

# **STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR SERVICES TO CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES IN THE CITY OF IRVINE**

**September 2003  
Children and Family Futures  
Irvine, California**

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**We must remember "...the two great obligations or standards, the two great tests that apply to every tribe and culture on earth, the two values by which any human society must be judged... without which human community is corrupt or useless, namely, *caring for the young ones and honoring the wisdom of the old ones*... The tribe or community or nation that fails at either of these missions brings woe and destruction on itself."**

Remarks by The Poet Laureate of the United States, Robert Pinsky, at the 1999 Stanford University commencement.

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### **Acknowledgements**

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Major Findings**

1. Most children and youth in Irvine are doing very well, served by a multitude of agencies and an extensive infrastructure for recreation and community services, and growing up in families that are financially secure.
2. The city provides a variety of services to families in need, both directly and through contracts and grants to local organizations. For the most part, these services emphasize counseling, referral and information, rather than links to family income support for lower-income working families.
3. Despite its financial challenges, the Irvine Unified School District does an exceptional job of educating most of its students, with an expectation of college attendance for a sizable majority. Extracurricular activities enrich education for many students, and special education services provide help for a significant number of students with special needs. The District's "second-chance" schools are exemplary and provide support to students who would not otherwise benefit from high school education. However, for approximately 5-10% of all students, graduation from high school is either not achieved or not adequate to connect them with employment that provides a decent wage.
4. The city's affordable housing programs provide subsidized housing to more than 3000 families and seniors.
5. Children and youth are a relatively stable segment of the city's total population, and are even declining as a percentage of some neighborhoods as their populations age. But the total number of children and youth is increasing; from 1990 to 2000, children under 18 declined as a percentage of total population from 24.4% to 22.4%, while the totals rose from 26,901 to 32,010. With population growth to a total of 164,900 in 2002 (compared to the Census 2000 population of 143,072), the total population 0-18 will soon approach 40,000.
6. City programs measure their effectiveness and impact primarily by counting the number of people they serve, rather than the results of their services. At the community-wide level, there is no consensus set of annual indicators of progress for children and families that can provide measures over time of positive or negative trends. As a result, youth crime patterns and academic test scores are the primary available indicators of the well-being of children and youth. Current county agency caseload information and trend lines are not compiled by the City for programs such as child abuse, welfare, or food stamps.

7. A wide array of prevention programs is aimed at reducing risky behavior, including violence, dropping out of school, tobacco, alcohol and drug use, and sexual activity. For the most part, however, these programs measure their effectiveness by the number of youth they contact, not changes in youth behavior. There are no consensus measures of the effectiveness of prevention programs, and thus it is not possible in the current climate of fiscal constraints to shift resources from the least effective to the most effective prevention programs.

### *Positive Results and Assets*

- A large majority of Irvine students go on to college
- Most Irvine students test well above their peers in the county and state
- Delinquency among Irvine youth is below comparable figures for other communities of Irvine's size
- A wide menu of community services and a rich array of facilities exists
- Active sports organizations and volunteers who staff them are abundant, with thousands of children and youth participating
- Intergenerational programs on some occasions combine youth with older members of the community
- An existing focus on early childhood programs and child care exists through the City and School District's own child care programs and the IUSD School Readiness Program
- An active Prevention Coalition operates that includes dozens of agencies in a multitude of prevention efforts
- Family services agencies serve families needing shelter and family support
- Strong city-school cooperative efforts include public safety, recreation, and community services
- Active youth involvement is visible in programs in the City
- Diversity and human relations programs in the city's schools celebrate the wealth of ethnic, cultural, and religious traditions
- Active religious congregations are involved in the life of the community and provide both religious and secular education to hundreds of youth in the city

### *Problems and Areas of Concern*

- 2,100 children live under the poverty line, and another 2,400 live in low-income families; 1,549 are eligible for free and reduced lunches in the school system; 492 are in families enrolled in CalWORKs, and an estimated 1,000 children and youth are receiving Medi-Cal or Healthy Families health coverage, based on statewide and County estimates
- When the cost of housing in Irvine is factored in, the percentage of lower-income families rises significantly
- Of the 18,500 households with children, 2,900 are single-parent families

