



**Locating Support for Disconnected Youth
in the San Joaquin Valley**

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Executive Summary

Substantial numbers of older San Joaquin Valley youth are not connected to the support they need to become healthy, economically prosperous, civically engaged adults. Existing research does not provide an adequate picture of who and where these youth are, and what is needed to better connect them. This report is an initial effort to fill the information gap, in order to inform effective investment and program and policy development in the region.

Data collection focused on seven counties and, within them, 15 municipalities and school districts. Census data and maps reveal the intensity of factors associated with youth disconnection, such as dropping out of school, teen pregnancy, juvenile crime, involvement with the foster care system, and poverty. A scan of available program supports provides information about (1) the breadth of types of programs that already exist in the region, (2) the availability of support tailored to the needs and interests of older, disconnected youth and (3) the distribution of programs in the region with respect to the distribution of youth and youth need. Finally, interviews with leaders of youth-serving community-based organizations, regional organizations, and county offices of education provide information about youth supports, initiatives to coordinate services, and local challenges. From these data, we began to learn about the nature of youth and regional need, the infrastructure of support, and some important areas for further investigation and investment.

The Need is Strong

- The seven-county San Joaquin Valley region fares poorly across multiple indicators associated with youth disconnection from key sources of support for successful transition to adulthood.
- Pockets of disconnected youth can be found within all counties where youth well-being suffers from multiple factors.
- Youth of color—particularly Black, Latino, and Native American youth— appear to be over-represented amongst the population of disconnected youth, based on juvenile sentencing data and drop-out rates. In some localities, Pacific Islander, Filipino, and Southeast Asian youth populations also face significant challenges.

The Infrastructure of Support is Uneven

- Programs for older youth mostly focus on the areas of education, health (including pregnancy prevention/support services and substance abuse intervention/prevention), employment preparation and training, support for foster/juvenile transitions, enrichment/recreation, youth leadership/civic engagement, and mentoring. Few programs appear to adopt comprehensive approaches to serving youth. Few programs are specifically organized to address the language and cultural backgrounds of youth participants.
- The largest sources of programmatic support for older youth are run through government agencies and their contracted service providers with federal, state, county, and, in larger population centers, municipal funds. Large non-profit organizations and networks (e.g. 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, Future Farmers of America) are another important source of programming in the region. Grassroots networks and non-profit organizations and faith-based organizations provide programs tailored to the needs of specific local populations, but tend to be under-resourced and are smaller in terms of numbers and reach.
- In some counties there are efforts to increase collaboration across sectors (e.g. health, education, juvenile justice, economic development) and between different types of organizations. However, there appear to be few strong working relationships between grassroots organizations that have strong links to low-income communities/communities of color and public agencies. This is a

missed opportunity to ensure that public resource allocation and program planning processes are well-informed about the interests and needs of harder-to-reach populations.

- Rural areas in particular have very small youth development non-profit sectors; in some cases even relatively large population centers, such as county seats, have small youth development non-profit sectors (for example, Madera, Merced and Hanford). While county agencies are working to extend services to rural communities, access continues to be limited in many places.
- There are a variety of challenges to serving older youth well that are related to logistical issues, program foci, current resources, and the nature of institutional and cross-cultural relationships.

Recommendations

Report findings suggest both topics for further investigation and areas where additional investment by public and private funders might enhance older youth's well being in the region.

Poverty is in many cases a root cause of youth disconnection, and the San Joaquin Valley has some of the highest poverty rates in the United States. Broader-based initiatives focused on poverty-reduction are therefore a critical long-term element of addressing older youth needs in the region.

The following are important additional and complementary investment strategies:

- Create new and enhance existing opportunities to engage older youth in guiding/advising program and policy development for their peers;
- Leverage public initiatives (e.g. ASES/21st Century Learning Center afterschool programming, Workforce Investment Board programming, Proposition 63 County mental health planning) to increase the numbers of promotion/participation-oriented programs tailored to the needs of ethnically, linguistically diverse older youth;
- Encourage and support increased collaboration between public agencies, large non-profit youth serving organizations, faith-based organizations and grassroots non-profit organizations and networks;
- Support organizational capacity-building in the non-profit and youth organizing sectors and cultural capacity building in the public sector;
- Provide capital for building/renovating spaces in low-resource rural communities that can house programs, services, and gatherings.
- Promote policies, programs and practices that increase graduation rates, decrease drop-out rates, and strengthen alternative schools;
- Support professional development in small rural programs to grow a local, culturally competent workforce;
- Pilot accurate and accessible regional systems for sharing information about youth needs and youth resources across sectors;
- Develop long-term, place-based, cross-sector investment strategies focused on older youth in geographic areas demonstrating especially high need and limited resources.

Key topics for further investigation include:

- Effectiveness, capacity and accessibility of the current system of support;
- Best practices for attracting and serving diverse older youth populations in rural settings;
- Existing public resources and the degree to which they reach youth in this region, rural youth, and youth across the diversity of racial/ethnic and language groups;
- State, regional and local leaders who would focus on addressing the needs of older, disconnected youth, and successful strategies that they should consider adopting;
- Community-scale assessments of older youth needs across ethnic, language and cultural groups, as well as existing assets for addressing them.

Introduction and Methods

Studies of the Central Valley indicate that the region's youth fare poorly in general, and in comparison with other regions in California and nationally, according to multiple indicators of well-being.¹ Within the Central Valley, the San Joaquin Valley has the highest rate of youth that are neither employed nor attending school during the academic year.² These youth also experience high rates of poverty, linguistic isolation, arrest, pregnancy, and foster care. Research suggests that youth who experience these multiple challenges are more likely to be disconnected from the supports necessary to make successful transitions to adulthood.³ There is a tremendous need for settings that offer these disconnected older youth transformative opportunities to learn in a safe, meaningful context, connect with supportive adults, and develop a sense of self-efficacy and civic responsibility.

Public and private funders, the "afterschool" field, and youth organizers in California are currently mobilizing to strengthen and expand programming. However, to date such efforts have lacked at least three key types of data that are critical to developing efficient and strategic planning and investment in the Central Valley: (1) Information about the breadth of types of programs that already exist in the region, (2) Information about the availability of support tailored to the needs and interests of older, disconnected youth and (3) Information about the distribution of programs in the region with respect to the distribution of youth and youth need.

This report takes a first step toward filling this information gap. The report is organized into three main sections: The Nature of Need, The Infrastructure of Support, and Recommendations. The first section draws upon U.S. Census data and other state data regarding high school drop-out rates, teen pregnancy, foster care, juvenile crime, poverty and linguistic isolation to locate potential concentrations of older, disconnected youth in the region. "The Structure of Support" examines the numbers and types of services available in fifteen sample communities, and draws upon service provider interviews to explore challenges and successes around serving this youth population. The final section outlines a series of recommendations for future investigation and investment.

Methods

This report examines needs and support of disconnected youth in the San Joaquin Valley through a primary focus on fifteen municipalities and school districts in a seven-county region.

These communities and their school districts were selected to reflect a mix of county seats and smaller rural settings. Criteria considered in selecting rural districts included the presence of an alternative high school, high drop-out and poverty rates in comparison with other districts in the county, and past status as a Healthy Start grantee.⁴ Nine districts were sites of Healthy Start programs, reflecting a history of school-community collaboration around child and family social and health services.

¹ GVC (2002). *The State of the Great Central Valley of California: Assessing the Region Via Indicators (Community Well-being)*. Modesto, CA: Great Valley Center.

Dannenber, A., Jepsen, C., and Cerdan, P. (2002). *Student and School Indicators for Youth In California's Central Valley*. San Francisco, CA: PPIC.

² GVC (2004). *The State of the Great Central Valley of California: Assessing the Region Via Indicators (Education and Youth Preparedness)*. Modesto, CA: Great Valley Center, p.16.

³ Osgood, D. Wayne, E. Michael Foster, Constance Flanagan, and Gretchen R. Ruth, (Eds.) (2005). *On Your Own Without a Net: The Transition to Adulthood for Vulnerable Populations*. 2005 Series: (MF) The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Series on Mental Health and Development. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁴ Prior or current involvement with Healthy Start was used as an indicator of district-level willingness to consider providing non-academic supports through school-based and/or school-linked programs.

Locating Support for Disconnected Youth in the San Joaquin Valley

County	School District	District Enrollment 2004-2005	Continuation Schools	# Healthy Start Schools ⁵	District Dropout Rate 2004-2005	Free/Reduced Meals Rate 2004-2005
Fresno	Fresno Unified	80760	5	17	0.20%	82.07%
Fresno	Mendota Unified	2383	1	1	6.50%	80.86%
Kings	Hanford Joint Union High	3688	2	0	2.30%	40.37%
Kings	Reef-Sunset Unified (Avenal)	2552	2	6	2.40%	100.00%
Madera	Chowchilla Union High	873	1	0	1.30%	11.77%
Madera	Madera Unified	17732	1	0	7.70%	72.24%
Merced	Merced Union High	10170	1	0	1.00%	70.77%
Merced	Dos Palos Oro Loma Joint Unified	2694	1	0	2.60%	74.40%
San Joaquin	Lodi Unified	30092	2	3	5.40%	54.19%
San Joaquin	Stockton Unified	39268	1	9	6.40%	72.74%
Stanislaus	Modesto City High	15856	1	1	5.60%	41.30%
Stanislaus	Patterson Joint Unified	4659	1	0	2.20%	55.04%
Stanislaus	Ceres	10479	1	3	5.80%	57.85%
Tulare	Cutler-Orosi Joint Unified	4026	1	10	4.00%	91.97%
Tulare	Visalia Unified	25794	3	5	2.10%	52.39%

The report is based on four main data sources: (1) secondary data such as U.S. Census 2000 data and data generated by state agencies such as the California Department of Education, the California State Attorney General’s Office, and the California Department of Social Services, (2) online information about public, non-profit and for-profit programs in the fifteen communities, (3) information about youth programs and services in these communities that has been compiled by public and private San Joaquin Valley organizations, and (4) interviews with seventeen key individuals in the non-profit and public sectors in the region.

Locating Youth Needs

The analysis of youth needs employs a regional mapping strategy. Key census data on indicators associated with youth “disconnected-ness” are mapped at the census tract scale (see Appendix A for mapping methods), providing a regional overview. An analytical map draws from six indicator maps to identify geographical areas that are likely “high need” areas.

Assessing Youth Supports

Data on the location and focus of youth services in the fifteen municipalities were generated primarily through interviews and online research.

Seventeen interviewees were selected from community-based organizations, regional organizations and county offices of education across the fifteen communities. All were asked about key organizations and individuals, efforts to compile information about youth supports, and initiatives to coordinate services. In some cases interviewees were able to provide lists of local youth-serving organizations or direct us to online listings. Interviewees also commented on the nature of supports in their area and local challenges. Please see Appendix B for a list of interviewees and the interview protocol.

Further information about local programs was collected online through central program offices, relevant agencies, philanthropic organizations, the California Attorney General’s Office, and keyword searches (see Appendix C for further information about data collection methods). Program data, including name contact information, and types of services provided, were compiled in an Excel spreadsheet. Program

⁵ These grants were established in 1991 by CA SB-620 to establish school-linked learning supports for children, families, and communities. Over 800 grants have been awarded in all 58 counties of California.

data received by December 7, 2006 were plotted on a point map with respect to census data indicating need; data received after this time (primarily from the Merced area) were compiled but not mapped. Types of programs most likely to have been under-counted in light of data collection strategies are those focused on substance abuse intervention and mental health more broadly, faith-based programs, child protective services, and alternatives to incarceration.

This study has several limitations based on the research methodology and available data.

- Resource constraints allowed for a small district/community sample and limited primary data collection (including limited ability to identify the full range of supports offered through schools).
- Program information was gathered primarily from secondary data sources that are not independently verified. These data sources did not consistently provide program information that would have been useful to assessing program capacity, including numbers of people served and languages in which services are available.
- Available program information did not consistently enable accurate assessments of whether more marginalized youth populations were targeted for services.
- While we rely on 2000 census data, we know there has been considerable population growth in the region since that time.⁶
- Time/resource constraints limited the number of indicators considered.
- The cross-indicator mapping analysis reflects a very rough assessment of need. A more refined statistical analysis could account for population size, relative weighting/importance of indicators, etc. in assessing need.
- This project neither examines program quality nor youth perspectives on need and available supports, both of which are critical factors for future research.

Section 1: The Nature of Need

Research has identified four key “transition” points which appear linked to long-term youth disconnection from the labor market and positive social, health and civic outcomes: (1) when youth drop out of high school, (2) when young women under age 20 have children out of wedlock, (3) when youth get involved with the juvenile justice system, and (4) when youth spend a significant portion of their adolescence in foster care placements.⁷ Poverty tends to be associated with all of these circumstances. Having limited English language skills might present additional challenges to accessing available support during these transitions. The following section reveals the condition of older youth in this seven-county region with respect to disconnection from school and the labor market. It concludes with data maps that reflect key indicators of potential disconnection, and an assessment of areas that present relatively negative trends with respect the state and region on multiple indicators.

