average of 220 individuals age 25 and younger were arrested in Alameda County for prostitution each year. Before the decriminalization of child sex trafficking victims in 2017, this number included an average of 40 minors each year (Figure II.3). In years past, local law enforcement estimated that approximately 100 children were sold for sex in Oakland on a given night (Grady 2010).

As part of the SafetyNet case review program, ACDAO has collected information about participating CSE youth's demographics and risk factors (HEAT Watch 2019). Among these youth, the vast majority were female (98 percent) and predominantly African American (64 percent) or Latino (15 percent). Their most common risk factors included having a juvenile arrest history (80 percent), prior victimization (72 percent), runaway history (66 percent), juvenile probation history (65 percent), history of drug use (53 percent), and chronic absenteeism from school (46 percent). Other risk factors included family criminal history and being or having been in the custody of social services.

A study by WestCoast Children's Clinic (WCCC) gathered rich information on the challenges faced by CSEC in Oakland and surrounding cities (Basson et al. 2012). The study's sample consisted of 113 girls and young women ages 10 to 24 who were clients of WCCC and partner agencies. In most cases, youth experienced the onset of exploitation by age 14. In addition to identifying demographics and risk factors similar to those described by HEAT Watch, the study found that 75 percent of the youth had experienced child abuse or neglect, including severe or repeated episodes; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; physical abuse; and family violence. Many of the youth also had unstable housing situations: 21 percent lived in a transient household (where

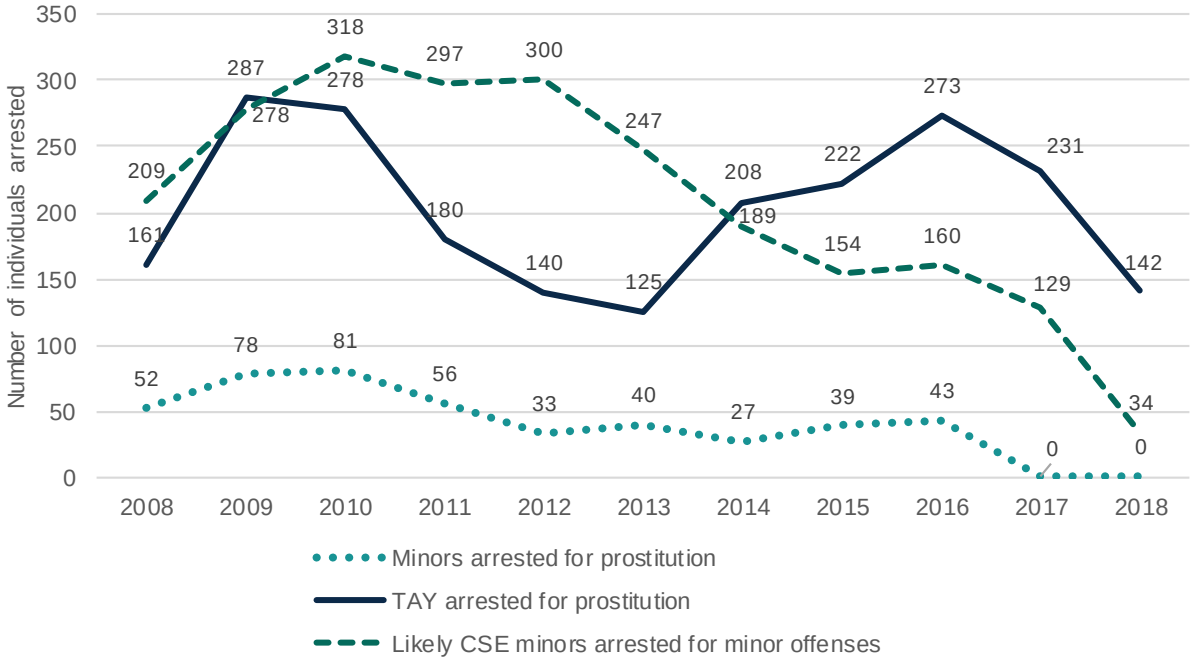
[4] Intensive case management was supported by Oakland Unite's youth life coaching sub-strategy.

many family members, acquaintances, or others live for periods of time or come and go sporadically), and 48 percent experienced foster care placement disruptions. The study identified extensive mental health needs, including depression, anxiety, anger control, and attachment disorder in over half the sample. In addition, the majority of the youth did not understand that they were being exploited.

Local policy context

Since the federal Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (TVPA) passed in 2000, California has increased efforts to support CSE youth. Most recently, California followed the lead of multiple other states by passing a safe harbor law, Senate Bill 1322, which took effect in 2017 and prohibits arrest of minors younger than 18 on prostitution, loitering, or solicitation charges. In 2016, 51 minors and 349 transitional age youth (TAY) were arrested for prostitution in Alameda County (Figure II.3). Following Senate Bill 1322, no more minors were arrested for prostitution in Alameda County. The number of TAY arrested for prostitution also decreased after 2016, down to 171 in 2018. The Human Rights Center suggests that although this change in the law represented a "significant paradigm shift" in how law enforcement and the public perceive the victimization of CSEC, police could potentially shift to arresting CSEC for other offenses (Alrabe and Stover 2018). However, the number of likely CSEC who were arrested in Alameda County for minor offenses also decreased after the law went into effect (Figure II.3).

Figure II.3. Individuals arrested for prostitution and likely CSEC arrested for minor offenses in Alameda County, 2008–2018



Source: OPD and ACPD data.

Notes: Likely CSE minors in a given year are youth younger than 18 who ever had a reported victimization incident related to prostitution or human trafficking, or were ever arrested for a runaway or prostitution offense. Minor offenses include status, delinquent, and misdemeanor offenses.

Prior to Senate Bill 1322, local law enforcement partnered with BAWAR to provide immediate support during prostitution sting operations. Before its dissolution following the passage of Senate Bill 1322, the Alameda County Girls Court (ACGC), a gender-specific court at the Juvenile Justice Center, provided a dedicated judicial proceeding for girls who had been exploited or were at risk of exploitation, following victim-centered protocols. ACPD also partnered with MISSSEY and WCCC to counsel CSEC in juvenile hall and worked with BAWAR to administer a victim assessment.

Outside of the justice system, the Alameda County Department of Children and Families Services (ACDCFS) works with community providers and partners to identify victims of CSE and address their needs. ACDCFS operates the Alameda County Assessment Center, an unlocked facility where most children are taken when they are first removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. Following Senate Bill 1322, law enforcement also take CSEC to the Assessment Center. Physical and mental health assessments are administered there, and advocates from MISSSEY are present to talk to youth, connect them to appropriate providers, and follow up as needed for up to 120 days (Walker 2013). MISSSEY advocates also train placement staff at the Assessment Center as well as foster parents and group home workers.

Within Alameda County, HEAT Watch has served as a hub for efforts to develop a coordinated response to supporting CSEC. In 2010, ACDAO worked with health care, law enforcement, and service providers to create HEAT Watch, a collaborative strategy for combating human trafficking (HEAT Watch 2019). In 2017, the Alameda County United Against Human Trafficking Advisory Council, or AC United, was formed as a collaborative project led by ACDAO and the Alameda County Social Services Agency to increase the services available for preventing and intervening in human trafficking, close gaps in critical services for victims, and enhance coordination of awareness and outreach efforts (HEAT Watch 2019). It is comprised of 83 partners, including county and city government agencies, law enforcement, hospitals, and community-based organizations. The manager of Oakland Unite serves as co-chair of AC United, along with the county's district attorney. BAWAR, DreamCatcher, and MISSSEY are also part of AC United.

Best practices for supporting CSE youth

Based on related efforts in other regions, promising programs for CSE youth, and existing research, we identified a number of best practices for serving CSE youth. For detailed examples of related efforts and promising programs, see Appendix A.

- **Develop a shared definition and validated method to identify CSE youth.** Stakeholders should develop a common definition of CSE youth across social services, law enforcement, and care providers (Clawson and Grace 2007; Moynihan et al. 2018). Implementing routine screening practices may be more effective than identification strategies that rely on individual practitioners' intuition (and therefore, potential assumptions) about CSE youth. Agreeing on a validated assessment tool to identify CSE victims can be an important first step (Dierkhising et al. 2016). For instance, Simich et al. (2014) developed a screening and assessment tool to identify CSEC.

- **Take a trauma-informed approach to services.** The Child Welfare Council CSEC Action Team (2015) recommends that interventions and services be trauma-informed, victim-centered, strengths-based, and culturally sensitive. Core elements of trauma-informed care include safety, trustworthiness, collaboration, empowerment, choice, and cultural relevance. Providing on-going information to both staff and victims about trauma and responses to trauma can help build an understanding of behaviors, the impact of trauma on victims, and the secondary impact on staff (Downey 2019).
- **Assess CSE youth's readiness for change and tailor services to their needs.** There is some evidence that programs for CSE youth with theoretical underpinnings may be more effective (Moynihan et al. 2018; Thompson et al. 2011). An example is the Stages of Change model, which both Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS) and Acknowledge, Commit, Transform (ACT) use to identify where youth lie on the continuum and direct them to the services that best meet their needs. (In the Stages of Change model, individuals move in a cycle through pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance, relapse, and back to pre-contemplation.) Another theoretical model is the harm reduction model, which in the context of CSE youth focuses on meeting youth where they currently are in their lives. Harm reduction operationalizes the tenets of trauma-informed care with the recognition that trauma impacts a victim's ability to discern danger from safety (Downey 2019).
- **Take a long-term, flexible approach to services**. Both continuity of care and the provision of long-term services are essential in addressing the needs of CSE victims, who often relapse to exploitation many times before permanently leaving their exploiters (Basson et al. 2012; Child Welfare Council CSEC Action Team 2015). Providers must understand the dynamics of CSE youth, including the gradual process of change. However, many programs aim to reach a broader population of CSE youth and only have the resources to serve shorter-term needs, such as crisis support, basic food or clothing needs, and safety planning. To counter these limitations, it is important for service providers to maintain an open door policy for participants (Gibbs et al. 2015).
- **Provide a reliable, stable relationship with a caring adult.** Because of the transitory nature of many CSE victims and the instability they face, building reliable and stable relationships with caring adults is important to participants' development (Clawson and Grace 2007). As part of the My Life My Choice program, participants never lose access to their survivor mentors. GEMS also focuses on developing transformational relationships with participants using the Roca model, which incorporates motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral therapy, as described in Table A.1.
- **Employ providers with expertise in CSE or lived experience.** Mentors with lived experience may be most effective in building relationships with youth (Thompson et al. 2011), as their experience helps staff build rapport with youth and overcome trust issues. Both GEMS and My Life My Choice hold survivor-based empowerment as a core tenet of their programming. Clawson and Grace (2007) also found that it was important that providers "live and breathe trafficking" and possess a deep understanding of what victims have experienced.