- 973 youth were arrested in Irvine in 2002; 623 of them were Irvine residents. A significant minority of older youth (estimated at more than 1,000 of the approximately 8,000 high-school aged youth) has had some contact with the Police Department in the form of informal warnings rather than arrests.
- 26% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 17% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders have used alcohol within the past 30 days (in a 2001-2002 survey); this can be projected to approximately 2000 high school aged youth (out of a total of 8000) using an illegal drug—alcohol
- A recent survey of parents and school staff who work with youth revealed high percentages of respondents who believe that underage drinking is “prevalent” in Irvine and that use of alcohol is increasing among Irvine youth
- Even higher percentages of high school youth surveyed in January 2003 said they thought usage of alcohol and other drugs was increasing, with three out of four youth saying underage drinking is prevalent in Irvine
- 20% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 13% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders report being in a physical fight at school
- The four year-trend line in domestic violence reports has risen from 273 cases in 1999 to 290 cases in 2002 (increases in DV reports, however, can sometimes involve changes in reporting and enforcement, not necessarily changes in incidence)
- A significant portion of the workers in Irvine who have families are paid at or near minimum wage levels, based on state and regional wage and employment data
- Of the 7,700 households with an over-65 resident, 600 of them were below the poverty level

## **Key policy and organizational issues and options for action**

Several policy and organizational choices can be framed as potential decisions as of mid-2003:

1. Decisions about the range of family support, recreation, health, and self-sufficiency activities to be pursued in the Great Park, and the decision to create a distinct Master Plan for Children and Family Services and Facilities as part of the Great Park planning effort.
2. The choice to respond with more effective measures to the underage drinking problem in the City
3. A decision that heads of families who are city residents, city workers and contract workers, and those who work in the city but do not live here should be provided by the City and its employers with the fullest possible information on income support programs that can assist them to provide their families with a decent level of income and financial security.
4. The opportunity to expand community service options for young and old in an intergenerational approach to community service at a new scale

5. Decisions about the future of affordable housing, framed in a way that addresses explicitly the counter-forces of new land availability and the value of increasing the resident worker population, contrasted with increasing housing prices and rental costs.
6. Decisions about assessment of prevention programs sponsored by the City that could lead to shifting funding from the least effective to the most effective programs, combined with decisions about the balance between universal and targeted programs that are aimed at a smaller number of youth involved in behavior that is risky for them and the community.
7. Decisions about the extent to which the School District is able to better target the students who are entering and leaving the school system without the tools needed for success.

### **Critical Organizational Choices Facing the City**

Within the City government, four major changes are proposed:

1. An ongoing strategic planning process that encompasses all programs affecting children and families, enlisting youth, parents, and other stakeholders throughout and beyond the community
2. An annual indicators report on the conditions of children and families
3. An annual summary of the budget's total effects on children and families
4. An annual prevention assessment that summarizes the impact of all prevention programs—this overlaps with the final policy choice above, but without the organizational change, the policy choice cannot be framed

As a follow-up to the submission of this planning framework, it is also proposed that a new phase of youth participation be initiated, involving citywide review of this plan by youth and youth organizations.

## Section 1: Introduction

### The Value of a Strategic Plan

Strategic planning is a widely used method of assessing strengths and problems as a basis for future decisions in local governments, school districts, nonprofit agencies, private firms, and the military. There are many different forms of strategic planning, but most have several ingredients in common:

- An assessment of what is—the strengths, assets, problems, and external factors affecting the directions taken by a unit of government or other agency;
- An assessment of current programs and policies;
- A compilation of available data summarizing important trend lines in population, needs, and positive factors relevant to a city’s population;
- An assessment of external factors likely to affect decisions and needs in the local area; and
- A review of the most important decisions facing the governmental unit or firms involved, with an array of options and alternatives to be considered, and a framework for establishing priorities.