This section relies extensively on data maps. While viewing the maps, note that large census tracts are typically located in regions of sparse population; therefore, visually large “hot spots” will have rates that are based on a relatively small numbers of occurrences in a specific location within the census tract.

High School Dropouts

With the exception of Merced, Fresno, and Kings Counties, four-year dropout rates in the San Joaquin Valley exceed those of the California state average. Across all seven counties, the average percentage of high school graduates meeting University of California/California State University course requirements is below the state average; regionally less than one-third have met these requirements, and in Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, and Tulare counties, only approximately 20% of graduates done so.

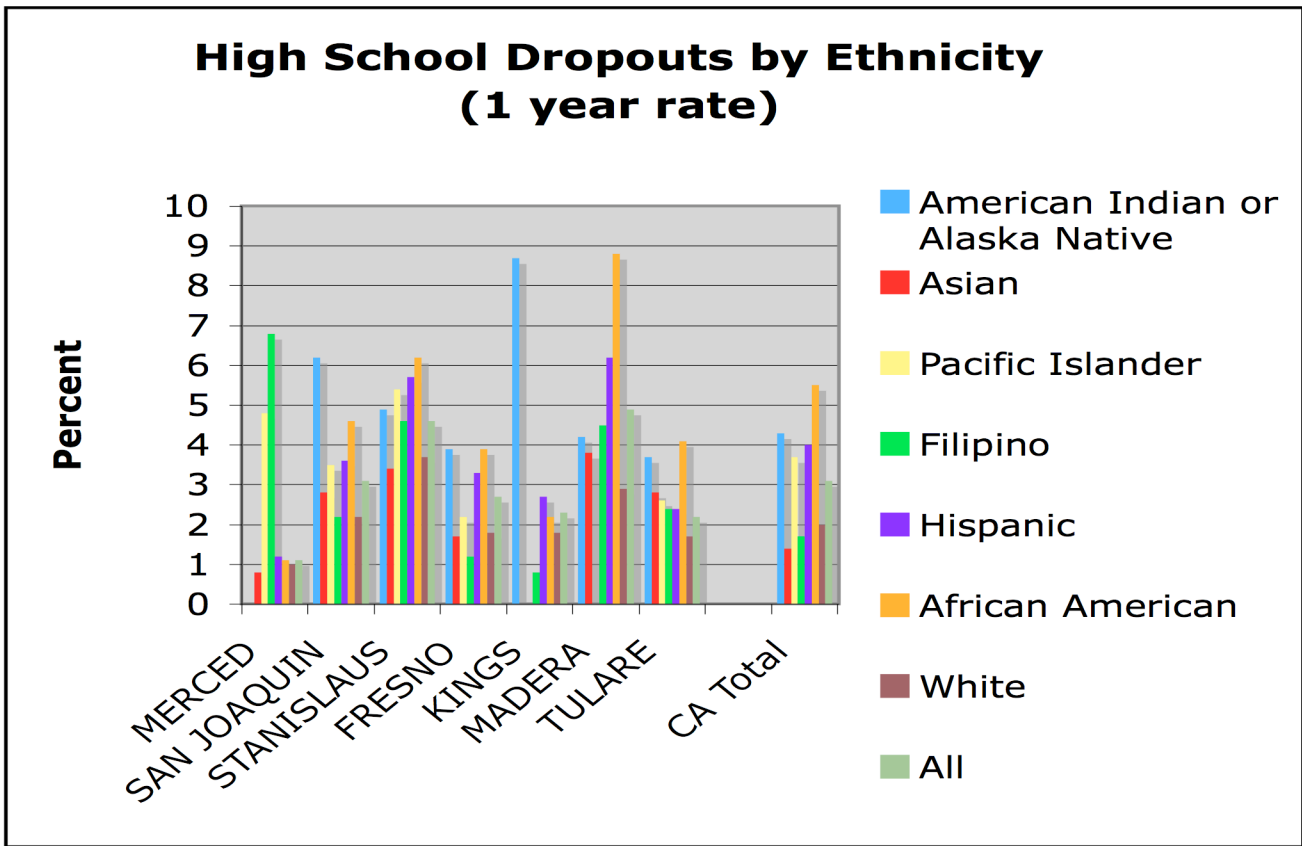
⁶ See Umbach, K. W. (2005). *San Joaquin Valley Land, People and Economy*(CRB 05-007). Sacramento: California Research Bureau.

⁷ http://www.ytfg.org/knowledge_transition.html

High School Completion Data

	4 yr. Drop-out rate (2004-2005) ⁸	Graduation rate ⁹ (2004-2005)	% Meeting UC/CSU Requirements (2004-2005) ¹⁰
California	12.6	85.0	35.2
San Joaquin	12.7	89.0	28.9
Stanislaus	17.9	83.3	21.5
Merced	4.4	92.8	19.3
Madera	18.7	82.3	20.2
Fresno	10.7	83.6	32.6
Kings	9.6	88.5	25.8
Tulare	12.6	87.9	22.0

As illustrated in the chart below, a disproportionate number of these students are youth of color, with some variation across counties.¹¹



⁸ From the California Department of Education, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/>, accessed June 2006.

⁹ This indicator (used by the National Center of Education Statistics) is a measure of the percentage of the incoming freshman class that graduates 4 years later. The averaged freshman enrollment count is the sum of the number of 8th-graders 5 years earlier, the number of 9th-graders 4 years earlier (because this is when current year seniors were freshmen), and the number of 10th-graders 3 years earlier divided by 3. The intent of this averaging is to account for the high rate of grade retention in the freshman year, which adds 9th-grade repeaters from the previous year to the number of students in the incoming freshman class each year.

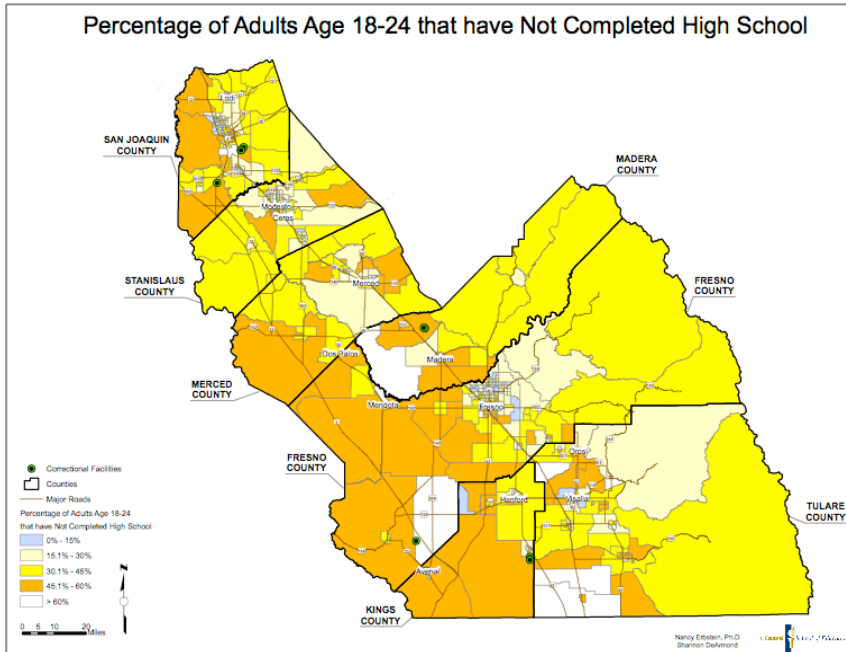
¹⁰ From the California Department of Education, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/>. Retrieved September 2006.

¹¹ From the California Department of Education, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/>. Retrieved September 2006.

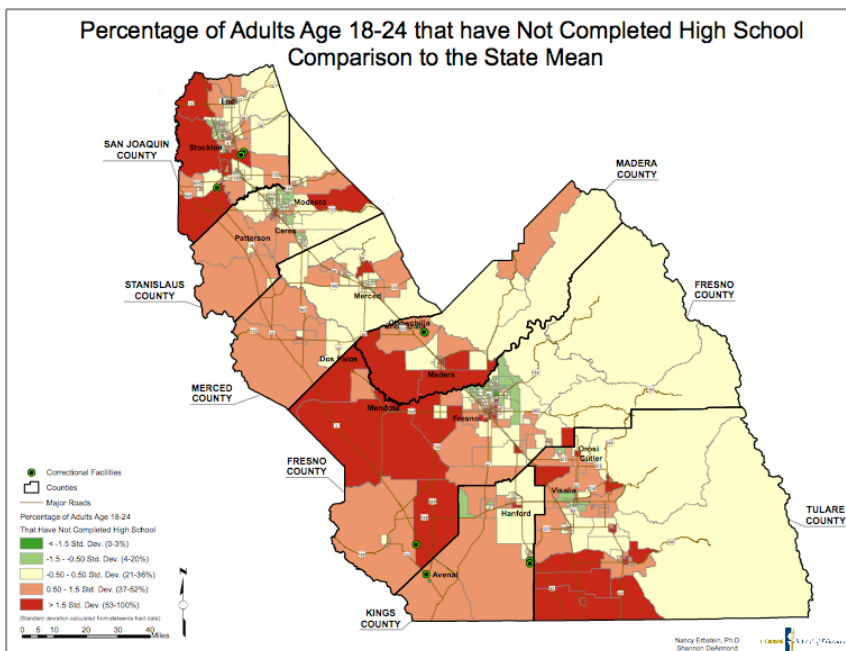
Locating Support for Disconnected Youth in the San Joaquin Valley

These high dropout rates contribute to a very low rate of high school completion amongst 18-24 year olds in the region compared to the state overall. The following two maps illustrate high school completion rates for this age group at the census tract level.

The first reveals that in 2000, in many areas more than 45% of this older youth population had not completed high school.



A second map shows the same data compared to the state mean of 28%, indicating that the San Joaquin Valley has a substantially higher percentage of youth not completing high school than the rest of the state.



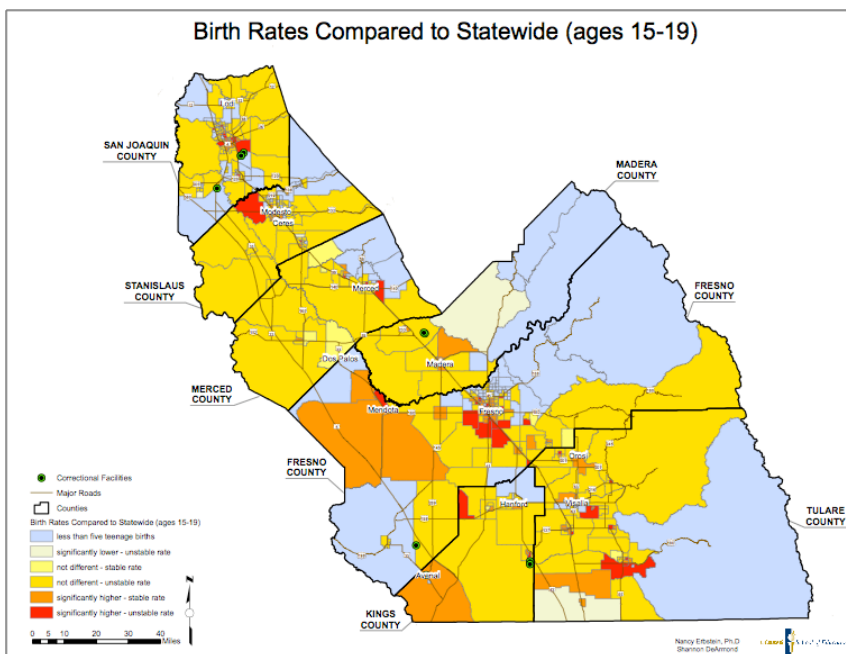
Teenage Pregnancy

The San Joaquin Valley has substantially higher high teen pregnancy rates than the state overall.¹²

Teen Births (per 1000 females ages 15-19)

	2001	2002	2003
California	44	41	39
San Joaquin	52	51	49
Stanislaus	51	47	45
Merced	59	56	53
Madera	76	65	69
Fresno	64	60	58
Kings	69	72	67
Tulare	73	69	68

The following map illustrates teen pregnancy rate trends at the census tract scale.



At this scale we see that these high county-level rates reflect especially high rates in specific communities, regions, and/or neighborhoods within each county.

