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California Capital Region

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A TIME OF TRANSITION

Middle School Youth

United Way California Capital Region

Serving

Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties

In 2000, United Way California Capital Region's Board of Directors approved a strategic plan that called for supporting programs in the area of "Youth and Families" that would support the outcome of all youth developing the necessary skills to be successful in life. Within this outcome area, the Community Investment Committee placed a special emphasis on middle school youth, focusing on three areas:

- Youth are in school
- Youth are successful in school
- Youth are out of trouble

Despite the resources that our schools and publicly funded federal, state and county systems bring to youth services, there are still critical gaps in services and unmet needs for middle school youth. Because middle school is a critical period of transition for our youth, this is a time when our resources can make the biggest impact in both prevention and intervention efforts.

Definition

The term "middle school age youth" is loosely defined, but primarily refers to children and youth 11 to 15 years of age who are attending a middle school or junior high school from 5th to 9th grades.

Critical Transition

Youth in this age group are in an important transitional period. This time of life sets the pace for what lies ahead. When youth in this age range are doing well, they are more likely to have a successful transition into high school.

According to *Caught in the Middle*, California Department of Education, "Middle grade students are unique. No other grade span encompasses such a wide range of intellectual, physical, psychological, and social development, and educators must be sensitive to the entire spectrum of these young people's capabilities. For many students the middle grades represent the last chance to develop a sense of academic purpose and personal commitment to educational goals. Those who fail at the middle grade level often drop out of school and may never again have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential."

Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary overview of middle school aged youth in the five-county region of Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo. A number of sources were used, including available statistical data from official sources, interviews of key informants from the five-county area, and existing reports. Many of these reports include information gathered from local communities, professionals working with youth, and from youth themselves. These reports are a great resource. For more information:

By the Numbers, 1999 and the *Youth and Family Report*, Placer Greater Collaborative.

CAL Facts, Legislative Analyst's Office. *California Report Card 2000*, Children Now.

Caught in the Middle, Educational Reform for Young Adolescents in California Public Schools, Superintendent's Middle Grade Task Force.

Children's Summit, Forming Action Plans to Turn the Curve, November 2000, Sacramento County Children's Coalition.

Community Health Needs Assessment for the Greater Sacramento Area, 1998, Healthy Community Forum.

Sacramento Area Congregations Together (ACT) Focus Group Results, 2000.

Sacramento County Children's Report Card, 2000, Sacramento County Children's Coalition.

School-Age Care in Sacramento, 2001, Child Action, Inc.

Report Card on the Status of Children and Families in El Dorado County, 1999, El Dorado County Children and Families Network.

Taking Center Stage – A Commitment to Standards-Based Education for California's Middle Grade Students, California Department of Education, guided by the Middle Grades Task Force.

Teenage Pregnancy Community Health Plan Sacramento County, September 2000, Public Health Advisory Board.

Voices for Families, Amador County Community Assessment, 2000, Amador County Voices for Families.

Key Trends and Issues

Preface

Discovering trends, good or bad, is an important process so that public policy, community attention, and resources may be focused where they are most needed. However much of the readily available data concerns problems such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, delinquency and school drop-out rates. These data are perhaps more indications that the family, school or community support system has failed and only paint a partial picture of the youth in our region.

Children and youth need a range of opportunities for academic learning, social development, and physical activity to help them successfully transition to adulthood. More and more communities are putting their attention into measuring what is right with our schools, families, neighborhoods, and young people. Collecting data on positive trends as well as negative ones will, in the future, perhaps lead to a more complete picture of how our youth are doing.

Changing Demographic and Socio-Economic Conditions

Population Growth Creates an Increased Demand for Services. The growth in the youth population is increasing faster than the population as a whole. In the five-county region, the age group of 11 to 15 year olds has increased 36 percent in the past decade compared an overall regional population increase of 18.7 percent. This growth impacts all of our health and human service systems, including education, recreation, and health. This indicates that demands for services targeting middle school aged youth will continue to increase not only in the urban areas, but also in the suburban and rural areas. For example, between 1990 and 2000, the 11 to 15 age population increased 52.4 percent in Placer County and 38.9 percent in El Dorado County.

Welfare Reform. As more parents leave public assistance and enter the workforce, there is a growing need for quality childcare as well as before- and after-school programs for youth. *School-Age Care in Sacramento*, a report prepared this year by Child Action, concludes that "There is a need for greater quantity and quality of out-of-school time opportunities for school-age children in Sacramento."

More Grandparents are Raising Children. An increasing number of grandparents are raising their grandchildren. In the U.S., the number of children under age 18 living in grandparent-maintained households increased from 2.3 million in 1980 to 3.9 million in 1997—an increase of 1.6 million or 70 percent.

Cultural Diversity. In Sacramento, as throughout the nation, our youth's ethnic and language diversity continues to expand. Since 1990 the number of Hispanic youth ages 11 to 15 has increased 43 percent, and the number of Asian/Pacific Islander youth ages 11 to 15 has increased 65 percent in the five-county region.

Education and Academic Performance are Affected by Language and Cultural Diversity. Proficiency with English impacts students' abilities to successfully partici-

pate in mainstream academic environments. Cultural attitudes about education and learning also play a role in the youth's ability to successfully navigate through a complicated system of education that is often quite different from their parent's experience in a different country. Often a youth's non-English speaking parents become disenfranchised from the educational system. If parents are not engaged as a result of cultural barriers, the youth will face additional challenges.

Evidence of Cultural Disparities.

According to the California Report Card 2000, published by Children Now, African American and Latino youth "experience worse outcomes in many economic, health, education and safety measures." The Children Now report recommends that we recognize the disparities among outcomes for teens of different racial, ethnic and socio-economic groups and subgroups and set goals to eliminate these disparities "through data development and collection, program planning and service delivery."

Culture and Language Gap between Generations Exist for Youth and Their Families. In addition to the normal generation gap that occurs when children become teenagers, new immigrant families often experience a culture and language gap. The children are becoming acculturated, speaking English and adopting the American culture, but the parents are often honoring the language and culture of their home country. Challenges exist in families where the parent is an English language learner. Service providers identified a need for parent support groups and opportunities for parents to learn additional parenting skills to help them bridge the widening gap caused by generation, language and culture differences. Other challenges include bullying, gangs, and disenfranchisement resulting from cultural bias among youth.

Risky Behavior - Still Room for Improvement

While a drop in reported sexual activity and juvenile crime rates indicate promising trends, a lack of data pertaining to substance abuse and school truancy rates still raise questions about risky behavior among youth.

Teen Births. Younger women who are most at risk of becoming teen parents share a set of common experiences: higher rates of absences from school; lower academic achievement; less participation in extracurricular activities; lower expectations for their futures; and are more likely to live in communities with lower educational levels.

According to the *Sacramento County Teenage Pregnancy Community Health Plan*, the good news is that the teen birth rate has declined steadily in the past five years. However, the age gap between teen mothers and their male partners is particularly striking among the youngest adolescents. Among mothers ages 11 to 12, fathers are on average nearly ten years older.

