



CONTRA COSTA CHILDREN'S LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Pleasant Hill Community Center

June 21, 2023



Children's Leadership Council

Agenda: June 21, 2023

- 1:30** Welcome and Our Goals
Why Engaging Matters
- 1:55** Panel Discussion: Collaboration Makes a Difference
Overview of Collaborative Projects and Expo
Group Reflections
- 4:00** Affinity Group Breakout Sessions
Appreciation
Closing Remarks and Call to Action
- 5:00** Close

Panel

Moderator

Erika Jessen, Contra Costa Health

Panelists

Wanda Davis, First 5 Contra Costa

Kathy Marsh, Employment & Human Services Dept.

Sefanit Mekuria, Contra Costa Health

Themes

- ★ Connect
- ★ Learn
- ★ Engage

Featured Projects

- 1 Perinatal Equity Initiative/
Deliver Birth Justice
- 2 Community Oral Health Program
- 3 Black Infant Health
- 4 Guaranteed Income for Child Care Teachers
- 5 Family Economic Security Partnership
- 6 Trauma-Informed Practices
- 7 Quality Early Learning
- 8 Resource Parents for Foster Youth
- 9 Workforce Services for Youth



The Contra Costa Children's Leadership Council gathered in person for the first time since the COVID pandemic restricted our ability to be together. The themes for the convening are **CONNECT, LEARN and ENGAGE.**



WELCOME !

TODAY: CONNECT
LEARN
ENGAGE

energizer



in a group of 4-
raise your fist w/ 1-2-3 or 4
fingers up-

make a loud noise if your
group's fingers = 11

polling

- 1 Why did you come today?
- 2 Most pressing need for children/families in our county?



Ruth Fernandez
ED- First 5 Contra Costa



Supervisor Andersen-Why Engaging Matters
The power of engaging & getting involved.
We WANT to hear from constituents.

Children's Leadership Council (CLC)
began in 2019-to reduce
disparities
includes - First 5 CC
Employment: Human Svcs
Health Services
CC office of Ed.
+ philanthropy, service providers,
Supervisors



create
a BIG
tent!

show up, share, tell us what
you think!

how I
became
involved

At 31- I put aside my career to
devote myself to my family
I volunteered in Morgan Hill - and
after being in meetings - thought -
I should be on the City Council -
I got appointed - and it was so
fulfilling - making policy - and
just reacting