A strategic plan for a city can guide budgets, staffing allocations, redirection of program resources toward the most effective programs, and partnerships with a wide variety of networks and allies, including parents, residents of the city, private organizations, other levels of government, schools, the local business community, developers, and nonprofit agencies operating in the city. As stated in the city’s own Strategic Business Plan,

The Strategic Business Plan was created in 1994 as a way to help the City Council assess the effect of today’s decisions on the City’s future quality of life. As a blueprint for the City’s future, the Strategic Business Plan defines the City Council’s goals and evaluates the city’s financial capacity to achieve them. The strategic goals *set priorities* for city operations and the annual budget... When funds are not available to fund everything, then *priority services*, as defined in the Strategic Business Plan, are funded first. [Emphasis added]

So *priorities for funding* are a major product that emerges from an effective strategic plan. To start with, however, there must be a clear picture of what *current* priorities already are. That is the underlying logic of a children and family budget, as an attempt to identify the major costs in the city budget that are most closely associated with results for children and families.

Irvine has made three prior efforts in the past decade to develop some of the ingredients of a strategic plan for children and families:

1. In 1992, in response to a shooting at Stonecreek Plaza, the City and the School Board convened a Safe Community Task Force, which presented its report in May 1993.

2. In 1996, the City adopted a Child and Youth Policy, building upon an earlier 1987 child care policy statement.
3. The Strategic Business Plan of the City, which has been published annually since 1994, includes references to children and youth under the heading of ensuring a “safe and secure community”, “prevention of crime” and “strategies to prevent disorder.”

Each of these prior efforts and products has established some important benchmarks and frameworks for addressing issues affecting children, youth, and families. In addition to these three formal reports, the ongoing work of the Youth Action Teams as they address issues affecting youth throughout the City is directly relevant to the task of strategic planning. The needs and aspirations of the city’s nearly 40,000 children and youth have received considerable attention in recent years, primarily in program-related initiatives and efforts to expand youth participation.

A number of other cities, some working on their own and some in conjunction with the National League of Cities’ Institute for Youth, Education, and Families, have developed policy statements and strategic plans for children and youth. These include Santa Fe, Thousand Oaks, Boston, Hampton, Virginia, and Multnomah County, (Portland) Oregon. The NLC has also produced some of the most useful documentation of local governments’ roles toward children and families. In 1989, several hundred cities and towns responded to a survey about the needs of children and families, and in 1995, 780 cities responded to an updated version of the survey, which was summarized in the 1996 NLC report *Critical Needs, Critical Choices*. A set of targeted telephone interviews in 1999 was the basis for a new report issued the following year by the Institute, *City Voices, Children’s Needs: New Ways of Taking Action*. Conferences have been held every two years since 1993 on the theme of “Your City’s Families,” with an emphasis upon model programs and exchange of ideas among city governments.

Within California, in 1995, the League of California Cities developed a *Youth Development Planning Guide* that called for cities to develop explicit youth development plans that would make focusing on “children, youth, and families a local and statewide policy.”

### *The Unique Status of Irvine*

There are very few communities in California that are anything like Irvine. Of cities over 100,000, only Thousand Oaks and Sunnyvale have family and household incomes close to Irvine’s, at more than \$85,000 in median family income in 1999. As Irvine moves toward the level of 200,000 residents, and as it moves into active planning and implementation of the re-use of the El Toro Air Base, its unique status becomes more and more difficult to compare with other cities. So the capacity to learn from other communities’ policy models is limited, and cannot easily be translated, either from larger communities with different ranges of socio-economic status or smaller communities with incomes as high or higher.

The City is even more unique in its role as an economic magnet as well as a residential area. The City's business plan estimates projected population and also the total daily non-residential population—people coming to Irvine to work, shop, entertain themselves, or go to school. The daily *nonresidential* population is estimated at 220,000 as of 2002, rising to 250,000 in 2010. Ranked the 24<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state as of January 2003, Irvine is estimated by the state to include 164,900 residents.

Far more than most of its counterparts, Irvine is a city that has adopted active planning approaches. It is a *planned community*, which means that its orderly growth and the guiding principles underlying that growth have been negotiated over time by developers, notably the Irvine Company, and the city government. But it is also a city that has used its own business planning system and its budget to develop and implement policy.