Children (both male and female) who enter adolescence with relationship deficits, unnurtured by their mother or father due to the absence or neglect of the parent, may spend their whole life looking to fill that void. It creates a particular kind of loneliness that leaves these children more vulnerable to substance abuse, gang involvement and pregnancy. (*Attachment & Loss*, John Bowlby)

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are diseases that can be transmitted by unprotected sexual contact or transmitted to an infant at birth. Gonorehea and clyamydia trachomatis are reportable conditions, thus are better

tracked than other STDs. Medically underserved populations and youth have a disproportionate share of STDs. Public health measures of early detection and treatment may aid in decreasing STD rates and are contingent upon service availability, appropriateness, and access.

Statewide, recent rates of reported cases for chlamydia and gonorrhea among females 10 to 14 years old has declined. The rate of reported gonorrhea cases in females ages 15 to 19 has also decreased. However, chlamydia rates of cases for females ages 15 to 19 has increased. This could be due to an improvement in recent years of detection and treatment of adolescents with sexually transmitted diseases.

Despite Public Perceptions, the Juvenile Crime Rate is Decreasing.

Most kids are *NOT* committing crimes. Nationally, violent crimes committed by young people have dropped sharply. In 1998, the serious violent crime offending rate for youth was 27 per 1,000 adolescents ages 12 to 17, totaling 616,000 such crimes involving juveniles - a drop by more than half from the 1993 high, and the lowest level since data were first collected in 1973 (*Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics*, 2000)

Statewide the arrest rates have declined for juvenile felony crimes from a rate of 29 arrests per 1,000 in 1989 to 18 in 1999. Violent Offenses, Homicides, Weapons, Property Crimes, and Vehicle Theft rates have dropped as well in the same ten year period.

The decline in the number of juvenile arrests in California reflects a nationwide trend. Historically, juveniles have had a higher arrest rate than adults. In recent years, however, the rates for juveniles and adults have become about equal. Adult Felony rates in California have dropped from 26 per 1,000 to 18; and

from 28 to 26 in Sacramento County. The juvenile felony Arrest rates have dropped from 29 to 18 throughout California during the same ten year period.

This does not mean that youth are without challenges, however. Drugs and gangs remain a problem for many of our communities. The 1999 California Student Survey reports that 10 percent of both female and male 7th-graders admit to previously or currently belonging to a street gang.

Low Incidences of Substance Abuse are Crucial for Healthy Transitions to Late Adolescence and Adulthood. Drug and alcohol use may be an indication of low self-esteem. It also can lead youth, already prone to believing themselves invincible, to engage in behavior that puts them and others at risk.

According to the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, nationally the prevalence of heavy drinking among adolescents has been stable over the past few years. Regardless, in 1999, 15 percent of 8th-graders still reported having five or more drinks in a row at least once during the past 2 weeks.

Statewide, according to the California Student Survey in 1999, 2 percent of 7th-graders and 6 percent of 9th-graders reported having 5 or more consecutive drinks of alcohol for 3 or more days in a row.

Nationally, 12 percent of 8th-grade students in 1999, same as the previous year, reported using illicit drugs. Hispanics reported the highest use at 17 percent. In California, 5 percent of 7th-graders and 12 percent of 9th-graders reported using marijuana in the past 30 days.

Smoking, alcohol and drug abuse was mentioned frequently as a challenge for youth. For example, through a youth survey, the Sacramento County Youth Commission identified alcohol and drugs, along with peer pressure as the number one concern of youth.

Negative Outlook for Youth who Use Tobacco. Research is clear that smoking is not good for one's health. It contributes to lung diseases such as asthma and emphysema, can cause cancer and is addictive. The younger a person starts smoking, the more likely that person will be a lifetime smoker. Smokeless tobacco is equally as harmful.

Nationally, the percent of 8th-graders who reported smoking cigarettes daily in the previous 30 days has continued to steadily decrease since 1996 to 8 percent. A slightly higher percent of females smoke than males as reported in 1998 and 1999.

In California during 1999, 7 percent of 7th-graders and 13 percent of 9th-graders reported smoking "any" cigarettes during the past 30 days. No 7th-graders and only 2 percent of 9th-graders reported daily smoking. Two percent of both 7th- and 9th-graders reported using smokeless tobacco or snuff in the past 30 days.

The 1999 California Student Survey also reports that when asked how harmful frequent (every day or almost every day) cigarette smoking is, 66 percent of 7th-graders and 62 percent of 9th-graders answered "extremely harmful." Twenty-two percent of 7th-graders and 26 percent of 9th-graders answered "harmful." The remaining 11 percent of 7th-graders and 12 percent of 9th-graders answered the same question either "somewhat harmful, mainly harmless or harmless."

Truancy Rates Play an Important Role in the Academic and Social Development of Middle School Youth. Children who are not in school are not receiving the education they need to prepare themselves for a productive life. Children who are not in school are often unsupervised and more likely to practice behavior that puts them at risk. Educators reported that truancy is a growing problem and that children are truant at younger and younger ages; however, truancy and

other absences are not measured consistently among the various school districts.

Importance of Perceived Safety in Schools and Neighborhoods. Every student has a right to feel safe in his or her school and community.

The 1999 California Student Survey reports that only 19 percent of 7th-graders feel "very safe" in their school. Fifty-nine percent feel "safe", 15 percent "unsafe" and 7 percent reported feeling "very unsafe." The neighborhoods fared better, with 41 percent of 7th-graders reporting feeling "very safe," 45 percent "safe," 10 percent "unsafe" and 5 percent "very unsafe."

Middle School Aged Youth Face Special Challenges and Have Unique Needs

Middle School is a Difficult Transition Period. Youth in this age group are in an important transitional period. Most youths experience puberty during this time. Physically, intellectually and emotionally they are in a state of constant flux. "No other grade span encompasses such a wide range of intellectual, physical, psychological, and social development." (*Caught in the Middle*)

This is a pivotal time for youth. This stage of growth sets the pace for what lies ahead. "Those who fail at the middle grade level often drop out of school and may never again have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential." (*Caught in the Middle*)

Many Youth Lack a Supportive, Positive Environment. Youth do not see themselves as valued or respected by adults. Research indicates that feeling supported and respected are important developmental assets for youth and contributes to their self-esteem and self-efficacy. Youth

feel isolated on large school campuses and frequently “fight anonymity” instead of building strong relationships with school staff and other adults. As one person put it, “We need to recognize, reward and support all youth, not just the high-risk kids.”

A Lack of Activities for Middle School Aged Youth Exists. After-school programs are effective in increasing self-esteem, improving social skills, and academic performance, and reducing juvenile crime; however, most service providers report either a lack of after-school activities, or that kids aren’t able to access those activities. Although many schools have after-school programs, they are limited by staffing and/or funding restraints. Frequently, after-school programs target younger children who traditionally required supervised childcare environments. Youth want to participate in activities that are meaningful and relevant to them.

Anecdotal research indicates that while activities may exist for this age group they (and their families) are either unaware of the opportunities or are unable to access the services due to a lack of finances and/or transportation. The Amador County Community Assessment reported that the major reason teens gave for not participating in community activities was “lack of information.” The Sacramento County Children’s Report Card reported that the information on the availability of Non-School Hour Programs was not complete. Many communities have programs offered by schools, community centers, park and recreation agencies, and faith-based organizations; however, young people and their parents may not be aware of them.

