

SOLANO DISCONNECTED YOUTH RESEARCH

Solano County Workforce Development Board

PREPARED BY



Building a
Future
That Works

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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JFF would like to thank all Solano County residents who participated in our interviews and focus groups.



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Introduction

Disconnected youth—young adults between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not working or in school—represent a sizable, underutilized resource for any community (Burds-Sharpe, 2017). This underutilization carries with it alarming immediate and long-term consequences that negatively impact a community’s economic, workforce, livability, and vitality indexes. For Solano County, California, the population of disconnected youth (8.3 percent of the total population) is significantly higher than the rest of the Bay Area counties, as well as the state (7.7 percent) and national (6.9 percent) averages (United Way, 2018).

Youth who are classified as disconnected are often on the fringe of traditional supportive services. This situation becomes more acute if available services only minimally address the specific needs of disconnected youth—and more acute still if they do not address those needs at all. Minimal social support results in disconnected youth experiencing negative economic and social outcomes at higher rates than other high-risk populations (Fernandes-Alcantara, 2015).

What lies at the heart of youth disconnection is not always easy to identify. But a better understanding of the characteristics of this subpopulation would assist Solano County leaders, notably the Workforce Development Board of Solano County, in developing and reinforcing essential community and countywide services that will promote and sustain the reengagement of this subpopulation.

Definition of Disconnection

For the purposes of this report, we define disconnected youth as any individual between the ages of 16 and 24 who is not employed and not in school working toward a credential. This includes, though is not limited to, youth who received a high school diploma but who are classified as in poverty or low-income, youth who have been or are currently in the state's foster care system or juvenile justice system, and youth who are homeless. The core elements of this working definition align appropriately with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) definition of Out-of-School Youth and is aligned with the terminology used in the WIOA Plans for the State of California and the Workforce Development Board of Solano County ("the Board").

Overview of Solano County Supportive, Education, and Workforce Services

Solano County offers services for disconnected youth through the county departments of Health and Social Services, Mental Health Services, Probation, Behavioral Health, and Family Violence Prevention via case management, vocational upskilling, and education reengagement programs. The Board also

leverages WIOA funding to provide a variety of educational assistive, career exploration, and career development supports through programs such as the Career in Focus Program for Young Adults, Pathways to Success, and Solano Employment Connection.

Community, adult, and continuation schools within Solano County also provide disconnected youth with service and program opportunities to complete secondary education and to acquire employment and vocational skills. In addition, certain nonprofits in Solano County offer afterschool programs and youth development services, while family service centers provide wraparound supports through direct referral channels via schools and county departments. While capacity cannot meet demand (Learning for Action, 2018), directors of these organizations report positive outcomes (i.e., program completion rates) for students who are involved both voluntarily and involuntarily, and youth we interviewed in focus groups noted that they recommended or referred friends to these programs based on trusting relationships with adults in charge.

Overview of Approach Taken

A mixed-method approach, incorporating a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection, was used to look at the characteristics and factors surrounding youth in Solano County who classify as disconnected. Complementary to this data collection, we conducted a literature review to study the characteristics and factors leading to youth becoming disconnected. Sources included county-, state-, and national-level organizations, such as Measure of America, Brookings, the Congressional Research Service, Burning Glass, the Aspen Institute, and United Way.

In addition to the literature review, we also conducted 17 interviews with administrators and staff affiliated with county public agencies and community-

based organizations, and two focus groups with high-risk youth. One focus group involved youth between the ages of 16 and 18, while the other involved foster youth between the ages of 20 and 24.

The quantitative data collection incorporated data from the local, county, state, and national levels. Data included poverty level, levels of educational attainment, median household income, unemployment rate, and much more and were drawn from various data collection sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau, KidsData, and other government sources. To analyze the distribution and location of certain supportive services and community factors in the county, we also performed geographic information system (GIS) mapping utilizing PolicyMap.



Overview of Findings

As mentioned previously, Solano County reports a higher rate of youth disconnection (8.3 percent) than state and national percentages. More urban cities in the county, Vallejo and Fairfield in particular, contain higher concentrations of disconnected youth than more rural cities. Data on this subpopulation can be incomplete, and this is the case for Solano County. Data from Dixon and Rio Vista remained spotty or nonexistent. Collected data on disconnected youth did show high concentrations of female, African American, Latino, and Filipino youth between the ages of 21 and 24. In rural agricultural towns with reported data, many disconnected youth came from Latino communities.

FINDINGS

Based on the findings, four influential factors related to the understanding and servicing of disconnected youth in Solano County emerged. These are:

- 1. K-14 Education and High School Equivalency:** Coordination of education programs and services pertaining to credential attainment, as well as student retention, transition, and matriculation, is not strong and at times is spotty. This is especially challenging for youth in more rural locales.
- 2. Education and Employment Training:** While there are a variety of education-to-employment assistive services being offered in the county, largely through the Board and WIOA-funded organizations' participation, retention and completion rates of high-risk and disconnected youth within these programs are still low.
- 3. Economic Impactors: Stable Housing and Public Transportation:** Affordable permanent housing and public transportation options are insufficient and at times unattainable for disconnected youth in the county. As noted elsewhere, these become more challenging for youth in more rural areas.
- 4. Supportive Services:** Though supportive services are available through nonprofits and WIOA-funded organizations, the need for services outstrips capacity. In some cases, particularly in more rural areas, there are no meaningful supportive services for disconnected youth to access.

Overview of Recommendations

Influenced by the study's findings and the four emerging factors, the report offers related recommendations for the Board's consideration. These recommendations call attention to the need for stronger coordination among community and agency leaders to leverage existing programs, services, and funds in order to expand the reach of the county's and Board's priorities for youth who are disconnected currently.

The recommendations also acknowledge that, though there are short-term approaches that can be taken, greater transformational work will require a long-term perspective and commitment by the Board's leadership. In short, funding specific programs or providing supportive services vouchers to the exclusion of a

long-term strategic approach will not resolve the longstanding issues confronting Solano County's disconnected youth. Given the Board's mission and goals, as cited in its WIOA Local Plan, and complementary plans released by North Bay Employment Connection, the Board is compelled to wield its presence, priorities, and funding influence to convene like-minded public and private entities to develop strategic approaches that address the systemic issues facing disconnected and high-risk youth in Solano County.

In response to these questions, a mixed-methods approach was used, allowing for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. More specifically, the methodology included:



RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND APPROACH

Four leading questions were identified for the study. These questions serve as the basis for the report's findings and recommendations.

1

What are the characteristics of disconnected youth in Solano County?

2

Are there population (sub) groups or geographic areas in Solano County that have higher concentrations of disconnected youth?

3

What factors lead to disconnection among youth in Solano County?

4

What services are currently being offered to disconnected youth in Solano County?

Research Approach

Analysis of Relevant Policy and Research Literature

A high-level review of key research and policies by leading institutions, such as Measure of America and the Brookings Institution, was conducted to assess the different risk factors that lead to youth disconnection. This scan of national- and state-level studies highlighted certain contextual factors, such as gender, race and ethnicity, poverty, caretaking, and institutionalization, which assisted in the characterizing of disconnected youth in Solano County. The review also looked at various programmatic and policy interventions that have been designed to address the needs and challenges of this vulnerable population.

Data Collection and Analysis

Primary and secondary data collection and analysis of youth and general county population demographics were conducted. These demographics included the identification of:

POPULATION

Geographic density and racial and ethnic composition)

SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Educational attainment, employment rates, median household income, and poverty rates

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES

Affordable housing, transportation, and support services.

Data were culled from multiple sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, KidsData, the California Employment Development Department's Labor Market Information Division, the California Department of Education, the California Community College System, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's Division of Juvenile Justice, the Everyone Graduates Center, Measure of America. PolicyMap, which is a geographic information mapping software, was also utilized to layer data geographically.

Asset Mapping

An asset mapping exercise was undertaken to examine various community support services, programs, and strategies, including education and employment training, that are available to disconnected youth. This work included one-on-one interviews with county officials from select departments and agencies (e.g., Child Support Services, Workforce Development Board, Solano Community College, the Office of Education, and the Office of Health and Social Services) and youth-focused organizations (e.g., Solano Youth Coalition, Children’s Network, First Place for Youth). Two youth focus groups—one for ages 16–18, and another for ages 20–24—were conducted.

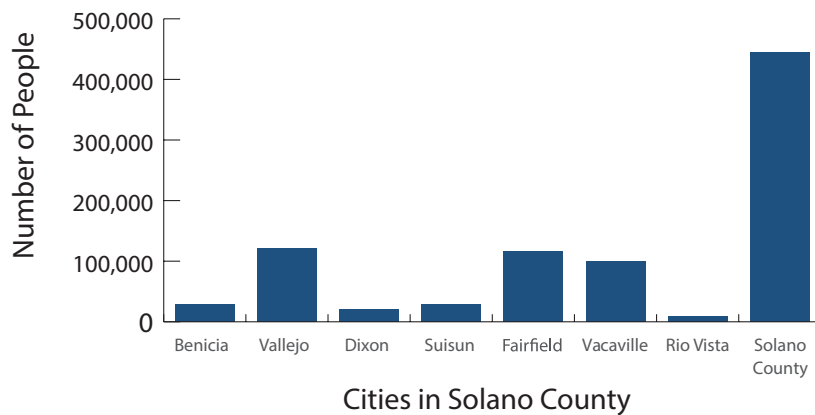


Landscape Analysis of Solano County

Using the questions as backdrop, a landscape analysis was conducted to set context and to frame the report’s findings related to the posed questions.

FIGURE 1: POPULATION OF CITIES IN SOLANO COUNTY

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, QuickFacts, July 2017

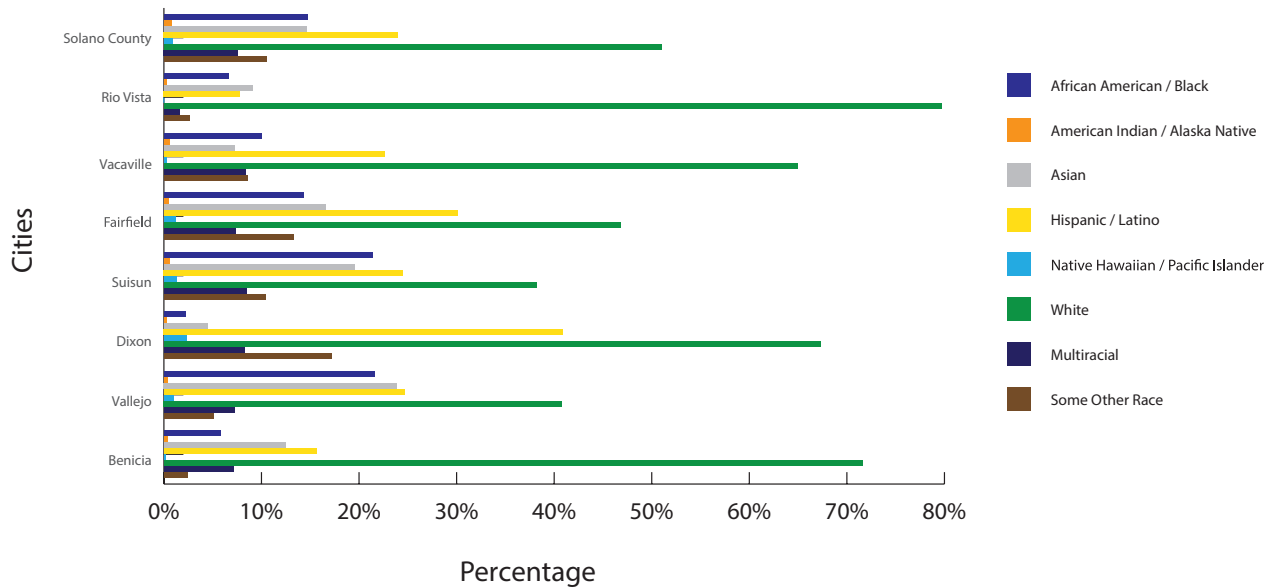


Geographic and School Density

Solano County has a population of a little over 440,000 and is in a period of growth. Presently, Solano County is the 21st most-populated county in California (Data USA, 2018). The population is concentrated largely in the urban centers of Fairfield, Vacaville, and Vallejo, each with a population of about 100,000 (Figure 1). Fairfield and Suisun City share the Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, and Fairfield is home to the main campus of the county’s only community college, Solano Community College. (Solano Community College has centers in Vallejo and Vacaville.) Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District comprises 30 K-12 schools. Vallejo has the second greatest number of K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions, with 26 K-12 schools and the county’s two other postsecondary institutions: California Maritime Academy and Touro University California. Smaller cities, with populations between 9,000 and 30,000, are Suisun City, Benicia (8 schools), Dixon (8 schools), and Rio Vista (7 schools). There are also several rural towns, some with populations below 200.

