HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF YOUTH IN HOPE SF COMMUNITIES

July 2014

WHAT WE DID

The purpose of this assessment was to look at what is needed to support the health of youth age 12-24 living in the HOPE SF public housing communities of Alice Griffith, Huntersview, Potrero Terrace & Annex and Sunnydale.

Nine young people from the HOPE SF sites were hired by the Youth Leadership Institute and worked as Youth Assessment Leaders. They partnered with 20 Master of Public Health students from San Francisco State University to develop and do all steps of this assessment.

WHAT WE WANTED TO LEARN

☑ The services important for youth health
☑ What youth need to access services
☑ What youth need to be leaders in HOPE SF communities
☑ The policy changes needed to support youth health
☑ The issues that undermine and support youth health
☑ Who youth turn to for support

HOW DID WE DO IT

LITERATURE REVIEW
February - March 2014

YOUTH LEADER PROGRAM
March - August 2014

INTERVIEWS & FOCUS GROUPS
May - June 2014

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS
July 2014

WE HEARD FROM

109 Youth Residents of HOPE SF Communities (12-24 yrs)
21 Adult Residents of HOPE SF Communities
8 Youth Assessment Leaders
20 Program Staff
22 Key Informants

YOUTH WE TALKED TO

Alice Griffith 30
Huntersview 18
Potrero 30
Sunnydale 31

African American 49%
Latino, Filipino, Bi-racial 28%
Samoan 23%
N/A 9%
Male 43%
Female 48%

PARTNERS

FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.healthequityinstitute.org
**WHAT WE HEARD**

**MENTAL HEALTH & SUPPORT**
- Violence at sites results in youth trauma and isolation; Substance use may be how youth cope
- Negative public perception of youth from HOPE SF sites is destructive to their health
- Desire for mental health services for youth on-site; Stigma around getting care is a barrier
- Youth at sites need support and services to foster healthy sexual relationships. Young parents need support programs to promote positive parenting
- Youth at HOPE SF sites turn to peers for emotional support, practical assistance and safety

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT**
- Youth want job training and help getting jobs
- Youth at HOPE SF sites are exposed to a rundown environment and have limited access to healthy food or places to be physically active

**VIOLENCE & POLICE**
- There is a strained relationship between youth and law enforcement
- Some youth are engaged in a cycle of violence perpetuated by a number of community factors

**PROGRAMS & POLICY**
- Stable, youth driven and relevant programs are needed for youth at HOPE sites. There are few programs for youth age 16-24 or LGBTQ youth
- Safety and transportation barriers limit HOPE youth from accessing programs and services
- Violence and trauma at HOPE SF sites impact program staff who work with youth
- Social and criminal justice policies compromise the health of youth at HOPE SF sites, but engagement in policy change efforts is lacking

**WHAT WE RECOMMEND**

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**
- Provide on-site jobs so youth earn income, contribute to community change and develop professional and personal skills

**COMMUNITY PEACE**
- Make violence prevention and improving youth-police relationships a priority; Hire Community Safety Ambassadors, adopt restorative justice approach and do a youth-led media campaign

**PROGRAMS, STAFF SUPPORT & YOUTH LEADERSHIP**
- Create on-site youth centers to engage older youth; Provide activities, access to wellness and support services, and promote youth development; Centers should be coordinated and foster unity across sites
- Expand on-site engaging youth activities and serve youth often overlooked by other programs
- Provide field trips specifically for youth ages 12-24 living in HOPE SF neighborhoods
- Support leadership of HOPE SF youth; Provide opportunities for youth to connect with their peers, elevate youth voices in HOPE SF
- Introduce or expand training and support for program staff to promote their well-being

**POLICY**
- Develop a HOPE SF youth policy agenda should be developed and advocate for change
- Provide flexible & long-term funding for programs