In addition, a lack of information about non-school-hour activities prevents comprehensive planning of middle school youth programs.

A special report on out-of-school activities in Sacramento County is currently being prepared. This report is being developed through a collaborative effort of The Sacramento County Children’s Coalition, Sunrise Recreation and Park District, Youth Services Provider Network, Child Action, and Foundation Consortium. The report will include the results of a survey of non-school hour programs, a review of existing studies, and input from youth focus groups. For information on this report, contact the Sacramento County Children’s Coalition.

Issues Related to Transportation Create Special Challenges for This Age Group. Middle school youth are not yet old enough to drive and must rely on parents or public transportation. With many single parent or two-working parent households, the ability of middle school aged youth to get to and from activities is greatly inhibited. Even programs that take place on a school campus cannot be accessed if the youth has no way to get home after the activity is over. The problem of transportation was identified as a key barrier to program access and implementation.

This Age Group - Overlooked?

Lack of Available Data. Finding data on this age group is particularly challenging—another indication that middle school youth are overlooked.

There is more health information available on infants, young children and older teens. There are very few available health indicators for middle school youth. And while education data is a rich source of information, it is designed to measure the effectiveness of the education system, not the well-being of the youth. As mentioned above, lack of reliable data about substance abuse, sexual activity, truancy, and availability of after-school programs

inhibits comprehensive analysis and planning of program and policy strategies targeting this age group.

YOUTH IN THE REGION

A summary of the demographics of middle school youth in the five-county region of Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo Counties

California and the Region

Population Growth

According to the *California Report Card 2000* by Children Now, "California is in the middle of a decade of change, during which our adolescent population (youth ages 10 to 17) will increase by 36 percent to nearly five million (4.7) total by 2005. This growth rate is 2.2 times greater than that of California's overall population [growth rate] and three times greater than the nation's overall."

In California 2,500,732 out of an estimated 34,336,000 people are youth 11 to

15 years of age, 7.23 percent of the total population.

There are 134,456 young people ages 11 to 15 in the five-county region of Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo according to population estimates from the California Department of Finance. This is an increase of 36 percent since 1990 for this age group compared to an 18.7 percent increase for the population as a whole.

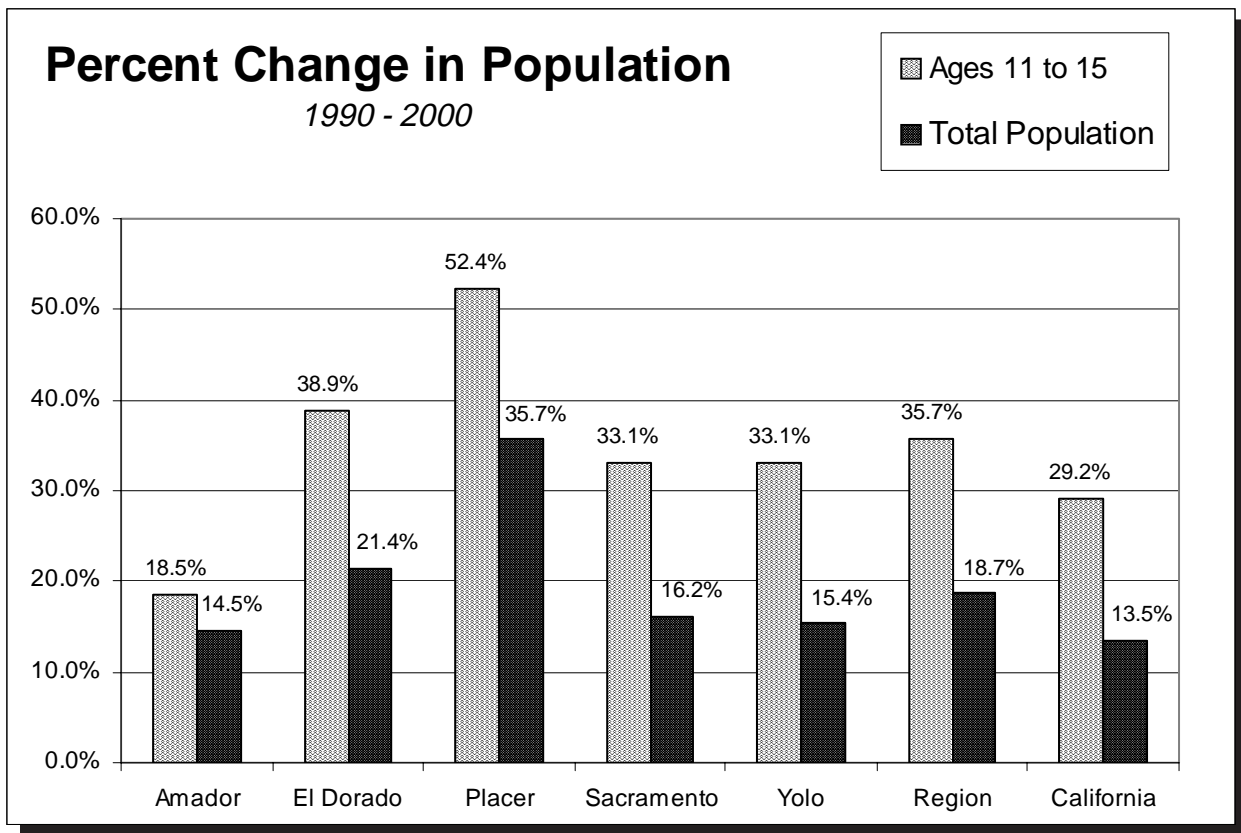
By the year 2007, the student population in the region is expected to grow by 8.6 percent, compared to 6.3 percent for the state as a whole. This will place increased demands on the region for educational facilities and school programs.

Diversity

Ethnic and language diversity are increasing in all population groups, and the projected diversity among youth will be unprecedented.

Of the total youths ages 11 to 15 in California, 43 percent are white, 37 percent are Hispanic, 12 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander, 8 percent are African American, and 0.6 percent are American Indian. Between 1990 and 2000 the Asian/Pacific Islander population for the 11 to 15 age group has increased 47 percent and the Hispanic population has increased 37 percent.

The Asian/Pacific Islander population in the five-county region, for the 11



Source: California Department of Finance

to 15 age group, has increased 65 percent and the Hispanic population has increased 43 percent.

According to the *California Report Card 2000*, published by Children Now, there is a troubling disparity among African American and Latino youth. It is reported that these particular youth “experience significantly worse outcomes in many economic, health, education and safety measures. For example, Latino children are more than twice as likely to be poor and to lack health coverage compared to white children; African American youth are more than twice as likely to drop out of school and the state is more than 6 times more likely to incarcerate them compared to white youth.” Additionally, the *California Report Card 2000* notes that “not only is California falling behind many other states in fostering young people’s capacity to achieve their potential when considering the population overall, but we have especially far to go with Latino youth, where our population growth will be greatest.”

In 1980 almost 26 percent of youth in the 11 to 15 age group throughout the five-county region were members of ethnic groups. By the year 2000 this percentage had increased to more than 36 percent.