FIGURE 2: RACIAL AND ETHNIC DEMOGRAPHICS IN SOLANO COUNTY

SOURCE: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



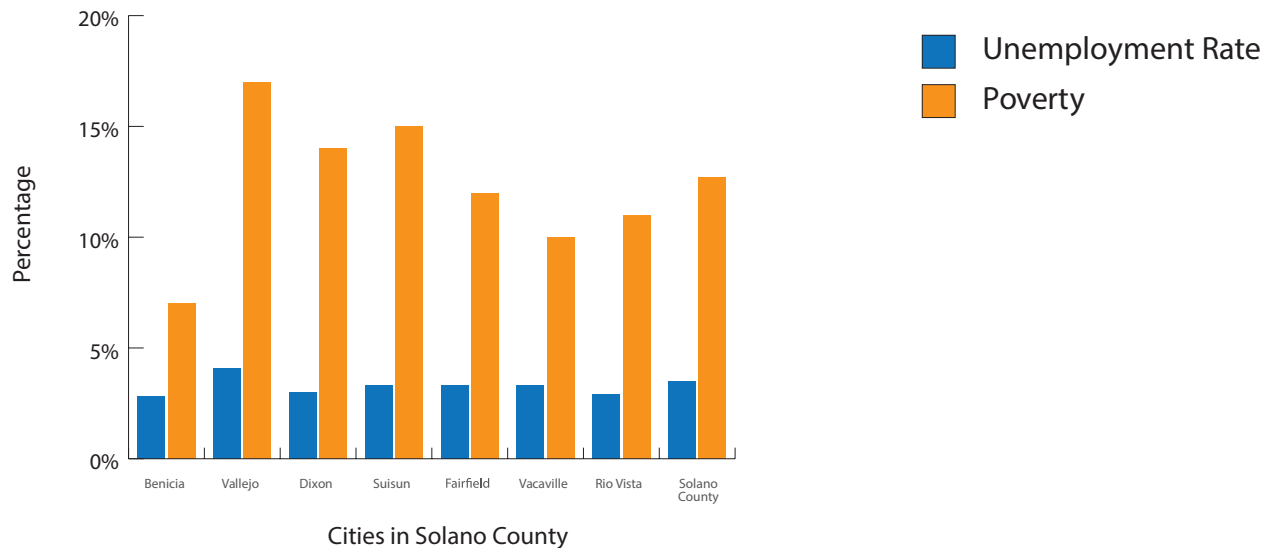
Racial and Ethnic Demographics

Solano County has a diverse population, with Caucasian, Latino, and Asian as its three most common racial/ethnic groups. Over 90 percent of residents are U.S. citizens (Data USA, 2018). The three most common non-English languages in the county are Spanish, Tagalog, and Chinese (Data USA, 2018). While diverse, the demographics of the county differ depending on the city (Figure 2). More rural towns, such as Dixon and Rio Vista, have larger white populations. However, Dixon is also home to the largest Latino population in the county. More metropolitan areas, such as Vallejo, Suisun City, and Fairfield, have larger populations of people of color, with Vallejo having the largest population of African Americans (22.6 percent of the city's total population) and Asians (24 percent).

FIGURE 3: UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY RATES IN SOLANO COUNTY

SOURCES: **Unemployment Rates:** <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/labor-force-and-unemployment-for-cities-and-census-areas.html>

Poverty Rates: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



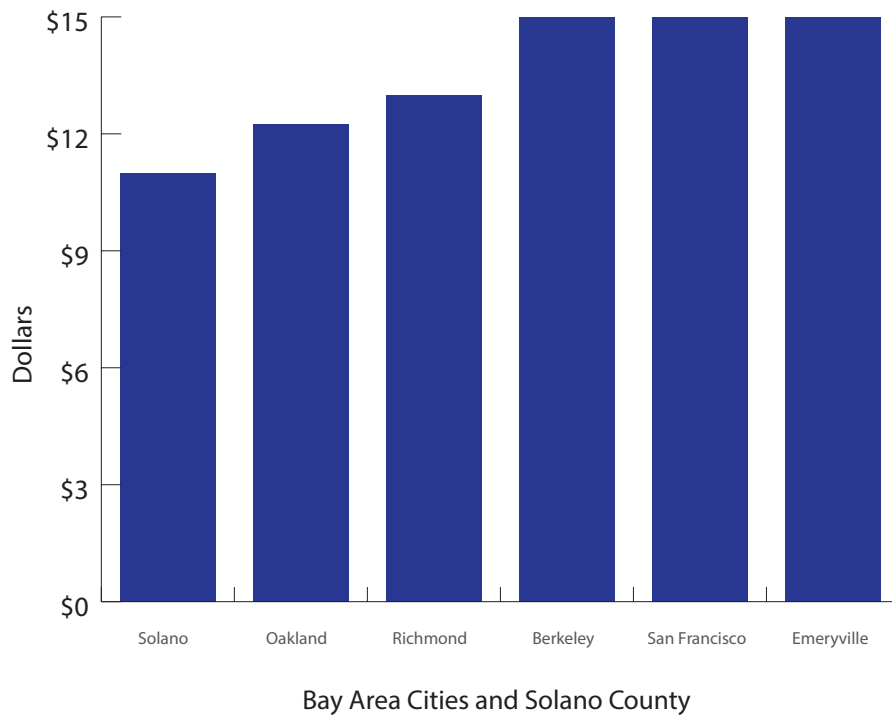
Economic and Employment Factors

The economy of Solano County employs nearly 205,000 people, and total employment grew by 5.76 percent between 2015 and 2016 (Data USA, 2018). According to preliminary figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, countywide unemployment was at 3.6 percent in October 2018, ranging within the county's cities from 2.9 percent in Benicia to 4.4 percent in Vallejo (Figure 3). In comparison to other counties, Solano County has high participation in the BLS occupational categories of Farm, Fishing and Forestry; Fire Fighting Supervisors; and Personal Care and Service (Data USA, 2018).

Similarly, poverty rates vary by city (Figure 3). The countywide average of 12.7 percent is exceeded in Vallejo (16.9 percent), Suisun City (14.8 percent), and Dixon (14 percent); nearly matched by Fairfield (12.1 percent); and bettered in Benicia (7.1 percent), Vacaville (9.9 percent), and Rio Vista (10.6 percent). In comparison to the other Bay Area counties, Solano also has the highest percentage of children living in poverty (United Way, 2018).

FIGURE 4: MINIMUM WAGE IN SELECTED BAY AREA CITIES AND SOLANO COUNTY

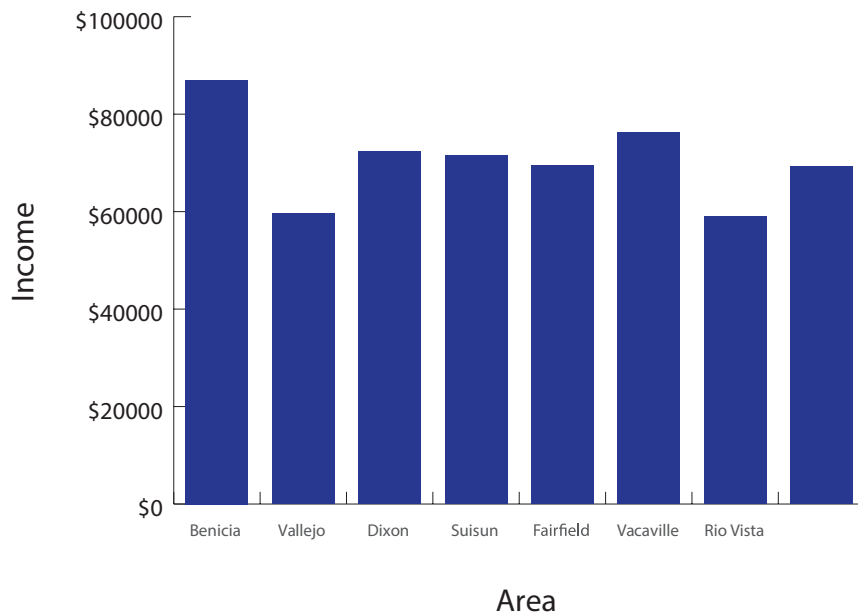
SOURCE: <https://californiapayroll.com/minimum-wage-changes-effective-july-1-2016/><http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06095>



These converse rates (low unemployment, high poverty) result from the general makeup of occupations in the county and the cost of living. In fact, the average minimum wage in Solano County is \$11, which is the current statewide minimum wage, compared with \$13.50 in the Bay Area cities of San Jose, San Mateo, Los Altos, and Cupertino (Figure 4). The highest minimum wage in the area is \$15 in Mountain View (Sciacca, 2017). In an interview with the Solano County Department of Health and Social Services, a director noted Solano County as having “one of the weakest business and nonprofit bases in Northern California ... causing 40 to 44 percent of its population to commute out of the county for work.”

FIGURE 5: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN SOLANO COUNTY

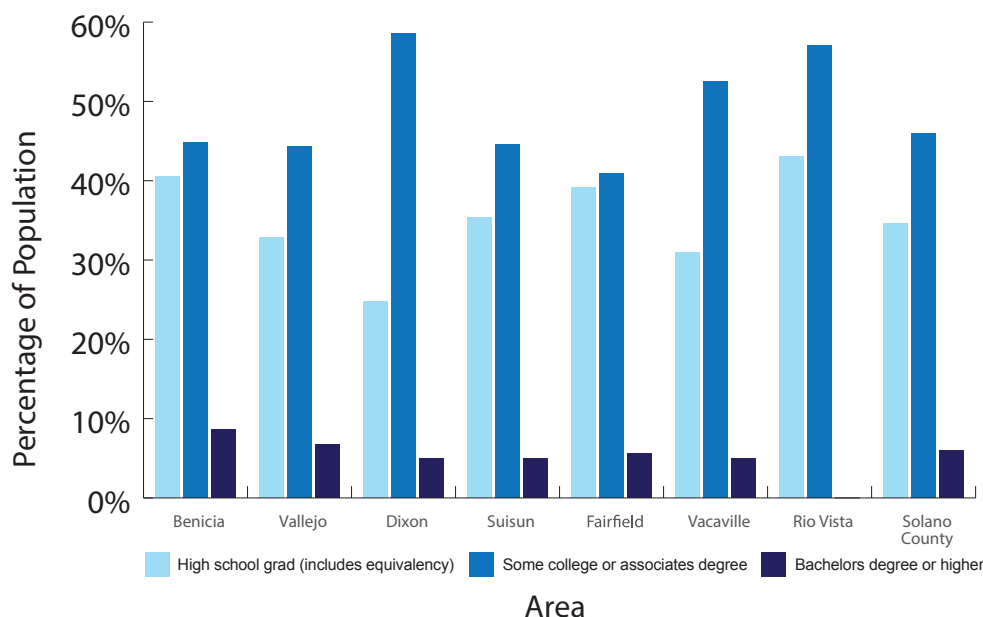
SOURCE: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Additionally, while Solano County's current median household income averages \$69,000, it varies greatly from city to city (Figure 5). Benicia has the highest median household income (\$87,011), while Rio Vista has the lowest (\$59,050). The urban cities of Fairfield and Vallejo have the next-lowest median household incomes, ranging from \$60,000 to \$69,000.