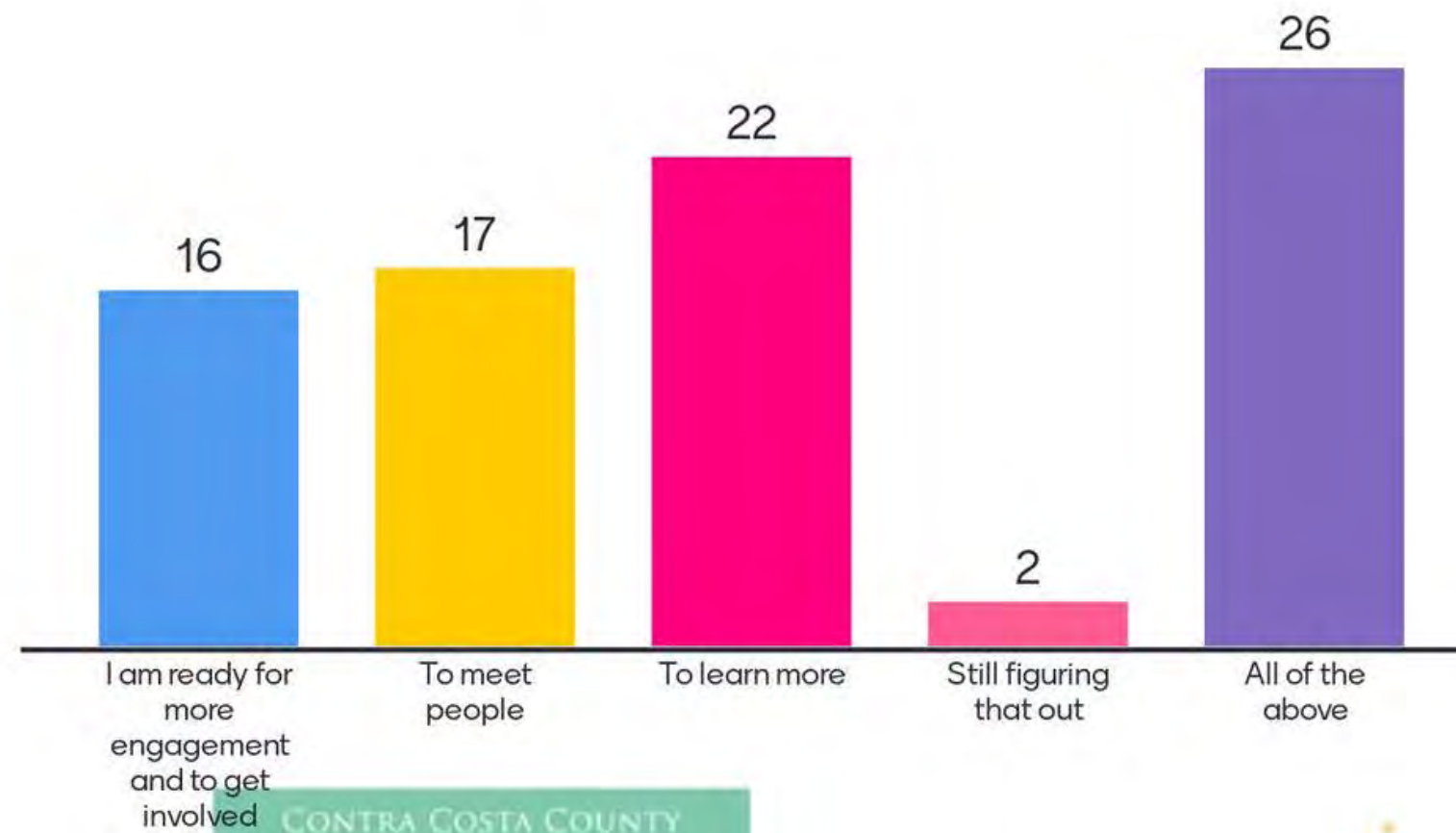
GOALS: Improve outcomes for children
strengthen our community of service
providers
Better coordinated services