Juvenile Arrests/Incarceration¹³

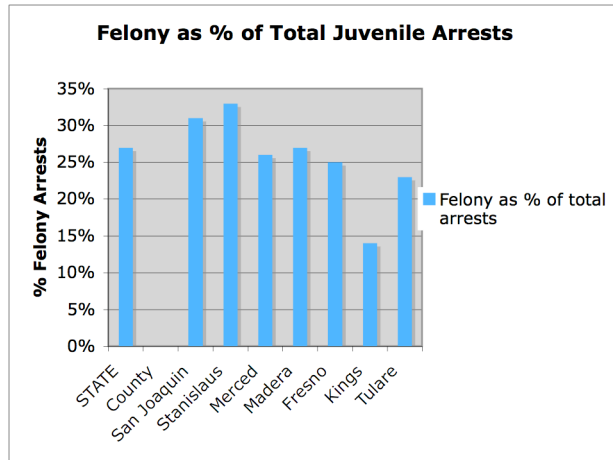
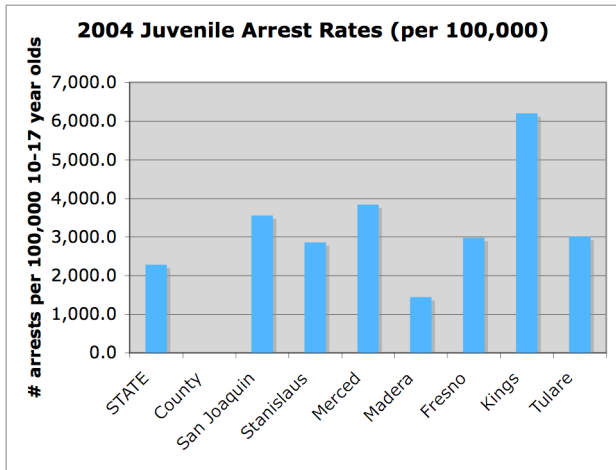
The San Joaquin Valley has some of the highest juvenile arrest rates in the state. Kings County has a rate twice as high as that of any other county in the region and, except Glenn County, in the state as a whole.

¹² First 5 California,

<http://63.192.161.5/ccfcgis/gis.asp?maxx=111.5004984&minx=127.1403046&miny=32.696534702&mxy=41.767622298&vis=teen,&nvis=mcit10less,mcit10to49,mcit50to99,mcit100plus,county,sdis,indians,congress,senate,assembly,parks,ctycomm,dds,otherfrc,shae,fhigh,sele,presch,calsafe,dobs,dped,dgen,indcli,hosp,clinic,wic,interstates,fwy,mroad,airports,train,bus,srih,ipchs,teen,kids04,lowinc,matedu,nativity,firstbirth,numchi,rafr,rami,rasi,rhis,rpc,rwhi,&p=1&t=2&s=0&h=430&geotype=&geo=&theclass=&thedistrict=&thevariable=&si=,3,&locmap=off>, Accessed July 2006.

¹³ Currently only county-level juvenile crime and sentencing data are held by the State Attorney General's Office, so we were unable to map more localized data on juvenile crime.

However, the San Joaquin Valley shows a smaller proportion of felony arrests than other regions. In Kings County, the vast majority of the arrests are for misdemeanors, not felonies.¹⁴



The W. Haywood Burns Institute has conducted analyses of 2003 county-level sentencing data to demonstrate the over-representation of youth of color ages 10-17 in juvenile detention facilities.¹⁵ In this seven-county region, over-represented groups were as follows.

Racial/Ethnic Over-representation in Juvenile Detention Facilities

County	Over-represented groups
Stanislaus	African American
San Joaquin	Data N/A
Merced	African American, Latino
Madera	African American, Latino
Fresno	African American
Tulare	Latino
Kings	Data N/A

So, while the region as a whole has a larger proportion of youth involved with the juvenile justice system, a disproportionate number of those young people are African American and Latino.

Youth In Foster Care

An analysis of foster care case loads in 2004 suggests that Fresno County is the only county in the San Joaquin Valley region with an average case load greater than the California county average. Emancipation rates across the region appear to be fairly consistent between 2000-2005.

¹⁴ From London, J.K. and Sommer, S.L. (forthcoming). Assessing the Region Via Indicators: Community Well-being. Modesto, CA: The Great Valley Center.

¹⁵ <http://www.burnsinstitute.org/dmc/ca/county.html> Accessed July 2006. "Over-representation" is defined as at least 1% greater than the percentage of the population of white, Native American, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, and/or Latino youth ages 10-17.

Number of Youth Emancipated By County of Removal¹⁶

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
California	4249	4460	4232	4107	3805	4063
San Joaquin	74	65	67	59	63	58
Stanislaus	34	40	29	30	32	17
Merced	23	28	32	17	20	17
Madera	22	12	15	13	11	11
Fresno	127	140	129	162	131	117
Kings	15	9	8	5	13	15
Tulare	59	69	57	59	62	81

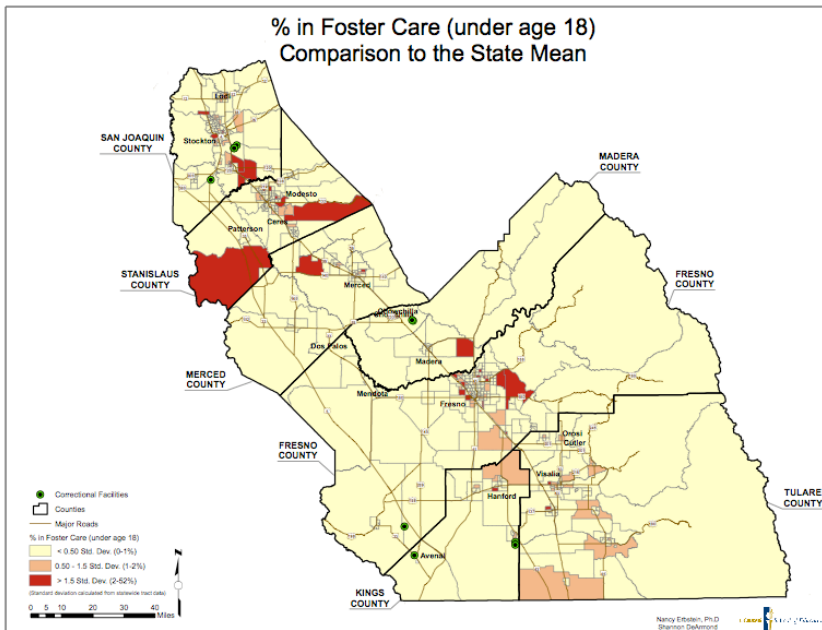
Fresno County has the greatest number of youth in foster care in the region. Black youth are heavily over-represented amongst emancipating youth and white youth are somewhat over-represented.

Fresno County Emancipation by Ethnicity (Number/Percentage)¹⁷

	Black	White	Hispanic	API	Nat. Am.	Total
2005	29/22.8	35/27.6	59/46.5	1/0.8	3/2.4	127
2004	30/21.4	33/23.6	74/52.9	2/1.4	1/0.7	140
2003	34/26.4	38/29.5	56/43.4	0/0	1/0.8	129
2002	32/19.8	50/30.9	74/45.7	3/1.9	3/1.9	162
2001	31/23.7	38/29.0	59/45.0	2/1.5	1/0.8	131
2000	32/27.4	33/28.2	52/44.4	0/0	0/0	117

2005	Black	White	Hispanic	API	Nat. Am.	Other
% 0-17 olds	6.2	21.8	59.5	9.0	1.4	2.0

A census data map showing the percentage of children/youth in foster care placements reveals that specific communities and neighborhoods have particularly high rates in comparison with the region and the state overall. While many of these settings are near urban centers, some are in more rural areas.



¹⁶ Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Shaw, T., Dawson, W., Piccus, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Conley, A., Smith, J., Dunn, A., Frerer, K., & Putnam Hornstein, E., (2006). *Child Welfare Services Reports for California*. Retrieved October 2006, from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website. URL: <<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/>>

¹⁷ *ibid.*

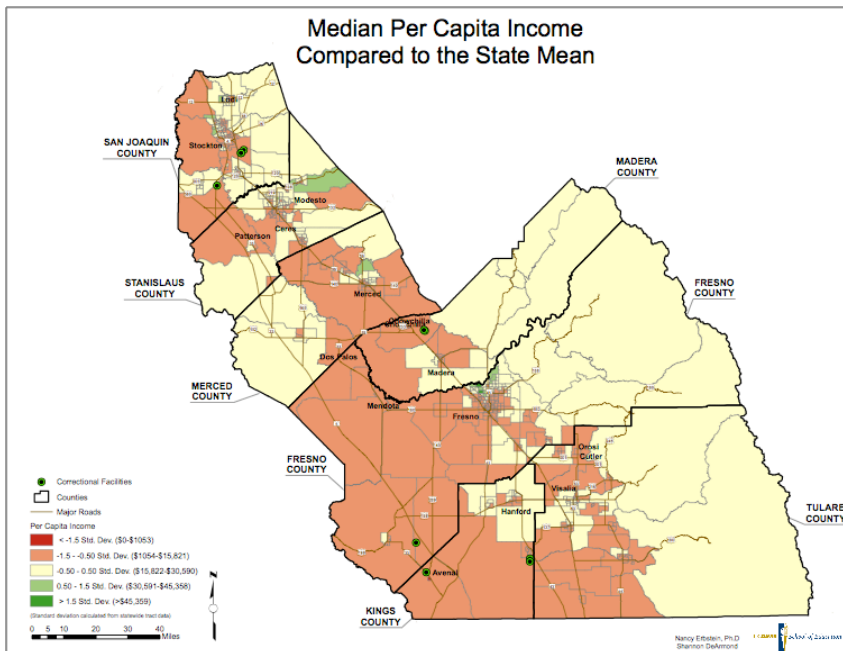
Poverty

Poverty is typically associated with each of the transition points that researchers have linked with youth marginalization from key sources of support for successful transitions to adulthood; that is, in many cases, marginalization is a consequence of poverty. As such, poverty is a critical indicator for assessing youth need. As indicated below, the median household income in the San Joaquin Valley is substantially lower than that of California as a whole.

Median Household Income¹⁸

	2000	2001	2002
California	45836	47064	47323
San Joaquin	40633	40018	41042
Stanislaus	40054	39300	40000
Merced	34474	34074	34689
Madera	35248	34010	34432
Fresno	34930	34020	34579
Kings	34724	33879	34709
Tulare	32253	31587	32033

The map displays the median per capita income at the census tract level, highlighting significant variation within each county, pockets of much more extreme poverty that are masked by county aggregate numbers, and the extent to which much of the region is significantly more poor than the state mean.

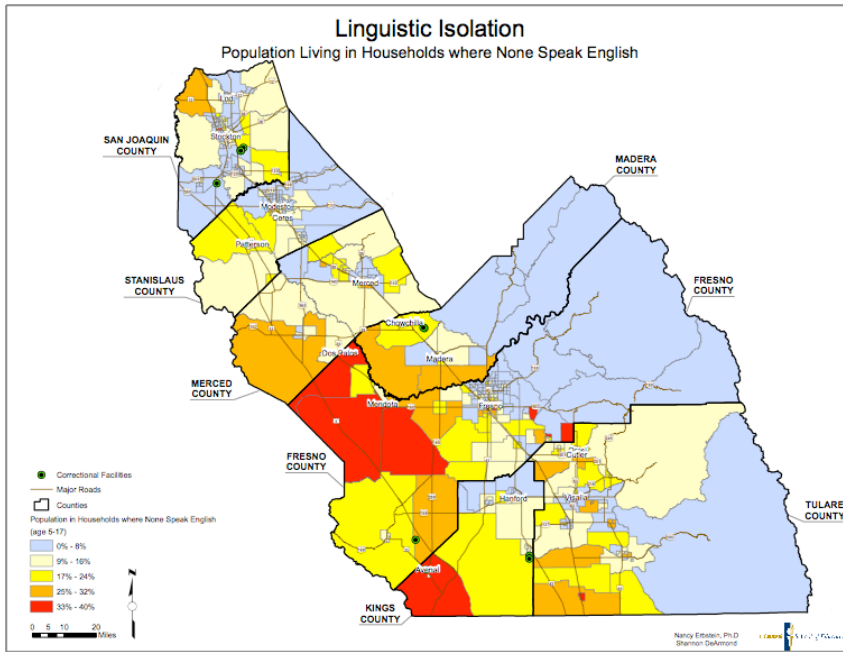


Linguistic Isolation

There has been limited research on the relationship between English language skills and youth transitions to adulthood. However, based on the hypothesis that limited English skills are likely to present another barrier between youth-serving programs and youth who need to access services, we have generated a map displaying the percentage of children ages 5-17 in households where no one speaks English “very well,” according to the assessment of respondents to the 2000 U.S. Census.

¹⁸ Children Now (2005). *County Data Book 2005*. Oakland, CA: Children NOW. www.childrennow.org

This map suggests that in many areas of the region (for example, northwest San Joaquin County, and western parts of Merced, Madera, Fresno Kings and Tulare Counties), substantial numbers of older youth might need primary language support.