FIGURE 6: EDUCATION ATTAINMENT FOR RESIDENTS BETWEEN 18 AND 24 YEARS OLD IN SOLANO COUNTY

SOURCE: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Education Attainment

Nearly all of the cities in Solano County have a similar concentration of young adults with a bachelor's degree or higher, between 5 and 6 percent, with Benicia as the only exception, at 9 percent (Figure 6). Benicia, Fairfield, and Rio Vista have the highest percentages of high school diploma attainment for residents ages 18 to 24 years old (around 40 percent). In Vallejo, Suisun City, and Vacaville, the percentages of high school graduates fall closer to the county average of roughly 35 percent. Dixon has the lowest percentage of high school graduates between the ages of 18 and 24, but it has the highest percentage of residents with some postsecondary education or an associate's degree. More notably, however, Rio Vista reports no individuals between 18 and 24 years old possessing a bachelor's degree or higher.



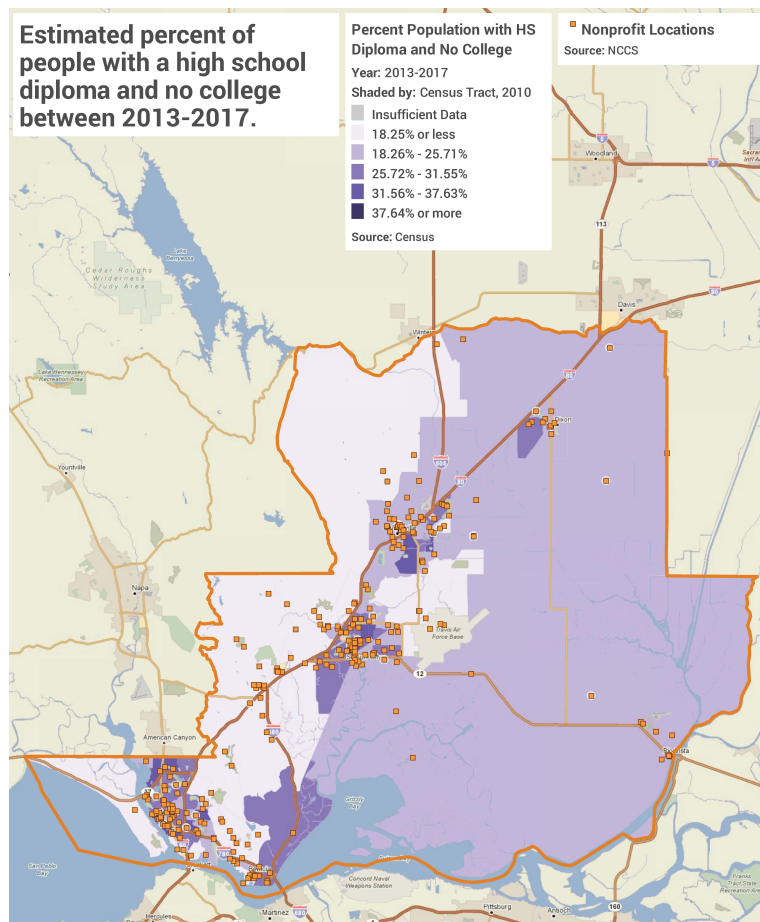
Conclusion

The landscape analysis of Solano County shows a diverse community in terms of wealth, education, and race. This complexity serves as both a strength and an opportunity. Most notably, the county must continue to focus on priorities that will close the gap between income levels, occupations, and education.

Solano County Services For Disconnected Youth

FIGURE 7: ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY, OVERLAID WITH LOCATIONS OF NONPROFIT AGENCIES

SOURCE: PolicyMap



Solano's existing resources and nonprofit agencies for disconnected and high-risk youth are not evenly distributed throughout the county. The urban centers of Vallejo, Fairfield, and Vacaville have substantially more programs and services to respond to education, workforce, and basic needs (Figure 7). Conversely, isolated rural regions such as Dixon and Rio Vista have zero or little access to free or subsidized support within their immediate communities. As many executive directors for Solano County nonprofits noted, these minimally served areas are not likely to receive funding, government investment, or philanthropic investment due to their smaller populations and tax bases.

Further, while nonprofits throughout the county deliver services with intention, expertise, and cultural responsiveness, they in general possess low capacity overall to serve the entire communities and populations they have targeted (Learning for Action, 2018). This was reinforced through our interviews with nonprofits, which also described lack of staff capacity and time and insufficient funding as barriers to expanding their limited outreach to disconnected and high-risk youth. County government agencies also expressed frustration with their inability to fully support the basic needs of the county's most vulnerable and at-risk populations due to various logistical and funding issues. These deficiencies are most evident for those disconnected and high-risk youth who seek socio-emotional or basic supportive needs in a preventive, responsive role.



Below, we highlight certain areas of service in Solano County that reflect specific needs identified by youth in the areas of education, employment, housing, and supportive services. For a detailed table of services, please refer to Appendix A.

Education and Employment Services

Education and employment services for youth exist within the county in the form of postsecondary credential programs and advanced workforce training/certifications. Providers of these services include the Board, Solano Community College, and other nonprofits receiving funding from government agencies. Specific opportunities range from paid skills training to job placement.

Housing

The county offers a variety of services to people struggling to secure stable housing and transportation. However, based on interviews with Solano County providers and with youth, the need for these services exceeds availability, and recipients of services must meet strict eligibility requirements, often including background checks and proof of income. Generally, services can be broken down into immediate and long-term solutions. Immediate or emergency services include shelters, short-term housing, and rental assistance. Longer-term services include housing for specific populations (i.e., youth transitioning out of foster care).

Supportive Services

Supportive services for vulnerable populations (youth in the juvenile justice system or foster care, and disabled, single-parent, and homeless youth), as well as general mental health and welfare programs are present in the county. The most robust of these services exist within local and county government agencies. Certain nonprofits fill an important but under-resourced, limited supplemental role. In both interviews with nonprofits and focus groups with youth, there was a resounding call to have the county provide more coordinated and accessible services for disconnected and high-risk youth in both rural and urban communities.

Research Results

With this context, the following are the results of the study.

FIGURE 8: PERCENTAGE OF DISCONNECTED YOUTH IN SOLANO COUNTY

DEFINITION: Estimated percentage of teens ages 16-19 in selected Solano County cities who are not enrolled in school (full or part time) and not working (full or part time).

SOURCES: kidsdata.org, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (December 2016)



Youth Disconnection in Solano County: Overview

Solano County has the highest rate of disconnected youth in all Bay Area counties (United Way, 2018). The percentage of disconnected youth within Solano County (8.7 percent) is also greater than the percentage of disconnected youth within the state and nationwide (Figure 8). In particular, two urban cities within Solano County, Vallejo and Fairfield, have a higher concentration of disconnected youth. The percentage of disconnected youth in Benicia (8.1 percent) is very close to the statewide average, and the percentage of disconnected youth in Suisun City (6.7 percent) is close to the national average. Vacaville has the lowest concentration of disconnected youth of the cities represented by collected data. Data on Rio Vista and Dixon are unreported.

Research Questions 1 & 2: Characteristics of Disconnected Youth and Geographic Concentrations

Youth struggling with homelessness, poverty, and traumatic events or upbringings experience higher rates of disconnection than those who do not. For example, the city of Vallejo has the highest poverty rate in Solano County (16.9 percent) and the highest percentage of disconnected youth (11.2 percent). As one assistant superintendent noted, “Urban areas are seeing an increasing number of students, especially females, who are struggling with youth disconnection.” In more rural cities, such as Dixon and Rio Vista, youth disconnection is more prevalent among youth from first-generation families of farm-working backgrounds. In fact, nationwide, “young people’s struggles with education and employment mirror those of their parents and neighbors” (Burd-Sharps & Lewis, 2015). This phenomenon often contributes to the start of generational poverty and other health and socio-emotional factors.

The percentage of disconnected youth in Solano County is even higher within the cohort between the ages of 21 and 24. This mirrors a national trend, “suggesting that the problem becomes more acute after young people are of an age to have graduated high school” (Brookings Institute, 2015) and begin to seek short- and long-term supportive services or run afoul of law enforcement. As one director of a county agency noted, “Many young adults who are emancipated from the foster care system often find themselves in the criminal justice system, social justice system, or homeless.”

Though KidsData and other databases do not disaggregate the percentage of disconnected youth by race and ethnicity, youth disconnection is regularly correlated to high school dropout rates, among several things. Therefore, by examining the racial and ethnic backgrounds of youth who have dropped out of high school, we can draw conclusions about youth disconnection. In fact, the data show that African American and Latino youth in Solano County experience the highest high school dropout rates and consequently also experience higher rates of youth disconnection (Table 1).

TABLE 1: HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES IN SOLANO COUNTY BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

DEFINITION: Percentage of public high school students who do not complete high school, based on the four-year adjusted cohort dropout rate, by race/ethnicity. LNE (Low Number Event) refers to data that have been suppressed because there were fewer than 20 students in that group who exited before graduating.

SOURCE: California Department of Education (May 2016).

Race & Ethnicity	Percentage
African American / Black	15%
American Indian / Alaska Native	LNE
Asian American	LNE
Filipino	LNE
Hispanic / Latino	12.9%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	LNE
White	7.7%
Multiracial	5.8%

Notably, black and Latino youth are “up to 3-to-6 times more likely to be disconnected than young whites” (Ross & Svajlenka, 2016). This holds true in Rio Vista, where 81.6 percent of the population is white, but service providers and counselors in the area identified youth of Latino decent as utilizing the majority of their offered services.

Higher concentrations of disconnected youth also exist within metropolitan centers such as Fairfield (10.2 percent) and Vallejo (11.2 percent). This is consistent with most research and advocacy around youth disconnection, which has largely focused on urban settings (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2017). Whether due to geographic preference or insufficient data collection, the reported percentages of disconnected youth within more rural townships in Solano County, such as Dixon and Rio Vista, are not available. Yet, according to national research performed by the Social Science Research Council, disconnected youth in rural counties as a whole fare much worse than those in more populous counties, largely due to minimal or nonexistent dedicated supportive services (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2017). For Solano County, given the distribution of racial and ethnic populations in urban and rural cities, as well as family median income, more rural youth of color find themselves at high risk and disconnected from the mainstream.

Research Question 3: Factors Leading to Youth Disconnection in Solano County

Based on collected and developed research, we identify four leading factors influencing youth disconnection in Solano County. These factors are:

1

K-14 public education system and education program-related services

2

Presence, capacity, and capability of existing education and employment training programs

3

Economic impactors such as stable housing and public transportation

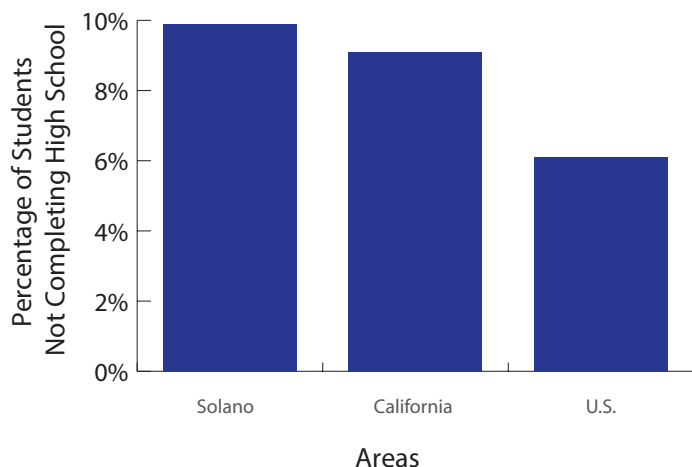
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Supportive services programs

These factors are developed further in the following subsections.

FIGURE 9: HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES IN SOLANO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, AND THE UNITED STATES

SOURCES: California Department of Education (<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>) and KidsData



K-14 Education and High School Equivalency

Solano County has a higher-than-average dropout rate: 9.9 percent, compared to the state dropout rate of 9.1 percent and the national dropout rate of 6.1 percent (Figure 9). However, as with all counties, Solano offers education re-engagement services and programs for high school-aged youth and young adults. Traditional, community-affiliated, continuation, and adult schools, as well as credit recovery programs, are available and offer pathways to high school diplomas or high school equivalency certificates. However, our research shows that these programs struggle to recruit, retain, and follow up with high-risk and disconnected youth, leading to the acknowledgement from providers that they have not been successful in closing the gap between qualified youth and the full awarding of credentials to this eligible population. This issue echoed further in interviews with youth, who cited an overall lack of coordination between services, quality of instruction and learning, and the understood usefulness of these credentials

once obtained. As one youth noted, “I was told that I could go back to school and earn my diploma, but I didn’t have a car. When I saw where I had to go, I decided it wasn’t worth it. Besides, a high school diploma doesn’t mean anything anymore. I’d rather take my chances with no diploma.”