12/23: distributed a report highlighting disparities - w/ an action plan

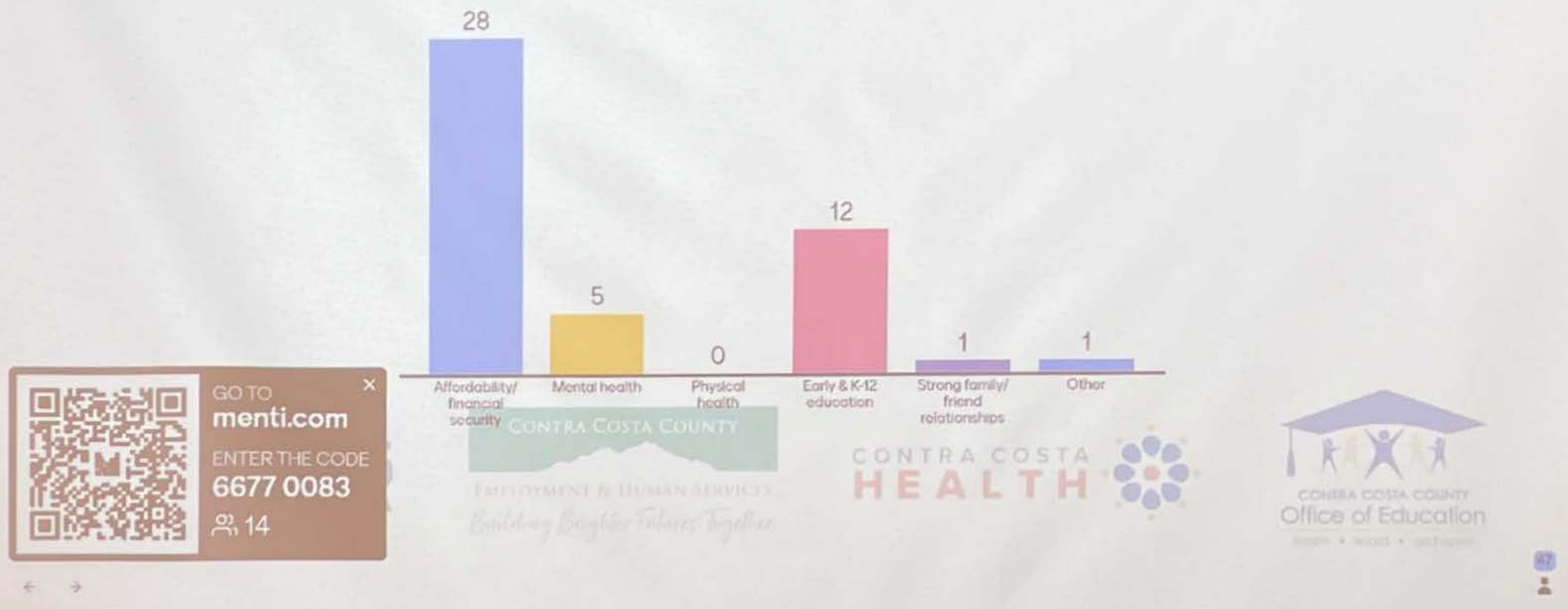
You have the opportunity
to be part of the solution
for our children!

Ruth Fernandez, Executive Director of First 5, welcomed everyone and opened with an energizer to encourage **CONNECTING** with one another. She gave a brief history of the Children's Leadership Council and reiterated the goal of improving outcomes for children. Supervisor Andersen was introduced and she also welcomed everyone and talked about the importance of **ENGAGING**.

Why did you come today?



What do you see as the most pressing need for children/families in our county?



Before Supervisor Andersen spoke to the group, we took a second poll, asking participants to respond to "What do you see as the most pressing need for children/families in our County?" The number one need was Affordability/Financial Security.

PANEL DISCUSSION: How Collaboration Makes a Difference

MODERATOR: Erika Jenssen

PANELISTS: Kathy Marsh • Sefanit Merkuria • Wanda Davis



Can you share an experience from your work where you've seen the benefits of that extra effort needed for a collaborative approach really pay off?



Why do you think it is even more important than in other fields that we work collaboratively when we are focused on children and families

There is the expectation that people know what to do but it's intimidating & confusing to navigate systems. We have to look at families as a unit - it's our job to work together to help access services and navigate through crises



● Collaboration creates energy to do better

Early Intervention Coalition - took info out on the road to educate & advocate for an intervention forum - our work resulted in funding from an MTSA grant

● Child Welfare requires collaboration - we want to get to prevention when working with children and families

ex: Child Youth Prevention Council - we go into the field and to CYPC and help children remain w/ families - we rely on collaboration to keep children in communities

● Children grow & thrive in community - think about what is most impactful - and strive for that - bring people together to figure out what's needed. We can't do it alone to make a wonderful WHOLE! Started a pilot w/ La Clinica and 2-1-1 to create seamless efficient pathways for what was important to families

● We have to meet children where they're at at schools we collaborate w/ districts, medical clinics (ex: vaccines) Hold webinars - to help us understand parents' questions and give them information

● Collaboration between probation and social services is needed to meet the needs of children - that is our main priority

Erika Jenssen moderated a panel of health leaders in Contra Costa to discuss the importance of **COLLABORATION**. Panelists were Kathy Marsh (Children and Family Services Bureau Director; Sefanit Mekuria (Medical Director, Contra Costa Dept. of Public Health; and Wanda Davis (Early Intervention Program Officer, First 5 CC). They shared (1) an experience where they have seen the benefits of a collaborative approach and (2) why it is more important than in other fields that we work collaboratively.

OVERVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS



Continuing with the theme of **COLLABORATION**, we heard from representatives from several projects with collaborative projects currently underway. We heard brief overviews of the projects, followed by an expo where participants had the opportunity to visit the project exhibits as a way to **ENGAGE and LEARN** with our project representatives.

COLLABORATIVE PROJECT EXHIBITORS

- Perinatal Equity Initiative/Deliver Birth Justice
- Community Oral Health Program
- Black Infant Health
- Guaranteed Income for Child Care Workers
- Family Economic Security Partnership
- Network for Care
- Quality Early Learning
- Resource Parents for Foster Youth
- Workforce Services for Youth







What one word describes how you are feeling after the expo?

44 answers



GO TO
menti.com

ENTER THE CODE
6677 0083

50



After the expo, people responded to the question, "What one word describes how you are feeling after the expo?"

The next activity provided another opportunity for further **ENGAGEMENT** with colleagues. We broke into four affinity groups: Young Children, School Age Children, Youth and Families.

Groups discussed:

- (1) What is the most useful thing you learned today about Young Children, School Age Children, Youth or Families?
- (2) What do you want to learn more about?
- (3) Other reflections

Notes from each group are on the next four pages.

YOUNG CHILDREN

★ What is the most useful thing you learned today?

- so many agencies work together and collaborate
- Drive for fair wages for early childcare workers/teachers
- recognizing we work in silos. reinforce the need to connect
- Black Infant Health - didn't know there were programs to help
- Youth Summit
- Youth Workforce opportunities
- stages 1:2 for cal works
- Everyone fighting for the same thing

★ What do you want to learn more about?

- dental health for children
 - quarantined income for families
 - Oral health program - many dentists don't take Medi-cal - how to connect
 - how to connect to academics - not just services/support ex: foster care children are labeled - learn how to nurture and connect to services to succeed academically
 - how to coordinate w/ District programs for all children
 - Universal preschool
 - how to stay competitive in our County
 - Day care for children w/ special needs + support
 - Family care providers are isolated + need more collaboration and information - we get missed - feel like step children of the childcare system
- IDEA: Child Network of Care

- learn more about services outside systems (community programs)

Roof Bancroft Program provide busing - WHERE DO WE FIT

bilingual no charge

YMCA of the East Bay - apprenticeship program - expanding to Los Medanos looking for internship placements for youth 3 levels: no degree comm. college BA

Would be great to do this again in other parts of the county!

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

1 What is the most useful thing you learned today?

Health Needs that do not get addressed

- Schools as a resource
 - * Like COTP
 - * Dental & Medical Services
- Childcare / Transportation to / from School
- Make connections to comprehensively support children
 - Prenatal support for parents also w/ school age kids

2 What would you like to learn more about?

- Lack of Diversity of teachers to meet the needs of children in the Classroom
- Increase work force - teachers / staff
 - * Clinicians in Schools
 - Mental health
 - Physical health

✓ Different Learning Models

- Access to mental health intervention status
 - * privacy access

• Financial Crisis

- * Not enough funding / budget cuts
- * Do more w/ less - Families asked to fund raise
- * How do we counter act cuts to vital services
- * Equity issue for areas where fundraising may not be feasible
- * How do we get back to leveraging HS age interns or other staff / volunteers to bring back free programs?
 - would allow HS youth to develop skills & acquire school credit.