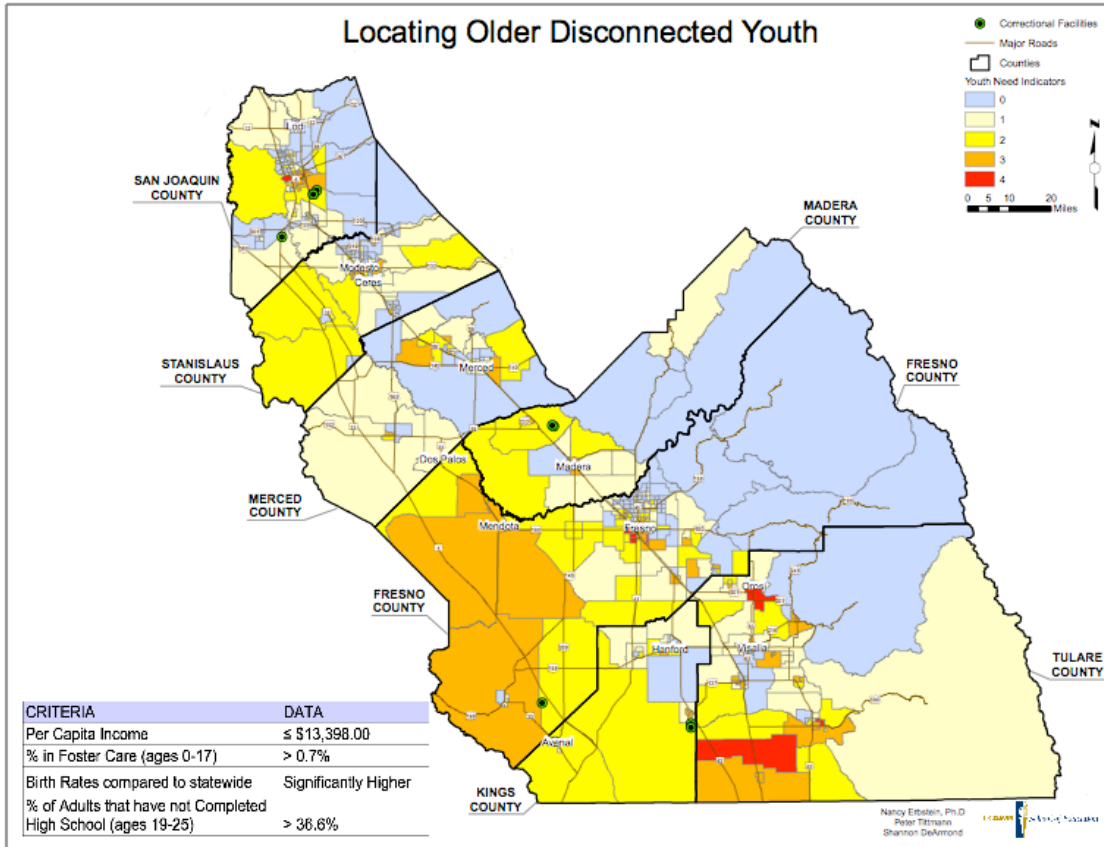


Summary of Risk

The seven-county San Joaquin Valley region fares poorly across multiple indicators associated with youth disconnection from key sources of support for successful transition to adulthood. Youth of color—particularly Black, Latino, and Native American youth—appear to be over-represented amongst the population of disconnected youth, based on juvenile sentencing data and drop-out rates. In some localities, Pacific Islander, Filipino, and other Southeast Asian youth populations also face significant challenges. As noted, more localized data suggests that there is important local variation within counties, and county scale data can mask the existence of more extreme conditions.

The following map provides a very rough analysis of the level of risk of “disconnection” in each census tract by looking across data related to four indicators discussed above: (1) high school completion of youth ages 18-24, (2) teen pregnancy, (3) foster care rates, and (4) per capita income. Each census tract was ranked based on the number of indicators for which it was placed in the two most negative quintiles. Therefore, tracts shaded light blue did not rank in the two “worst” quintiles across any of these indicators. Tracts shaded red ranked within the three “worst” quintiles in all four indicator areas.¹⁹

¹⁹ As noted earlier, the presence of group quarters appears to be linked to high rates of youth out of school and unemployed in some census tracts; this appears to have especially affected the ranking of the large beige tract west of Stockton and a small part of the beige area just north of the light blue tract directly above the “Merced” city label. In these cases, these tracts did not rank in the two most negative quintiles for any other indicators, so it is likely that if group quarters were factored out, these tracts would have been light blue.



Two cautions underscore the reason to treat this map as a “rough” analysis. First, because the map does not weight any individual indicator more than another (thus, for example, the foster care rate as an indicator of disconnection is weighted the same as per capita income), a 1-indicator (beige) ranking is somewhat suspect, and a 4 indicator ranking (red) is a more powerful assessment than one based on 1 indicator. However, because this analysis only “counted” a tract if it ranked within the top three quintiles on a given indicator, even some light blue and beige tracts might, for example, have relatively high percentages of adults that have not completed high school. Nonetheless, this map shows that youth in certain areas of the San Joaquin Valley experience multiple stresses that are associated with disconnection from key supports for successfully transitioning to adulthood.

Locating Disconnected Youth

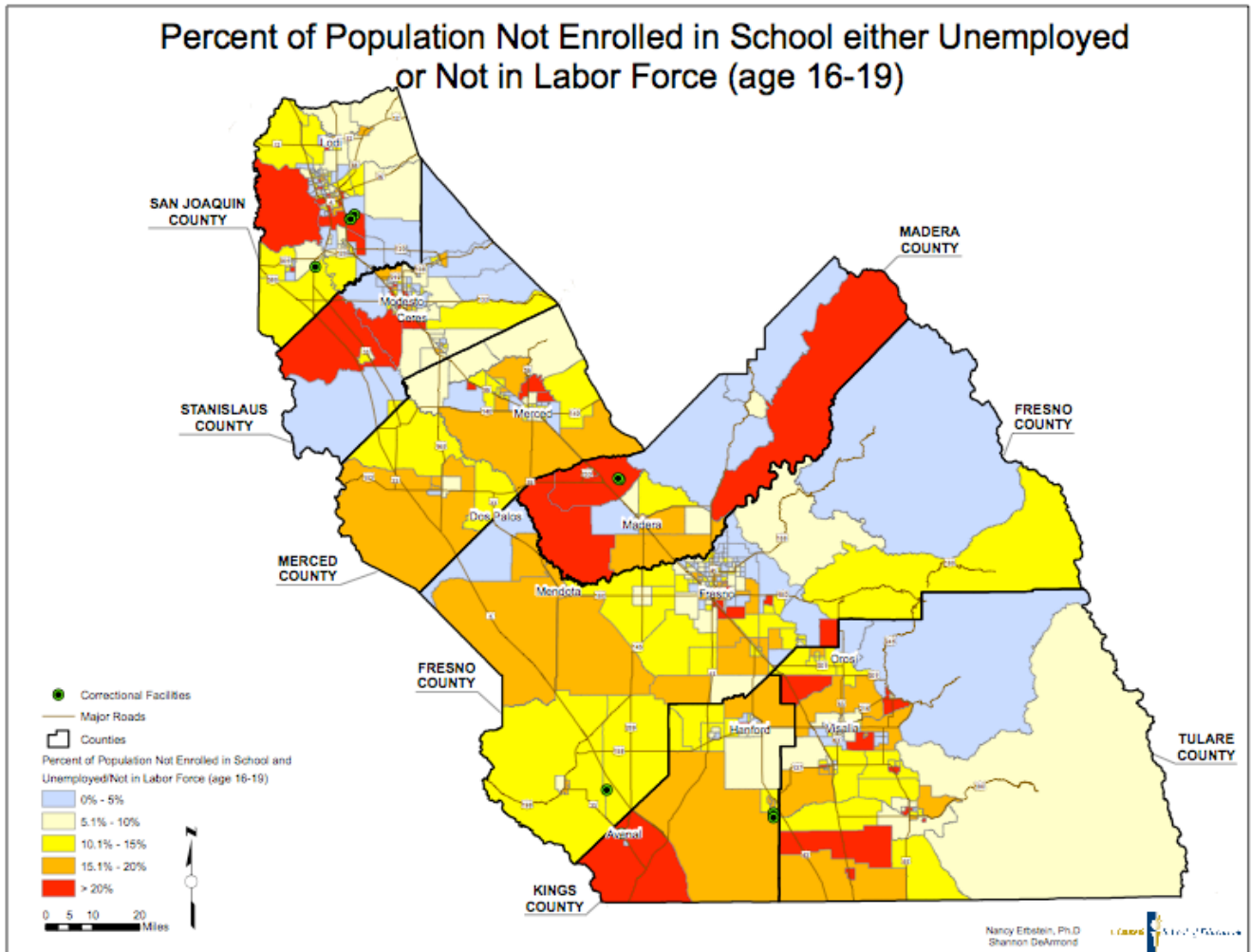
Another way of locating older youth who are likely to be disconnected from critical supports is to consider the percentage of youth ages 16-19 who are out of school and unemployed or not in the labor force.²⁰

²⁰ Children NOW 2005 County Data Book. “Unemployed” youth includes those who are “not in the labor force.” The latter category consists mainly of individuals taking care of home or family, retired workers, seasonal workers enumerated in an off-season who were not looking for work, institutionalized people (all institutionalized people are placed in this category regardless of any work activities they may have done in the reference week), and people doing only incidental unpaid family work (fewer than 15 hours during the reference week) (definition from http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/MetadataBrowserServlet?_type=subject&id=EMPLOYSF3&dssspName=DEC_2000_SF3&back=update&_lang=en).

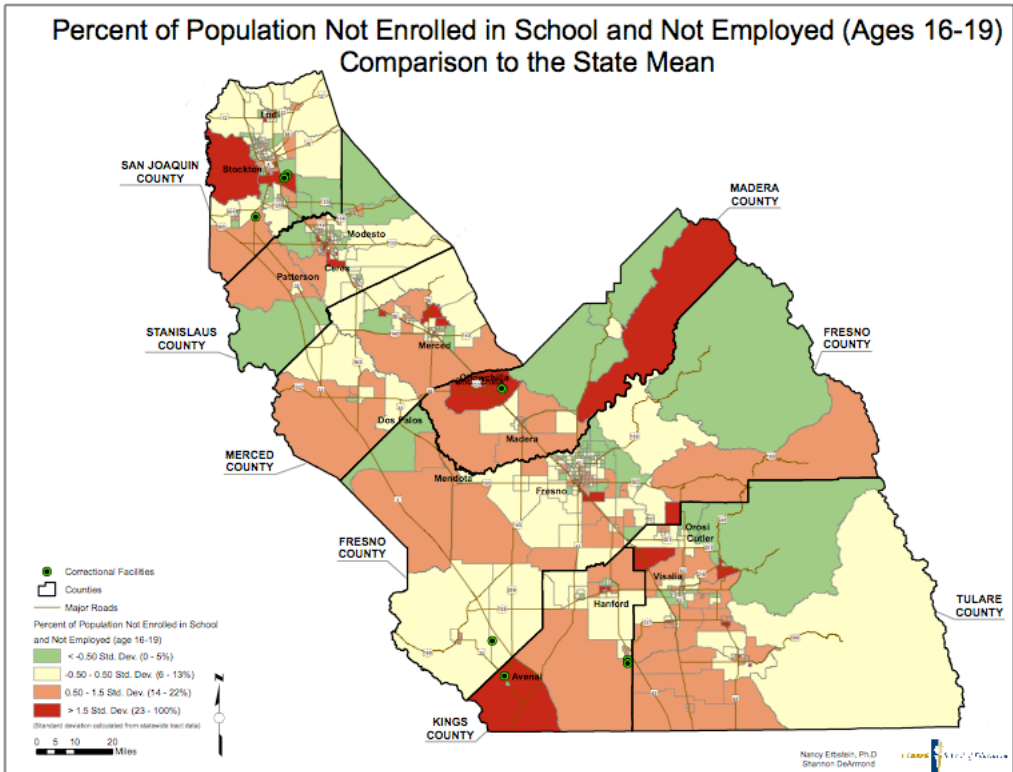
16-19 year olds out of school and unemployed.

	% Out of School/Unemployed
California	9.5
San Joaquin	11.7
Stanislaus	11.2
Merced	12.0
Madera	14.0
Fresno	11.3
Kings	14.8
Tulare	12.4

County numbers, however, mask local variation. The following maps depict the county data at a smaller (census tract) scale. At this scale we see that in many areas, these rates are much worse (which in some cases in part reflects the presence of prisons, which are indicated on the map).¹ Also, areas with high rates of out-of-school and unemployed youth are in some cases in close proximity to areas where rates are much lower.



Comparing these data with the state mean reveals that the percentage of youth who are out of school and not employed is significantly higher than that of the state overall in many parts of this region.