- **Help youth rebuild family and community ties.** Improved family relations are considered a protective factor that can help victims move away from exploitation. Connectedness to family is also associated with lowering risk behaviors, such as running away (Saewyc and Edinburgh 2010). In keeping with this, Basson et al. (2012) and Moynihan et al. (2018) both found that successful programs incorporate family members. For example, ACT uses culturally responsive family therapy to help reconnect victims with their natural support systems.

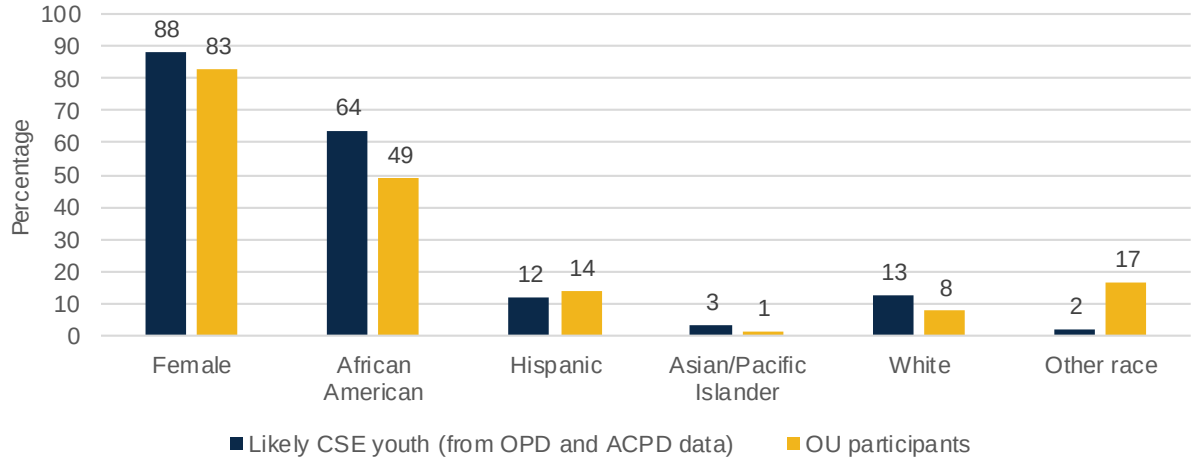
III. IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

In this chapter, we present the results of qualitative and quantitative analyses examining the implementation of the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy based on multiple data sources, including site visits, staff interviews, key informant interviews, participant surveys, and administrative data.

Who are the agencies serving?

Agencies serve the intended population of girls and young women of color with a history of victimization and/or contact with law enforcement. Figure III.1 shows the gender and ethnicity of participants in the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy compared to youth identified as likely CSE youth according to arrest and victimization records. Both groups are comprised primarily of girls and young women of color, which suggests that agencies are serving the intended population.

Figure III.1. Oakland Unite participant gender and ethnicity, compared to likely CSE youth in Alameda County



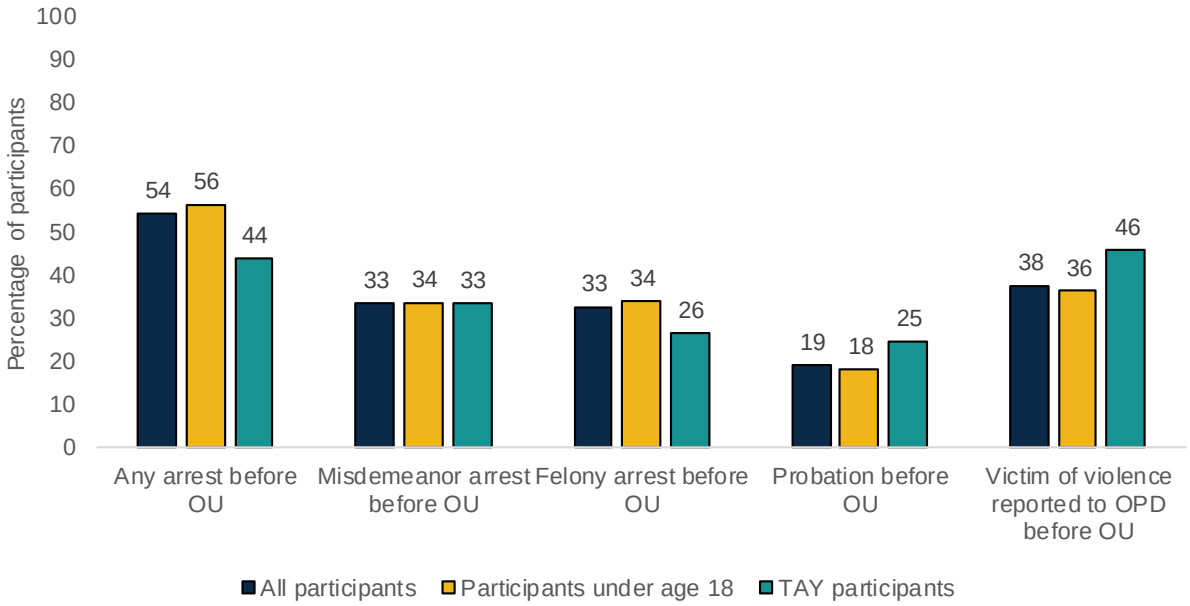
Sources: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD.

Note: Likely CSEC are youth who ever had a reported victimization incident related to prostitution or human trafficking, or who were ever arrested for a runaway or prostitution offense. "Other race" includes Native American, multiethnic individuals, and other. Most of the Oakland Unite youth in this category were multiethnic.

When examining participants' histories of victimization reported to OPD, 38 percent of all participants had a reported violent incident (Figure III.2). This proportion includes 12 percent of participants who had repeated victimization, meaning three or more violent incidents (not shown). According to police records, the most common types of incidents were sexual assault and rape, battery, and human trafficking or kidnapping. TAY participants had even higher rates of reported violent victimization than minors (46 percent versus 36 percent). However, because victimization is frequently underreported to police and youth may have also experienced violence in other jurisdictions, these rates very likely underestimate the extent of victimization

among participants. In a survey of a small sample of participants (N = 28), 68 percent said that they had been victims of violence.

Figure III.2. Oakland Unite participant victimization, arrest, and probation histories before services

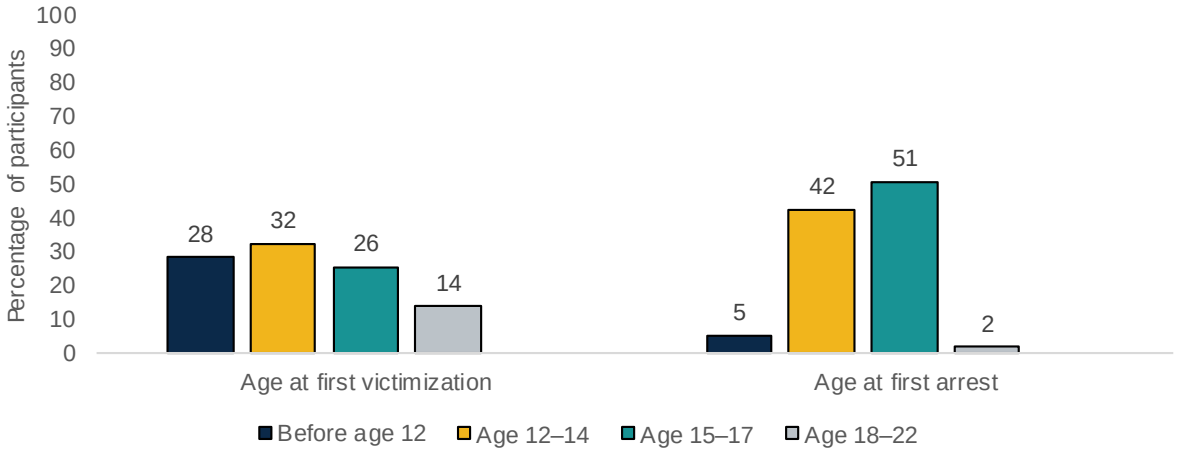


Sources: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD.

Participants also had histories of contact with law enforcement. Fifty-four percent of all participants had been arrested in Alameda County before starting services (Figure III.2), and one quarter had three or more arrests before starting services (not shown). Minors younger than 18 were more likely than TAY to have a prior arrest (56 percent versus 44 percent). The most common arrest incidents involved robbery, running away, battery, resisting an officer, vehicle theft, and prostitution. Rates of arrests for misdemeanor and felony offenses were similar overall, although TAY were less likely to have a felony arrest than minors. However, TAY were more likely to be on probation at the time of starting services.

Victimization often precedes youths' first arrest, but arrests are more likely to immediately precede the start of services than victimization incidents. The average age of participants' first reported victimization was 13, and almost one-third of participants were younger than 12 when they first had a victimization incident reported to OPD (Figure III.3). In contrast, the average age at participants' first arrest was 14, with more than half of participants being arrested for the first time between ages 15 and 17 (Figure III.3).

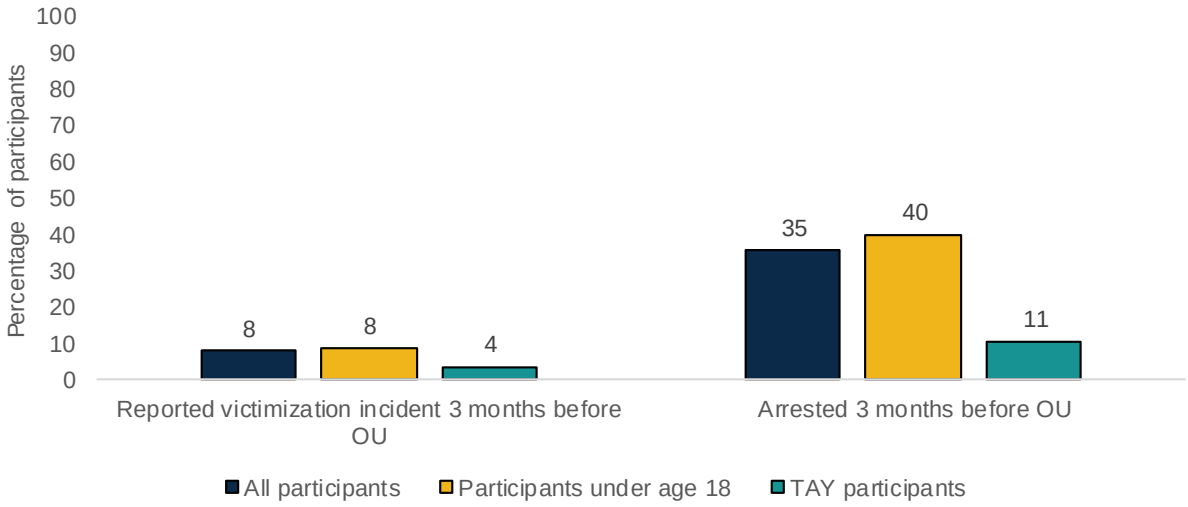
Figure III.3. Oakland Unite participants' age at first victimization and arrest



Sources: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD.