Like that of the state, the student dropout rate for the region is declining overall, but for some racial/ethnic populations the rate remains high. African American and Hispanic students dropout at higher rates than other student populations. While dropout rates are measured at the high school level and interventions often are focused on these students, the roots of dropout problems begin well before high school. (Trends, 1998)

“In 1996 (the most recent year for which data was available), California ranked 28th of 41 states in 8th-graders’ math skills. The disparity among ethnic

groups exists on this test as well, with Asian/Pacific Islander and white students scoring near the national average and African American and Latino students scoring lower.” (*California Report Card 2000*)

English Language Learners are students for whom there is a report of a primary language other than English and who lack the clearly defined English language skills of listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing necessary to succeed in school.

In California 25.5 percent of the students are English Language Learners. The top languages for grades 5 through 9 are: Spanish, Vietnamese, Hmong, Cantonese, Philipino, Khmer, and Korean.

Health

In 1991 there were 71,793 births to mothers age 19 and younger. The numbers have steadily declined, resulting in 57,615 births by teens in 1999; 1,038 being under 15 years of age.

“Chlamydia is the most common communicable disease in California and has the highest prevalence in young adults and adolescents. It can cause a variety of long-term complications, including pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy, infertility and chronic pelvic pain in women and pneumonia in newborn babies.” (*California Report Card 2000*)

The rates of chlamydia cases in California among 10 to 14 year old females has decreased from 123.2 cases reported per 100,000 population in 1995 to 106.7 in 1999. Chlamydia cases for females ages 15 to 19 have increased in rate from 1,879.2 per 100,000 in 1995 to 2,118.5 in 1999; however, the rise in rate of chlamydia cases for this age category could be due to an increased ability in recent years to detect and treat sexually transmitted diseases in adolescents.

The rate of gonorrhea cases in California among 10 to 14 year old females

has decreased from 37.1 reported cases per 100,000 in 1995 to 20.5 in 1999. The rates of reported gonorrhea cases among females aged 15 to 19 has also decreased from 407.4 per 100,000 in 1995 to 288.2 in 1999.

Juvenile Crime

There were 68,503 juvenile felony arrests in California in 1999 for youth aged 10 to 17. Forty-eight percent of these were committed by youth 11 to 15 years old. Juvenile felony arrest rates have been steadily declining in California, from a high of 29 in 1991 to 17.8 in 1999 per 1,000 youth. The average juvenile felony arrest rate in the five-county region was 17.4 in 1999.

The rates of juvenile homicide arrest, likewise, have been steadily decreasing in California from a high of .22 in 1991 to a low of .05 in 1999. The juvenile arrest rate for the five-county region has been steadily declining since 1992 at .16, with a sharp drop from 1998 to 1999 (.042 to .016).

Rates for juvenile weapons arrests, property offense arrests and motor vehicle theft arrests have steadily declined in recent years in both California and the five-county region. Juvenile felony drug arrest rates have also been declining in California since 1994, but the rates for the five-county region have fluctuated. In 1999, the juvenile felony drug arrest rate for 10 to 17 year olds was 1.7 in California and 1.5 for the five-county region. Of the 344 drug offense arrests in the five-county region, 5.2 percent were of youth 11 to 15 years of age.

Arrest rates for juvenile felony DUI in California have decreased since 1996, but the five county rates have fluctuated. The juvenile felony DUI arrest rate in 1999 was .02 for California, and .09 for the five-county region. Youth themselves report that alcohol and drugs remain an important and troubling issue for adolescents.

Amador County

Population and Diversity

There are an estimated 1,983 youth ages 11 to 15 living in Amador County, 1.5 percent of the region's total. Less than 17 percent of these young people are members of minorities compared to 56.7 percent for the state.

For the 1999/2000 school year, there were only 46 English Language Learners in grades 5 through 9. Of these students, 42 spoke Spanish.

Poverty

In 1999 there were 312 youth ages 10 to 14 certified as eligible for Medi-Cal. This is an increase of 48 percent since 1992, compared to an increase of 20 percent for the total county population.

Education

Amador County's public education system consists of six elementary schools, two middle schools and four

high schools. In 1990/2000 there were 2,145 students enrolled in grades 5 through 9 in Amador County. According to the *Voices for Families* report, there are 99 students total enrolled in independent home schooling programs and a number of students attending local private schools.

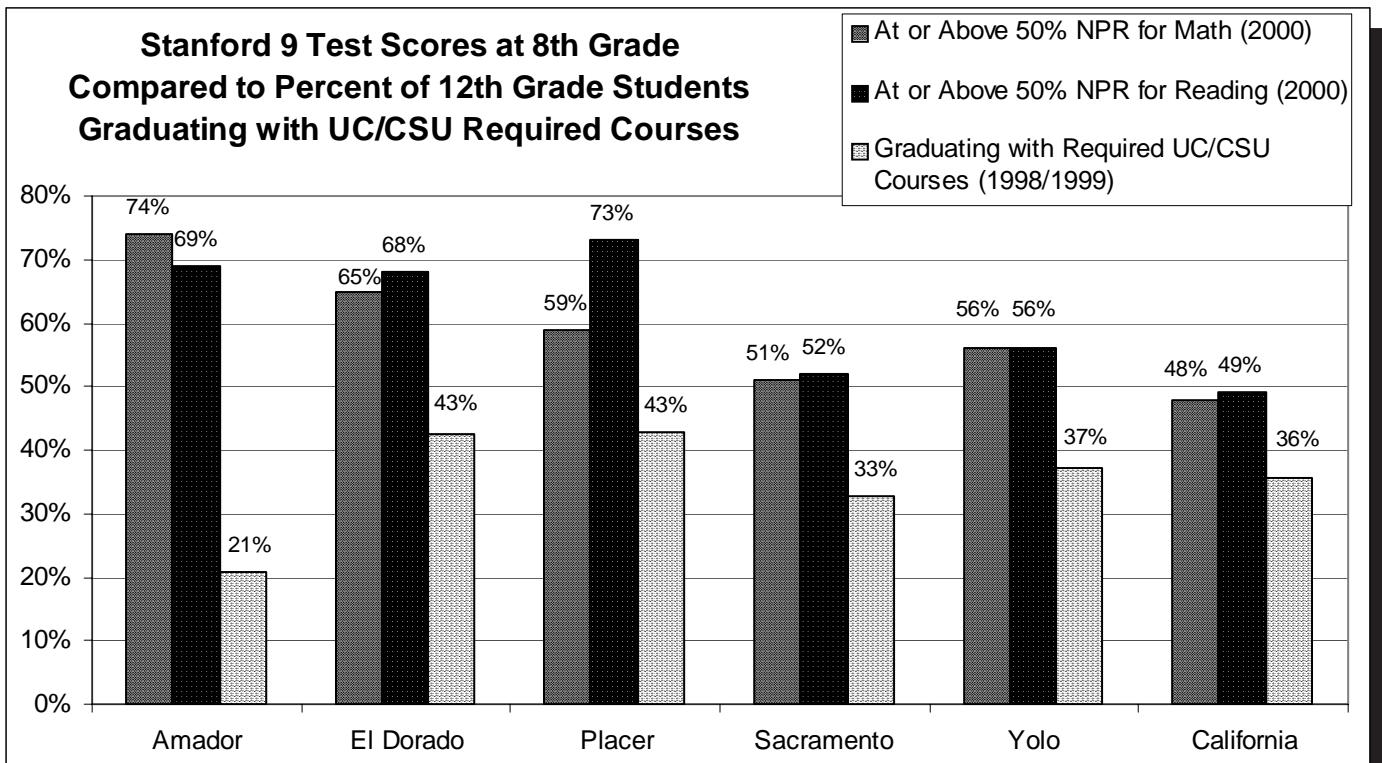
The *Voices for Families* report states, "Community perceptions about current educational quality seem to vary . . . Most parents see room for improvement, regardless of current qualities, and many expressed concern about poor facilities and equipment at all county schools. For the most part, parents appeared satisfied with teachers and several expressed concern that the best teachers would not stay if wages remained lower than those in surrounding areas."