Education and Employment Training

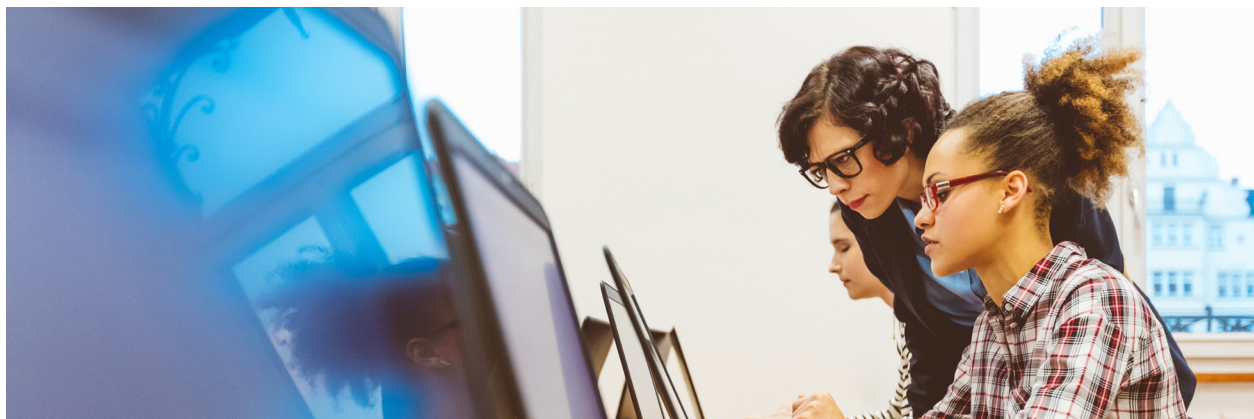
All participants of the two youth focus groups reported having worked minimum-wage jobs for inconsistent and/or short durations of time. In some cases, youth reported working multiple jobs at the same time in order to maintain a livable income. In one of the focus groups, a foster youth in her twenties said, “School is good but it’s like the last option for us. It takes more time than we have. I just want a job first.” This comment is indicative of the larger issue: how to successfully braid educational attainment with viable and relevant employment, leading to real life choice options rather than dead ends for high-risk and disconnected youth.

“School is good but it’s like the last option for us. It takes more time than we have. I just want a job first.”

According to research performed by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, “While having some level of employment during one’s studies is associated with improved employment and earnings outcomes later in life, employment while enrolled should be considered complementary to one’s studies” (Carnevale et al., 2018). Working more than 15 hours a week, which is the case for many disconnected youth, leads to lower academic preparedness, graduation rates, earnings, and early career outcomes (Kyte, 2017). Investing in education has greater long-term payoffs on one’s future income streams than working too many hours in the interim (Carnevale et al., 2018). This issue becomes more acute when considering that employers are increasingly seeking postsecondary graduates for positions that used to require a high school diploma or other sub-baccalaureate training, a phenomenon known as “upcredentialing” (Burning Glass, 2014).

The reasons behind upcredentialing are twofold: upskilling is required as more jobs become more complex, and employers are becoming more selective and favoring educated workers (Burning Glass, 2014). For example, 65 percent of postings for executive secretaries and executive assistants now require a bachelor's degree even though only 19 percent of those currently employed in those positions have a bachelor's degree (Burning Glass, 2014). In 2018, jobs available for workers who have either a high school diploma or incomplete high school education with some on-the-job training dropped to 37 percent, compared to 41 percent in 2007, 44 percent in 1992, and 72 percent in 1973 (Carnevale et al., 2011). This tremendous drop in employment opportunities requiring only a high school diploma or less applies to careers of all kinds. Therefore, not only do postsecondary education and degree attainment increase future financial security and earnings, but employers are also raising their requirements when deciding who to hire.

To that end, there is a growing need for stronger integration of the educational and employment experiences of high-risk and disconnected youth in order to support the progress of both simultaneously, rather than leaving youth with few options but to choose one over the other. Through work-based learning opportunities that include paid internships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships at the K-12 and postsecondary levels, disconnected youth could progress toward degree attainment, practice what they are learning at their workplace, and generate a self-sufficient wage. The Board currently provides a wide inventory of services and programs to meet the education and employment re-engagement needs of disconnected youth. In fact, a spectrum of educational assistance and occupational training supports are available for youth, young adults, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. These supports include job search assistance programs such as Job Connect and Solano Employment Connection, career exploration and development through Youth Career Exploration and Occupational Skills Training, and work-based learning initiatives through Inspiring Work Based Learning Systems.



However, despite the various programs and supports in place across Solano County, participant retention and completion rates in these programs still remain low. For example, within the adult programs provided by the Board for individuals who are 18 years or older, 230 individuals enrolled in the program to receive support in creating a customized action plan to develop skills and meet today's job market and employment opportunities. However, only 180 of them actually received the training, and 84 gained credentials. In the Career in Focus Program for Young Adults, 31 participants enrolled in the program but only 3 gained a credential. Strengthened capacity-building, outreach, and retention efforts within these education and training programs could reach more high-risk and disconnected youth and support them in degree attainment and program completion.



Stable Housing and Public Transportation

The majority of disconnected youth in Solano County come from a background of poverty (Fernandes-Alcantara, 2015). The primary causes of poverty are the high cost of housing, lack of middle-skill employment opportunities, and a limited/nonexistent transportation infrastructure. Compounding this is the continued increase in average cost of living in Solano County. This is particularly problematic in areas such as Vallejo, as more Bay Area residents are being priced out of their current living units and looking to Solano County for a less expensive alternative. Furthermore, median earnings are not keeping pace with cost of living and have not returned to pre-recession levels (Genentech Foundation, 2015). As a result, over half of Solano County's renters pay at least 30 percent of their income toward rent. And while the percentage of families spending 30 percent or more on housing was steadily decreasing in Solano County in 2015, the rate is now higher than in Yolo and Contra Costa counties (United Way, 2016).

Poor housing quality, lack of choice, and instability have obvious negative impacts on school-aged youth and young adults in a variety of ways. First, youth who “experience homelessness or are living in overcrowded, doubled-up situations may lack the necessary tools to do well in schools,” such as a calm environment to complete homework assignments (Cunningham and MacDonald, 2012). Evidence also shows that low housing quality may lead to severe health consequences among children and youth, causing them to fall behind in schoolwork and experience lowered academic achievement (Cunningham and MacDonald, 2012). The unaffordability of housing may also lead to residential instability, due to the frequent need to move, increasing the chances of absenteeism and school changes (Cunningham and MacDonald, 2012).



In addition to stable housing an expansive transportation system was repetitively cited in interviews and focus groups as needed to increase education and employment attainment for high risk and disconnected youth. The inadequacy of public transportation in Solano County is due largely to its large geographic spread across 906 square miles and its mostly rural landscape. To assist in combating this acute issue and to address the needs of students, Solano Community College earlier in 2018 partnered with the Solano Transportation Authority to allow SCC students who could access the bus services to ride the SolTrans Local Routes and SolanoExpress Route 85 for free by showing valid student identification.

Though this is commendable, the majority of high-risk and disconnected youth cannot access public transportation either due to cost or a lack of presence in their communities. This must be addressed. Complicating matters is the current bus schedule, which often conflicts with the offered services and programs for youth. For example, all local bus companies, including SolTrans, FAST, Vacaville City Coach, and the Delta Breeze Transit system, stop service around 7 p.m. On weekends, the hours of operation are even shorter and less frequent throughout the day. This can make evening and weekend classes and programs untenable for youth who lack other means of transportation. If more high-risk and disconnected youth are to be reached, they must have a way to travel from home to school and to work.

“The majority of high-risk and disconnected youth cannot access public transportation either due to cost or a lack of presence in their communities.”

Supportive Services

Through focus group interviews, many youth cited a lack of basic supportive services that could help them persist and complete their programs of study in the face of housing, food, transportation, and mental health emergencies. This is especially true of youth between the ages of 19 and 24 who lack access to, or do not receive enough in, the county's existing support services programs and agencies to help balance work, school, and/or parenting.

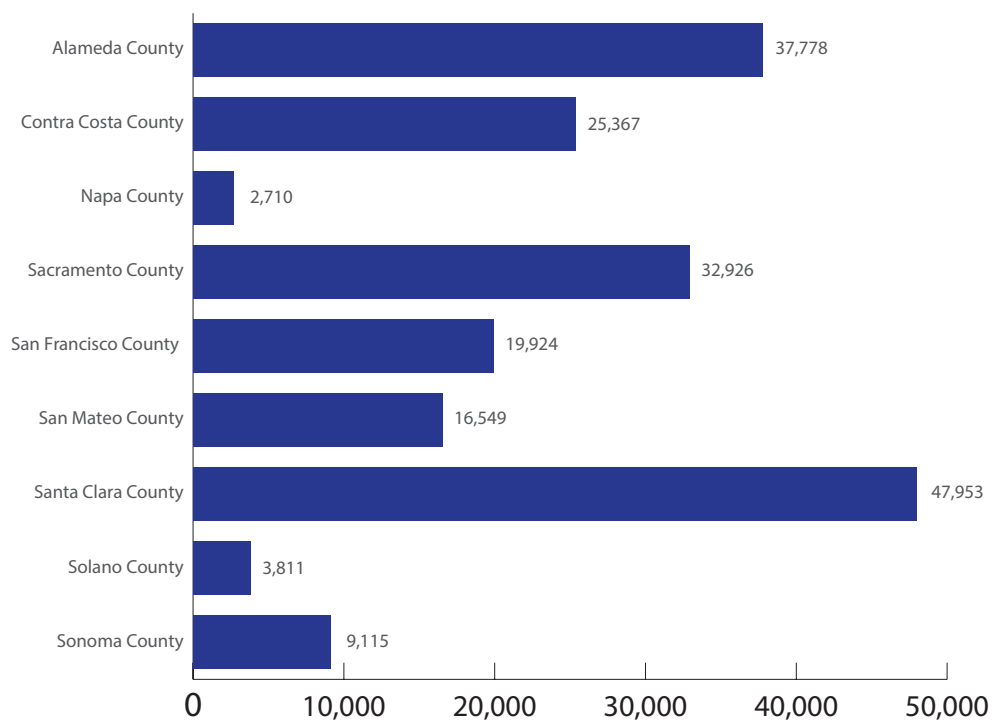
“State aid and federal program funds are not enough to address the larger needs of eligible high-risk students.”

Within the county, the high cost of living, coupled with the low median income and wages and limited public transportation, only worsens prospects for high-risk students struggling to remain in school. Recently passed state Assembly bills (refer to Appendix B for listing) are designed to help respond to some of these issues. However, in cases like Solano Community College, state aid and federal program funds are not enough to address the larger needs of eligible high-risk students. Without stronger, more coordinated investments and delivery systems developed by county leaders, the basic supportive needs of the county's most at-risk students will remain largely unmet, causing the most vulnerable to drop out and not return.

Though legislation and funding are vital to developing needed supportive safety nets for high-risk students, the county again lacks the capacity to provide other services and coverage for the most at-risk of youth, causing many to not even consider returning to school or to seek upskilling opportunities. Arguably, one of the most at-risk are single young parents and their children. The overall child poverty rate in Solano County is 18.8 percent, and 44 percent of single mothers with children under the age of five are classified as living in poverty (ASR, 2018). While Solano County residents have access to subsidized childcare through programs including First 5 and Children's Network, demand outweighs the supply. Solano County, with its high rate of low-income families, has the second-lowest number of childcare slots in licensed facilities in the Bay Area, after Napa County (Figure 10).

FIGURE 10: NUMBER OF CHILDCARE SLOTS IN LICENSED FACILITIES, 2014

SOURCE: California Child Care Resource & Referral Network, California Child Care Portfolio (November 2015)



“Disconnected youth and high-risk students could be assisted by the development and promotion of robust counseling services that braid academic, career, and socio-emotional supports.”