However, when we examined victimization and arrest incidents in the three months before participants went to Oakland Unite, we found that participants were more than four times as likely to have been arrested during this period than they were to have a reported victimization incident (Figure III.4). This finding is consistent with law enforcement being a primary referral for the sub-strategy, particularly before 2017. In addition, participants who were minors were four times more likely than TAY to be arrested in the three months before services and two times more likely than TAY to have been victims of violence during that period, suggesting that more minors come to services at a particularly high-risk moment in their lives.

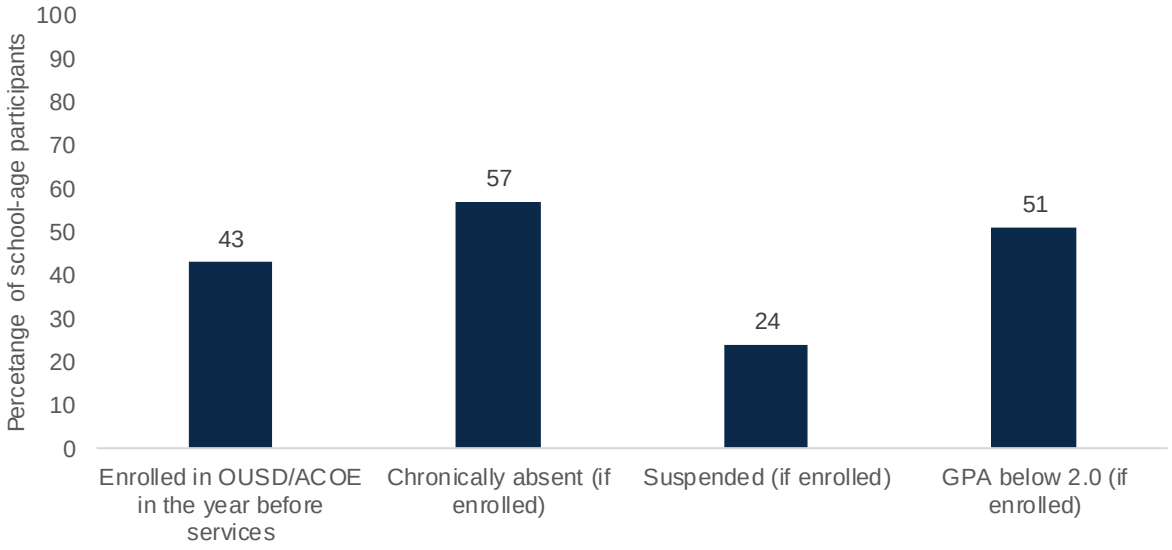
Figure III.4. Oakland Unite participants' victimization and arrest history in the three months prior to starting services



Sources: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD.

School-age participants exhibit high rates of disengagement from school before starting services. Among participants who began services before age 18, only 43 percent were enrolled in an OUSD or ACOE school during the preceding year (Figure III.5). Although this low enrollment rate likely reflects school mobility and dropout, some youth who were exploited in Oakland may have lived and been enrolled in school in surrounding jurisdictions, for which data were not available for this report. Among youth who were enrolled in an OUSD or ACOE school, chronic absence, discipline, and academic issues were relatively common: 57 percent of participants enrolled in school were chronically absent (defined as missing at least 10 percent of enrolled days for any reason), 24 percent had been suspended or expelled, and 51 percent had a grade point average below 2.0.

Figure III.5. Oakland Unite school-age participants' engagement in school in the year prior to starting services



Sources: Cityspan, OUSD, and ACOE.
Note: Chronic absence is defined as missing at least 10 percent of enrolled days for any reason.
GPA = grade point average.

Limited information is available on other participant risk factors. In interviews, agencies identified that LGBTQI youth appear to be rising among the participants they serve. According to data entered into Cityspan, the share of youth who identified as LGBTQI was relatively stable, ranging between 13 percent in 2016 and 14 percent in 2018. However, sexual orientation was not reported by 55 percent of participants. Staff at DreamCatcher further noted that the number of youth who self-identify as affiliated with a gang appears to have increased this year. (Agencies do not record gang affiliation, so this anecdotal information could not be confirmed.) Although agencies may assess various risk factors during intake, this information is not captured in Cityspan.

How do agencies identify participants?

Agencies have a shared understanding of the CSE youth population, but do not use a standard identification process. Staff in the agencies have a shared perspective of CSE that is consistent with the California Department of Social Services CSEC Program guidelines, and bring their knowledge of common risk factors to the work. However, each agency relies on different identification tools and processes. Although there are assessment tools that attempt to standardize the identification process (such as WCCC's risk factor tool designed to assist local service providers in identifying youth at risk of CSE), Oakland Unite CSE intervention agencies may use less complex tools to identify risk factors, especially for light-touch services such as a drop-in center where a more comprehensive assessment may not be feasible. Several agency staff described using an approach they termed "meet them where they are." Upon first seeking services from an agency, the youth may not be ready to divulge the information necessary to comprehensively assess risk, and agency staff may have limited information from other sources that would enable them to determine risk for CSE. As the youth builds trust, they may share this information with agency staff.

Although staff are aware of common risk factors among CSE youth, the agencies serve differing levels and types of risk, and identification can depend in part on individual judgments made by staff. For example, DreamCatcher uses the WCCC risk factor tool and an intake form, but focuses on homelessness as the single most important risk factor of CSE. In contrast, because BAWAR has close relationships with ACPD and ACDAO, many of its participants are involved in the justice system and tend to exhibit the greatest rates of victimization, arrest, and school disengagement compared to participants in the other agencies. Identification is thus closely tied to the referral source, which also varies across agencies by design (Table III.1).

Table III.1. Oakland Unite participant referral sources, by agency

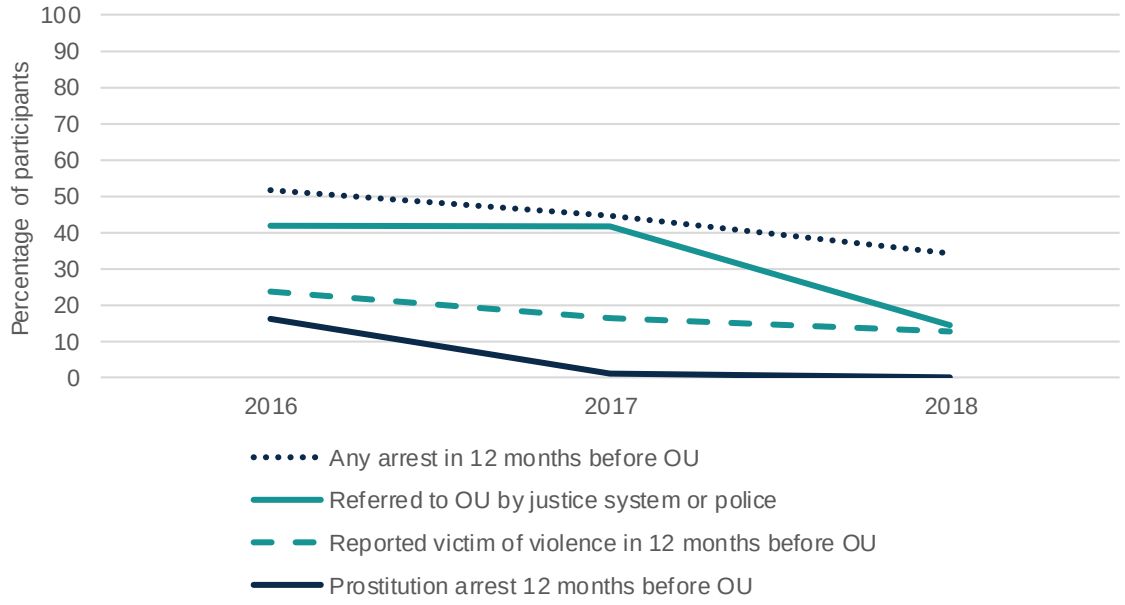
	BAWAR	DreamCatcher	MISSSEY
Another agency	3%	11%	5%
Justice system	59%	1%	24%
School	1%	9%	1%
Police	7%	0%	0%
Family or friend	1%	13%	22%
Hospital	9%	0%	0%
Outreach	0%	0%	5%
Self	2%	2%	10%
Social services	1%	1%	12%
Other referral source	5%	8%	12%
Missing referral information	11%	56%	10%
Number of participants	281	195	165

Source: Cityspan.

Note: Shading reflects the relative frequency of the referral sources within each agency. Other referral sources reported include the internet, group homes, and coordinators from other service agencies outside of Oakland Unite.

Referral pathways have expanded from law enforcement to include multiple points of entry into services. As Figure III.6 indicates, participants' contact with law enforcement prior to starting services decreased each year. Increasingly, staff reported that youth could arrive to their agencies through multiple channels. As one informant stated, there should be "no wrong door" for entry into a CSE program, and youth in need should be able to be identified and referred wherever they may encounter someone who can advocate for them. Although it is a best practice to have multiple referral pathways through which youth can be connected to services, processes currently vary depending on the referral source and agency, and sometimes depend on individual relationships. For example, staff said that word of mouth is now a major referral source for MISSSEY and DreamCatcher. Other examples of relationship-based referrals include referrals from specific school staff who happen to be aware of an agency's services and suspect a youth to be at risk of CSE.

Figure III.6. Oakland Unite participants' contact with law enforcement prior to starting services, by initial year of service



Sources: Cityspan, OPD, and ACPD.