In one sense, children and family policy has been at the center of this planning, though in an implicit way: Irvine seeks to be a desirable place for families to live and for children to grow up. Its developers' advertisements feature a family involved in recreation, underscoring the major role played by planning for parks and other recreation facilities and services. The city website features parks, community events, and a wide menu of community services that have a children and family orientation, including services for older residents.

But explicit family policy—especially for families that may need help, is less prominent. At times, as noted by some of our interviewees, an inevitable tension exists between positive messages about the community, which are designed to add to its commercial and residential appeal, and acknowledging that some residents have needs that require help from local public and private agencies. Irvine deserves credit for all that it has done to widen its benefits to its own residents and residents of other parts of its region. But a challenge remains in achieving a proper balance between celebrating what is good and responding to what is not so good for some residents and workers in Irvine.

### *The Elements of the Strategic Plan*

Building on prior efforts in Irvine and these national counterparts, this strategic plan has been developed with five major phases:

1. Data collection and review of City, county, and school district materials
2. Analysis of the city budget
3. Development of a draft framework for an annual report on indicators of children and family well-being
4. Review of external events and forces likely to affect services to children and families in Irvine
5. Interviews with key stakeholders familiar with children and family programs in Irvine

## *The Charge to Children and Family Futures*

Children and Family Futures, a nonprofit firm based in Irvine, was chosen by the City Council at its January 28, 2003 meeting, to develop a strategic plan. CFF staff had presented testimony to the June 2002 hearing on child and elder poverty in Irvine, and recommended development of such a plan. The Council's support began the formal development of this plan.

With the submission of this report, Children and Family Futures is not presuming to have developed a strategic plan by itself. The development of a strategic plan, such as the strategic business plan of the city, must be carried out with oversight from the city's policy leaders and active day-to-day involvement of the staff of the city agencies, not solely by an outside organization. This document is intended to provide a template for decisions and an ongoing strategic planning process that would include decisions made by the Council, city staff, other agencies, and the community as a whole.

### **External Forces and Events affecting CYF Issues**

A strategic plan needs to consider its context, including the political, economic, and other events and forces that affect the choices to be made in the plan. There are at least seven critical elements that provide the environment for this plan:

1. *State and federal budget climate*  
The sizable deficits facing both state and federal government in 2003 and well beyond are an unavoidable factor in considering the external resources that will be available to Irvine and all cities in California. While less dependent upon federal funding than many cities, Irvine has received several federal grants for its prevention programs.  
  
State funding is more critical, and the City's agricultural status at the time several critical formulas were set for state aid for education is a major fiscal handicap for Irvine. The budget deficit means budget cuts appear possible beyond those already made.
2. *The effects of regional and national economic downturn on families*  
Layoffs have affected Orange County less than other regions of California, but lower-income families have been affected by increasing unemployment. The county's overall unemployment rate rose to 3.8% in March 2003, compared with 6.6% statewide and 6% nationally.
3. *Regional uses of the Great Park*  
Since the politics of the El Toro reuse decisions have been framed in regional terms, with countywide votes and discussions of regional benefits from the Great Park, the planning for the Park includes consideration of several

features that would affect children and families outside Irvine as well as residents.

4. *Increasing percentage of non-resident workers in Irvine*  
As the Spectrum development and other employment areas in Irvine expand, an increasing number of workers in Irvine are lower-income service workers required for food service, cleaning, health care, maintenance, and other service industries.
5. *Housing affordability likely to worsen*  
As housing and rental prices continue to rise in Orange County, the City's programs to expand affordable housing in Irvine may not be able to keep pace with the increases in market rates.
6. *Potential for community service expansion*  
Both youth and seniors provide a potential recruitment base for a variety of community service activities that represent significant potential for an expansion of voluntary staffing of children, youth, and family services. Some school districts have made community service a mandatory graduation requirement, while college admissions place considerably more emphasis upon such activities than was true twenty years ago.
7. *An increasing emphasis upon quality education measured by standardized tests*  
State testing mandates, financial incentives for schools to improve their academic ratings, the ease of defining real estate values based on schools' average test scores available on the Internet and the federal Leave No Child Behind legislation have all resulted in great emphasis being placed upon California school districts' relative scores on standardized tests. This creates an emphasis upon testing and the achievement levels of those students who may lower average test scores. Some districts in Orange County have sought to eliminate all or most programs that use school time for non-academic activities, and school social workers, psychologists, and counselors have either been terminated or assigned caseloads so great that only students with serious needs can be counseled in depth.