Without access to affordable, convenient childcare, single mothers trying to earn a high school or advanced credential find the odds of attainment nearly insurmountable. Additionally, recent studies show that high-risk students, who are also “time poor” due to life stressors such as lack of childcare, transportation, food, housing, etc., are more likely to drop out of their schooling in order to address those issues, even when they are told what the long-term consequences of those decisions could mean (Brookings, 2015).

In addition to the provision of accessible supportive services, disconnected youth and high-risk students could be assisted by the development and promotion of robust counseling services that braid academic, career, and socio-emotional supports. Research uniformly endorses the positive benefits of meaningful counseling services in the immediate and long-term decision-making of high-risk students and youth, and this was reinforced through the focus groups conducted with Solano County youth. One participant explained how therapy made a huge difference in his ability and motivation to pursue work and education, noting that he was able to address systemic and personal barriers and get on a path to better his life circumstances. Similarly, several youth involved in programs associated with youth development cited positive outcomes, ranging from a stronger connection to school and community to a greater sense of security and self.



Report Recommendations

Besides identifying the four core factors most influencing and impacting high-risk and disconnected youth, this report also presents recommendations to address the identified factors, and where relevant it calls attention to promising practices undertaken by other communities and organizations that may serve as inspiration to the Board. In addition to recommendations tied to the four identified factors, we also call out recommendations specific to data reporting and collection, which has been an underlying issue throughout the research. The following serve as the report's recommendations:

Countywide Data Collection and Data Tracking

Our research has surfaced data collection and data tracking deserts in Solano County, particularly in its rural areas and townships such as Dixon and Rio Vista. The reasons are twofold. First, data from sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau's annual American Community Survey are calculated on the basis of a representative sample of the population (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2017). In many rural areas, this sample size is too small to reliably represent the full population of the rural area. Second, collecting data for rural populations is "administratively difficult and associated with comparatively high per-person costs" (Burd-Sharps and Lewis, 2017). However, given that any countywide priorities, policies, and programs must include all communities, it is imperative that the Board ensure that collected data represent all of Solano County and not just the more urban areas, such as Fairfield, Vacaville, and Vallejo.

Recommendation 1

The county should adopt a countywide, cross-stakeholder data-collection system and data-sharing protocol that would be utilized by all relevant agencies and organizations committed to the well-being of youth and young adults. The Board would work with relevant stakeholders, such as educators, non-government organizations, faith-based establishments, and workforce partners, to collectively identify youth who are disconnected or at high risk of becoming disconnected.

Promising Practices

Los Angeles YouthSource Centers

Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and the Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department, which is responsible for the administration of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds, created a partnership that makes possible the implementation of 16 YouthSource Centers throughout Los Angeles. YouthSource Centers offer young people the chance to return to school and resume their education while also gaining workforce experience and earning some money, which provides an added incentive for young people to return to school. Using American Community Survey data and working with Paul Harrington of Drexler University, the LAUSD and the Economic

and Workforce Development Department were able to accurately describe the problem. They compiled a profile of the population aged 16–24 including youth demographics, school involvement, and employment rates.

Contra Costa Community College District Partnership and Orange County Pathways Data Matching Processes (pg. 27)

Some K-14 partnerships, such as the Contra Costa Community College District partnership and Orange County Pathways, prioritize the collection and matching of student-level data from local high schools and community colleges. Contra Costa Community College District has implemented different approaches, including internal data-matching protocols, to merge data from Contra Costa County Office of Education and Contra Costa Community College District to examine the transition of students from K-12 to community college. Orange County Pathways linked local K-12 and community college student data to examine trends in career and technical education pathway enrollment across institutions.

Recommendation 2

In concert with relevant stakeholders, the Board should undertake the development of data-sharing agreements and the creation of a data repository to maintain

relevant information on (1) disconnected youth; (2) the primary, secondary, and tertiary services provided; and (3) the outcomes of these services on the short- and long-term successes of participants.

Promising Practice

[Fresno Unified Equity and Access A-G Course Monitoring Tool \(Chapter 5\)](#)

Fresno Unified Equity and Access developed a centralized data warehouse system that enables data sharing of indicators related to equity and access. For example, the A-G Course Monitoring tool calculates college readiness measures and creates exportable information sheets for staff to reference. The real-time accessibility of this warehouse to partnership personnel reduces the amount of time-intensive manual data entry that other exchange methods require.

K-14 Education and High School Equivalency

The report's countywide scan of formal education and education-related programs and services revealed little coordination of care across agencies and organizations. Additionally, nonprofit organizations need support for their capacity to measure, track, analyze, and make progress based on

outcome data. However, many nonprofits said it is a challenge to strategize around mission and impact, due to the urgent demands of running low-resourced programming. While a host of services currently exist within the county, more coordination and capacity-building between the providers could increase access to these services for disconnected youth.

Recommendation 1

Expand academic support services to retain high-risk students through early interventions and regular follow-up.

Promising Practice

[Colorado Youth for a Change](#)

Colorado Youth for a Change (CYC) was established in 2005 in response to the alarming increase in the number of students dropping out of school in Colorado and the lack of capacity of school systems to reengage students who had dropped out or who were at risk of dropping out of school. The goal of CYC is to reengage Colorado students that are either at risk for not completing high school or who have dropped out of school completely, by providing case management to build positive relationships, reducing barriers to educational success, and coordinating academic support services, so that students will reengage with their education and earn their high school

diploma or GED, thereby ultimately contributing to solving the dropout crisis in Colorado.

Recommendation 2

Expand capacity-building and outreach efforts of GED or high school equivalency-related programs.

Promising Practice

Re-engage Dubuque

Re-engage Dubuque is a partnership between the Dubuque Community School District, Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC), and Project HOPE. This community initiative aims to connect students who have recently dropped out of school to alternative educational options and postsecondary education. Re-engagement coaches work in the field recruiting youth who have dropped out and helping those who have reengaged to remove obstacles that stand in the way of earning a high school diploma or GED. The coaches help individual students develop a personalized plan for completing a high school diploma or GED and exploring options for further study. During the first year, the Dubuque Community School District had 135 students who had dropped out; the number decreased to 98 after the first year of operation, encouraging the center and

its partners to believe that their strategies are working.

Recommendation 3

Develop relevant re-engagement services for disconnected youth, leading to full retention and program completion.

Promising Practice

Boston Public Schools Re-Engagement Center

The Boston Re-Engagement Center (REC), founded cooperatively by the Boston Public Schools and the Boston Private Industry Council, was one of the first established re-engagement programs in the country. Originally designed to study the “dropout crisis” in Boston and develop and implement an action plan to address it, the center continues to use data to inform the school district’s planning efforts, especially for multiple pathways.

Education and Employment

In many of our interviews with disconnected youth and job-training service providers, youth are being prepared to work primarily for short-term minimum-wage jobs rather than progressing to work in high-needs, high-wage, high-skilled jobs that keep residents

in Solano County and contribute to the vitality of the county. Additionally, in order to better meet the needs of the student and worker lifestyle of disconnected youth, strategies to integrate educational and employment experiences are necessary to prevent disconnected youth from choosing short-term employment over education and career. While the Board is taking steps toward aligning its education and employment-training programs to credentialed secondary and postsecondary programs as well as the county's economic and workforce priorities, enrollment and retention numbers in these programs are still low.

Recommendation 1

Continue efforts through the Inspiring Work-Based Learning Systems project to establish a countywide commitment to work-based learning opportunities for students at the K-12 and postsecondary levels. For disconnected youth, leverage funding to establish paid internships, pre-apprenticeships, and registered apprenticeships that are fully aligned with promoted programs of study leading to a credential.

Promising Practices

[Work-Based Learning in Tennessee](#)

Students build on classroom-based instruction to develop employability

skills that prepare them for success in postsecondary education and future careers. Through experiences like internships, apprenticeships, and paid work experience, juniors and seniors (16 years or older) may earn high school credit for capstone WBL experiences. WBL coordinators are educators who are trained and certified by the department to coordinate these WBL experiences for students.

[Delaware Pathways](#)

Delaware Pathways is an education and workforce partnership that creates a career pathways system for all youth. This effort builds upon Delaware's rich history in providing career and technical education (CTE) through the state's vocational school districts and Delaware's community colleges, which have produced a robust and highly skilled workforce for Delaware and the surrounding region. This work spans all secondary and postsecondary partners, and includes the integration of community-based organizations and workforce partners to ensure that all youth are successful in pursuing postsecondary education and gainful employment.

Recommendation 2

Leverage WIOA-sponsored funding with K-12 school districts and postsecondary institutions to establish vertically aligned CTE and education and workforce pathways that fully reflect the economic and labor priorities of the county in high-needs, high-wage, high skilled jobs.

Promising Practice

[Kentucky: Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky \(TRACK\)](#)

Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) is a youth pre-apprenticeship program that stands out as an innovative example of effective collaboration between the Kentucky Labor Cabinet, the Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education, employers, and labor to strengthen students' career pathways and the talent pipeline. The program utilizes Kentucky's existing CTE infrastructure to create a pipeline for students that begins in high school and culminates in an industry-recognized credential, paid work experience, and, in many cases, advanced standing within a full registered apprenticeship.

Recommendation 3

Leverage pre-existing, cross-sector partnerships to expand outreach

and retention of disconnected youth in education and workforce, WIOA sponsored skills training programs.

Promising Practice

[College, Career & Technology Academy \(CCTA\) in the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District in Texas](#)

The College, Career & Technology Academy, situated in the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo (PSJA) Independent School District, is a recovery educational option for youth aged 18 to 26 who have dropped out of school. PSJA uses an intensive community outreach process, as well as data analysis, to identify and recruit eligible students.

Economic Impactors: Stable Housing and Public Transportation

Qualitative data collected through interviews and focus groups perpetuated a common theme that affordable permanent housing and viable public transportation options are insufficient or unattainable for the majority of county residents, notably high-risk and disconnected youth. For disconnected youth who may be juggling school, after-school support programs, and nighttime work shifts to be successful, the bus schedules limit their options within

the day, often forcing them to choose work over academic investment. Additionally, as the cost of housing is on the rise, youth find themselves struggling to pay rent and utilities or have to move frequently.

Recommendation 1

Work with local government and community officials to extend bus routes and reassess schedules that better align with the needs of the youth and work to develop alternative transportation options to complement public transportation.

Recommendation 2

Evaluate when and where formalized education and workforce training programs are offered for youth and whether or not these need to be adjusted to align with transportation offerings and work schedules to increase accessibility.

Recommendation 3

Work in concert with local government and state service officials to evaluate and recommend approaches that will increase the number of affordable housing offerings for independent youth and young adults.

Promising Practices (Collectively for Recommendations)

[Build UP, Birmingham, Alabama](#)

Build UP provides low-income youth career-ready skills through paid apprenticeships with industry-aligned secondary and early-postsecondary academic coursework while also providing families access to affordable, stable housing they can live in and even rent to earn a passive income. Youth become educated, credentialed, and empowered civic leaders, workers, homeowners, and landlords that lead long-term revitalization efforts within their communities.

[Tacoma Community College: College Housing Assistance Program](#)

In 2014, Tacoma Community College (TCC) partnered with Tacoma Housing Authority to start the College Housing Assistance Program. This program provides federal rental assistance vouchers to students who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

[Community Transportation Association \(pg 4\)](#)

Youth transit needs are quite similar to those of their adult counterparts. Research indicates that the spatial mismatch between where low-income youth reside and where jobs are is a barrier to youth as well as their parents in obtaining and maintaining a job.

Supportive Services

Research repeatedly identified the insufficient offerings of, or lack of, supportive services as an overt barrier to completing and earning an education credential. Supportive services are those interventions necessary to enable an individual to participate in education and training activities. Examples of such services may include transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments. Funds may be used to provide supportive services through various means, including, but not limited to, providing the actual supportive service (e.g., childcare), or providing grants or vouchers for a service (e.g., public transportation).

Recommendation 1

Work with established organizations from education, government, and non-government organizations to more heavily invest in and influence the types of supportive services that will attract and retain high-risk and disconnected youth in education and career pathways at the K-12, high school equivalency, and postsecondary levels.