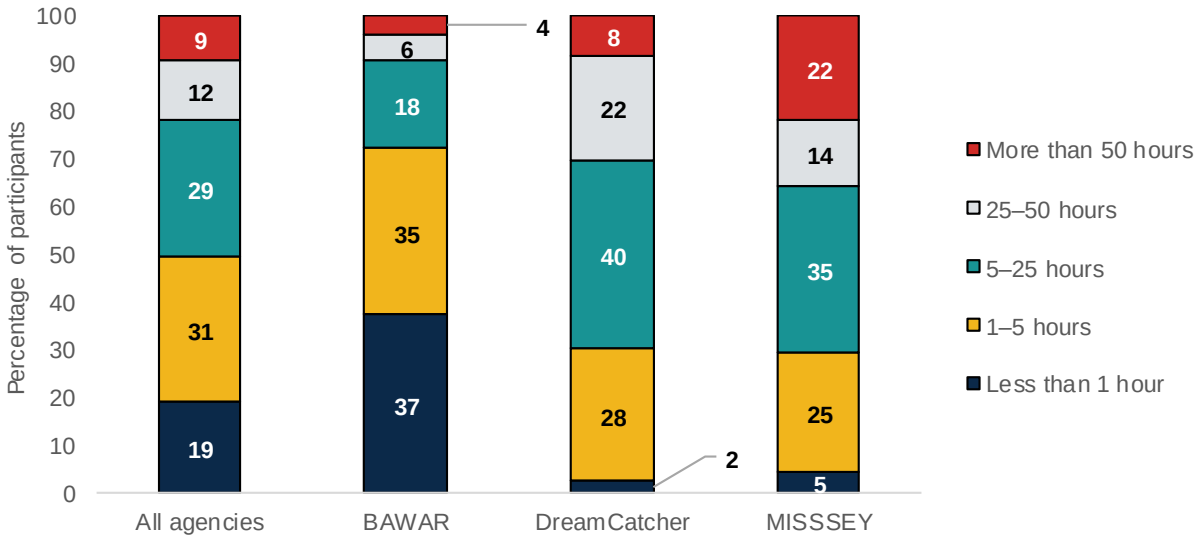
The broadening set of referral pathways may be partly attributable to decriminalization, when Senate Bill 1322 took effect. The law was widely seen as a positive step for minor victims of sexual exploitation. However, it also reduced the ability of law enforcement to help a minor connect with the agencies that could help them separate from their exploiter, and created the need to refer at-risk youth to services in other ways. Previously, an arrest would have led to the youth being held in custody. The youth may then have entered the juvenile justice system, through which referrals could be made to supportive services, such as an Oakland Unite agency equipped to address CSE needs. Now law enforcement may bring youth to the county's Assessment Center, an unlocked facility where minors can stay temporarily while appropriate referrals and placements are arranged. Although both WCCC and MISSSEY are represented at

the Assessment Center, the center serves vulnerable children between birth and age 18 and is not tailored to address CSE-specific needs.

What services do participants receive?

Length of services differs across agencies according to their models, with half of all participants receiving fewer than 5 hours of services. As described in Chapter II, Oakland Unite's investment in the CSE youth intervention strategy has centered on short-term crisis intervention and stabilization services. On average, participants received a total of 17 hours of services, but this total ranged from an average of 5 hours at BAWAR, 18 hours at DreamCatcher, and 35 hours at MISSSEY, consistent with their different models. As noted earlier, each agency offered distinct, complementary services: BAWAR provided intensive outreach focused on crisis intervention, DreamCatcher provided emergency housing and stabilization services (including case management and group mental health, peer support, and social activities), and MISSSEY offered a drop-in center where youth could receive case management, peer support, and counseling. Furthermore, these averages mask the fact that a number of participants received services for a very limited time: 50 percent received less than 5 hours of services, and 19 percent received less than 1 hour over the length of their participation (Figure III.7). Conversely, approximately 10 percent of participants received more than 50 hours of support.

Figure III.7. Oakland Unite participants' total service hours received



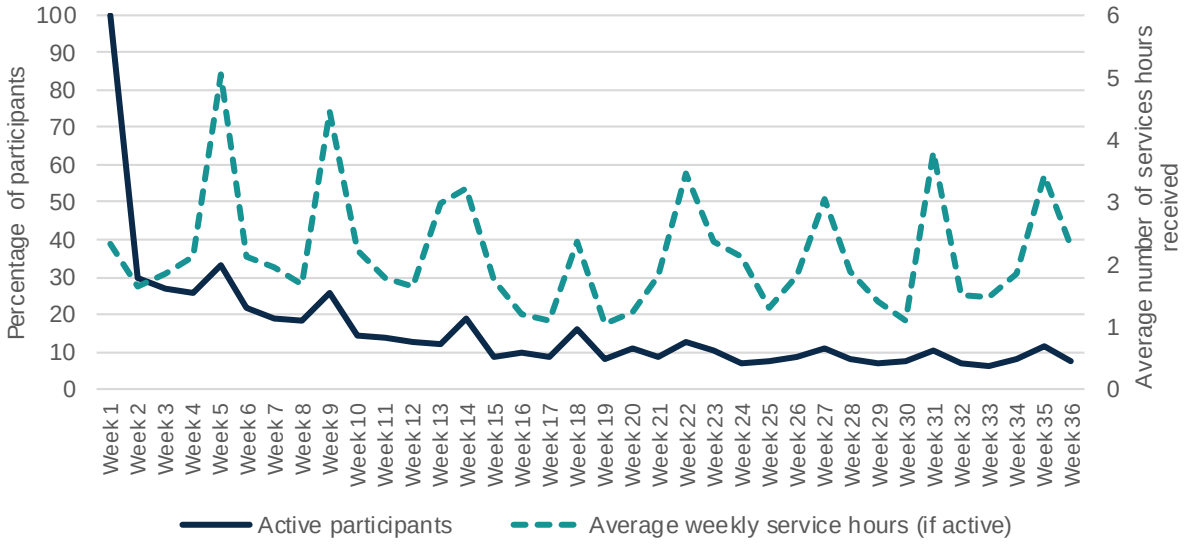
Source: Cityspan.

Note: Although MISSSEY also offered services through the youth life coaching sub-strategy, this figure only includes service hours that were recorded under the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy.

Although services focus on short-term crisis response, a subset of participants remains engaged with agencies over time, with engagement spiking every few weeks. Figure III.8 shows the percentage of participants who received services across the weeks following their initial contact with an Oakland Unite agency (solid line). About 30 percent of participants returned for services a second week, consistent with the short-term nature of crisis response. Although engagement

generally decreased over time, spikes in engagement appeared every few weeks, with more youth coming back for services than leaving every two to four weeks. A pattern of engagement spiking every few weeks is also apparent in the number of weekly service hours received among the subset of youth who came back for services (dotted line). On average, during periods of low engagement participants received 1 to 2 hours of services per week, whereas during periods of high engagement they received 3 to 5 hours of services per week. These patterns suggest that participants feel comfortable returning to agencies for support after their initial crisis has been addressed, and are consistent with agencies maintaining an open-door policy.

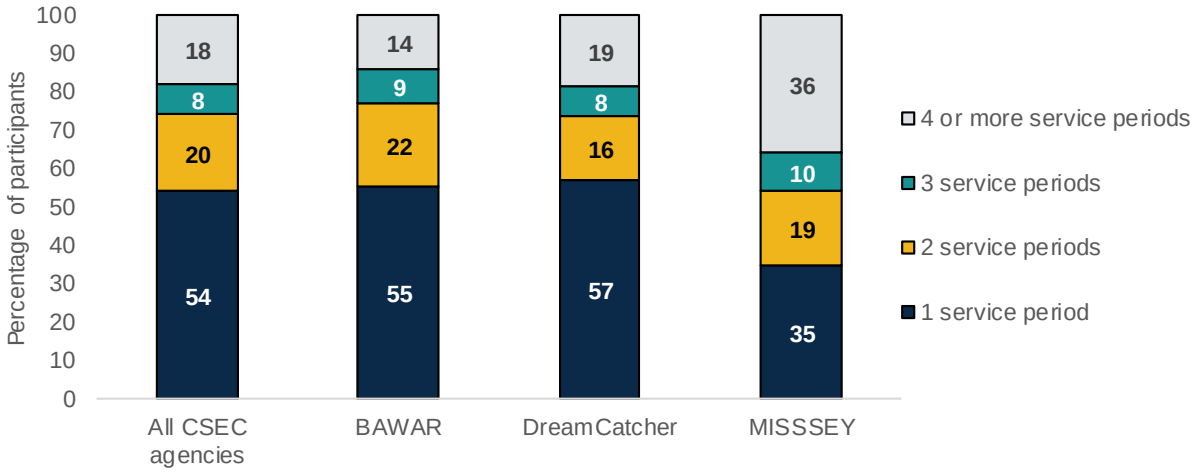
Figure III.8. Oakland Unite participants' engagement and service hours received, by week



Source: Cityspan.

Almost half of participants receive support over multiple service periods. Another way to examine participant engagement over time is to measure the number of distinct periods during which youth received services. Defining a service period as a time interval in which no more than a month elapsed between service contacts indicates that 46 percent of participants received support over multiple service periods (Figure III.9). MISSSEY participants were most likely to return for services across multiple service periods, which is consistent with the drop-in nature of their services. However, across all agencies there are a subset of youth who return for services multiple times. Typically, approximately 7 weeks pass between service periods, with each service period lasting about 1 week. As noted earlier, these patterns suggest that a number of participants are able to return for short-term support when they need it, even if it is weeks after their initial contact with the agency.

Figure III.9. Oakland Unite number of service periods participants engaged with agencies



Source: Cityspan.

Note: A service period is defined as a time interval in which no more than a month passes between service contacts.

Agencies offer a safe, welcoming space for youth, but participants' sense of safety can be affected by external factors. Drop-in facilities provide a first step for agencies to develop relationships with CSE youth. Because CSE youth are coming to the agencies through various pathways, including word of mouth or self-referral, agencies need to be able to provide a welcoming place that encourages youth to return. The facilities at MISSSEY and DreamCatcher aim to provide a homelike environment to encourage continued interaction with youth who enter their drop-in or wellness centers. By helping to meet basic needs, such as offering a washer and dryer participants can use, meals, or bus passes, the facilities encourage the process of building trust with youth. This trust, in turn, is intended to lead the youth to return and become more involved with a community or open up to staff to determine what other referrals or resources from which they could benefit.