For the 2000 Academic Performance Index (API) Report, Amador County's two middle schools scored 8 and 9 in the statewide rank, (10 being the highest score).

Eighth grade students in Amador County did better than the state average on the Stanford 9 tests for Math and Reading. Seventy-four percent tested at or above the 50% National Percentile Ranking for Math compared to 48 percent for the state, and 69 percent tested at or above the 50% NPR for Reading compared to 49 percent for the state. Although students in Amador County scored higher than the state for Reading and Math, only 20.9 percent of the 12th grade graduates in the 1998/99 school year completed the courses required for college, compared to 35.6 percent for the state as a whole.

Health

According to *Voices for Families*, Amador County is served by Sutter Amador Hospital, a private not-for-profit community hospital that is linked to a larger system of tertiary care hospitals in an adjacent county. Sutter Amador Hospital opened a new state-of-the-art facility in Spring 2000. Sutter Amador hospi-



Source: California Department of Education

Many youth suffer from missed opportunities. Schools and other programs are doing a good job, but children aren't using the programs. Some of the challenges are a lack of funding and the need for additional parental and volunteer involvement. More collaboration among public agencies: schools, law enforcement, etc., is needed.

Chief Ed Sisneros
Jackson Police

tal owns two full service primary care centers in the remote rural communities of Plymouth and Pioneer, and one pediatric center in Jackson. Another primary care center that is a satellite of Lodi Memorial Hospital, provides services to Ione, a third remote rural area of the county. These four medical centers provide the majority of care to the county's low income and Medi-Cal eligible population. In addition, there is a Native American medical clinic located just outside of Jackson in Martell that serves the Native American community as well as other ethnic groups.

Despite these facilities, Amador County, like many rural counties, has a shortage of health care providers. Many health care providers do not accept Medi-Cal. It is also difficult to recruit physicians to rural areas. Certain specialties are represented only part-time or not at all. Many patients need to seek care in more urban areas. This can be particularly challenging to non-drivers because public transportation to Sacramento is limited and none is available to Stockton.

Although the focus groups in Amador County looked at smoking in the

home and in families as a whole, the *Voices for Families* report states that "a number of parents and teens talked about the need for expanded and/or improved drug and alcohol education and counseling for middle school and high school students."

Births to Teen Mothers

There were 29 births in 1999 to teen mothers age 19 and under, but no recorded births to girls under the age of 15 in the past five years.

STDs

There were no reported cases (except one chlamydia case in 1997) of chlamydia or gonorrhea in Amador County from 1995 to 1999 for females 10 to 14 years of age. Although, this represents *reported* cases, which could be underrepresented due to a lack of health care providers in the county.

The number of chlamydia cases reported for females ages 15 to 19 dropped from 11 in 1995 to 4 in 1999. Only one case of gonorrhea cases was reported in 1999.

Juvenile Crime

There were 47 juvenile felony arrests in 1999 in Amador County for youth ages 10 to 17. Twenty-four (51 percent) of those arrested were youth ages 11 to 15.

In 1999 there was only one Juvenile DUI Arrest and three juvenile felony drug arrests for the 10 to 17 age group. Although these numbers are small, at least one service provider felt that drugs were a challenge faced by Amador County youth.

There were 79 Juvenile Misdemeanor Arrests in 1999 for youth ages 10 to 17. Thirty-four (43 percent) of those arrested were youth ages 11 to 15.

In the five-county region in 1999 there were 1,918 Juvenile Property Offense Arrests for ages 10 to 17. Only 26 of these

arrests occurred in Amador County, and only 17 of those arrested were juveniles ages 11 to 15. Although the number is small, it is worth noting that 12 of those arrested were age 15, compared to only 3 arrests that were youths age 14.

Amador County Voices for Families 2000

In 2000 Amador County conducted a Community Assessment that included focus groups, surveys, and analysis of secondary data.

The report identified the county's mentoring programs, school programs and church groups as some of their greatest strengths, but reported that some of the greatest challenges included:

- Current public transportation doesn't provide evening routes
- Teens don't receive much exposure to cultural experiences or the arts
- Not enough healthy recreational activities for teens
- Not enough social activities and educational opportunities, especially for teens and young adults.

As part of the Community Assessment process, Amador County conducted a youth survey of teens in grades 8 through 12. This survey was distributed through classes at each of the Amador County middle schools and high schools. Approximately 1,050 surveys were distributed and 1,006 were received.

El Dorado County

Population and Diversity

There are an estimated 12,101 youth ages 11 to 15 living in El Dorado County, an increase of 38.9 percent since 1990. This represents 9 percent of the region's total middle school youth population. Fourteen percent of these young people are members of minorities compared to 56.7 percent for the state.

Four percent of all the students in grades K-12 are English Language Learners. The majority of these students (91 percent) speak Spanish.

Poverty

In 1999 there were 1,267 youth ages 10 to 14 certified as eligible for Medi-Cal. This is a decrease of 2.8 percent over 1992, compared to a decrease of 9.7 percent for the total County population.

Education

There were 11,416 students enrolled in grades 5 through 9 in El Dorado County in the 1999/2000 academic year.

Total school enrollment in El Dorado County is projected to increase 2.6 percent between 1999/2000 and 2007/08 compared to an increase of 6.3 for the state as a whole.

The Academic Performance Index (API) is a measurement of school achievement for accountability purposes as a result of the 1990 Public Schools Accountability Act. For 2000, El Dorado County's 9 middle schools scored between 6 and 10 in the statewide rank.

Eighth grade students in El Dorado County did better than the state average on the Stanford 9 tests for Math and Reading. Sixty-five percent tested at or above the 50% National Percentile Ranking for Math compared to 48 percent for the state, and 68 percent tested at or above the 50%

NPR for Reading compared to 49 percent for the state. Of those students graduating from 12th grade, 42.6 percent had completed the courses required for entrance into UC/CSU colleges. This is significantly higher than the state's 35.6 percent.

Births to Teen Mothers

There were 155 births in 1999 to teen mothers age 19 and under, but only 2 of these recorded births were to girls under the age of 15.

STDs

In El Dorado County, no cases of gonorrhea were reported for females ages 10 to 14, and only one case of chlamydia was reported in 1999.

Numbers of reported cases of chlamydia were lower in 1999 at 24, than any year since 1995 for females aged 15 to 19 years of age. Only 2 gonorrhea cases were reported for females ages 15 to 19 in 1999.

