

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES REPORT – February/March, 2006

Managing Through Challenges

On January 17, Solano's emerging Coalition of Non-profit Organizations held a summit to learn more about the reasons behind their struggle for adequate funding. A new report on the non-profit business sector had just been released by the Stanford Graduate School of Business. It documented that Solano ranks near the bottom of every statistical category related to the support non-profit groups receive to do their vital work, compared to the nine other Bay Area counties.

The researchers found that Solano's funding of non-profits is "strikingly different from other counties." Proportionately, Solano relies overwhelmingly on clients paying fees for services, has slightly lower government support than is typical, and brings in much less commercial income and substantially lower philanthropic support. The sector's funding "is considerably less across the board . . ." in comparison to the rest of the Bay Area counties. For example, the median budget size in Solano is \$89,022, while in Contra Costa, the median is \$123,425 and in Napa it is \$155,624.

County	Median Budget	Median Assets
Alameda	\$222,820	\$92,631
Contra Costa	\$123,425	\$71,212
Marin	\$156,965	\$88,361
San Francisco	\$334,474	\$176,759
San Mateo	\$115,394	\$97,777
Santa Clara	\$146,611	\$97,938
Santa Cruz	\$175,945	\$85,422
Napa	\$155,624	\$121,084
Sonoma	\$136,017	\$63,658
Solano	\$89,022	\$59,847

Is this happening because we have a higher number of non-profit organizations sharing the financial pie? On the contrary; Solano has significantly fewer non-profits per resident than any other Bay Area County.

County	Density per 1,000
Alameda	1.7
Contra Costa	0.7
Marin	2.1
San Francisco	1.9
San Mateo	0.8
Santa Clara	1.8
Santa Cruz	1.3
Napa	1.0
Sonoma	1.0
Solano	0.5
Total Bay Area	1.1

Some of the Summit attendants asked if the numbers were valid since some very large non-profits do business here but are based in other counties. The Stanford researchers have controlled for that possibility in their study. As noted in the full Stanford Project on the Evolution of Non-Profits (SPEN) report, the analysis was conducted using "medians" not "averages." The median is the center point of a spread--the organization exactly in the middle of the spread. In other words, fifty percent of the organizations have a higher budget and 50 percent have a lower budget. This avoids the problem of having data skewed by unusually large or small organizations. Additionally, the researchers dropped the atypically large organizations such as universities, hospitals and health plans from the calculations altogether when that group along skewed outcomes. *(Charts Courtesy of the SPEN Report)*

So, although no statistical analysis is going to perfectly capture every contingency, the Stanford technique allows for a reasonable basis of comparison, and the remaining differences would tend to be off-setting. For example, yes, it is true that Solano County's Head Start Services are provided by an organization based in Napa. On the other hand, Napa's MediCal Managed Care services are provided by an organization based in Solano.

After hearing presentations from the speakers, summit participants broke into discussion groups for developing strategies to change this picture. Participants agreed it is essential that the media,

business and government all become partners in forming solutions to the funding challenges facing the non-profit business sector in Solano County. To do less would significantly diminish the quality of life for people who live and work here.

Further details on the Summit and the reports provided by both Stanford and United Way are available online at www.childnet.org.

Children's Network Data System Highlighted in Statewide Study

In July 2005, The Foundation Consortium for California's Children and Youth convened a group of child welfare services community partnership stakeholders to develop criteria for evaluating data systems used by Family Support Services in the implementation of Differential Response for Child Welfare System Redesign. A total of sixteen different data systems and vendors were assessed; the ChildNet Results Manager was among the systems which best met the criteria.

The criteria for assessing the data systems included capability to manage client data, service data, cost/finance data, and outcomes measurements and reports. The ChildNet Results Manager met or exceeded expectations in all areas.

The ChildNet Results Manager was developed by Information Technology staff at the Children's Network in collaboration with the Family Resource Center Network to track the families the FRCs serve, including demographics, referrals, services, funding and billing information, and outcomes for families.

As of December 31, 2005, 14,014 families including 19,947 children, receiving 50,145 units of service, have been tracked with the ChildNet Results Manager.

Outcomes for families are tracked with the Family Development Matrix (Matrix) embedded in the ChildNet Results Manager. Jerry Endres of the Institute for Collaborative Studies at California State University Monterey Bay originally developed the Matrix and consulted on its modification for Solano County's FRC Network. He explains, "It helps to measure family progress and outcomes by quantifying the qualitative."

For individual families, the Matrix is a case management tool. When data are aggregated across agencies and programs, a broader picture emerges. More than 230 families have used the Matrix in one or more of 13 domains. For families who began in crisis, 78% report an improvement in the conflict resolution skills, 64% report an improvement in family communication, 70% report increased family support, 92% report an improvement in access to health resource, 74% report an increase in income.

Differential Response is intended to assure that all families, whether or not a child abuse or neglect case, get connected to the services they need. Developing data systems to track these services and outcomes is critical to determine if Differential Response is having an impact and how much it costs. Solano's own ChildNet Results Manager has been recognized in California as a best practice, data management model for Differential Response. To view the full report, go online to www.foundationconsortium.org/pdf/FRCdata_system_report1105.pdf.