According to staff, it is critical that their facilities be perceived as safe and free from threats. This goal was consistent with participants' views on the survey: 66 percent said that it was very important or somewhat important that the agency location is safe and convenient. For some participants, this can mean that the location has no apparent affiliation with law enforcement. Staff at BAWAR specifically noted that being located in the Family Justice Center hinders their ability to serve youth. Because ACPD is in the same building, youth who are on probation are reluctant to go to their facility. As a result, advocates sometimes meet with youth in public places outside the center, which is less secure for both the advocate and the youth. Perceptions of safety may also depend on whether the facilities are located in a neutral location, away from street violence. A staff member at DreamCatcher noted that a recent increase in gang-affiliated youth affects whether they feel comfortable seeking services from the agency. According to the staff interviewed, the cul-de-sac where DreamCatcher and MISSSEY are located was considered neutral territory, but may now fall in a gang territory.

Youth often dictate whether agencies try to engage their families in services. Although staff acknowledged that accessing family support systems could help increase successful transitions for youth, some noted that this can be challenging as family members may be abusive, involved in the youth's exploitation, or otherwise not a positive influence in youths' lives. As a result, it is not standard practice across the sub-strategy to involve families in service provision, and staff often rely on youth to dictate the degree of family involvement. An exception is DreamCatcher, which attempts to facilitate family mediation and make referrals to family therapy as part of its efforts to help youth find a permanent home.

What are the needs of participants?

Appropriate mental health services are an unmet need for many CSE youth. Appropriate options are limited for participants who are in need of therapy. At DreamCatcher, mental health graduate student interns are available on a limited basis to meet with participants. While WCCC is a primary resource for CSE youth served by Oakland Unite with mental health needs, not all participants are eligible to receive care from the organization. Outside of these agencies, respondents noted that most mental health services operate under the assumption that trauma has ended, whereas CSE youth may still be experiencing intermittent trauma while receiving therapy. In addition, respondents said that by the time a trusting relationship has developed between the youth and provider, the youth may have reached the limit on services he or she can receive. In addition, a long-term care plan is often needed to help CSE youth recover from their trauma and move past their exploitation.

Staff burnout makes it difficult to provide the stable relationships that many youth need. Staff at the agencies sometimes fill the role of a stable, caring adult in a youth's life. As such, they become the de facto support for addressing participants' trauma and other needs. As initially proposed, BAWAR intended to work with participants as long as they were in crisis and needed services. However, staff reported that high levels of staff burnout and turnover led to instituting a limit on the number of sessions between the participant and advocate, after which the participant's case is reevaluated to determine the best next steps. Direct service staff at DreamCatcher also indicated that staff need to care for themselves amidst the trauma and challenges they encounter with the youth they serve and are not always able to provide the ongoing relationship with a caring adult that some youth need.

Housing continues to be a major need for CSE youth. Lack of housing was frequently cited as a challenge facing CSE youth. This information is consistent with participant survey responses, where only 39 percent of respondents said it was very likely that they would have a safe place to live one year into the future—by far the lowest among all Oakland Unite sub-strategies. Even with the opening of Claire's House[5] and Nika's Place to specifically serve CSE youth, informants expressed that demand exceeds supply. In addition, these two facilities focus on minors, and are thus not an option for exploited TAY.

[5] Claire's House is a short-term residential therapeutic program operated by Catholic Charities that serves CSEC ages 12 to 17.

The sub-strategy's expanded age eligibility will allow agencies to support TAY, who have been an underserved group with different needs. Informants suggested that fewer services are available for TAY even though they tend be further along the Stages of Change continuum than younger participants. As noted in Chapter II, Oakland Unite recently expanded eligibility to include TAY, which will allow older CSE youth to receive support from the agencies. Informants noted that services will need to take into account the different needs of TAY compared to younger participants. Agency staff observed that TAY may need less intensive outreach than younger participants, as TAY are more likely to be ready to make a change. As another example, MISSSEY staff noted that their trauma-informed curriculum resonates more with CSEC than with older youth.

TAY also experience different challenges. For example, while younger children can be placed back into the home of a family member, ideally, or be eligible for other types of housing through foster care or Claire's House and Nika's Place, these are not options for TAY. In addition to housing, many TAY are also seeking jobs and child care. As part of a growing recognition of the needs of CSE TAY, a pilot project is underway outside of Oakland Unite between WCCC and MISSSEY to assist trafficked TAY with health care, housing, and employment opportunities.

How do agencies collaborate with other partners within and outside of Oakland Unite?

Agencies say they have benefitted from collaboration and cross-agency referrals within Oakland Unite. Staff across the agencies noted that Oakland Unite has fostered connections between them and cited each other as referral sources and partners in supporting CSE youth. One informant noted that the connections have also helped staff feel more supported, as working with the unique needs of this population can be isolating. A staff member at DreamCatcher also pointed out that Oakland Unite was a valuable resource when their agency experienced an uptick in the number of gang-affiliated youth seeking services. Through Oakland Unite, DreamCatcher was able to connect with a knowledgeable resource about gang dynamics in Oakland and with others working in that field.

However, there is room for more cross-agency referrals across the Oakland Unite network. Although the sub-strategy is designed to meet different needs of CSE youth, only 13 percent of participants received services from more than one CSE youth intervention agency as part of Oakland Unite (not shown). The greatest number of shared participants was between BAWAR and MISSSEY (Table III.2). One informant suggested that the shared goals and target populations of BAWAR and MISSSEY create an opportunity for closer collaboration that would be further facilitated by being in the same physical space. Staff at MISSSEY relayed that participants want a one-stop shop where they can access multiple services, and having a safe, private place to meet with youth is a key part of BAWAR's service model.

Table III.2. CSE youth participation in multiple Oakland Unite agencies and sub-strategies

	Percentage of participants who also receive services from:			
	BAWAR	DreamCatcher	MISSSEY	Other Oakland Unite sub-strategies
BAWAR	-	3%	20%	27%
DreamCatcher	5%	-	12%	11%
MISSSEY	29%	12%	-	51%

Source: Cityspan.

Note: MISSSEY includes participants in the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy only. Shading reflects the relative frequency of participant sharing overall.

A larger share of participants (21 percent) received services from another Oakland Unite sub-strategy (not shown). Most of these youth received life coaching from MISSSEY, which until 2019 was funded by Oakland Unite under the youth life coaching sub-strategy. (Starting in fiscal year 2019–2020, another agency—Young Women's Freedom Center—will offer life coaching to CSE youth leaving the Transition Center of the Juvenile Justice Center). Although Oakland Unite offers services to young adults, including life coaching and employment and education support, TAY were four times less likely than minors to receive services from another Oakland Unite sub-strategy. One informant noted that it can be challenging to build strategic partnerships with agencies outside of the CSE strategy because those agencies are not equipped to address the needs of CSE youth.

Informants provided mixed feedback regarding collaboration with law enforcement. One informant said that recent efforts have resulted in improvements in how law enforcement is viewed as potential collaborators working to support CSE youth. BAWAR works closely with OPD, and the two have trained each other's staff. BAWAR has taught staff at the police academy to recognize the signs of CSE, to see a referral to BAWAR as a first response to helping youth connect with necessary services, and to understand how other agencies collaborate to serve CSE youth. However, another informant noted the effectiveness of law enforcement training depends on "what they're willing to learn about how to better support youth." Similarly, another informant noted that working with ACDAO can be "hit-or-miss." As noted earlier, the passage of Senate Bill 1322 may have reduced the ability of law enforcement to help a minor separate from their exploiter and created a gap in law enforcement objectives related to CSEC. Finally, recent scandals within OPD have eroded trust in the organization.[6]

Informants see an opportunity to develop a closer partnership with schools, beyond just accepting referrals. OUSD school staff may receive training from MISSSEY or WCCC, and some school staff are consistent sources of referrals. However, implementation of the district's response protocol may be applied unevenly across schools. One informant pointed out that, given teachers' many responsibilities, training of other types of staff at schools would be beneficial to the identification and support of CSE youth so that the burden does not fall solely on teachers. In addition, multiple staff from agencies told stories that reveal the lack of a universally shared

[6] For more information, see: https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2016/06/the-oakland-police-department-scandal-explained.html

perspective on the best way for schools to support CSE youth. In one example, agency staff described a scenario in which a CSE student returned to school, which was a positive step. However, a teacher called the student's probation officer for an apparent probation violation, which resulted in the youth being arrested again while at school. Staff said that returning to custody undoes the progress youth have been making outside of the justice system.

What role does Oakland Unite play in broader efforts to support CSE youth in Oakland?

CSE youth intervention agencies benefit from the technical assistance Oakland Unite provides. Technical assistance needs identified by respondents outside of the agencies included improving organizational infrastructure, obtaining additional grant funding, and tracking outcomes beyond the number of youth served. Oakland Unite has partnered with Bright Research Group to offer technical assistance to all agencies in the network, and has developed a learning agenda with topics such as healing modalities for survivors of gender-based violence.

With Oakland Unite's expansion of the gender-based violence strategy, there are opportunities to further integrate CSE youth intervention into broader violence prevention efforts. Multiple informants noted that increased collaboration could take place with other efforts by Oakland Unite to prevent and interrupt violence, as the communities affected by gun violence (which have historically been the focus of violence prevention efforts) are also impacted by gender-based violence. However, while CSE-focused agencies view exploited youth as victims, several informants noted that organizations that do not focus on CSE may not share this perspective. Untrained providers may thus blame the youth for making bad choices and not know how to best support them. Informants also noted that the same individual who participates in interventions to prevent gun violence may also be involved in trafficking or abusing CSE youth. From their perspective, interrupting CSE means that violence prevention efforts also need to address the role of buyers and sellers and provide education and alternatives for these individuals. Oakland Unite's expansion of the gender-based violence strategy acknowledges these dynamics and offers opportunities for further integration.

Institutions and stakeholders across Alameda County have different views of CSE youth and how they should be treated. Outside of Oakland Unite, institutions that come in contact with CSE youth, such as law enforcement agencies, the juvenile justice system, schools, the child welfare system, healthcare providers, and communities affected by CSE may also lack a shared perspective on the issue. One informant in particular noted that, beyond Oakland, other police jurisdictions in the county need to be in agreement with how youth are identified and treated. Informants believe that if everyone viewed CSE youth as victims entitled to certain protections, this framing of the issue could help destigmatize CSE for those youth who need help and promote a shared approach to supporting them. Developing a shared understanding of CSE across these key institutions and stakeholders has the potential to shift the conversation away from blame and toward rehabilitation.