Juvenile Crime

There were 217 juvenile felony arrests in 1999 in El Dorado County for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 118 (54 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In 1999 there was only 1 Juvenile DUI Arrest and 23 juvenile felony drug arrests for the 10 to 17 age group. These numbers are small, but the rate of juvenile felony drug arrests in El Dorado County of 1.22 is lower than the rate for the state as a whole at 1.71. Of the 23 Juveniles arrested for felony drug offenses, 14 were ages 13 to 15.

In 1999 there were a total of 59 Juvenile Violent Offense Arrests. Violent offenses include homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault or kidnapping. Of these, 28 arrests were of young people age 11 to 15.

There were 846 Juvenile Misdemeanor Arrests in 1999 for youth ages

One of the main challenges for youths in this county is transportation. Many youths would like to be involved in more activities but there is no way of getting to or from these activities.

Carol Martin
4-H Youth Development
Program Representative

10 to 17. Of these arrests, 413 (49 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In the five-county region in 1999 there were 1,918 Juvenile Property Offense Arrests for youth ages 10 to 17. Of this total, 106 arrests occurred in El Dorado County, and 60 of those arrests were juveniles ages 11 to 15.

The family unit plays a major role and that more work with the parents is needed. She states, "we're seeing more drug use, non-compliance with family and authority (police officers, teachers). We're seeing a lot of children complaining about parent's drug use.

Debby Savage, Shelter Manager
New Morning Youth and Family
Services

Placer County

Population and Diversity

There are an estimated 18,331 youth ages 11 to 15 living in Placer County, an increase of 52.4 percent over 1990. This represents 13.6 percent of the region's total middle school youth population. Less than 15 percent of these young people are members of minorities compared to 56.7 percent for the state.

Ten percent of the students in grades K-12 are English Language Learners. Of these students, 76 percent speak Spanish. In grades 5 through 9, almost 600 students are English Language Learners, with slightly more than 400 of these students speaking Spanish.

Poverty

In 1999 there were 1,927 youth ages 10 to 14 certified as eligible for Medi-Cal. This is an increase of 20 percent over 1992, compared to an increase of 1.3 percent for the total county population.

Education

There were 21,252 students enrolled in grades 5 through 9 in Placer County in the 1999/2000 academic year.

Total school enrollment in Placer County is projected to increase 22.9 percent between 1999/2000 and 2007/08 compared to an increase of 6.3 for the state as a whole.

For 2000 Placer County's 12 middle schools scored between 6 and 10 in the statewide rank (with 10 being the highest score).

Eighth grade students in Placer County did better than the state average on the Stanford 9 tests for Math and Reading. Fifty-nine percent tested at or above the 50% National Percentile Ranking for Math compared to 48 percent for the state, and 73 percent tested at or above the 50% NPR for Reading compared to 49 percent for the state. Of those students graduating from 12th grade, 42.7 percent had completed the courses required for entrance into UC/CSU colleges. This is the highest percentage in the five-county area and

significantly higher than the state's 35.6 percent.

Teen Births

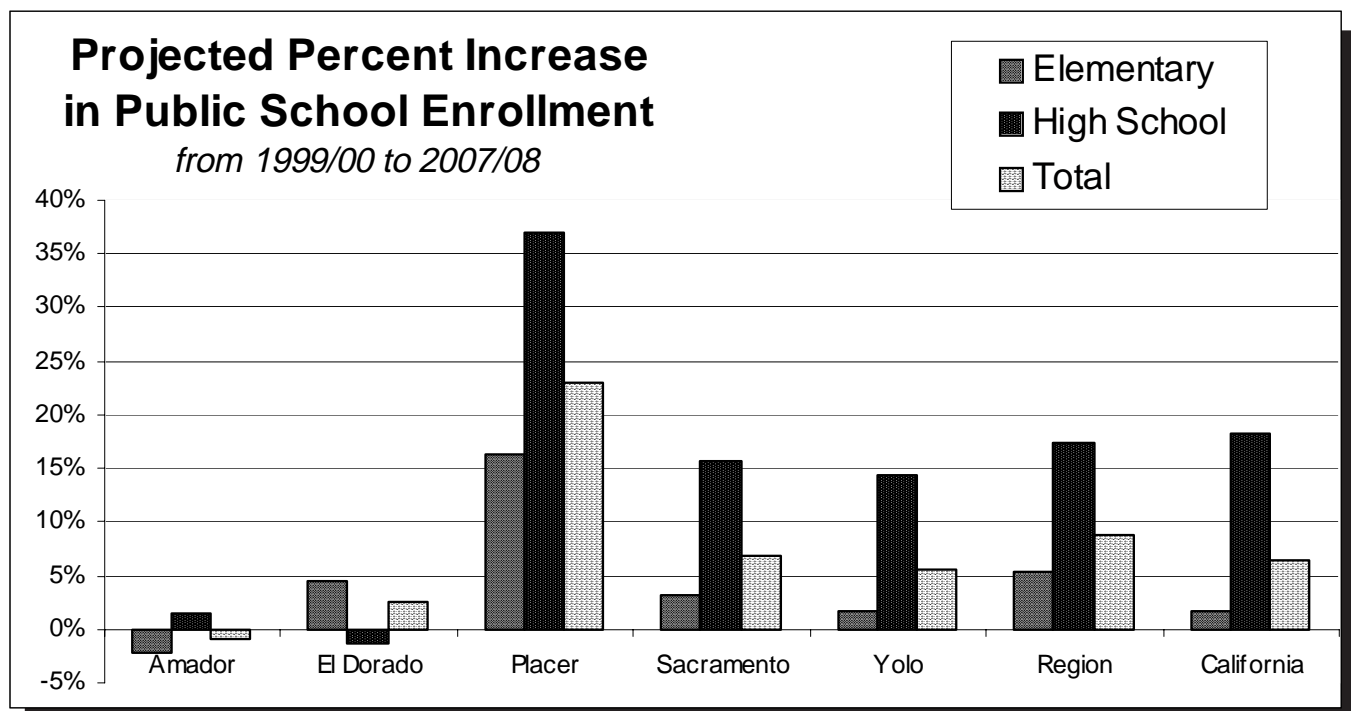
There were 198 births in 1999 to teen mothers age 19 and under, but only 2 of these recorded births were to girls under the age of 15.

STDs

The number of chlamydia cases reported in Placer County, for females ages 10 to 14 has remained fairly constant at 2 in 1995, 1996 and 1999. Gonorrhea has not been reported for this age group since 1996. Rates for chlamydia in females ages 15 to 19 have risen slightly from 770.0 in 1995 to 772.5 in 1999. Too few numbers of gonorrhea cases were reported in this age group to accurately depict using rates.

Juvenile Crime

There were 490 juvenile felony arrests in 1999 in Placer County for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 237 (48 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.



Source: California Department of Education

In 1999 there were only 2 Juvenile DUI Arrests and 58 juvenile felony drug arrests for the 10 to 17 age group. These numbers are small, but the rate of juvenile felony drug arrests in Placer County of 2.06 per 100,000 is the highest in the five-county region and higher than the rate for the state as a whole at 1.71. Of the 58 Juveniles arrested for felony drug offenses, 22 were ages 12 to 15.