✓ Allowing Parents / volunteers to support teachers in the Classroom

- * Not ~~allowed~~ allowed during COVID
- * Reduce teacher stress
- * Allow individual needs to be met / Learning style
- * Children exposure to various cultures
- * Having HS students receive credit and gain skills while serving as classroom or clinical aides to support teachers & clinicians
 - HS students inspired to pursue careers in Ed.

✓ Having students participate in intergenerational projects

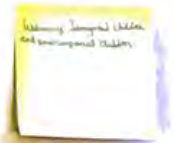
- Bring back trade programs, shop, home Economics classes = skills training

✓ Need to address to WHOLE Child

- * Reduce Families opting out of traditional public School

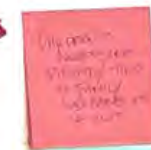
Issues

- School shootings / safety concerns



Ways to reduce Issues:

- Schools as resources to meet many needs
 - * Mental & Physical health
 - * Nutrition
 - * Family Services



YOUTH

most useful thing you learned?

- Collaborating
- using different resources
- vast # of resources
- Measure X Youth Summits
- Measure X Youth Centers for East + Central County

What do you want to know more about?

- youth voice → what do they want
outreach strategies
- best practices for keeping people engaged
- Success Stories - challenges faced + impact
- teen perspective of early childhood (generational perspective)

Other reflections -

- discovering different career pathways
- definition of "youth" differs from program to program

FAMILIES

★ Most Useful

- being open
- power of collaboration
 - ✓ in #s
 - ✓ in-person
- importance of family units (all families)
- culturally sensitive
- imp. of serving whole family vs. indiv. child
 - ↳ "takes a village"
- # of resources available
- coordinated system needed (for collaboration)
 - ↳ platform

★ Actions & Suggestions

- 1 platform needed to encourage collaboration (for both providers & agencies)
- 2 looking outside of the box
- 3 "~~Aunt Bertha~~" / Find Connect
 - ↳ navigation support w/ feedback loop
 - accountability components
 - consumer ability to escalate
 - follow-through/advocacy from beginning to end
 - commitment to respond

BREAKOUT GROUP REPORT OUT

• Young Children

Excitement!

connecting w/ programs
getting together in person
learning from one another
doing this again!

• Youth

collaboration using different
resources

how to connect w/ youth
voice

Best practices to keep youth
engaged

Success stories

Teen perspective around childhood

Career pathways

Definition of youth by program

• School Age Children

Health needs not addressed
Using schools as resources
Childcare - scarcity

Address scarcity
Workforce - increase teachers,
staff

Mental health - lack of
services/intervention

Not enough funding
Bring back trade programs

• Families

Power of collaboration, numbers

Being together

Being sensitive to all types
of families

Coming together like this
highlights what is available

Power of collaboration
look outside the box

New connections



We're not alone
in this work.
and there's lots
we can do!

CLOSING

★ Sup. Carlson

Thank you for your work and for being here - and the impact my childhood has had on my life. This work is all about partnerships - it's essential to all my work - the work you do has direct impact

★ Sup Gioia

Sup. Carlson gets it! I am always energized in groups like this - you are doing the work. This needs to be a system w/ partnerships. We are at a time in our country where we need to work collectively

★ Anna Roth

The moral test of government is how that government treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the elderly; and those who are in shadows of life, the sick, the needy, and the handicapped. - Hubert Humphrey

It's the moral test for all of us children are suffering and it's the moral test for all of us. I am grateful and inspired by all the programs here



We are in a big tent together

We have so much disparity - we have to recognize it, talk about it before we can do anything about it. You are working to close our County's gaps. Thank you!



★ Marla Stuart

The most important thing we can do is take care of our children so there is a future!

Thank you to all the programs here today

We are on the trajectory to make systemic change where every child! family thrives! achieves their goals

Closing words of gratitude and inspiration were shared by Supervisor Carlson; Supervisor Gioia; Anna Roth, CEO Contra Costa County Health; and Marla Stuart, Contra Costa County Director of Employment and Human Services