Multiple agencies and branches of government are tackling the issue of CSE in Alameda County, but a cohesive strategy is lacking**.** For years, Oakland and Alameda County have been at the

forefront of efforts to tackle CSE and support victims. However, different informants indicated that service providers, law enforcement, the juvenile justice system, child welfare system, schools, health care settings and the people in the communities where CSE is taking place need to have better communication and collaboration. In addition, several informants noted that because many of the systems that CSE youth encounter are not Oakland-specific, addressing the issue of CSE youth needs to involve government agencies and stakeholders throughout Alameda County. In recognition of the need for increased collaboration across the county, initiatives borne out of ACDAO and Alameda County Social Services have attempted to create a more coordinated system of addressing CSE needs.

With co-chairs from ACDAO and Oakland Unite, AC United was borne out of a state-wide assessment that indicated that a council serving these functions was a best practice to combat CSE. However, according to informants, this effort has not yet fulfilled its purpose. Informants recommended that the council needs representation and commitment from key stakeholders in the community, and strong leadership to keep a large and diverse group of members focused on core objectives. Maintaining a consistent, ongoing schedule of meetings is also important.

One informant also noted the importance of having representation from the City of Oakland in discussions with the child welfare–led steering committee that is working to address the issue of CSE countywide. This committee provides a response protocol for CSE youth, as many are eligible for social services. The informant expressed the view that City government should be involved in the development and implementation of the plan, especially due to the need for coordination between law enforcement (at the city level) and child welfare (at the county level).

IV. CONCLUSION

In this report, we describe the implementation of Oakland Unite's CSE youth intervention sub-strategy. In summary, we offer the following key findings:

Agencies serve the intended population of girls and young women of color with a history of victimization, contact with law enforcement, and school disengagement. The profile of participants was consistent with other research on CSE youth, suggesting that agencies are serving the intended population. Participants' first reported victimization frequently preceded their first arrest and occurred by age 14, yet youth were more likely to come to services after an arrest than after a victimization incident.

Agencies are following many best practices in their work. Although Oakland Unite is still developing shared standards of practice, the CSE youth intervention agencies are already implementing many best practices. For example, all agencies have a shared understanding of the CSE youth population, which is grounded in the expertise and lived experience of providers. Staff commonly referred to the Stages of Change model as a way to understand participants' readiness for change and described using an approach they termed "meet them where they are," which is consistent with harm reduction. In addition, the agencies have a flexible open-door policy that allows youth to return for services as needed.

Although the services offered by Oakland Unite agencies focus on short-term crisis response, many youth return for support over time. Almost half of participants receive support over multiple service periods. Participants' engagement with services spikes every few weeks, with participants returning and receiving a higher intensity of services from time to time. These patterns suggest that a subset of youth build a continuum of care by returning to the agencies as needed after their initial crisis has been addressed.

The sub-strategy's expanded age eligibility will allow agencies support TAY, who have been an underserved group with different needs. TAY appear less likely to be in a moment of crisis when they come to services and are perceived to be further along in the Stages of Change continuum. Despite exhibiting greater readiness to make a change in their lives, however, they often are too old to receive needed support services. In addition, they tend to have different needs related to housing, employment, and child care than younger participants. Oakland Unite's decision to expand CSE services to TAY should offer opportunities to serve these older youth.

CSE youth's unmet needs include mental health support; stable relationships with caring adults; and safe, stable housing. Oakland Unite agencies focus on helping youth through crisis response and stabilization, which are the first two tiers of the California Department of Social Services' recommended three-tiered response to support CSEC. However, the last tier—ongoing support—may not be addressed. The unmet needs that were identified may require longer-term care and relationship building, either through Oakland Unite or other partners.

Despite strong collaboration within the sub-strategy, there is room for more cross-referrals as well as greater collaboration with other Oakland Unite strategies. Although the sub-

strategy is designed to meet different needs of CSE youth, only 13 percent of participants received services from more than one CSE youth intervention agency. A larger share received services from another Oakland Unite sub-strategy (21 percent), but most were minors who participated in life coaching at MISSSEY. In addition to expanding cross-referrals, there may be other opportunities to increase collaboration between the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy and other efforts by Oakland Unite to prevent and interrupt violence, given that both are interrelated. However, this collaboration may require first developing a shared understanding of CSE youth across the network.

Although agencies serving CSE youth have a shared understanding of the population, the broader violence prevention community does not have a standard identification process. Despite efforts from HEAT Watch, WCCC, and other agencies to develop protocols and tools to help youth-serving adults identify signs of CSE, the process of identifying and referring youth at risk of or experiencing CSE does not appear to be standardized in Oakland. As referrals broaden beyond law enforcement, it may become even more important for Oakland Unite agencies across all strategies to have shared identification criteria.

Multiple agencies and branches of government are tackling the issue of CSE in Alameda County, but a cohesive strategy is lacking. Although initiatives borne out of ACDAO and Alameda County Social Services have attempted to create a more coordinated system of addressing CSE youth needs, the county has not yet achieved a cohesive strategy for identifying and serving CSE youth. Different informants indicated that stakeholders need to have better communication and collaboration.

Considerations for the future

Based on these findings, we offer some considerations for Oakland Unite to continue to improve program services:

Continue to develop standards of practice for CSE youth intervention agencies. Although each agency provides different services, shared standards of practice, including a standardized identification tool, could help ensure they each consistently draw from evidence-based practices in providing support to CSE youth. This could include using the Stages of Change model not only to identify where youth lie on the continuum but also to develop a response plan for youth who exhibit different levels of readiness for change, as GEMS and ACT do. Approaches could also include elements from harm reduction and motivational interviewing. Oakland Unite is already working with Bright Research Group to develop standards of practice and a training plan for the network that covers many of these topics.

Support agencies in collecting additional participant data that can be used for continuous improvement. Currently, limited information is collected systematically on the needs and outcomes of participants. Agencies could begin collecting data on risk factors and meaningful short-term outcomes, such as changes in self-reported attitudes and social-emotional skills or achievement of participant goals related to housing and other needs. Collecting data when

participants first begin services and throughout their engagement with the agencies could help them assess their effectiveness to better serve youth.

Continue to integrate CSE and other gender-based violence responses into broader violence prevention efforts. Oakland Unite could foster stronger connections between CSE-focused agencies and Oakland Unite agencies focused on other types of community violence. This work has already begun with the development of an expanded gender-based violence strategy in fiscal year 2019–2020 and the identification of training needs across the network with Bright Research Group. A next step toward fostering these stronger connections could be to define, across strategies, what CSE is, how to identify CSE youth, and how to respond appropriately to those involved on all sides of exploitation. These efforts could also include encouraging more cross-referrals with Oakland Unite life coaching and EESS, particularly for serving TAY needs.

Promote a shared understanding of CSE youth identification and response across the county through advocacy, protocols, training, and research. Beyond Oakland Unite, creating an infrastructure where there is "no wrong door" means that all stakeholders who come in contact with youth need to be able to identify those at risk and connect them with appropriate services. Taking an active role in AC United is one way for Oakland Unite to promote a consistent understanding of the problem and a cohesive strategy to combat CSE.

In Los Angeles and Multnomah Counties, developing a single response protocol and training a large number of staff have been core to the response model. Both counties also emphasized working closely with child welfare, schools, and hospitals, in addition to law enforcement, to create formal referral structures. Multnomah County in particular has worked to ensure that both minors and TAY have access to a full continuum of care and housing. Although Oakland Unite has focused on short-term responses, there may be opportunities to raise awareness, as well as additional funds, for longer-term needs under the new Department of Violence Prevention.

Finally, part of developing a shared understanding of CSE youth could involve promoting more data sharing and research. Currently, data on CSE youth are collected by various stakeholders, including Oakland Unite, ACDAO's SafetyNet, OUSD, and the Assessment Center. However, there has been little linking and analysis of these data to date, even though they could assist in assessing the scope of youth CSE in the area as well as identifying predictive factors. As data sharing requires legal and technical capacity to develop agreements, processes, and analyses, it could be helpful to identify an overseeing agency for this effort, such as the HEAT Institute, the new Department of Violence Prevention, or the Alameda County Public Health Department, which already has a data and research team.

Areas for future research

We see several areas for additional research and analysis that could support Oakland Unite in understanding and improving program effectiveness in the coming years. Although relatively limited rigorous research exists overall on services for CSE youth, this is especially true for short-term crisis intervention and stabilization services compared to more intensive programs. To

assess the effectiveness of these services, we recommend identifying and collecting relevant outcomes that are expected to change among participants in the short run, including self-reported attitudes, feelings of safety, and plans for the future. We also recommend assessing implementation fidelity once shared standards of practice have been developed. Implementation fidelity is an important complement to effectiveness research, as it helps programs identify what is being evaluated and interpret the results. A different vein of research that could take advantage of existing administrative data would be to conduct predictive analytics to identify the factors that predict CSE among local youth and thus inform responses before youth come into contact with law enforcement.

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Appendix A:

Additional information on CSE policy and programs

In Appendix A, we offer additional detailed information on the CSE policy context and provide examples of related efforts and promising programs in other parts of the country.

State, county, and city policy contexts

In 2006, the state passed the California Trafficking Victims Protection Act (CTVPA), which required the Attorney General to prioritize CSEC, made human trafficking a felony, provided avenues for victims to receive damages, and created a statewide taskforce on the issue (Walker 2013). In 2012, the California Against Slavery and Exploitation (CASE) Act, also known as Prop 35, strengthened exploiter penalties and victims' court defense capabilities, while also requiring human trafficking response trainings for law enforcement, although the state did not impose any penalties for agencies that neglected to provide training (Alrabe and Stover 2018; Walker 2013). Subsequent legislation further improved CSEC protections in court testimony and outside the juvenile justice system through child welfare, replaced group homes with short-term residential treatment centers, and created funding channels for CSEC support efforts (Alrabe and Stover 2018; Walker 2013). Most recently, California passed a safe harbor law, Senate Bill 1322, which took effect in 2017 and prohibits arrests of minors younger than 18 on prostitution, loitering, or solicitation charges.

Within Alameda County, HEAT Watch has served as a hub for efforts to develop a coordinated response to supporting CSEC through "a five-point collaborative strategy" (HEAT Watch 2019). The initiative's five components are: (1) robust community engagement, (2) training for and sensitization of law enforcement, (3) vigorous prosecution, (4) education of and advocacy with policy makers, and (5) wraparound services for victim and survivors. This blueprint has become a nationally recognized, award-winning model for responding to the needs of human trafficking victims.

The HEAT Watch umbrella includes a number of programs. ACDAO also created the Bay Area HEAT Coalition, a network of system, community, and service provider stakeholders that share practices for addressing human trafficking, and the HEAT Institute, which has identified gaps in data and research and produced trauma-informed protocols for law enforcement agencies, emergency departments, and clinics in Alameda County to use in identifying signs of CSE youth. Under HEAT Watch is also the Young Women's Saturday Program, a 16-week aftercare and youth development course aimed at teaching young women self-reliance following exploitation.