Recommendation 2

Expand advising and counseling services relevant to the experiences of

disconnected youth, including mental health counseling services, in addition to education- and career-related advising.

Promising Practices (Collectively for Recommendations)

Community Schools

Community schools are both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources with an integrated focus on academics, health and social services, youth and community development, and community engagement. Using public schools as hubs, community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families, and communities.

SF's Beacon Initiative for Community Schools

The San Francisco Beacon Initiative coordinates public and private partnerships and funding that enables schools, communities, and families to offer academic, social, and emotional support to their youth as they prepare for lives as successful adults. It is one of the first models of communities and schools working in partnership.

Fast Forward Center, Dayton, Ohio

Sinclair College operates the Fast Forward

Center, a countywide initiative with a primary focus on identifying and reengaging youth who could benefit from earning a high school diploma, pursuing postsecondary education, or entering the workforce. FFC also collaborates with various community organizations to provide services that address non-academic barriers for youth that could stand in the way of academic progress.



Conclusion

This report utilized a robust, mixed-use research approach to answer four key questions posed by the Board pertaining to high-risk and disconnected youth. In doing so, we identified four core factors influencing and impacting the well-being of Solano County youth and their short- and long-term life choices. Each factor is a vital determinant on its own, but combined, they are a lethal force for those young people who already are most at risk. Collected quantitative and qualitative data on Solano County youth bear this out. The current county and local programmatic and funding approaches, as well as capacity, are not retarding or reducing the number of youth who are classified as disconnected or high-risk.

By acknowledging these factors and providing recommendations, we want to again call attention to the strong alignments of the report's recommendations to the already stated priorities of the state, region, and county WIOA plans (Local Plan, North Bay, and State). Specifically, we draw attention to the commitments toward cross-system data capacity, supportive services, and robust education-to-career pathways.

In closing, the report's findings and recommendations bear witness that, though there are short-term approaches that can be taken to relieve some issues, greater transformational solutions will require a long-term perspective and commitment by the Board and its leadership. In short, funding specific programs or providing supportive services vouchers at the exclusion of a long-term strategic approach, in partnership with other like-minded public and private entities, will not resolve the longstanding issues confronting Solano County's disconnected and high-risk youth.

Given the Board's programmatic and funding priorities, the Board stands in a position of strength to lead in the development of meaningful and sustainable countywide strategic approaches that address the systemic issues facing disconnected and high-risk youth in Solano County.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Solano County Resource Directory

The following is a list of resources including mid- to large-sized nonprofits and county/state departments designed to meet the needs of low-income individuals struggling to find stability or support within the categories of education, workforce, and basic needs.

Education

Adult Education

Solano Community College: Community College Campus

Phone: 707.424.2431

Address: 4000 Suisun Valley Road, Fairfield, CA 94534

In addition to the academic credit classes, the community college offers a range of noncredit and community service programs at the main campus and satellite locations throughout the county. There may be fees for registration, materials, and parking.

Solano County Adult Schools

Phone: 707.421.4155

Address: 180 South First Street, Dixon, CA 95620

Adult Schools offer quality programs and instruction for all adults 18 and over. Their students come to learn a new language, work with computers, earn a high school diploma, get a job, or become better-informed parents. Adult education classes are scheduled throughout the year with both daytime and nighttime courses.

Vallejo Regional Education Center

Phone: 707.556.8850

Address: 436 Del Sur Street, Vallejo, CA 94591

Formally Vallejo Adult Schools, the Education Center offers a variety of academic, vocational, and personal enrichment programs, including: adult basic education, English as a second language, citizenship, high school diploma, GED, computer basics courses, and job skills training.

English as a Second Language

Benicia Public Library: Adult Literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) Program

Phone: 707.746.4341

Address: 150 East L Street, Benicia, CA 94510-3278

The California Literacy Campaign was created in 1984 by the California State Library to provide literacy instruction to anyone “over 16 years of age, out of school, and reading [at] less than a sixth-grade level.” The Adult Literacy and ESL Program has expanded beyond the initial 1:1 volunteer tutoring service.

Global Center for Success

Phone: 707.562.5673

Address: 1055 Azuar Drive, Vallejo, CA 94592

The Global Center for Success is an organization that assists the homeless and underserved individuals in the greater Vallejo area. Located on Mare Island, they provide life skills counseling, health and wellness education, financial and computer literacy classes, GED/ESL training, and much more.

Basic Needs

Cell Phones

California Lifeline Telephone Service

Phone: 877.858.7463 (English and Spanish)

Address: PO Box 8417, Westminster, CA 92684

State program that provides discounted home phone and cell phone services to households that qualify. One discount per household is allowed (exception for those who use a teletypewriter and for the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunication Program participants).

Clothing

Faith Bible Church of Vallejo—Faith Food Fridays

Phone: 707.557.7923

Address: 901 Solano Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94590

The church provides families and individuals with emergency food and groceries to help those in our community who are struggling financially. Distribution of food, clothing, shoes, personal care items, and other goods happens every second and fourth Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and every Friday from 2 to 5 p.m.

Salvation Army—Social Service Office

Phone: 707.426.6244

Address: 630 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Social Service Centers provide food, clothing and assistance with utility bills. Emergency food given once a month at the Fairfield location. Must provide proof of emergency (e.g., loss of job, unexpected circumstances, etc.). Families can pick up bread and pastries once a week.

**Vallejo Central Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Community Services Building—
Food Pantry and HomeBase**

Phone: 707.643.6181

Address: 1130 Alabama Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Food Pantry is on Tuesdays at 9 a.m. Limited number of families are served, so arrive early. HomeBase is a place where families and friends in need can (for free): wash and dry clothes, get used clothes, use the internet, grab a bite to eat, and use the telephone.

Emergency Food

Eligibility Center

Phone: 707.784.8050

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

Provides services for CalFresh (formally known as food stamps), Medi-Cal, and general assistance.

Amador Street Hope Center, Angel Food Ministries

Phone: 707.648.1986

Address: 929 Amador Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Food Distribution Monday at 6:30 p.m., and Wednesday at 1 p.m. (first come, first served—arrive 90 minutes early; 1 box per household per month; picture ID and proof of residency in Vallejo—e.g., utility bill, bank statement, etc.). The second Wednesday of every month is for seniors only (62+).

Cornerstone Baptist Church—Emergency Food Assistance

Phone: 707.678.5234

Address: 185 West Cherry Street, Dixon, CA 95620

Senior emergency food: the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, from 10 to 11 a.m. Emergency Food: every Wednesday from 10 to 11 a.m., and Fridays from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Salvation Army of Fairfield: Food Pantry and Emergency Food

Phone: 707.455.8191

Address: 1200 Missouri Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

One bag of groceries provided by Rockville Presbyterian Church from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed for lunch from 12 to 1 p.m.). Emergency food (one box) provided once every 30 days with proof of emergency.

Salvation Army of Vallejo: Food Pantry, Emergency Food, and USDA Food Giveaway

Phone: 707.643.8621

Address: 630 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Sack Lunch on Fridays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Emergency food (given once every three months) on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. USDA Food Giveaway (once a month) on Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Fairfield Family Resource Center (FRC)

Phone: 707.421.3224

Address: 1600 Kidder Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

The Fairfield FRC offers English as second language classes, basic needs assistance, parenting education, a clothes closet, free or low cost health insurance programs, counseling, etc. (The clothes closet is every second Wednesday of the month, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.)

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano—John Finney High School

Phone: 855.309.3663

Address: 233 Hobbs Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94589

Provides 15 to 20 pounds of free fresh produce to low-income families and individuals twice a month. Please bring two bags with handles. Food is distributed on the first and third Tuesday of each month, from 2 to 3 p.m.

Eye Care

EyeCare America

Phone: 877.887.6327

Address: 655 Beach Street, San Francisco, CA 94109

EyeCare America provides eye care through volunteer ophthalmologists at no cost to those who qualify. Facilitates eye care for U.S. citizens or legal residents who are without an ophthalmologist, and who do not belong to an HMO or do not have eye care coverage through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Housing

First Place for Youth

Phone: 510.272.0979 x305

Address: 1545 North Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

My First Place is a flagship program that provides current and former foster kids, ages 18 through 24, with access to housing, education, and employment support in five California counties. Steps to Success provides robust career and education-focused programming to support foster kids in reaching their goals.

Mary's Help—Transitional Housing Placement Program and Transitional Housing Placement and Foster Care

Phone: 707.649.8011

Address: 1219 Monterey Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

A transitional housing placement opportunity for foster youth, ages 18 through 21 (males), who have been emancipated from the child welfare system. The goal is to provide a safe living environment while helping youth achieve self-sufficiency so they can learn life skills after leaving foster care.

Christian Help Center

Phone: 707.553.8192

Address: 2166 Sacramento Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Provides a safe shelter for the homeless, hot meals, restroom and shower facilities, clothing, case management services, housing counseling, and placement with community support resources and partner agencies.

Mission Solano

Phone: 707.384.2410

Address: 740 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94533

Provides a variety of housing and shelter services to individuals and families in need. Services include dental screening, medical screening, referral resources, assessment, outreach, screening, brief intervention, peer counseling, case management, medication, housing, and treatment of co-occurring disorders.

Opportunity House

Phone: 707.447.1988

Address: 267 Bennett Hill Court, Vacaville, CA 95688

Provides a variety of housing and shelter services to individuals and families in need. Opportunity House has helped thousands achieve their goal of self-sufficiency, aiding the diverse needs of a growing population.

Section 8 Housing—Fairfield

Phone: 707.428.7392

Address: 800 23 B Jefferson Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

Assists with affordable housing. Walk-ins are seen Monday through Thursday by a housing specialist.

Section 8 Housing—Vallejo

Phone: 707.648.4507

Address: 200 Georgia Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Assists with affordable housing. Walk-ins are seen Monday through Thursday by a housing specialist.

Solano Affordable Housing Foundation

Phone: 707.422.5919

Address: 1401 Union Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

A nonprofit housing developer dedicated to increasing the supply of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income individuals employed or residing in Solano County. Does not make referrals for low-income housing.

Solano/Napa Habitat for Humanity

Phone: 707.422.1948

Address: 5130 Fulton Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534

Brings people together to build decent, affordable homes and empowers families through home ownership. Local and state governments help by providing grants and loans for land purchases and mortgage assistance thus allowing the organization to build simple, decent homes at affordable prices.

SafeQuest Solano

Phone: 707.422.7345

Address: 1049 Union Avenue, Fairfield, CA

SafeQuest Solano, formerly known as Solano Women's Crisis Center, is a dual domestic violence and sexual assault agency that serves all of Solano County. They provide advocacy services, safety, and support to all those who are affected by domestic violence and sexual assault.

Solano County Health and Social Services: CalWORKs Homeless Assistance (TANF)

Phone: 707.784.8050

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

Welfare program that gives cash aid and services to needy California families. If a family has little to no cash and needs housing, food, utilities, clothing, or medical care, it may be eligible to receive immediate short-term help. Spanish-speaking staff available.

Women's Recovery Services (WRS)

Phone: 707.527.0412

Address: PO Box 1356, Santa Rosa, CA 95402

WRS is a haven where women struggling to live free from addiction can find the support and specialized treatment they need. Their mission is to break the cycle of addiction for women in a safe residential setting, allowing them and their young children to live together while learning life skills.

Independent Living Skills Instruction**Dungarvin California**

Phone: 510.727.9418

Address: 3019 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94534

Dungarvin provides a variety of individually tailored services and supports the Medicaid Home and Community-Based Waiver. Services provided include day services, supported employment, case management, supported foster care, children's services, respite care, host homes, and supports for persons with disabilities.

Dixon Family Services / Family Resource Center

Phone: 707.678.0442

Address: 155 N 2nd Street, Dixon, CA 95620

Dixon Family Services is much more than a Family Resource Center. The agency serves as a one-stop shop for social services with a highly competent self-sufficiency case management team and a qualified clinical/therapy department to serve all members of the community of Dixon.

Benicia Community Action Council

Phone: 707.745.0900

Address: 480 Military East, Benicia, CA 94510

Offers financial assistance to low-income residents. The council provides professional guidance, resources, and referrals to those striving for self-sufficiency.