Section 2: The Infrastructure of Support

The previous section suggests that a substantial number of older youth in the San Joaquin Valley face barriers to becoming healthy, economically independent, civically engaged adults. The following section examines the types of support that are available to these older youth, the organization of support, coordination, access to support, and barriers to providing youth services. This section relies upon data gathered in seventeen interviews with staff from community-based and regional organizations, school districts, and County Offices of Education, and information on 372 programs/organizations that were identified in the fifteen focus communities.

Numbers of Programs and Organizations

City	Population ²¹	# Sites
Lodi	56,999	8
Stockton	243,771	57
Modesto	188,856	31
Patterson	11,606	5
Ceres	34,609	2
Chowchilla	11,127	1
Madera	43,207	14
Merced	63,893	48
Dos Palos	4,581	4
Fresno	427,652	123
Mendota	7,890	6
Hanford	41,686	21
Avenal	14,674	2
Cutler-Orosi	11,809	5
Visalia	91,565	33

²¹ U.S. Census 2000

It is important to note that these programs do not reflect an exhaustive list of programmatic supports, but rather a rough snapshot of supports available to older youth in transition.²²

The Nature of Programs

Programs and organizations identified through this project focus on the areas of education (including tutoring, drop-out prevention and GED preparation), health (including physical well-being, mental health and social services, and pregnancy prevention), employment (including career exploration, job placement and training), Foster/Juvenile transitions (including emancipation and re-entry support), Enrichment/recreation (including sports, arts, and cultural activities), leadership/civic engagement (including leadership training, youth organizing), Mentoring/Parenting Skills (general mentoring and mentoring of young parents), and other topics (e.g. positive identity development based on ethnicity or sexual orientation, gang mediation, emergency services such as homeless youth shelters). Approximately 45% of programs focus in at least two areas.

Program Foci Across 15 Municipalities

Program Focus	# Programs
Health	181
Leadership/Civic Engagement	*102
Employment	99
Education	72
Enrichment/Recreation	68
Other	**66
Mentoring/Parenting Skills	32
Foster/Juvenile transition	18

* Includes 30 Gay Straight Alliance clubs, 25 Friday Night Live programs, 16 Boys and Girls Clubs.

** Includes 30 Gay Straight Alliance clubs

According to this snapshot, the majority of programmatic supports focus on health and, to a lesser extent, employment and education. It is important to note, however, that this list does not include education and employment oriented programs based at schools and community colleges. While 102 programs focus on leadership, this number drops to 30 when some large network programs that tend to serve youth in school are not counted. Both leadership/civic engagement and mentoring and parenting skills are the next smallest categories of programming. Few programs offer support tailored to the needs of youth who are emancipating from the foster care system and leaving California Youth Authority facilities.

While more than one-third of these programs provide more than one type of support for youth, relatively few provide more than three, suggesting that most are organized to offer particular services rather than holistic, full-service support for older youth. Those that offer multiple types of support tend to be non-profit organizations; some interviewees suggested that some of the non-profit networks (e.g. Boys and Girls clubs) are not necessarily well-equipped to engage older youth who are already marginalized from mainstream programs for teenagers.

The Forum For Youth Investment's Ready By 21 Initiative describes four orientations that can be used to characterize most youth-serving programs and policies: protection/punishment, prevention, promotion, and participation. Programs with a "protection" orientation seek to protect youth from harm and/or punish perpetrators for dangerous behavior. Programs with a prevention orientation seek to prevent a range of negative outcomes, while those with a promotion orientation focus on promoting specific positive

²² Because in some cases we could not get complete regional information, we did not include school based programs (except GSA, ASSET, FNL) such as FFA and migrant education, or community based programs such as 4-H, Scouts, and Camp Fire programs, although some interviewees identified these organizations as offering important supports; we were also unable to accurately assess the reach of county program offerings based in county seats. Conversely, the list may well include programs that are not de facto accessible to older youth most in need of support. For example, while school-based programs were often some of few programs in rural settings, older youth who drop out or graduate no longer have access to these programs.

outcomes. Programs with a participation orientation emphasize engaging youth in promoting positive outcomes for themselves and their peers.²³ *This Initiative suggests that all four types of programs provide critical supports. In order to ensure that increasing numbers of youth make successful transitions to adulthood, we must ensure their engagement in settings that promote positive outcomes and foster participation.*

A rough analysis of these 372 programs according to the Ready By 21 framework reveals a primary emphasis on prevention and promotion, with limited focus on participation. (Because program data were not collected with a focus on “punishing/protecting” programs, the numbers of this program type are not reported here.)

Program Types

Program Type	# Programs
Prevention/Intervention	132
Promotion	167
Participation	68

A closer look at programs characterized as emphasizing “participation” reveals that 50 of the 68 are Gay Straight Alliance Clubs and Friday Night Live programs, leaving only 18 with other foci. Of the 167 programs emphasizing promotion, 25 are Boys and Girls Clubs/YMCAs/High School afterschool programs, 16 are faith-based programs, and 24 are One-Stop Career Centers; many other programs are community centers or focus on job training and placement. It is unclear how many of these programs specifically reach out to older youth who tend to be disconnected from strong sources of support.

Project constraints do not allow for a full analysis of programs’ language and cultural capacity. However, a quick scan suggests that relatively few programs are specifically organized around the language and cultural backgrounds of participants.

The Organization of Support

A range of organization types provide these programs, including state, county and municipal agencies, for-profit companies and non-profit organizations (including smaller community-based organizations and large non-profit networks), faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher education. Interviewees also spoke of key individuals who tend to be in touch with the older youth population in their communities and play critical mentoring roles.

Agency Programs

The largest sources of programmatic support for older youth in transition in the San Joaquin Valley are run through government agencies with federal, state, and county funds. Key agencies are County Offices of Education, local school districts, Departments of Health and Social Services, Probation Departments, and Workforce Investment Act boards. Regional Migrant Education Offices also support multiple programs for older youth, including emergency healthcare, supplemental educational services, career exploration and transportation support. In some cases, state funds are distributed through networks such as Friday Night Live, allocated to larger local agencies and organizations through competitive grant processes and distributed through contracts with non-profit and for-profit contractors (for example, a great deal of substance abuse prevention programming and employment services appear to be offered through contractors). See Appendix D for examples of state and federal funding sources that target older youth needs.

Some data indicate that while state and federal resources comprise the majority of funding available for youth programming, the San Joaquin Valley region might not receive an equitable share. For example,

²³ from Ferber, T., & Pittman, K., with Marchall, T. (2002). *State Youth Policy: Helping All Youth Grow Up Fully Prepared and Fully Engaged*. Washington D.C.: The Forum for Youth Investment

in FY 2005/2006, of the \$93,529,862.00 that was awarded to California through Discretionary grant awards of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), only \$100,000, or 0.1%, were directed to this seven-county region; Comprehensive Youth Services of Fresno, Inc., received this grant for a program to reduce substance abuse among youth and establish and strengthen community anti-drug coalitions.²⁴

Particularly in large population centers, municipal government also provides support for youth programming. Much of this programming appears to target school-age youth. Programs include youth centers with tutoring and teen programs and onsite after-school programs and other services at low income housing complexes.

Non-Profit/For-Profit Sector

In order to gain a general sense of the youth development non-profit sector in the region, we turned to data from the Office of the Attorney General of California. The following table indicates the number of non-profit organizations that were listed in a search of registered “youth development” non-profit organizations by city; in cases where no organizations were listed, a second search was conducted using the umbrella category, “Human Services/All” (marked with an asterix).

Number of Non-profit Youth-Serving Organizations²⁵

City	Population (2000)	# Organizations
Lodi	56,999	3
Stockton	243,771	15
Modesto	188,856	28
Patterson	11,606	1
Ceres	34,609	1*
Chowchilla	11,127	8*
Madera	43,207	7
Merced	63,893	5
Dos Palos	4581	14*
Fresno	427,652	42
Mendota	7890	10*
Hanford	41,686	2
Avenal	14,674	3*
Cutler-Orosi	11,809	0
Visalia	91565	13

* numbers of *all* human services organizations

It is important to note that organizations listed in these searches are not necessarily currently operating (in fact, the vast majority did not have current paperwork on file in the online system, including all of those listed for Dos Palos); organizations with assets under \$25,000 are exempt from filing IRS Form 990 and might not have been listed. Almost none of the organizations specifically targeted older, disconnected youth. Many might not serve them at all (for example, Little League Baseball and non-profit nursery schools are common organizations across many communities, as are scholarship-granting organizations). Organizations listed under “Human Services/all” do not necessarily serve children/youth (for example, of the 10 Mendota organizations, only 2 specifically focus on youth services).

Several points emerged from this analysis.

1. Rural areas in the region have a very small youth development non-profit sector.
2. Even relatively large population centers, such as county seats, have small youth development non-profit sectors (here, Madera, Merced and Hanford stand out as having especially small sectors).
3. Most of the existing organizations do not target local older youth populations.

²⁴ <http://www.samhsa.gov/statesummaries/detail/2006/ca.aspx>

²⁵ California Attorney General’s Office, <http://ag.ca.gov/>, accessed June 2006

4. Some existing organizations are local branches of larger networks (for example, Boys and Girls Clubs, 4-H, Big Brothers/Big Sisters).

Looking more closely at the non-profit organizations that emerged in the scan, several other points emerged.

Large, established non-profit organizations and networks are an important source of youth programming in the region. Key groups include 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA/YWCA, Camp Fire programs, and scouting. These groups are increasingly located in both large population centers and small communities.

While many of these groups programs target a younger audience, many also offer tutoring support, leadership development, and some health programming for older youth. Some interviewees did raise questions about whether these programs are viewed as accessible sources of support by all youth. One interviewee in particular noted that many Latino youth in the region perceived Boys and Girls Club to be for “white kids.” Another noted that youth facing the most challenges in his community would not be likely to attend a Boys and Girls Club or participate in 4-H.

Nonetheless, there is evidence that these organizations are increasingly reaching out to a broader population base. In San Joaquin County, the Girl Scouts have started a troop in the California Youth Authority, and have programs in low-income and migrant worker housing complexes.²⁶ 4-H has been expanding its program areas to include a wide range of delivery methods. In counties such as Fresno, Kern, Placer, and Merced where this “balanced program” approach has been emphasized, overall participation, and the diversity of young people served by 4-H have sky-rocketed. In Kern County for example, 4-H curricula tailored to serve youth on probation through a 12-week intensive program is credited in reducing the recidivism rate from 80% or higher to 30%. New partnerships with county agencies, school districts, and non-profits, and the training and engagement of a wide range of youth-service professionals have facilitated this expanded outreach. In addition to raising total numbers of youth served by 4-H, these methods have greatly increased the diversity of program participants, particularly attracting Latinos in the San Joaquin Valley.²⁷

Other non-profit networks are partnering with schools to provide youth supports. These include the Future Farmers of America (based in all high schools with agricultural education programs), Friday Night Live (youth leadership programs focused on substance abuse prevention and funded through the CA State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs), and the Gay Straight Alliance Network (a network that supports the creation of high school clubs that create safe environments in schools for students to support each other, educate the school community about homophobia, gender identity, and sexual orientation issues, and fight school-based discrimination, harassment, and violence).

Large health and social-service oriented non-profit and for-profit organizations contract with county agencies to provide services.

As noted above, it appears that many county agencies contract with other organizations to provide health and social services. For example, Proteus, Inc.²⁸ provides youth education and employment services in Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern counties.

While relatively small in number, independent non-profits and networks play a critical role in the region, particularly in the areas of leadership/civic engagement, and organizations involving particular ethnic, cultural and language groups. The ESPINO Network, a current grantee of the

²⁶ http://www.tdogs.org/outreach/our_program.htm

²⁷ from London, J.K. and Sommer, S.L. (forthcoming). Assessing the Region Via Indicators: Community Well-being. Modesto, CA: The Great Valley Center.

²⁸ <http://www.proteusinc.org/proteusinc.asp?main=6&d=243&set=6&z=200&sid=1>

Walter S. Johnson Foundation, includes many of the region's organizations that specifically engage older youth who are disconnected from more mainstream sources of support in leadership opportunities.

Postsecondary Education

Community colleges, the CSU system, private colleges, and most recently, U.C. Merced, directly support older youth in the region in a variety of ways. Community colleges offer training opportunities and GED programs. They and other campuses engage in a variety of outreach to under-represented youth populations. Four-year and graduate programs also place interns in the community: for example Alliant University provides low-cost counseling services and CSU Fresno places MSW interns in local programs.

Faith-based programming

Faith-based youth programming in the sample ranges from mentoring, to substance abuse intervention, to boot camps, to community organizing. This scan did not generate a comprehensive list of faith-based supports due to the difficulty of identifying programs and their specific focus. In large population centers, there appear in particular to be many Christian youth ministries.

Important Individuals/Local Leaders

Most interviewees focused their comments on programmatic supports for youth; however, some alluded to the importance of local individuals who are not affiliated with particular programs, but who play important support and mentoring roles. In some cases they are teachers, in others church-members, and in others members of extended family and social networks. One interviewee who works regionally noted having especially seen this dynamic in play in predominantly Latino and Southeast Asian communities and neighborhoods.