In 1999 there were a total of 107 Juvenile Violent Offense Arrests in Placer County. Violent offenses include homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault or kidnapping. Of these, almost half—53 arrests—were young people age 11 to 15.

There were 1,075 Juvenile Misdemeanor Arrests in 1999 for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 475 (44 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In the five-county region in 1999, there were 1,918 Juvenile Property Offense Arrests for ages 10 to 17. Of this total, 247 arrests occurred in Placer County, and 129 of those juveniles were ages 11 to 15.

Youth are a barometer of how our society as a whole is faring. The majority of them are relatively happy, healthy, successful teens who are contributing positively to their families and community. Those who are struggling with drugs, violence, depression, truancy, etc. are a reminder that we all have some improving to do. Youth are not “they,” or “those” but rather “us” and “ours.”

Like all of us, teens are facing more pressures than teens of the past. This is a fast-moving society with lots of demands and stresses. Some teens, especially high achievers, are too busy. They don't take the opportunity to just BE. Teens report that drugs are so easy to get, even on campus. Teens need adult role models who are living healthy, drug and alcohol free lifestyles to show them how to get a natural high. The role models they don't need are the ones on prime time TV.

For youth in rural areas, it can be a real challenge just to find something fun and constructive to do after school and on weekends. Most after-

school programs target youth age 8-13. Older teens who aren't involved in sports are looking for places to hang out and socialize. They complain that there's no where to go. Many are unsupervised from 3:00 - 6:00 PM and on weekend nights.

The waiting list for drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs is so long that many addicted teens are falling through the cracks.

The number one barrier is lacking positive adult role models (parents, relatives, neighbors) to spend time with teens and give them guidance. They need to feel that they are competent and contributing members of society. They need help making the transition to adulthood.

Issues that need to be addressed include providing all our youth with opportunities to develop their talents and abilities. Certainly school fills part of that need. But since Prop 13 was passed years ago, we've had a shortage of opportunities for fine arts, music, drama, and affordable sports. Basically, we need to invest time and money.

Casey McCormick
Placer Community Challenge
to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Sacramento County

Population and Diversity

There are an estimated 90,874 youth ages 11 to 15 living in Sacramento County, an increase of 33.1 percent since 1990. This represents 67.6 percent of the region's total middle school youth population. Forty-three percent of these young people are members of minorities compared to 56.7 percent for the state.

The percentage of students that are English Language Learners has more than tripled since the early 1980s in Sacramento County. According to the *Sacramento County Children's Report Card*, in 1982-83 students learning English represented less than 5 percent of students. Today they comprise more than 20 percent. Most of the English Language Learner students in Sacramento County speak one of more than 20 Asian Languages.

Poverty

In 1999 there were 31,345 youth ages 10 to 14 certified as eligible for Medi-Cal. This is an increase of 26.9 percent over 1992, compared to an increase of 13.6 percent for the total county population in Sacramento County for the same time period.

Education

There were 82,278 students enrolled in grades 5 through 9 in Sacramento County in the 1999/2000 academic year.

Total school enrollment in Sacramento County is projected to increase 6.82 percent between 1999/2000 and 2007/08 compared to an increase of 6.3 for the state as a whole.

The Academic Performance Index (API) is a measurement of

school achievement for accountability purposes as a result of the 1990 Public Schools Accountability Act. Sacramento County chose API as an indicator to monitor in the *Children's Report Card*.

The API is a ranking of schools based on standard test scores of students. There is also an API ranking within "similar" schools which considers special challenges that schools face, such as poverty and the percentage of non-English speakers. The possible points are between 200 and 1,000 with 1,000 being the top score.

According to the *Sacramento County Children's Report Card*, 79 schools, or 29 percent of the 277 schools in Sacramento County were rated in the top fifth of the index. These schools are considered to be doing a good job. Seventy, or 25 percent of the county's schools, are in the second fifth. These schools received a score between 700 and 800 and are expected to implement improvements that would bring their scores closer to the state target of 800 points. Scoring between 600 and 700 points, 49 schools in the county, or 18 percent, lie in the middle fifth of the index. The remaining 79 schools, 28 percent, fall in the bottom two-fifths of the rankings.

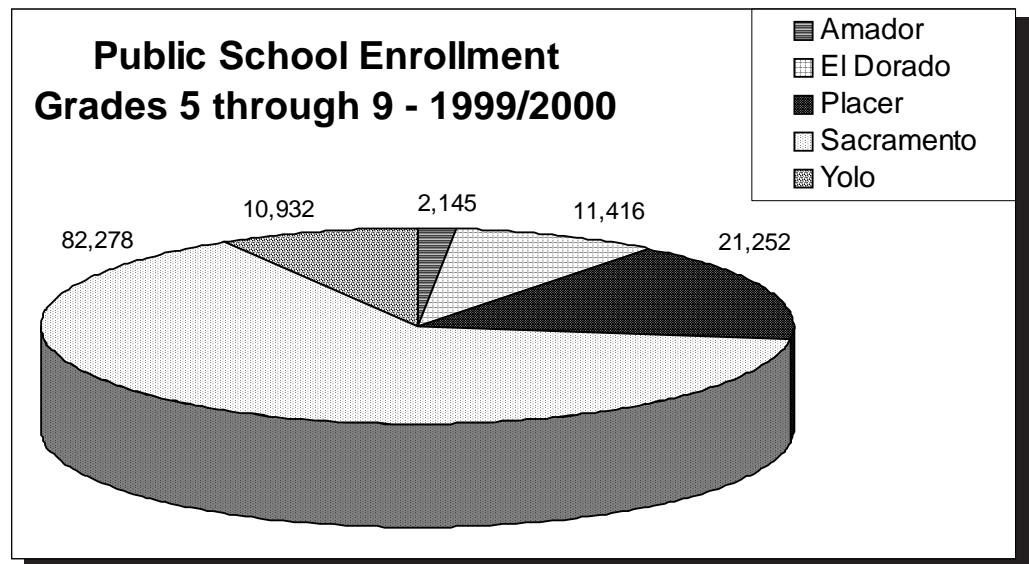
Eighth grade students in Sacramento County did slightly better than the state

average on the Stanford 9 tests for Math and Reading. Fifty-one percent tested at or above the 50% National Percentile Ranking for Math compared to 48 percent for the state, and 52 percent tested at or above the 50% NPR for Reading compared to 49 percent for the state. Of those students graduating from 12th grade, 32.8 percent had completed the courses required for entrance into UC/CSU colleges. This is somewhat lower than the statewide percentage of 35.6 percent.

Health

According to the *Sacramento County Children's Report Card*, smoking by teens in 1999 in Sacramento County has significantly reduced since 1998. Overall, 30 percent fewer adolescents and teens were smoking in 1999 than in 1998. The reduction is most dramatic among younger children. In 1998, 14 percent of seventh-graders reported having had at least one cigarette within thirty days of the survey. In 1999, only 7 percent did so—a 50 percent reduction. In 1999, thirty percent fewer ninth-graders reported smoking in 1998. These statistics are encouraging but relate to only a two-year span. It remains to be seen whether the trend proves meaningful.

According to the *Sacramento County Children's Report Card*, Sacramento



County's teenage birth rate has declined for the past five years. The birth rate for teens ages 15 to 17 years old is lower than the year 2000 goal set by the Healthy People 2000 initiative.