Community Action Partnership (CAP Solano)

Phone: 707.428.7749

Address: 1000 Webster Street, Fairfield, CA 94553

CAP Solano identifies and assesses poverty related needs and resources in the community, and establishes a detailed plan, goals, and priorities for delivering those services to individuals and families most affected by the poverty. CAP Solano administers funds through the Community Services Block Grant.

Department of Rehabilitation: Fairfield Branch

Phone: 707.428.2080

Address: 450 Chadborne Road, Fairfield, CA 94534

Provides services to people who have developmental, physical, mental, or emotional disabilities, helping them to get a job or keep the job they have. Types of services available from the DOR include, but are not limited to: job training, transportation, and reader/interpreter/scribe.

Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network

Phone: 707.558.1775

Address: 1125 Missouri St Fairfield, CA 94533

Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network is the first vocational rehabilitation program certified by the state of California that is affiliated with a mental health rehabilitation center. Services range from teaching participants to assisting them with initial hurdles such as securing social security cards.

Fairfield-Suisun WorkAbility

Phone: 707.399.4400

Address: 5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534

This program promotes independent living and provides comprehensive pre-employment worksite training, employment, and follow-up services for youth in special education who are making the transition from school to work. The program serves both middle and high school.

Last Transition House

Phone: 707.647.2291

Address: 918 Amador Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Works with emancipated foster youth to help develop life skills and avoid homelessness, incarceration, and self-destructive behavior.

Parenting and Family Education**Adolescent Family Life Program / Positive Youth Development**

Phone: 707.421.2750 x5

Address: 1325 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94533

AFLP is a voluntary, strengths-based, case management program designed for pregnant and parenting teens to address the social, health, educational, and economic impact of adolescent pregnancy in Solano County. This program focuses on fostering Positive Youth Development by partnering youth with mentors.

Agape Counseling Center and Network

Phone: 707.549.6733

Address: 1234 Empire Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

Agape Counseling Center and Network is a multiservice community organization that offers services including: individual counseling, family counseling, marital counseling, parenting and co-parenting, depression, grief, and loss. They also offer groups for teen support and teen girls' self-esteem.

Black Infant Health

Phone: 707.553.5055

Address: 355 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

The Black Infant Health Program works with participants to develop life skills, reduce stress, build social support, and improve overall health and wellness. BIH provides education on the importance of early and continuous prenatal care, well-child checkups, and breastfeeding.

Building Blocks Children's Services

Phone: 707.427.6640 x213

Address: 1017 Tennessee Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Children's groups, parent/child interaction, developmental activities, and close supervision. Linkage to individual therapeutic services for children ages 0 through 12.

Catholic Charities of Solano County

Phone: 707.644.8909

Address: 125 Corporate Place, Vallejo, CA 94590

A human services agency available to all. The mission of the Catholic Charities of Solano County is to reach out and provide assistance to anyone in need in the community, especially the poor and disadvantaged.

Child Start / Head Start

Phone: 707.252.8931

Address: 439 Devlin Road, Napa, CA 94588

Offers child and family support services including preschool and home-based visits, nutrition, medical and dental diagnosis/treatment, services for handicapped children, social services, parent involvement, parent education, and mental health services.

EMQ Families First—Uplift Family Services

Phone: 707.399.4520

Address: 2420 Martin Road, Fairfield, CA 94533

Uplift Family Services is a statewide nonprofit that helps children and families. The agency is one of the largest, most comprehensive mental health treatment programs in California. Uplift Family Services takes a state-of-the-art approach to children and adolescents with complex behavioral health issues.

Greater Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership, Family Resource Center

Phone: 707.648.5230

Address: 505 Santa Clara Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

The FRC provides resources and referrals, basic needs assistance, homeless assistance, mentoring, parenting support, and education to families with children ages 0 through 18 years of age.

La Clinica Vallejo—Great Beginnings

Phone: 707.645.7316

Address: 210 Hospital Drive, Vallejo, CA 94589

Services include: comprehensive and postpartum care for women of all ages, pregnancy testing, sonograms, nutritional counseling, HIV testing, childbirth preparation classes, newborn care classes, breastfeeding education and support, delivery at Sutter Solano Medical Center, and car seat safety.

Maternal Child and Adolescent Health (MCAH) Referral Line

Phone: 877.680.2229

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

The MCAH Referral Line connects pregnant and postpartum mothers to prenatal care services, health insurance, and other home-visiting, case-management, and care coordination programs available for families.

Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Bureau

Phone: 707.784.8622

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

The MCAH Bureau of the Solano County Health and Social Services Department assesses, develops, preserves, and improves access and services for women, infants, children, adolescents, and families in the community. The bureau promotes wellness and prevents diseases.

North Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership, Family Resource Center

Phone: 707.553.7345

Address: 246 Olympic Aventura, Vallejo, CA 94589

Vallejo FRC provides resources and referrals, basic needs assistance, homeless assistance, mentoring, parenting support, and education to families with children 0 through 18 years of age.

Parent Education and Custody Effectiveness (PEACE)

Phone: 707.399.4666

Address: 900 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94533

The goal is to create an effective co-parenting relationship between divorcing parents. The program offers parents an opportunity to learn the necessary skills to keep their children out of family conflicts and helps them acquire new parental skills necessary for rearing children.

Parents by Choice Solano

Phone: 707.689.4497

Address: 1545 N Texas Street #201, Fairfield, CA 94533

Parents by Choice offers foster parenting programs, intensive treatment for foster parenting, adoption services, supervised visitations and safe exchanges, and positive parenting programs. They also offer job skills to teens by hiring them in their offices.

Partnership for Early Access to Kids (PEAK)

Phone: 707.422.2229

Address: 1126 Missouri Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

PEAK offers a variety of voluntary programs for children ages 0 through 5 and their caretakers, such as developmental and social-emotional screening and assessment; parenting programs, including parenting groups and individual counseling; and in-home mental health interventions.

Solano Car Seat Connection

Phone: 707.784.8628

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

A family-orientated education program led and coordinated by the Health Promotion and Community Wellness Bureau. Statistics show that four out of five children are not properly restrained when riding in the family car. Services include: free educational classes in English and Spanish, and gift certificates.

Solano County Health and Social Services—Maternal Child Adolescent Health (MCAH) Bureau

Phone: 707.784.8131

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

The MCAH Bureau of the Solano County Health and Social Services Department assesses, develops, preserves, and improves access and services for women, infants, children, adolescents, and families in our communities. The bureau promotes wellness and prevents disease.

Solano Parent and Child Education

Phone: 707.399.4666

Address: 900 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94533

Provides educators who specialize in Early Childhood Education and are there to help. They provide online classes, interactive classes, and practical parenting tips to help with navigating the journey of becoming a parent.

Suisun Healthy Start, Family Resource Center

Phone: 707.421.4398

Address: 725 Golden Eye Way, Suisun City, CA 94585

FRCs provide a local space for families to get information, learn about available services, meet other families, and get involved in community activities. Solano's FRCs are open to all families, regardless of income. FRC services include: information and referral services, parent education classes, etc.

Travis Air Force Base Family Advocacy Office

Phone: 707.423.5168

Address: 101 Bodin Circle, Travis Air Force Base, CA 94533

The Travis Air Force Base Family Advocacy Office provides services to military families experiencing child abuse and/or domestic violence issues. They also provide parenting classes for military families.

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

Phone: 707.469.4555

Address: 2101 Courage Drive, Fairfield, CA 94533

WIC provides checks for nutritional food such as: fruits and vegetables, milk, cheese, eggs, soy milk, tofu, juice, cereal, bread, rice, infant formula, infant cereal, etc. WIC provides nutrition assessment and education including: assessment and screening by staff who are trained.

Substance Use Disorder Education/Prevention

A.K. Bean Foundation

Phone: 707.429.8888

Address: 623 Great Jones Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

A.K. Bean Foundation offers alcohol, drug, and tobacco education classes at offices in Fairfield, Vacaville, and Vallejo, California. All programs offered are taught by certified counselors for DUI offenders in an effort to reduce their chances of re-offending.

Hand-in-Hand Counseling for Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Phone: 707.455.8776

Address: 40 Eldridge Avenue, Vacaville, CA 95688

Assessment, family treatment, outreach (Spanish community), individual treatment, co-occurring disorder, case management, groups, prevention / early intervention, referrals to other addiction programs that meet immediate need, and treatment referrals.

Keys 2 Recovery

Phone: 707-427-6640 ext.213

Address: Sorry, no address information available for this agency.

Substance abuse service. Intensive outpatient groups for drug treatment, relapse prevention & developing interpersonal skills. Individual counseling, crisis intervention, food finding assistance, jobs, housing.

Workforce

Vocational Rehabilitation

Caminar Jobs Plus

Phone: 707.648.8121

Address: 902 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Assessment, screening, individual treatment, employment placement / vocational rehabilitation, groups.

Caminar—Supportive Adult Independent Living (SAIL)

Phone: 707.648.8127

Address: 902 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Assessment, screening, case management, medication monitoring, housing, family treatment, individual treatment, co-occurring disorder, consultation, and employment placement / vocational rehabilitation.

Community Action Partnership (CAP Solano)

Phone: 707.428.7749

Address: 1000 Webster Street, Fairfield, CA 94553

CAP Solano identifies and assesses poverty-related needs and resources in the community, and establishes a detailed plan, goals, and priorities for delivering those services to individuals and families most affected by poverty. CAP Solano administers funds through the Community Services Block.

Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network

Phone: 707.558.1775

Address: 1125 Missouri Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network is the first vocational rehabilitation program certified by the state of California that is affiliated with a mental health rehabilitation center. Services range from assisting participants with initial hurdles such as securing social security cards and teaching.

Fairfield-Suisun WorkAbility

Phone: 707.399.4400

Address: 5100 Business Center Drive, Fairfield, CA 94534

The program promotes independent living and provides comprehensive pre-employment worksite training, employment, and follow-up services for youth in special education who are making the transition from school to work. The program serves both middle and high school.

Nalls Foundation

Phone: 415.505.6427

Address: 1261 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94533

Nalls Foundation provides diverse services for young women and men in foster care by addressing behavior challenges as well as providing academic, vocational, technological, and life-skills training. The Nalls Foundation program provides extensive family, permanency, and educational support services to help youth.

Solano Diversified Services (SDS)

Phone: 707.552.9443

Address: 1761 Broadway, Vallejo, CA 94589

SDS is dedicated to providing training and employment services in a variety of integrated, community settings to adults with disabilities in Solano County.

Solano Employment Connection

Phone: 707.649.3604

Address: 320 Campus Lane, Fairfield, CA 94534

The Solano Employment Connection is a partnership of 29 agencies involved in employment and training. The Employment Development Department and the Workforce Investment Board have staff on site, as well as Experience Works services for older workers.

Vallejo Transition: WorkAbility and Transition Partnership Program

Phone: 707-556-1700 ext. 50721

Address: Sorry, no address information available for this agency.

Vallejo Transition is a combination two programs: the Transition Partnership Program and WorkAbility (WAI). The goal of staff is to transition high school youth, who have a disability, from school to the world of work. TPP collaborates with the California Department of Rehabilitation to provide these services.

Comprehensive Job Assistance Centers

Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay—Fairfield Career Services

Phone: 707.864.5440

Address: 180 Grobrie Court, Fairfield, CA 94534

Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay provides workforce development services, including job-readiness training, and job placement, including transitional employment for residents of Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano counties. This program offers individuals who are job-ready with more advanced training.

Treasure Island Job Corps Center

Phone: 877.889.5627

Address: 351 H Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94130

Job Corps is a no-cost education and career technical training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through career technical and academic training.

California Conservation Corps

Phone: 916.341.3100

Address: 2100 Napa Vallejo Highway, Napa, CA 94558

A resource agency responding to emergencies and restoring California's great natural resources. The success of this program is based on the hard work and dedication of the Corps members (the young men and women of California). This is a full-time paid training and development program.

First Place for Youth

Phone: 510.272.0979 x305

Address: 1545 North Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533

My First Place is a flagship program that provides current and former foster kids, ages 18 through 24, with access to housing, education, and employment support in five California counties. Steps to Success provides robust career and education-focused programming to support foster kids in reaching their goals.