Another notable program created under HEAT Watch is SafetyNet, a weekly, multidisciplinary case review of youth who have been exploited or are at risk of exploitation following initial involvement with the juvenile justice system. SafetyNet meetings include 15 agencies that interact with CSEC and at-risk youth, including BAWAR and MISSSEY. Agency representatives work together to connect youth to services and resources that meet their individual needs. As part of SafetyNet, ACDAO maintains a database of CSE youth with information from the different agencies involved. ACPD has also partnered with MISSSEY and WCCC to counsel CSEC who are in juvenile hall and worked with BAWAR to administer a victim assessment.

County-level efforts like HEAT Watch, AC United, and others have been complemented by past initiatives led by city agencies. In 2013, the Oakland City Council passed a resolution convening the CSEC Task Force, a collaborative comprised of organizations that work with victims of sex trafficking. The task force included elected officials and representatives from public safety agencies, service providers, OUSD, and advocate organizations, and has since been incorporated into AC United to represent the needs of Oakland. Recommendations from the task force in 2016 included expanding housing and placement options for children and TAY and requiring that all City employees participate in CSE trainings (City of Oakland CSEC Task Force 2016). Training for all public-facing City employees was completed in September 2019. OUSD also convened a CSEC Task Force in 2011, which brought together school administrators and community service agencies to provide trainings on child trafficking to school employees. Most recently, the district began tracking data on students suspected of or confirmed of being sexually exploited and developed a response protocol involving county, city, and nonprofit collaborations, including required referrals to MISSSEY.

Related efforts in other regions

Other jurisdictions nationwide have demonstrated a similar commitment to confronting and eradicating commercial sexual exploitation. We highlight key aspects of coordinated CSEC efforts in Los Angeles County, California, and Multnomah County, Oregon.

Los Angeles County, California

Los Angeles County's approach to CSE prevention is coordinated by the Los Angeles County CSEC Integrated Leadership Team, which was founded in 2015 to bring together key stakeholders and connect CSEC with the services they need. Both the Los Angeles County Probation Department and the county's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) have specialized CSEC units with lower caseloads, regularly scheduled multidisciplinary team meetings for CSEC, and specialized CSE courts (Dierkhising et al. 2018). The Succeeding through Achievement and Resilience Court serves probation-involved youth in a manner similar to Alameda County's SafetyNet. In addition, the Dedication to Restoration through Empowerment, Advocacy, and Mentoring Court serves CSEC who fall under the DCFS's jurisdiction. After being identified as CSEC, they are connected with an advocate from a community-based victim advocacy agency contracted by the court who meets with youth regularly and attends these weekly multidisciplinary team meetings. This community-based advocate helps guide CSEC victims through the web of agencies and refers them to other service providers.

Understanding that many county officials may come into contact with CSEC and have the opportunity to refer them to services, the CSEC Integrated Leadership Team emphasizes identification and response training for all county employees. As of 2017, around 12,000 county probation officers, social workers, schools, and other providers were trained in CSEC response (Plaza 2017). In 2013, Los Angeles County developed the First Responder Protocol for CSEC, a set of trauma-informed response guidelines for the first 72 hours following law enforcement identification of a potential CSEC victim (Ackerman-Brimberg et al. 2018). Within the first 90

minutes of contact, law enforcement officers are expected to assess and address urgent medical needs of victims and transport them to a staging agency, where they are connected with a community-based advocate and representatives from the probation and DCFS teams described earlier. The advocate provides clothes and food and takes the child for a medical exam. Over the next 72 hours, a safety plan is developed by a multidisciplinary team, and next steps are taken to ensure the youth is connected with longer-term support systems. This protocol helps ensure that youth do not fall through the cracks.

Most recently, Los Angeles County is working to expand housing options for CSEC. Although some funding already exists in the county to provide housing to youth identified as CSEC, the county identified a shortage of dedicated housing. More than a third of minors and TAY who were victims of sex trafficking and served in 2018 by the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (a core service provider for CSE victims in Los Angeles) reported that they were also experiencing homelessness (Office of Supervisor Hilda Solis 2019). County departments are working to develop a plan to create more housing placement options and provide supports for youth identified as CSEC or at risk of exploitation. The county has also recently expanded housing options for youth in the foster care and probation systems.

Multnomah County, Oregon

Collaboration and coordination are the central tenets of Multnomah County's CSEC response. In 2009 the county established the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Steering Committee under a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The committee meets quarterly, at a minimum, to provide structure for a diverse and comprehensive set of stakeholders to take stock of the state of CSEC and identify gaps in service provision. Collaborating agencies include law enforcement, the Oregon Department of Human Services CSEC Unit, the Multnomah District Attorney's Office, and a broad array of victim service providers. The Committee's "no wrong door" philosophy and clearly defined roles and responsibilities emphasize referrals across all agencies, aiming to ensure that youth encountering *any* partner agency will be brought into a full continuum of care provided by partner agencies (CSEC Steering Committee 2012).

The Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC) serves as a key connection between victims and partner agencies when they come into contact with CSEC. This role ensures that victims receive the same supports, regardless of whether they were first identified by law enforcement, human services, or another agency. SARC provides around-the-clock crisis response resources, has a drop-in center, and operates two long-term case management programs: the Survivors Together Reaching Your Dreams Empowerment (STRYDE) program for youth ages 12 to 18 and the Resilient Young Adult Survivor Empowerment (RYSE) program for TAY ages 18 to 25. SARC also assists in connecting victims with partner agencies depending on youths' needs and provides opportunities for peer connection and community building via regularly scheduled group activities. Both programs use a survivor-to-leader model guided by a strengths-based philosophy that values the capacity, knowledge, and potential of victims. Each month, SARC supports more than 80 youth and young adult survivors (Nedeau et al. 2017).

In addition, emergency and long-term residential support for youth ages 14 to 21 are provided by Janus Youth Program's Athena House, and LifeWorks Northwest operates an intensive mental health and substance abuse treatment program for both CSEC and TAY. To ensure that these services constitute a full continuum of care for CSEC victims, the Steering Committee also has a Victim Service Advisory Committee (VSAC) made up of direct service providers that meets monthly to assess any gaps or areas of improvement (Ohlsen 2015). Multnomah County recognized that TAY often age out of crucial support systems, which requires efforts to expand services for TAY. The county utilized funding from the Administration for Children and Families Domestic Victims of Human Trafficking grant to expand services for TAY. This effort expanded Janus Youth Program and LifeWorks services for young adults and established the STRYDE program (Krieger et al 2018).

Promising programs for supporting CSEC

Programs to support CSEC victims can take a variety of forms. In a meta-analysis of available literature, Moynihan et al. (2018) identified five main categories of services: (1) health or social services, (2) intensive case management models, (3) psychoeducational therapy groups, (4) residential programs, and (5) other types (examples include a drop-in alternative school program and a cash-transfer program). Oakland Unite CSEC agencies, like many other programs, provide services that fall into multiple categories. Research on the effectiveness of programs serving CSEC populations is limited, however. In Moynihan et al.'s meta-analysis, only eight studies included comparison groups. DuBois and Felner (2016) also highlighted a lack of research with sufficiently large sample sizes and reliable outcome data in their meta-analysis of mentoring programs for CSEC populations. Despite these limitations, a number of programs are evidence-based and/or demonstrate promising results (Table A.1).

Table A.1. Summary of promising programs for CSE youth

Runaway Intervention Program (RIP)	RIP operates in conjunction with the hospital-based Child Advocacy Center in Minnesota to serve runaway girls with a history of sexual exploitation. The program employs advanced practice nurses to provide case management and utilizes girl empowerment groups and home visits to help promote healthier relationships, mental health, and behavioral health. The intervention lasts up to 12 months and includes participants spending three hours weekly with a therapist. A study found that participants demonstrated improvements in familial relations compared to abused girls from a comparison group after 6 months (Saewyc and Edinburgh 2010). By the 12-month follow up, RIP participants were no longer statistically different from a sample of non-abused girls in drug use and sexual risk behaviors and had lower rates than the non-abused girls of suicide ideation and attempts. Girls with lower levels of self-esteem and family connectedness and higher levels of emotional distress at baseline showed the greatest improvements.
Girls Educational and Mentoring Services (GEMS)	GEMS provides a variety of supports, including crisis care, case management, education services, youth development, and transitional and supportive housing (GEMS 2019). The organization incorporates guiding principles from the fields of domestic violence, positive youth development, gender-specific programming, and addiction into their programs. GEMS hires survivors to mentor youth and trains them to employ transformational relationship practices as delineated by the Roca intervention model using a range of methods, including motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral therapy. The organization also uses an adapted version of the Prochaska and DiClemente (1983) Stages of Change transtheoretical model to tailor their approach according to the stage where youth find themselves. For example, if a youth is in the pre-contemplation stage, the goals are to help them develop a reason for changing, validate their experience, encourage self-exploration, and leave the door open for future conversations. No evaluations of GEMS exist at this time.
My Life My Choice	My Life My Choice is a well-established CSEC support program in Massachusetts that has shown promising early evaluation results (My Life My Choice 2018). Program participants are paired with survivor mentors and receive intensive case management, community leadership and engagement opportunities, and specialized clinical and substance abuse recovery support. Youth are expected to build meaningful relationships with their survivor mentors, who meet with them weekly for one to two hours, traveling to see them wherever they are placed. Youth cannot age out of the program and can continue to access their mentor as long as they choose. Preliminary before-and-after results found that program participants were five times less likely to report being commercially sexually exploited after completing one year of the program and also reported a decrease in drug use and an increase in social support and coping skills.
Acknowledge, Commit, Transform (ACT)	ACT serves youth in Massachusetts through intensive and long-term residential treatment, pairing counseling with My Life My Choice survivor mentoring. To improve participant retention, ACT changed its service model to focus on girls who both self-reported sexual exploitation and demonstrated a willingness to commit to changing their lives according to the Stages of Change model. These benchmarks, along with readiness to adjust to life in a group home, are assessed by a motivational interview at intake. If girls are not deemed ready, they can be entered into a nonresidential program to help prepare them for ACT. This transition led to a 78 percent decrease in unplanned discharges compared to earlier iterations of the program (Thompson et al 2011). Of those who did have a planned discharge, the majority were still in a safe environment three months later. Thomson et al. (2011) also found that the residential aspect of the program helped girls stay put and provided structure in a homelike environment.
Seeking Safety	Seeking Safety is a counseling model to help people attain safety from trauma /or substance abuse. Although this model is not exclusively focused on CSE youth, strong evidence exists of its effectiveness. Based on a meta-analysis of 12 quasi-experimental or experimental studies, Lenz et al. (2016) found that the program was effective in decreasing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse for a broad range of individuals. In a randomized controlled trial specifically focused on adolescent girls, the program was effective in improving a variety of mental health outcomes (Najavits et al. 2006). The Seeking Safety program is designed to be integrated with other treatments and can be implemented in an individual or a group format. The program consists of 25 sessions but can be adapted to focus on a subset of those sessions if counselors have fewer than 25 sessions to work with individuals.