Coordination of Services

As multiple supports and services often target the same youth population, we were curious about the amount and effects of coordination of support. Interviews revealed four main points.

There appears to be some effort to facilitate communication between youth service-providers within some counties, although several interviewees suggested that they do not include smaller community-based organizations and faith-based organizations [one interviewee from a community-based organization noted that public sector agencies might periodically “pull in one or two CBOs for input”]. It is unclear whether these networks promote coordination of services in a way that would increase quality and/or access for youth. Some efforts-- for example, that of the Merced County Workforce Investment Board-- have simply focused on compiling information on regional youth services, an important precursor to any coordination and increased youth access to them.

There have been 2 efforts in the CBO sector to promote communication across the region: the Central Valley Partnership (CVP) and ESPINO (Escuelas Si, Pintas Non). ESPINO launched out of the CVP's coordinating efforts. ESPINO is working towards developing a regional youth organizing strategy and the establishment of “youth empowerment zones” that would provide comprehensive regional networks of support for older youth populations that are marginalized from typical sources of support. This effort has grappled with the challenges of limited resources and recent staff-turnover, but appears to provide a unique voice for older youth.

There is limited coordination between smaller community-based organizations and the government sector. We heard a variety of examples of collaboration between large non-profit organizations and public agencies. For example, County Offices of Education are increasingly

collaborating with YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs to provide afterschool programs in rural areas, and the implementation of Proposition 49 (Afterschool for All) has resulted in new collaborative efforts. The San Joaquin Valley Peacekeeper Violence Prevention Program brings together youth-serving agencies, school districts, and over 25 community-based organizations in San Joaquin Valley to work with school-based outreach workers to deter violence and promote positive lifestyle choices, although the extent to which it engages smaller, grassroots organizations remains unclear.²⁹

Interviewees from smaller, more grassroots non-profits noted a number of reasons for this lack of coordination, including differences in organizational cultures, broader cultural differences related to race/ethnicity, class, language and age, tension around working with undocumented youth, and difficult relationships tied to having been on opposing sides of local policy conflicts. County interviewees noted some grassroots organizations' limited capacity to administer large grants as a barrier to collaboration. However, they also noted their eagerness to work with community-based organizations in light of the skills and knowledge they bring and the cost-effectiveness of contracting with them.

These tensions do not appear to serve youth well. Resources tend to reside within larger agencies, yet grassroots organizations can bring critical networks and cultural capacity to ensuring that resources benefit youth with the greatest need.

Each interviewee identified other key individuals who were especially in touch with the needs of older youth and/or programs intended to support them. Appendix E contains contact information for these people.

Access to information about programs

The scan highlighted the challenge of finding information about supports for older youth in the region. Many interviewees confirmed the difficulty of generating comprehensive information about available services, particularly specific to the needs of older youth. We did note some differences across counties and communities. In particular, the San Joaquin County Workforce Investment Board³⁰ and Tulare County³¹ and Fresno United Way³² websites offered substantial lists of programs. Merced's Workforce Investment Board is in the process of finalizing a list of resources for children and youth. Representatives from Kings, Madera and Stanislaus counties confirmed the difficulty of accessing information, but confirmed that supports and services are also limited. Information for "youth in crisis" is compiled by the California Coalition for Youth and available through their website and the California Youth Crisis Line.³³

Access to supports

All but one interviewee thought older, disconnected youth had inadequate supports in their locality, county, and/or region. Several interviewees noted the lack of culturally appropriate supports for Latino and Asian youth, explaining they don't "look and feel like the community"; however, one individual who works with faith-based organizing efforts noted observing significant informal mentoring happening within Latino and Hmong communities. Others noted a lack of key supports in their area and the need to look to coastal areas for key mental health needs and transitional housing for recently incarcerated youth.

While we cannot claim to have generated an exhaustive list of programs,³⁴ this rough snapshot suggests that small rural communities have especially limited programmatic supports, as do many larger towns

²⁹ <http://www.ccspartnership.org/what/strategy.html>

³⁰ <http://www.sjworknet.org/crd.html>

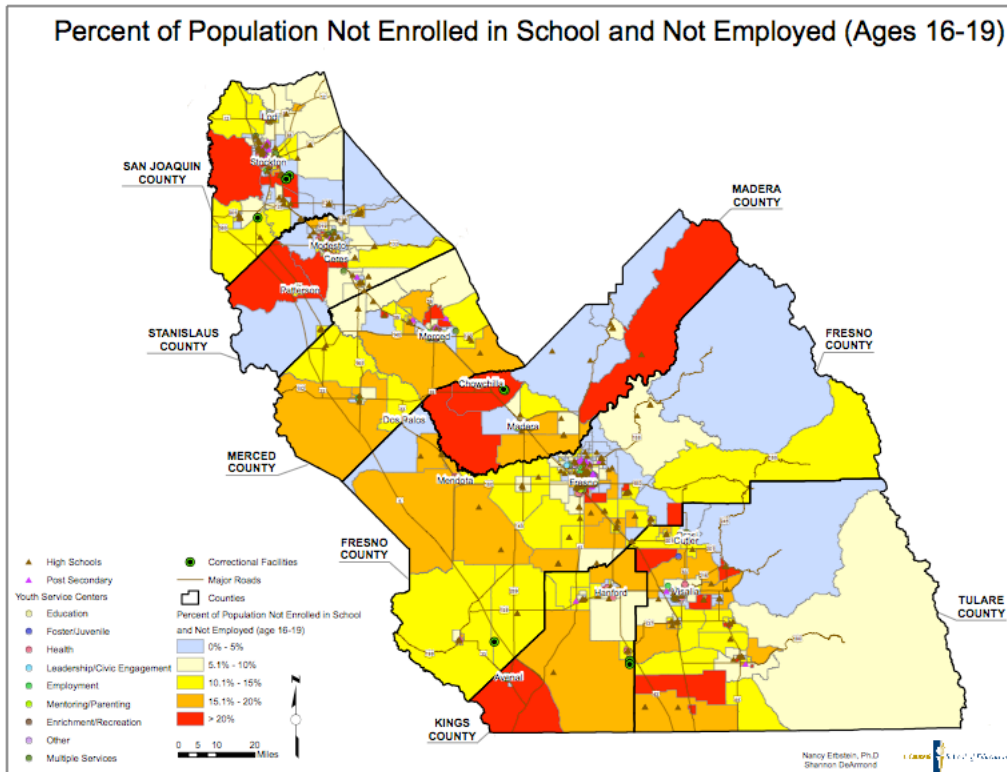
³¹ www.unitedwaytc.org/

³² www.unitedwayfresno.org/

³³ <http://www.youthcrisisline.org/>

³⁴ This map does not reflect all organizations included in the analysis for each community; programs in the Merced and Fresno areas are especially under-represented.

(although one rural interviewee did note that supports and services have increased markedly over the past ten years). A map of programs located in the focus communities reflects this analysis.



As a check on our scan results, we turned to two other resources: the California National Association on Mental Illness (NAMI) Referral website and a review of resources for released inmates provided by the CA Department of Justice. The NAMI referral website offers resources for families around mental health needs; it is continuously updated based on NAMI scans. Searches for all services (including in-patient programs, out-patient programs, and individual therapists) in all languages for each county in the seven-county region produced the following numbers of services, also revealing gaps in rural services.

Organizations Listed On California NAMI Referral Site (all Mental Health Services)³⁵

City	Population (2000)	# NAMI Sites
Lodi	56,999	4
Stockton	243,771	38
Modesto	188,856	10
Patterson	11,606	0
Ceres	34,609	2
Chowchilla	11,127	0
Madera	43,207	6
Merced	63,893	9
Dos Palos	4581	0
Fresno	427,652	82
Mendota	7890	0
Hanford	41,686	7
Avenal	14,674	8
Cutler-Orosi	11,809	0
Visalia	91,565	7

A review of the Community Resource Directory provided by the California Department of Justice also reveals the limitations of San Joaquin Valley resources, particularly for youth who have been released

³⁵ <http://www.namicalifornia.org/services-bycounty.aspx>, accessed September 2006. All services for all ages and all illnesses, in all languages.

from the California Youth Authority or have been arrested. The review's author looked up programs and found there was a "wide range of credibility and accessibility." Of those non-state/county programs that she was able to contact (some were un-reachable at included phone numbers and addresses) and found to be offering credible services, none were located in the San Joaquin Valley.³⁶ The lack of suitable local alternatives to incarceration has been found to contribute to the trend of the Central San Joaquin Valley sending far more of their juvenile delinquents per capita to the CYA than other CA counties.³⁷

While we are unable to assess numbers of youth served by each program, the relatively small numbers of programs, and the large emphasis on health-related services amongst scan programs and organizations suggest gaps in access to education supports for out-of-school youth, enrichment, emancipation/re-entry support, and leadership development/civic engagement opportunities. In particular, only one rural community in this sample included programs with an emphasis on youth participation. The important role of schools as a locus of programming and connection with additional supports in small rural settings (e.g. in Dos Palos, the High School is the site of 4-H, migrant education supports, DECA (an association of students studying marketing, management and entrepreneurship), and VICA (a vocational training club)) particularly raises questions about access for youth who have dropped out or graduated. The limited number of programs that offer a comprehensive range of services, in combination with the difficulty of obtaining information about programs, raises questions about how well youth and young adults are able to access services when they exist. The tendency of programs and compilations of program information to not offer services in languages other than English raises questions about limited and non-English speakers' access to support.

Barriers to Providing Supports and Services

Interviewees pointed out four types of barriers to providing key support to older, disconnected youth: logistics, programs, resources and relationships. The following section summarizes their comments.

Logistics

Five key logistical issues present a challenge to organizations serving older youth.

- Transportation is a challenge both in rural settings and more urban settings due to long distances and limited public transportation.
- Space for programs/services is limited, especially in small rural communities
- Most funding is channeled through public agencies that are mainly set up to provide services 9am-5pm, but older youth—particularly those who are most in need of support—typically need access to resources in the evening.
- Schools are a key locus of programs—especially in rural communities—yet these services are not available to youth who have dropped out or graduated.
- Youth cannot easily learn about existing resources. Youth with limited English skills are at an even greater disadvantage.

Programs

Interviewees raised the following concerns about program focus.

- There's a tendency to force youth into program models rather than tailoring programs to local youth needs, interests, backgrounds.
- Programs don't offer enough opportunities for youth to build on their creativity and organizing abilities, which are then used in negative ways elsewhere.

³⁶ http://www.law.stanford.edu/program/centers/scjc/workingpapers/EPederson-wp3_06.pdf, p. 16-22. This is a student paper done in connection with a course taught by Prof. Joan Petersilia, Ph.D. at Stanford Law School. Accessed December 7, 2006, permission to quote granted December 7, 2006, by Kara Dansky, Executive Director, Stanford Criminal Justice Center

³⁷ Richardson, N.M. (2001). Out of Sight Out of Mind: Central San Joaquin Valley Delinquents and the California Youth Authority," p.3. N.M. Richardson (Consultant), 1750 S Bobolink Lane, Fresno, CA 93727, (559) 251-7253

- Schools need new models for high school afterschool program structures and content based more on older youth's interests and needs.
- NCLB leads schools to focus most intensively on youth who test at the basic level, not far below basic, in the interest of meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements. This, in combination with the increasing numbers of youth consigned to remediation, the decreasing opportunities for youth to pursue and build upon their interests, and the CAHSEE might lead to increased drop-out rates.
- There's a lack of programs focused on the needs of older youth (ages 16-22) in general, and especially those that are marginalized from traditional sources of support.
- The Fresno area has large foster population but lacks specialized support for this population.
- The region needs more programs/services with language/cultural capacity to serve non-English-speaking youth and families.

Resources

All interviewees noted that resources, along with organizational capacity, presented a challenge to meeting the needs of older, disconnected youth. Organizational and program stability were an even greater challenge for smaller organizations and large organizations that wanted to collaborate with them.

Programs in small rural communities were viewed as facing additional challenges:

- Small communities are not well positioned to attract funding due to their small populations, and, in some cases, more limited networks;
- Funding and program continuation are often contingent on personal relationships in small towns;
- Rural areas face a lack of qualified staff, especially in the area of mental health services.

Local choices were, in some cases, perceived as working against support for older, disconnected youth. For example, one interviewee thought more school resources tend to be allocated to high performing students and their interests; in a climate of scarce resources, this results in fewer resources for other students.

In some cases, funder demands were viewed as creating barriers to serving this youth population:

- An explicit commitment to serving undocumented populations limited some organizations' access to federal funding;
- Funder expectations of quick fixes are not a good fit with addressing the needs of marginalized older youth populations;
- Hard-to-come-by core operating support and professional development funding are viewed as key to training local, culturally competent individuals to serve as staff.