Employment Development Department (EDD) English to Spanish

Phone: 800.326.8937

Address: N/A

The EDD uses Google Translate to provide translation on most of the webpages on the website. Google translate is a free, automated service that relies on data and technology to provide translations. The translation should not be considered as exact and should be used as a rough guide.

Solano Employment Connection

Phone: 707.649.3604

Address: 320 Campus Lane, Fairfield, CA 94534

The Solano Employment Connection is a partnership of 29 agencies involved in employment and training. The Employment Development Department and the Workforce Investment Board have staff on site, as well as Experience Works services for older workers.

Job Development

Goodwill Industries East Bay—Job Services

Phone: 707.864.5440

Address: 180 Grobrie Court, Fairfield, CA 94534

Goodwill operates a Solano County Job Services Program in partnership with the county's Health and Human Services Department. The Job Services Program provides job readiness and search assistance, placement into transitional and permanent employment, and support services. A clothing closet is also available.

National Adult Day Services Association

Phone: 877.745.1440

Address: 11350 Random Hills Road, Fairfax, VA 22030

National Adult Day Services Association is the only association devoted exclusively to professionals in the adult day services arena. Members receive discounts on professional development, assist with recruitment for their centers, and provide up-to-date info on a variety of topics.

Experience Works

Phone: 707.863.3580

Address: 320 Campus Lane, Fairfield, CA 94533

A national nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the lives of older people through training, community service, and employment.

Adolescent Family Life Program / Positive Youth Development

Phone: 707.421.2750 x5

Address: 1325 Travis Boulevard, Fairfield, CA 94533

AFLP is a voluntary, strengths-based, case management program designed for pregnant and parenting teens to address the social, health, educational, and economic impact of adolescent pregnancy in Solano County. This program focuses on fostering Positive Youth Development by partnering with youth.

California Tribal TANF Partnership

Phone: 707.421.8379

Address: 1001 Texas St. Fairfield, CA 94533

Provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes, reduce the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, reduce out-of-wedlock pregnancies, and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

Goodwill Industries Greater East Bay—Fairfield Career Services

Phone: 707.864.5440

Address: 180 Grobrie Court, Fairfield, CA 94534

Goodwill Industries of the Greater East Bay provides workforce development services, including job readiness training, and job placement, including transitional employment for residents of Alameda, Contra Costa, and Solano counties. This program offers individuals who are job-ready with more advanced training.

Resource Connect Solano

Phone: 707.652.7311

Address: 902 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

Are you living in your car, on the street or outdoors, looking for help? Call Resource Connect Solano for a free, personalized resource, referral, and connection to local services. Resource Connect Solano is a program under Caminar. Caminar is dedicated to improving the quality of life.

Solano County Health and Social Services: Employment and Eligibility Services

Phone: 707.469.4500

Address: 275 Beck Avenue, Fairfield, CA 94533

This division assists the unemployed and underemployed to become more independent and productive citizens through programs designed to reduce dependency on welfare and promote personal responsibility. Programs include the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS), Cal Learn, etc.

Solano County Job Connection Employment and Training Center

Phone: 707.648.4028

Address: 320 Campus Lane, Fairfield, CA 94534

Offers training and assistance in finding part- or full-time employment.

Solano County Transition Partnership Program (TPP)

Phone: 707.399.4830

Address: 2460 Clay Bank Road, Fairfield, CA 94533

The TPP is a collaborative contract with the California Department of Rehabilitation and Solano County Office of Education. The program provides employment services, including employment preparation, job development and placement, follow-up, and non-supported employment to those students / DOR clients in Solano.

Solano Diversified Services (SDS)

Phone: 707.552.9443

Address: 1761 Broadway, Vallejo, CA 94589

SDS is dedicated to providing training and employment services in a variety of integrated, community settings to adults with disabilities in Solano County.

Solano Employment Connection

Phone: 707.649.3604

Address: 320 Campus Lane, Fairfield, CA 94534

The Solano Employment Connection is a partnership of 29 agencies involved in employment and training. The Employment Development Department and the Workforce Investment Board have staff on site, as well as Experience Works services for older workers.

Treasure Island Job Corps Center

Phone: 877.889.5627

Address: 351 H Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94130

Job Corps is a no-cost education and career technical training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through career technical and academic training. The Job Corps program is authorized by Title I-C of the Workforce Investment Act.

Appendix B: List of Assembly Bills Related to Basic Needs and Homeless Students

Assembly Bill

AB 801 Success for Homeless Youth in Higher Education Act (2016)

Expanded priority registration and various other benefits received by foster youth to homeless youth as well and mandated the designation of a foster and homeless youth liaison at public college and university campuses.

AB 1228 Housing priority, housing plans uring academic breaks (2015)

Modified the provisions of AB 1393 to provide similar priority to homeless youth and to require that California State Universities and Universities of California allow foster youth and homeless youth to remain in housing that is available during academic breaks at no extra charge.

AB 1747 College Student Hunger Relief Act (2016)

Provides the state with several new tools to draw down federal resources and aims to improve coordination between anti-hunger efforts on college campuses and anti-hunger efforts in the surrounding communities.

AB 214 Clarifies work-study laws so more college students can access SNAP (2017)

Help to reduce food insecurity and college hunger by improving access to CalFresh, California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—formerly known as the Food Stamp Program—by simplifying the administration of the program for college students.

AB 1995 Access to community college shower facilities for homeless students (2016)

Allows homeless college students who are enrolled in coursework, have paid tuition fees, and are in good standing with the community college district to shower at community colleges.

Appendix C: Interview Questions with County-Level Staff and Administrators**Solano Disconnected Youth Research**

INTRODUCTION

Background

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your organization and the work that you currently do?
2. Tell me about your organization/department.
 - a. What are the primary services you provide?
 - b. What are the intended outcomes of these services?

Probe: Purpose/mission, structure and goals, longevity, funding source, education and employment services.

Disconnected Youth

Now that I know a bit more about your organization and role, I'd like to shift gears . . .

1. As you know, this research is focused on disconnected youth (16- to 24-year-olds not working or in school). If not already mentioned, to what extent does your department/organization engage with disconnected youth?
2. What services/programs do you provide that target disconnected youth?
3. If none, what would you say have been the reasons and barriers for not engaging with disconnected youth? What, if any gaps, do you see for programs/services for disconnected youth in Solano County?
4. If you do provide such services/programs, what would you say has been the intended impact on disconnected youth?

5. What are some of the successes your organization/department has experienced with regard to serving disconnected youth?
6. What do you see as some of the challenges in addressing the needs of disconnected youth? How have these challenges been addressed?
7. What, in your experiences, are the primary factors that contribute to young adults leaving school and not working? What would you say are the biggest risks or vulnerabilities confronting them?

Probe: Disability/illness, homelessness, foster and/or institutional care, substance abuse, incarceration / juvenile delinquency, poverty status, parental background, young parents, punitive school suspension/expulsion/dropout.

8. Are there geographic areas in Solano County that have higher concentrations of disconnected youth?

Probe: Cities or school districts, isolated areas, urban, peri-urban, rural

9. Are there particular communities that have higher concentrations of disconnected youth?

Probe: Ethnic/racial groups

10. As you think about what ways to better serve disconnected youth in Solano County, what do you think is most pressing needed?

Probe: Education and employment training / programming for disconnected youth, funding, better needs assessment.

Concluding Thoughts

1. Outside of your organization/department, what other services/programs do you know of that are targeted at disconnected youth in Solano County?
2. Are there other individuals or organizations who you would recommend for this interview?

Introduction

Background

1. Let's start with a little bit of background. Could you provide your name, how long you have been attending [program], and describe future plans?

Probe: Continuing education, self-sufficiency, job training, long-term employment, sobriety, parenting, life skills, relocation, etc.

2. Prior to attending [program], what level of schooling or training had you completed and when was that?

Probe: High school, college, middle school, job training, work-based learning programs, disengagement, etc.

Current Engagement

3. Great, thanks! Now, let's talk a little more about your experience under the [program].
 - a. How did you become involved with them?
 - b. What does your involvement consist of?
 - c. What type of support do they provide?

Probe: Educational and employment, housing, mental health, child care, case management, etc.

4. What is your current status in the program?

Probe: Assistance from counselors, faculty, or staff from external organizations; referrals from other organizations; referrals from family/friends; etc.

- a. How far along are you in the program? When do you anticipate finishing?

- b. Do you have a sense of opportunities after you exit the program? Are you receiving information about next steps or related services?
- 5. Has anyone in particular helped you along the way? If so, who and what kind of information and/or support have they provided?
- 6. How are you fairing in the program thus far?
 - a. What factors do you think are contributing to your performance?

Probe: Tutoring/mentoring, work-based learning, alignment with interests, financial support, housing, etc.

- b. Are there other resources in or outside of the program that you know of but haven't accessed? If yes, why haven't you used them?
- 7. What would you say are some of your greatest successes or accomplishments since being involved with [program]?
 - a. To what extent has support from the program contributed to these successes?
- 8. What have been some of the greatest personal and/or academic challenges you've experienced in terms of pursuing education or employment thus far?

Probe: Transportation, housing, citizenship status, family responsibilities, parole, financial aid or other benefits.

- a. To what extent has the [program] helped you navigate some of these challenges?
 - b. What kinds of supports do you think could help you be more successful?
 - c. What other challenges, if any, do you foresee upon completing the [program]?

Employment Navigation

- 9. Some of you have been or are currently employed. How did you go about finding employment?

10. To what extent has your program prepared you for employment? What information and/or resources have they offered?

Probe: external organizations, place-based collaboration organizations

- a. Have they helped you plan for employment once you finish your program? Please describe.
- b. Have they connected you to skills training?
- c. Have they helped you identify possible careers or interests?

Concluding Thoughts

1. In what ways do you feel like [program] provides the necessary supports for you to meet your educational and employment goals?
2. What information, supports, and resources have proven to be most useful for getting back into education and the workforce? What has been the least useful?
3. What improvements can be made in Solano County to help you, and other youth, to succeed in your education and employment endeavors?

Appendix E: Recommendations for Vallejo, California

As the largest city in Solano County, Vallejo is home to a diverse population and an increasingly vibrant business community. However, it also is home to the highest poverty rate and the highest percentage of disconnected youth in the county. As more upper-income Bay Area residents move into or near Vallejo to escape higher property costs in nearby cities, the number of Vallejo's youth, who are economically and educationally disconnected, is expected to increase.

In recognition of this growing dichotomy, we have taken liberty to identify specific recommendations designed to address some of Vallejo's more acute issues facing its disconnected and high-risk youth in the areas of educational attainment and workforce training. These recommendations are not a panacea, but they can serve as necessary fasteners to strengthen the city's educational and economic safety nets for one of its more vulnerable populations.

Recommendation 1:

Support expansion of alternative learning options for high school-aged youth and young adults lacking a traditional high school diploma.

Many high school dropouts earn their diploma or GED when offered the chance to enroll in nontraditional, community-based programs. The Workforce Development Board, in partnership with other community nonprofits and city agencies, facilitates the identification and/or expansion of services that allow dropouts to resume their education without returning to the regular classroom. This includes a sustained, robust marketing campaign to identify and enroll qualified youth and ensure their program completion.

Recommendation 2:

Expand college access and program completion for disconnected and high-risk youth.

Working with the Solano County Community College and other appropriate local stakeholders, the Board facilitates an analysis of credentialed programs and supportive services offered by SCCC. The analysis ascertains the full alignment of those offerings to the mobility and employment limitations and needs of disconnected and high-risk youth. Based on the analysis, appropriate changes are implemented in order to successfully enroll and graduate youth with a valued credential leading to employment in Vallejo.

Recommendation 3:

Expand access to entry-level jobs with career ladders.

Disconnected youth are less likely than their more advantaged peers to have informal, social networks that they can use to find entry-level employment. Working with local and area employers, community nonprofits, and appropriate local government agencies, the Board facilitates the securing of job pledges from local employers and develops a supportive skills training process in partnership with employers that enables disconnected and high-risk youth to obtain an initial entry-level position with advancement opportunities to higher-skill, higher-wage positions.



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