Appendix B:

Additional information on data sources

This report is based on qualitative and quantitative analyses of multiple data sources. We discuss both the qualitative and administrative data sources in this appendix. All data collection procedures were reviewed and approved by the Health Media Lab Institutional Review Board.

Qualitative data

The qualitative component of this report included primary data collection through a participant survey, site visits, interviews with agency staff, and a review of materials provided by Oakland Unite and collected during site visits.

Survey data

The purpose of the survey data collection was to gather information about Oakland Unite directly from strategy participants. The general topics of study included experiences and satisfaction with services, importance of agency characteristics, thoughts about the future, experiences with violence, and demographic characteristics. Before the survey was administered, it was pretested with former Oakland Unite participants in two strategies. The pretest focused on respondents' understanding of questions, difficulty of answering, and the time required for completion. Based on this pretest, the survey was revised and the final version was translated into Spanish.

The surveys were fielded with participants at each agency during September and October 2018. Survey administration was typically conducted on two back-to-back days where any Oakland Unite participant who visited that agency on one of the days was asked to complete a survey. Due to the differences in services provided and the number of participants at each agency, some sites delayed the start of data collection or included additional days. Nearly all surveys were conducted using a paper copy of the survey, with 5 percent of respondents electing to use a web version. The survey took approximately five minutes to complete. As no identifying information was included on the survey, all responses were anonymous. In total, 28 participants completed a survey across the three CSE youth intervention agencies. Because the number of surveys varied by agency, the responses were weighted proportional to the number of completed surveys at each agency. This means that each agency contributed equally to the sub-strategy averages regardless of the number of participants who completed a survey.

Site visits and interviews

The purpose of the site visits and interviews was to gather information about Oakland Unite strategy implementation from agency staff. The general topics of study included participant engagement, program implementation, program progress and tracking, collaboration networks, and successes and challenges. Site visits took place in winter 2017 and summer 2019. During each visit, Mathematica staff conducted semistructured interviews with grantee staff members, including managers and frontline staff. Across the two years, we conducted 21 interviews at the three agencies providing services in the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy, plus 6 additional key informant interviews with stakeholders in policy and advocacy, law enforcement, community health, and coalition-building (Table B.1).

Table B.1. Site visit and interview summary

Data collection period	Site visits conducted	Director or program manager interviews	Frontline staff interviews	Key informant interviews
Winter 2018	3	3	9	0
Summer 2019	3	3	6	6

At each site, we interviewed site directors or managers for approximately 45 to 60 minutes, focusing on topics such as defining and reaching the program's target population, program performance measures, and staffing. Interviews with frontline staff members at each site were typically 30 to 45 minutes and focused on participant engagement, service provision, and program data. For agencies with grants across multiple strategies, we interviewed frontline staff members for each strategy. For key informant interviews, we conducted phone calls that were typically 30 to 60 minutes long.

Interview protocols included a set of topics, with questions varying depending on which type of respondent was interviewed. The protocols also included targeted questions about the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy, which asked about best practices specific to it and additional details about services and outcomes. The interviews were semistructured, meaning the evaluation team asked the same questions during each interview, but responses were open-ended and the interviewer had flexibility to probe for details or clarification in the responses. During the site visits, a note taker recorded responses in a standardized template, which linked the responses to specific interview questions and to broader topics for analysis. The evaluation team analyzed responses across interviewees within the site and across agencies within the same sub-strategy. The goals were to highlight key themes about the implementation of the sub-strategy and to identify similarities and differences between agencies.

In addition to site visits and key informant interviews, the evaluation team reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite staff and collected directly from agencies during the site visits. The documents included the scope of work statement, agency budgets, quarterly reports, and intake forms. We used this information to better understand the types of services offered by each agency as well as their benchmarks and performance measures.

Although the qualitative data provided rich information about the agencies and the Oakland Unite program, this evaluation approach has some limitations. In particular, the participant surveys were done with a convenience sample of clients who happened to be on-site, or with clients specifically selected for participation by the agency, so their responses may not reflect the experiences of all clients. As with all data from interviews, particularly those including sensitive topics, a potential for social desirability bias also exists, as staff may provide responses that reflect favorably upon themselves. Although we specifically informed each interviewee that their answers would be kept confidential and would have no impact on their employment or the agency's participation in Oakland Unite, respondents may still have felt that negative responses could have repercussions. We designed our site visit procedures to minimize the potential for this

bias, including interviewing in private spaces and emphasizing the confidential nature of the research in the consent language, but we cannot rule out the effect of these factors in the results.

Administrative data

The quantitative analyses in this report used administrative data from Oakland Unite, the Oakland Police Department, the Alameda County Police Department, the Oakland Unified School District, and the Alameda County Office of Education that were linked together (Table B.2).

Table B.2. Administrative data sources

Data source	Total number of individual records retrieved	Date range
Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE)	1,492	August 1, 2014, to June 30, 2018
Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD)	23,377	January 1, 2010, to December 31, 2018
Oakland Unite Cityspan data	8,631	January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2018
Oakland Police Department (OPD) arrest incidents	76,630	January 1, 2006, to December 31, 2018
Oakland Police Department (OPD) victimization incidents	392,680	January 1, 2006, to December 31, 2018
Oakland Unified School District (OUSD)	82,028	August 1, 2010, to June 30, 2018

Oakland Unite data

All Oakland Unite agencies are required to maintain administrative records in a common database managed by Cityspan. Agencies use the database to record service contacts and hours, milestones reached, incentives received, referral sources, and demographic and risk information about each participant. The data extract we received from Cityspan included participants who received services between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018. Although some individuals may have begun participating in Oakland Unite in the prior year, we did not have information about any services they received before January 1, 2016.

Between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2018, 69 percent of the 564 participants in the CSE youth intervention sub-strategy consented to share their personal information for evaluation purposes. Accordingly, Cityspan did not provide names, dates of birth, or addresses for participants who did not consent. Although nonconsenting participants are included in most descriptive statistics about Oakland Unite, they are excluded from any analyses of victimization, arrests, probation, and schooling because these analyses require identifying information so participants can be linked to outside records.

OPD data

OPD provided data on arrests and victimization incidents that occurred between January 1, 2006, and December 31, 2018. The arrest data included information about each arrest incident, including its location, statute code, and Uniform Crime Reporting statute category code, as well

as information about the arrestee, including name, date of birth, address, and demographics. The victimization data included similar information for each incident involving a victim of a crime. We used the Uniform Crime Reporting statute categories and statute codes to determine each arrest or victimization incident's type. For example, we classified incidents by whether they involved a gun or other weapon, public order, property, drugs, a violent offense, or a violation of probation. For victimization incidents, we also identified a broader category of violent incidents, including whether they involved homicide, rape, robbery, assault, offenses against the family and children, prostitution, human trafficking, or sex offenses. For arrest or victimization incidents with multiple offenses, we used the most serious offense to determine the severity.

ACPD data

ACPD provided data on state and local Criminal Offender Record Information for individuals age 13 and older served through the Juvenile Division between 2010 and 2019, and records for individuals ages 18 to 40 served through the Adult Division, including realigned populations, also between 2010 and 2019. The Juvenile Division data files included arrest date and arrested offenses, sustained offenses, disposition, and facility information. These files included juveniles arrested throughout Alameda County, including the City of Oakland. The Adult Division file included only information on sustained offenses for individuals who were on formal probation. The ACPD data was matched to the other data sources using first and last name, date of birth, race and ethnicity, and gender. Mathematica conducted the match on-site at ACPD and removed identifying information from the matched file before conducting the analysis.

OUSD data

OUSD provided data on all individuals enrolled in the district at any point between August 1, 2010, and June 30, 2018. For each academic year, the data included information about the student's school, days enrolled, days absent, days suspended, and academic performance. In addition, the data contained demographic and identifying information about each student.

ACOE data

ACOE provided data on all individuals enrolled in the county's community schools at any point between August 1, 2014, and June 30, 2018. For each academic year, the data included information about the student's days enrolled, days absent, days suspended, and academic performance. In addition, the data contained demographic and identifying information about each student.

Data matching

To conduct the analyses, we needed to link individuals within and across data sets. To conduct these matches, we used an algorithm to assign individuals a unique identifier both within and across data sets. The algorithm used consenting individuals' identifying information, including their first and last name, date of birth, gender, and address, to perform matches. All of these data points did not have to be available or match exactly for records to be matched. Instead, the algorithm was designed to take into account the likelihood that two or more records represented

the same person, even if minor differences existed across records (such as in the spelling of names). The algorithm placed the most weight on name and date of birth but also used gender and address, if available. These weights were carefully calibrated to avoid erroneous matches while still allowing flexibility.

We received 9,700 unique Cityspan IDs in the Oakland Unite data. The matching algorithm identified 8,631 individuals, which reflects that a number of people received services from more than one Oakland Unite agency. However, this number may still overcount the unique individuals served by Oakland Unite, because we were only able to identify participants who received services from more than one agency if they consented to sharing their identifying information for evaluation. Of the 8,631 individuals identified in the Oakland Unite data, we matched 1,780 records to OPD arrest data, 1,627 to OPD victimization data, 1,625 to ACPD data, 1,319 to OUSD data, and 273 to ACOE data; 4,074 did not consent to share their identifying information with evaluators and thus could not be linked to other records.

Data security

Mathematica exercises due care to protect all data provided for this evaluation from unauthorized physical and electronic access. Per our current data-sharing agreements, we do not share identifiable data with Oakland Unite or any other entity. All data are stored in an encrypted project-specific folder in a secure server. Access to this folder is restricted to authorized users through access control lists that require approval from the evaluation's project director. Only staff members who were needed to complete the evaluation objectives were granted access to the restricted data folder; they included three researchers (including the project director) and a lead programmer. These staff members have all completed data security training and background checks and are up to date on Mathematica's data storage and security policies.

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