Finally, funding levels for older youth programming were perceived to be inadequate by all interviewees. Interviews with County Office of Education administrators highlighted, as a point of contrast, the effects of a large-scale, sustained, well-resourced initiative; interviewees described a dramatically increased level of attention, activity, and school-community collaboration focused on after-school programming for elementary and middle school age children in the wake of Proposition 49 implementation. There is some hope that the re-focusing of 21st Century Community Learning Center funding on high school afterschool programs will provide much-needed additional resources for older youth.³⁸

³⁸ A County Office of Education interviewee noted quite strongly that the application for 21st Century funds would provide activities for high school students that are no longer a part of the high school curriculum because of the impact of testing and standards curriculum – music, the arts, theatre, etc.

Relationships

Aside from resource issues, interviewees pointed to several types of relationships that need to be strengthened in order to enhance support for older youth. As noted previously, grassroots interviewees pointed out that there is at best a lack of connection, at worst tension, between public sector and CBO/faith networks. Public agencies have access to state funding and capacity to administer it, while lacking, in some cases, strong connections with the communities they serve. One interviewee noted: “they [public agency staff] have never dealt with the struggles like the folks that they are trying to help--- the administration are middle class white people—they are limited in their thinking and approach.” Grassroots community-based organizations in many cases have limited access to funding and capacity to administer grants, but sometimes stronger networks into poor communities of color. Youth would likely benefit from stronger working relationships across these sectors.

Some interviewees also noted racial and cultural barriers within programs and communities that resulted in youth feeling unwelcome at certain programs, and certain programs not being embraced by local leaders. By way of example, one interviewee described a case in which local leaders attempted to destroy a youth-produced mural that depicted low-riders telling people to get out and vote. The interviewee attributed this to leaders not wanting a mural that reflected Hispanic culture, despite the fact that the store-owner had given the arts group permission to place it there (the mural was saved through an organizing effort).

Finally, interviewees noted the importance of developing youth-friendly, socially sensitive, and culturally and linguistically appropriate outreach strategies to help ensure that youth who are most in need of support get it.

Section 3: Recommendations

This scan suggests that in light of poverty, linguistic isolation, high youth drop out rates, high youth unemployment rates, high teen pregnancy rates, and high juvenile arrest rates in the San Joaquin Valley, there is clearly a substantial population of older youth who face significant barriers to successfully transitioning to adulthood. However, support for this population appears to be limited, especially in the areas of enrichment, leadership/civic engagement, and transitioning out of the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Despite the relatively larger numbers of health-oriented supports, interviewees noted the lack of mental-health services. The emphasis on school-based programs, the difficulty of finding program information, and the small number of programs offering a range of types of support suggest that it might be especially difficult for young people who are not in school to access support. Numbers of services are extremely limited in rural communities, and even some county seats appear to have relatively small numbers of programs for this youth population. There also may be inadequate programming that reflects specific cultural and language needs of the region’s youth population.

The findings of this report suggest potential areas for further investigation and investment.

Investigation

The scan suggests at least six areas for further investigation.

- **Structure:** How well is the current structure of support in the region meeting needs of this youth population? Are youth able to access information about existing programs? Can they find people and programs that offer holistic support and encouragement to seek support around specific needs? Is there a need for more culturally/linguistically appropriate services? What is the quality of existing programs? Where are the greatest gaps in services, in light of the numbers of youth existing providers are able to serve?

- **Practices:** What are best practices around attracting and serving older youth who face multiple barriers in transitioning to adulthood? Youth of varying ethnic and linguistic backgrounds? Youth in rural versus urban settings?
- **Resources:** What are the existing public resources intended to support older youth, to what extent are they reaching this region, and is there potential for increased coordination of resources?
- **Leadership:** Where does leadership reside around addressing the needs of older, disconnected youth? Are key individuals and institutions present to ensure that the needs of all racial/ethnic and geographic constituencies are well represented? What are existing opportunities for youth input into decision-making about public resource allocation, and to what extent are these being employed?
- **Access:** Are there specific unmet needs in certain geographical areas? Are there particularly effective models of reaching older youth in rural settings? To what extent, and in what ways, do local cultural and political dynamics decrease the opportunities available to poor youth and youth of color? What are some examples of overcoming historical and/or emerging social tensions to increase access to support?
- **Youth Need:** Most importantly, there is tremendous need for community-scale assessments of this youth populations' needs and interests.

Investment

The following strategies might be considered as important areas for further investment.

- This scan demonstrates that very few programs actively engage youth in assessing needs and framing responses. Create new opportunities and leverage existing opportunities to engage older youth in guiding/advising program and policy development for their peers (for example, through Workforce Investment Boards, County Juvenile Justice boards, High School Site Councils, School Boards, City Advisory Commissions, forthcoming county-scale mental health planning committees (Proposition 63), etc.).
- Develop and/or tap strategies to draw attention to the needs of older youth and promote investment (e.g. The Graduation Promise Act of 2007 is federal legislation targeting youth at risk of dropping out of high school. See "Addressing America's Dropout Challenge" for further information on state efforts to boost graduation rates.³⁹).
- Support further data collection on relevant programs, and systems for updating the information on an ongoing basis. Make the information accessible to providers and youth in multiple languages.
- Develop strategies to foster further local and regional collaboration around identifying and addressing older youth needs between public agencies, non-profit organizations, grassroots organizations and networks, and faith-based organizations.
- Develop and pilot systems for cross-sector collection and monitoring of older youth data at a scale more localized than counties that could be used to inform needs assessments, resource allocation and program planning.
- Support organizational capacity-building in the non-profit and youth organizing sectors and cultural capacity building in the public sector.
- In light of the association between leaving school and other choices that are likely to decrease youth connection to support, promote policies, programs and practices likely to increase older youth's engagement in school; one area that has received very limited attention in the context of educational reform efforts are alternative/continuation high schools.

³⁹ <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2006/11/graduation.html>

Locating Support for Disconnected Youth in the San Joaquin Valley

- Increase the numbers of promotion/participation-oriented programs for older, disconnected youth. Consider building on forthcoming 21st CCLC funding to support COE/school district/CBO/youth collaboration around identifying high school age youth interests and needs with respect to afterschool programming.
- Adopt place-based, cross-sector investment strategies focused on older youth in geographic areas demonstrating especially high need and limited resources.⁴⁰
- Poverty is in many cases a root cause of youth disconnection, and the San Joaquin Valley has some of the highest poverty rates in the United States. Broader-based initiatives focused on poverty-reduction are therefore likely to be a critical long-term element of addressing older youth needs in the region.

⁴⁰ The Sierra Health Foundation (www.sierrahealth.org) is currently experimenting with place-based funding for community coalitions focused on the needs of children and youth ages 10-15 in the greater Sacramento region. Their REACH Community Action strategy might be an interesting model to examine.

Appendix A: GIS Methods

The project uses the industry standard ArcGIS Desktop and ArcInfo Workstation software from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) to create spatially explicit datasets and produce maps using the following data. All sites were geocoded from the street addresses using Batch Geocode⁴¹, a free online batch geocoder running the Yahoo! Geocoding API. Scientific methods were used in the creation of the information layers displayed in these Geographic Information System (GIS) maps. However, the underlying spatial data were derived from a variety of sources that cannot be independently verified. We therefore provide the data "as is" and cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional accuracy in the digital data or underlying records.

Data	Source
CA School District Cartographic Boundary Files	U.S. Census Bureau ⁴²
CA High School/Post-secondary Institutions	National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) ⁴³
CA school district statistics	National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
21 st CCLC/ASSET grantees ⁴⁴	CA Department of Education
Prison locations	California Department of Justice
2000 CA census data	U.S. Census Bureau/American Factfinder
Boys and Girls Club locations ⁴⁵	Boys and Girls Club national office
YMCA locations ⁴⁶	YMCA national office
Community-based program locations	Interviews and online sources ⁴⁷

U.S Census data were accessed through American Factfinder on June 1, 2007.⁴⁸ To define the analytical rankings for the risk factor analysis, the data was split into five groups using quintile breaks. The three most extreme groups were given a risk factor of "1". The following census data were employed.

Dataset	Age Class	Summary File	Table
population 16-19	n/a	4	pct3
population 15-17	n/a	4	pct3
youth not employed/not in school	16-19	3	p38
youth employed/not in school	16-19	3	p38
foster care	0-17	4	pct23
linguistic isolation where some speak english	5 to 17	4	pct41
linguistic isolation where all speak other	5 to 17	4	pct41
institutional group quarters	15-17	4	pct13
noninstitutional group quarters	15-17	4	pct13
per capita income	n/a	3	p82
population with high school diploma	18-24	3	pct25

⁴¹ <http://www.batchgeocode.com/>

⁴² United States Census Cartographic Boundary Files: http://www.census.gov/geo/www/cob/bdy_files.html

⁴³ <http://nces.ed.gov/>

⁴⁴ The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program provides federal funds to California afterschool programs via the CA Department of Education

⁴⁵ Location points do not necessarily reflect program locations; contact with sites revealed that in some cases staff at these sites were running programs at local school sites.

⁴⁶ Location points do not necessarily reflect program locations; contact with sites revealed that in some cases staff at these sites were running programs at local school sites.

⁴⁷ See Appendix C for further information

⁴⁸ See <http://docs.lib.duke.edu/maps/guides/factfinder.html> for methods used

Locating Support for Disconnected Youth in the San Joaquin Valley

Additional spatial datasets employed are as follows.

Geographic Data Technology, Inc. (GDT), & Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI). *U.S. Major Roads* [shapefile]. 1:50,000. ESRI Data & Maps, 2000. Redlands, CA: ESRI, 2000.

Tele Atlas North America, Inc. & ESRI. *U.S. Counties* [shapefile]. 1:100,000. ESRI Data & Maps, 2006 World, Europe, United States, Canada, and Mexico. Redlands, CA: ESRI, 2006.

National Atlas of the United States, United States Geological Survey, & ESRI. *U.S. National Atlas Cities* [shapefile]. 1:2,000,000. ESRI Data & Maps, 2006 World, Europe, United States, Canada, and Mexico. Redlands, CA: ESRI, 2006.

Appendix B: Interviewees/Interview Protocol

County	Name	Organization	Expertise
Fresno	Keith Bergthold	Relational Culture Institute	Faith-based initiatives in the region
Fresno	Rodrigo Gomez	Mendota Unified School District	Mendota supports
Fresno	Bob Bullwinkel	Fresno County Office of Education	Curriculum & Instruction Coordinator
Fresno	Randy Mehrten	Fresno County Office of Education	Safe & Healthy Kids Program Specialist
Kings	Kelley Stinson	YouthNet, Kings County Behavioral Health Department	Kings County youth services
Kings	Larry Todd	Kings County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent
Madera	Baldwin Moy	California Rural Legal Assisance	Multiple Madera-area youth supports
Merced	Richard Mahacek	UCD/County Youth Development Advisor	Merced county youth programs
Merced	Denard Davis	Independent Consultant	Dos Palos supports
Merced	Sharon Twitty	Merced County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent Instructional Services
San Joaquin	Sammy Nunez	Family and Fathers	Stockton area, ESPINO
San Joaquin	Gary Dei Rossi	San Joaquin County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent Educational Services
Stanislaus	Sergio Cuellar	Youth In Focus/ESPINO	Patterson, SJV youth supports
Stanislaus	Noe Paramo	Central Valley Partnership	Supports in immigrant communities in the region
Stanislaus	Chris King	Stanislaus County Office of Education	Assistant Superintendent Instructional Support
Tulare	Martin Cuevas	American Friends Service Committee	Tulare youth, farm labor supports
Tulare	Eldonna Caudill	Workforce Investment Board	Youth development, youth employment in Tulare County

Interview Protocol

1. **A. (if overseeing program(s))** Please tell me about the program(s) that you coordinate, including the target youth populations, the types of services they provide, and where they are located.
Probe: youth populations served
geographic area(s) served (and local capacity to reach more remote areas)
sources of funding
budget
capacity to serve English learners

 - B. (if coordinating a network of programs)** Please tell me about the purpose of your network and the participating programs.
Probe: youth populations served by programs/network
Types of providers (government, CBOs, faith-based)
Geographic areas served (and local capacity to reach more remote areas)
Sources of funding
Capacity to serve English learners

 - C. (if providing an overview of community programs)** Please tell me about the programs in the area served by X school district(s).
Probe: youth populations served
Geographic areas served (and local capacity to reach more remote areas)
Types of providers (government, CBOs, faith-based, other) and their relative importance
Capacity to serve English learners
2. Do you know of any efforts in your area to compile information about programs that serve this youth population and the number of youth they serve? If so, how might we obtain a copy of this information?
 3. Are there any efforts to coordinate services in your county/community? Please describe.
 4. Are there specific individuals who stand out as having played an especially active leadership role in developing and/or coordinating services for this youth population? Would you be willing to provide me with their contact information?
 5. Are there specific individuals in your county or community who are especially in touch with the needs of this population? Contact information?
 6. From your vantage point, do you see many individuals playing a key mentoring role for small groups of youth outside formal programs? Please describe.
 7. In general, how would you characterize the level of support available to this youth population in your area? What additional types of supports do you believe are needed, if any?
Probe: adequacy of amount/types
Effectiveness of programs
Conception of community/community need
 8. From your vantage point, what are the barriers to providing needed services?
Probe: conceptions of community strengths and vulnerabilities
Ways that groups are able/unable to gain access to resources and underlying reasons
 9. Do you have any other comments regarding this youth population, the community/region, or the programs that serve them?