There were 2,039 births in 1999 to teen mothers age 19 and under, but only 35 of these recorded births were to girls under the age of 15.

The *Sacramento County Teenage Pregnancy Community Health Plan*, reported that 61 percent of babies born to teen mothers in 1998 were fathered by adult men 20 years old. Of these, 11 percent were age 25 to 29 and 5 percent were 30 years of age or older. The age gap between teen mothers and their male partners is particularly striking among the youngest adolescents. Among mothers ages 11 to 12 fathers are on average nearly ten years older.

According to the *Sacramento County Children's Report Card*, Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are diseases that can be transmitted by unprotected sexual contact or transmitted to an infant at birth. Gonorrhea and chlamydia trachomatis are reportable conditions, thus are better tracked than other STDs. Medically underserved populations and youth have a disproportionate share of STDs.

In Sacramento County, the rates of gonorrhea and chlamydia for the 10 to 14 age group were reduced 42 percent and 29 percent respectively from 1995 to 1998, but they both remained significantly higher than the state average. Sacramento County's 1998 rate of gonorrhea among 10 – 14 year olds was more than twice the state average rate—34.3 for Sacramento County compared to 12.8 for the state. The rate of chlamydia in the county was almost double the state average for the same age group—102.8 for the county compared to 58.9 for the state.

Juvenile Crime

The Sacramento County *Children's Report Card* reported that although pub-

lic perception is that crime among juveniles is on the increase, the fact is juvenile felony arrest rates have steadily declined in Sacramento County and across the state in the past ten years. Felony arrest rates decreased from 26 percent in 1990 to 19 percent in 1998 in Sacramento County, and from 29 percent to 20 percent in California.

There were 2,549 juvenile felony arrests in 1999 in Sacramento County for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 1,301 (51 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In 1999 there were only 6 Juvenile DUI Arrests and 230 juvenile felony drug arrests for the 10 to 17 age group. The rate of juvenile felony drug arrests for Sacramento County of 1.63 is slightly lower than the state's rate of 1.71. Of the 230 Juveniles arrested for felony drug offenses, 65 (28 percent) were ages 12 to 15.

In 1999 there were a total of 694 Juvenile Violent Offense Arrests. Violent offenses include homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault or kidnapping. Of these, half—349 arrests—were young people age 11 to 15.

There were 5,012 Juvenile Misdemeanor Arrests in 1999 for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 2,532 (50.5 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In the five-county region in 1999 there were 1,918 Juvenile Property Offense Arrests for youth ages 10 to 17. Of this total, 1,307 arrests, or 55 percent, occurred in Sacramento County, and 716 of those juveniles were ages 11 to 15.

For the five-county region there were 203 Juvenile Weapons arrests. These include weapon-related offenses including those for firearms, knives, blunt objects and personal weapons. Sixty-eight percent of these arrests—138 juveniles—were in Sacramento County. Of those juveniles arrested in Sacramento County, 73 arrests (almost 53 percent) were ages 12 to 15.

School-Age Care in Sacramento, 2001

Prepared by Child Action, Inc. for the Local Child Care and Development Planning Council (LPC)

This report addresses the child care needs of school-age children. Five major challenges were identified for both parents and providers to offering quality, affordable and convenient care opportunities for school age children:

- **Funding** - lack of available funds for both parents and providers
- **Transportation** - a lack of transportation between school and care programs
- **Space** - difficulty finding appropriate, consistent and safe program space, compounded by class size reduction
- **Qualified Staff** - shortages of qualified staff
- **Collaboration** - lack of effective collaboration among all of the individuals involved in the continuum of school-age care

The report concludes that “there is, without a doubt, a need for greater quantity and quality of out-of-school time opportunities for school-age children in Sacramento.”

Yolo County

Population and Diversity

There are an estimated 11,167 youth ages 11 to 15 living in Yolo County, an increase of 33.1 percent over 1990. This represents 8.3 percent of the region's total middle school youth population. Forty-three percent of these young people are members of minorities compared to 56.7 percent for the state.

Twenty-one percent of the students in grades K-12 are English Language Learners. Of these students, 71 percent speak Spanish and 9 percent speak Russian. In grades 5 through 9, slightly more than 2,100 students are English Language Learners, with almost 1,500 of these students speaking Spanish.

Poverty

In 1999 there were 2,843 youth ages 10 to 14 certified as eligible for Medi-Cal. This is an increase of 9 percent over 1992, compared to an increase of 0.8 percent for the total county population in Yolo County for the same time period.

Education

There were 10,932 students enrolled in grades 5 through 9 in Yolo County in the 1999/2000 academic year.

Total school enrollment in Yolo County is projected to increase 5.6 percent between 1999/2000 and 2007/08 compared to an increase of 6.3 for the state as a whole.

The Academic Performance Index (API) is a measurement of school achievement for accountability purposes as a result of the 1990 Public Schools Accountability Act. For 2000, Yolo County's 7 middle schools scored between 3 and 10 in the statewide rank.

Eighth grade students in Yolo County did better than the state average on the Stanford 9 tests

for Math and Reading. Fifty-six percent tested at or above the 50% National Percentile Ranking for Math compared to 48 percent for the state, and 56 percent tested at or above the 50% NPR for Reading compared to 49 percent for the state. Of those students graduating from 12th grade, 37.3 percent had completed the courses required for entrance into UC/CSU colleges. This is higher than the state's 35.6 percent.

Health

There were 205 births in 1999 to teen mothers age 19 and under, but only 3 of these recorded births were to girls under the age of 15.

Juvenile Crime

There were 437 juvenile felony arrests in 1999 in Yolo County for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 218 (50 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In 1999 there were zero Juvenile DUI Arrests and 30 juvenile felony drug arrests for the 10 to 17 age group. These numbers are small, but the rate of juvenile felony drug arrests in Yolo County of 1.72 is slightly higher than the rate for the state as a whole at 1.71. Of the 30 Juveniles arrested for felony drug offenses, 6 were ages 14 and 15.

In 1999 there were a total of 109 Juvenile Violent Offense Arrests in Yolo County. Violent offenses include homi-

cide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault or kidnapping. Of these, almost half—55 juveniles—were young people age 11 to 15.

There were 953 Juvenile Misdemeanor Arrests in 1999 for youth ages 10 to 17. Of these arrests, 481 (50 percent) were youth ages 11 to 15.

In the five-county region in 1999 there were 1,918 Juvenile Property Offense Arrests for ages 10 to 17. Of this total, 232 arrests occurred in Yolo County, and over half (129) of those juveniles were ages 11 to 15.

**Percent of Total Population by Ethnic Group
Ages 11 - 15
2000**

	White	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	African Am American	American Indian
Amador	83.1%	12.4%	0.5%	2.5%	1.6%
El Dorado	86.0%	10.4%	2.2%	0.6%	0.9%
Placer	85.7%	10.1%	2.7%	0.7%	0.8%
Sacramento	56.8%	16.4%	13.5%	12.3%	1.1%
Yolo	56.8%	29.9%	9.6%	2.5%	1.2%
California	43.3%	36.8%	11.7%	7.7%	0.6%

Source: California Department of Finance