Child Abuse Prevention Council – Blue Ribbon Campaign

In 2005, 4,126 children in Solano County were reported abused or neglected to Child Protective Services. Recognizing that the health and well-being of young children in Solano County are critical components of the Board of Supervisors strategic plan, Children's Network and the Child

Abuse Prevention Council will join other community partners in April to sponsor and support public awareness and education with the Blue Ribbon Campaign.

In Solano County, the Blue Ribbon Campaign has been conducted by the Child Abuse Prevention Council and AmeriCorps since 2001. The events this year include a “What Keeps Me Safe and Healthy” kids’ art activity in each city, blue ribbon tying events, and presentations of city and Board of Supervisors proclamations recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

Also to promote awareness of children’s issues during the month of April, and in keeping with the spirit of community collaboration that resulted in Solano County being selected by America’s Promise as one of the “100 Best Communities for Youth,” public education and community events in April will be sponsored and supported under the unified theme of *Solano County: A Community United for Building Better Futures*. Families and parents are encouraged to participate during April events to learn more about community supports for young children. Local service providers and community organizations working in conjunction with the Children’s Network, Child Abuse Prevention Council, Child Care Planning Council, AmeriCorps and the Family Resource Centers include: Solano Family and Children’s Services, First 5 Solano Children and Families Commission, Solano Office of Family Violence Prevention, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Travis Air Force Base and others.

Featured events and activities to commemorate Child Abuse Prevent Month, CASA Light of Hope, Month of the Military Child and Week of the Young Child, include Vallejo’s “Fighting Back Against Child Abuse” (April 8), Vacaville Blue Ribbon Tying (April 11)^h and “Spank Out Day” (April 30), Dixon’s Block Party (April 22), Fairfield/Suisun’s Light of Hope/Blue Ribbon Event (April 13), Rio Vista’s Annual “Walk for Safety” (April 20), and Benicia’s “Cherish the Child” Event (April 23).

In addition, members of AmeriCorps and the Child Abuse Prevention Council will be participating in the statewide 2006 “Kids’ Day at the Capitol” in Sacramento on April 7th and the “*Child Abuse is Everyone’s Business*” Campaign of the Greater Bay Area Regional Child Abuse Prevention Council. A full calendar of events can also be found online at www.childnet.org.

Family Resource
Center Network

Solano Parenting Partnership Promotes Training Opportunities

In October 2005, the Solano Parenting Partnership worked with the Solano County Office of Family Violence Prevention to offer a special **Safe from the Start “Train the Trainer”** workshop for parenting education providers. In this workshop, participants reviewed Safe from the Start information, learned approaches to sharing the material with parents, and provided feedback on modifying handouts and other Safe from the Start materials to make them more user-friendly for specific groups of parents.

In January 2006, the Solano Parenting Partnership, with funding from First 5 Solano Children & Families Commission, sponsored four local child-serving professionals to attend a 5-day Instructor Training for the research-based, SAMHSA-approved **Effective Black Parenting Program**. This award-winning program approaches parenting education from a culturally-based African American perspective. The Parenting Education Coordinator and the cohort of Instructors are working together on implementation details. The first class will be launched within 12 months of the training.

Child Care
Planning Council

Solano Child Care Planning Council Evaluates Prop. 82: Preschool for All

The Solano County Child Care Planning Council approved its Public Policy Platform at its February 27, 2006, general meeting. This platform incorporates the items related to child care and

development from the current Board of Supervisors (BOS) Platform and will be brought to the BOS for approval in coming weeks.

The Council included in the platform a section related to preschool, acknowledging the discussions that will take place related to *Proposition 82: The Preschool for All Initiative* which will be brought to the voters on June 6, 2006. While it has not taken a direct position on Prop. 82, the Council recognizes the benefits of quality preschool opportunities for children and continues to evaluate the potential impacts of Prop. 82 in Solano County. To illustrate the Council's attention to this issue, please see below an excerpt from the preschool section of the Council's Platform and an overview of Proposition 82 with website links to noted research relating to early childhood education.

Child Care Planning Council Public Policy Platform - Preschool Section

Promote the development of a *Preschool for All* system that:

- Utilizes existing local child care and development planning resources to ensure an appropriate plan that meets local needs (i.e. data/needs, advisory body, etc.).
- Builds on the strengths of the existing child care and development system.
- Utilizes a diverse delivery system.
- Meets the needs of and is accessible to all families including children with special needs.
- Integrates developmentally appropriate social, emotional, and physical standards for children.
- Aligns its quality criteria with the quality criteria of existing programs (i.e. NAEYC Accreditation, NAFCC Accreditation, Title V standards, etc.).
- Provides adequate resources for full utilization (i.e. provides funding for the actual cost of high quality services).
- Is integrated into child care infrastructure for children 0-3 and school-age.
- Includes a quality consumer education outreach program.

Proposition 82 Overview

Children's advocate Rob Reiner, and a broad-based coalition of business, labor and education leaders, filed Proposition 82 for the June 2006 ballot aiming to provide a high-quality, voluntary preschool education for every four year old child in California. The Act funds part-day, part-year preschool services through a 1.7 percent additional tax on taxable income over \$800,000 for couples filing jointly and income over \$400,000 for individuals. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction would provide oversight at the state level, and local administration would occur through the County Office of Education (COE). COEs would contract with local providers to meet certain educational standards and deliver preschool services. Additional background information and noted research is available online at the following websites: www.iom.edu/CMS, www.rand.org, www.fpg.unc.edu/nccd/.