Appendix C: Program Identification methods

Multiple strategies were employed to locate organizations that offer programming for older youth—especially those who are most likely to be disconnected from typical sources of support for successfully transitioning to adulthood.

- Interviews: Fifteen interviews were conducted with individuals who were familiar with local and/or regional programs. All were asked to identify key supports.
- The National Center for Education Statistics provided information on high school (public, private and charter) and post-secondary school locations.
- Programs offered through state, county, and municipal agencies were identified through online searches of relevant agencies across sectors, including Education, Health and Human Services, Social Services, Housing, Employment, Juvenile Justice, and Parks and Recreation.
- Programs offered through centralized networks were identified at central office websites (Planned Parenthood, Gay Straight Alliance Network, the Red Cross) or by contacting central office staff (Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, Friday Night Live). Some networks were unable to provide data on specific program locations, although they were active in the region (e.g. 4-H, Camp Fire programs, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brother/Big Sister).
- Philanthropic organizations that are active in the region (e.g. the James Irvine Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the California Endowment, the California Wellness Foundation, the Fresno Regional Foundation, the Sierra Health Foundation, United Way) organizations providing capacity-building support to non-profit organizations were contacted for information on grantees and partners.⁴⁹
- NAMI was a source of information on local mental health services.
- The Office of the Attorney General of California was a source of information on non-profit organizations.
- Key word searches were conducted for each of the focus communities using the following terms:

Adolescence	Prevention
Affordable Or Low-Income Housing	Probation-Juvenile
At Risk	Student Services
Career Or Job Training	Students Of Incarcerated Parents
Central Valley- Youth Partnerships	Substance Abuse Treatment Programs
Community Action/Organizing	Teen
Community Alliances	Teen Health/Clinic
Community Programs/Organization	Vocational
Foster Kids/Youth	Welfare
Immigrant (Rights And Resources)	Youth
Mentors	Youth In Arts
Migrant Families	Youth Ministries
Older Youth Support	
Pregnant Or Parenting Teens	

⁴⁹ A new resource for the region is *Resource Directory for Nonprofit Capacity Building in California's Central Valley (April 2006)*, produced by the Human Interaction Research Institute *818/386-9582, HIRILA@aol.com) with support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and The California Wellness Foundation

Appendix D: State/Federal Funding Source Examples

The following table provides examples of state and federal funding sources. While some types of funding are distributed based on allocation formulas, others are awarded through competitive grants.

Sector	Source	Intent
Education/Health and Human Services	Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities (Title IV) http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/nclbtitleiv.asp	Supports programs that prevent violence in and around schools and the illegal use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs; involve parents; and coordinate these efforts and resources with other federal, state, and community entities
Education	Migrant Education http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/me/mt/programs.asp	Supports local, statewide and binational (with Mexico) programs to provide academic, social and health-oriented support to migrant youth.
Education	LEA Homeless Liaisons http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/hs/	Supports district liaisons with homeless youth/families
Education	LEA Foster Youth Liaisons http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/pf/fy/	Ensure that health and school records are obtained to establish appropriate placements and coordinate instruction, counseling, tutoring, mentoring, vocational training, emancipation services, training for independent living, and other related services
Education	Cal SAFE http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/aa/ca/calsafe.asp	Support for pregnant/parenting teens
Education/Attorney General's Office	School Community Violence Prevention Grants http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/	Projects must address unmet school safety/violence prevention issues identified by collaboratives
Education	School Safety Consolidated Competitive Grants http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/	Replaces School-Community Policing, GRIP, School Community Violence Prevention, Conflict Resolution and some other related programs
Education	Pupil Retention Block Grants http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/profile.asp?id=593	Funds multiple programs, including Continuation HS Foundation, High Risk Youth Education and Public Safety, 10th Grade Counseling, District Opportunity Classes and Programs, and Dropout Prevention and Recovery. Amounts are estimated annual entitlement
Education	21 st CCLC/ASSET http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ba/	Supports afterschool programs for high school students
Education/Health Services	Tobacco Use Prevention Education (TUPE) http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/tupeoverview.asp	Funds programs in schools, innovative and promising community-based projects, programs for Indian Education Centers
Social Services	Independent Living Program http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/ILPCountyC_1443.htm	Training, services and programs to help current and former foster youth achieve self-sufficiency prior to and after leaving the foster care system.
Social Services	Transitional Housing Placement http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/transition_342.htm	Helps participants emancipate by supporting youth to practice skills learned in ILP. Support includes regular visits to participants' residences; educational guidance, employment counseling and assistance reaching emancipation goals outlined in participants transitional independent living plans.
Employment Development Department	Workforce Investment Act Services http://www.edd.ca.gov/wiarep/wiaind.htm	Workforce development activities offered through statewide and local organizations. Year-round youth program emphasizes basic skills, opportunities for academic and occupational training, and exposure to the job market and employment. Activities may include instruction leading to completion of secondary school, tutoring, internships, job shadowing, work experience, adult mentoring, and comprehensive guidance and counseling. Emphasizes services for out-of-school youth ages 14-21.
CA Health and Welfare	Proposition 36: the Substance Abuse and Crime Prevention Act of 2000 (SACPA) http://www.adp.cahwnet.gov/sacpa/prop36.shtml	Under SACPA, first or second time non-violent adult drug offenders receive drug treatment rather than incarceration.
CYA	AB 2796 (Wright, 1/1/99) http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/97-98/bill/asm/ab_2751-2800/ab_2796_bill_19980915_chaptered.html	Provided some grants for local youth centers
CA State Parks	Proposition 12 (2000) http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=22317	Provided some grants for youth centers
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	YouthBuild Grants http://www.hud.gov/local/ca/news/pr2006-01-26.cfm	Engages/trains youth to build low-income housing
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)/CA Department of Mental Health)	SAMHSA Block and discretionary grants http://www.samhsa.gov/index.aspx , http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov/ServicesPrograms.asp	Support for mental health services and substance abuse prevention/intervention

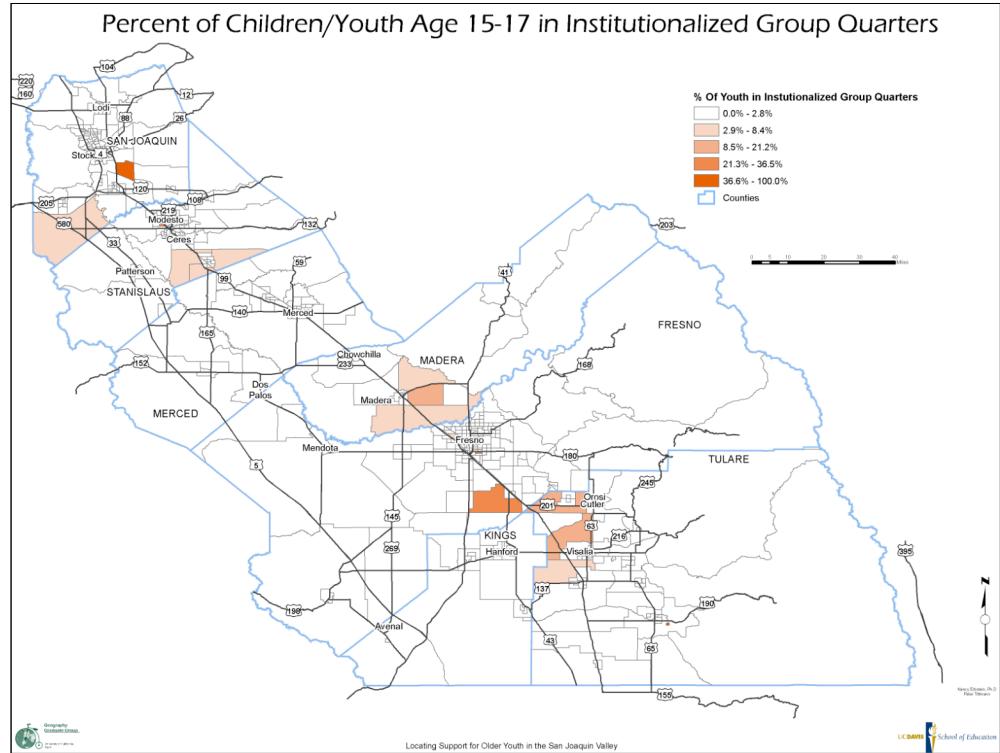
Appendix E: Additional Key Regional Contacts

The following individuals were identified by interviewees as other local people who are especially knowledgeable about older youth needs and/or services in their areas.

County	Contact name	Organization	Title	Phone	Email
Fresno	John Minkler	Fresno COE	Youth Citizenship Award Coordinator	(559) 497-3728	jminkler@fcoe.k12.ca.us
Fresno	Dan Moreno	Fresno Co. Public Health Officer	Director	(559) 445-3200	
Fresno	Dino Perez	Youth Leadership Institute	Coordinator, Fresno	(559) 255-3300	
Fresno	Nancy Daniels	Mendota Westside Community Center		(559) 655-4808	Westside1709@sbcglobal.net
Fresno	Cheryl Taylor	Tobacco Education District Advisor	TUPE Educator	(559) 655-2503	
Fresno	Deborah Nankivell	Fresno Business Council	CEO	(559) 449-6398	dnankivell@fresnobc.org
Fresno	Halfrid Nelson	Fresno Regional Foundation	Director	(559) 226-5600	halfrid@fresnoregfoundation.org
Fresno	Randy Mehrten	Leadership Academy	Coordinator	(559) 265-3066	rmehrten@fcoe.k12.ca.us
Fresno	Roger Palomino	Fresno EOC	Executive Director	(559) 263-1000	
Kings		Community Action Network		(559) 582-4386	
Madera	Juan Anta	Mountain Vista Continuation High School	Director	(559) 675-4490	
Merced	Jennifer Duda	Merced Co. Health Department	Director		jduda@co.merced.ca.us
Merced	Natalie Culver	Merced Co. Foster Youth Transition Program			culver.n@MCCP.edu
Merced	Becky Lincoln	Merced COE	WIB Youth Council		rlincoln@mcoe.org
Merced	Joanne Abraham	Merced High School District	Teen Parent Program/ECEC	(209) 385-6543	
Merced	Collette Farris	Midway/South Dos Palos	Youth Worker	(209) 392-2848	
Merced	Holly Newlon	Merced COE Workforce Investment	Coordinator	(209) 387-6740	hnewlon@moe.org
Merced	Jill Macha	Valley Community School	Principal	(209) 381-5150	jmacha@mcoe.org
Merced	Tony Slaton	Boys & Girls Club-Merced	Director	(209) 724-0647	TS6165@aol.com
Merced	Ismael Montoya	Children In Crisis (CIC)	Director	(209) 357-1926	cicprograms@aol.com
Merced	Brian Cooley	Programs in the Juvenile Hall	Chief Probation Officer--Merced Co.		pr46@co.merced
Merced	Tom Burr	Juvenile Court	Judge Juvenile Court	(209) 385-7665	
Stanislaus	Sal Veda	COPAL	Director	(209) 988-0172	
Tulare	Juan Guerro	Whitman Center	Youth Director	(559) 713-4867	
Tulare	Randy Wallace	Tulare COE	CSET	(559) 733-6101	
Tulare	Carolyn Rose	Tulare Co. Champions for Youth		(559) 733-6102	
San Joaquin	Chis Hope	Probation (French Camp)	Chief	(209) 468-4000	
San Joaquin	Tom Amato	PACT - Stockton	Director	(209) 466-7540	tom.amato@sbcglobal.net

Appendix F: Youth In Group Quarters

The following maps illustrate the percentage of youth ages 15-17 that live in institutional and non-institutional group quarters. The U.S. Census Bureau definition of institutional group quarters includes correctional institutions, psychiatric hospitals, schools hospitals or wards for the mentally retarded, physically handicapped, or people being treated for drug/alcohol abuse, juvenile institutions. Non-institutional group quarters include: group homes, college dormitories, military quarters, agriculture workers dormitories, residential Job Corps and vocational training facilities, and emergency and transitional shelters. Note that because the following maps reflect the location of youth ages 15-17, they do not capture older youth, including incarcerated youth.



homes, college dormitories, military quarters, agriculture workers dormitories, residential Job Corps and vocational training facilities, and emergency and transitional shelters. Note that because the following maps reflect the location of youth ages 15-17, they do not capture older youth, including incarcerated youth.