### *The Focus of a Strategic Plan*

It is possible to frame the strategic issues involving children and families in three widening circles:

1. Within the first circle are the issues that relate directly to children and family programs, such as child care, youth development, and family support programs;

2. The second circle includes those issues that affect children and families, but are usually not labeled as such: law enforcement, public works and facilities planning; and
3. The furthest circle of issues are those that set the context for the other two: state and federal tax policy, state laws concerning affordable housing, and private market decisions about land use—each of which affects family incomes in Irvine, but which are rarely framed as family policy.

A second framework for children and family policy is the distinction among

1. Families now living in Irvine
2. Families whose working parents live outside Irvine but work within the city, and
3. Families who do not live in Irvine and who work elsewhere but may use city facilities.

This strategic planning framework will address all six of these levels of policy.

## **Snapshots: Beyond the Numbers**

**For those who have not spent a great deal of time in Irvine or around its facilities and programs for children and youth, it may be difficult to convey how superb those facilities and programs can be. On any given weekend day, thousands of children, youth, and parents are using the city's parks and recreational facilities for organized sports or just being together as a family. Some of the vignettes that follow may help make this clearer:**

*Hundreds of youth and parents watching and competing in the 16<sup>th</sup> annual Irvine Junior Games, with proceeds devoted to the Irvine Children's Fund, used for child care scholarships and program upgrading.*

*Hundreds of parents and their children in Little League and soccer games, under the lights at night on broad fields with scoreboards and new grass, with the aroma of hot dogs and hamburgers wafting out over the crowd from the snack bar, representing thousands of hours of donated parental labor for fundraising.*

*Children filing into summer art camp, participating in drama, ceramics, drawing, painting and a host of other artistic endeavors. Some of the displayed art which has been created by children reveals extraordinary talent; all reveals enthusiasm about art.*

*Open house at child care centers with anxious parents of younger children inspecting all the equipment, talking with earnest young teachers, and asking how much emphasis is placed on reading and arithmetic.*

**Programmed time for Irvine children and youth can be extensive, involving thousands more of them in many different activities:**

*Youth from each of the city's five high schools gathered at City Hall, presenting reports on attitudes among their peers to the City Council.*

*Part-time recreation leaders chosen from among Irvine's older teens leading younger children in summer sports and arts activities.*

*School resource officers recruited from the Police Department talking easily with youth at the five high schools, knowing many of them by name, watching for problems, available for one-on-one conversations when students want them.*

**There are also other activities available to children and youth, less about formal recreation and more about "what kids do." These vignettes reveal further dimensions of life for Irvine's children and youth.**

*Younger teens congregating around a cyber-cafe, with some 11-year-olds who ride their bikes to the cafe and stay playing computer games until the place closes.*

*Dozens of youth filing into the city's several tutoring academies after school and on weekends, more intensively around SAT test time, but staying busy throughout the year.*

*The parking lots at the five high schools in mid-morning, full of late-model cars, creating a caste system between those who drive and those who don't, with some students getting their cars before they get their licenses.*

*Youth hanging out in front of the pizza places after a football game, moving in and out of their cars.*

*A graduating senior at a high school who lost her mother this year, and a family so poor the staff took up a collection to provide a gravestone for this girl's mother.*

*A boy from another high school who committed suicide this year -- no one knew why -- his sister found him upstairs in his house with a gunshot wound to his head.*

*Two parents gather with the "IEP team" at their son's school to review his progress, having seen his latest test scores and beginning to realize the problems he may have passing the high school exit exam.*

## Section 2: Overview of Data Collection

Information on the conditions of children, youth, and families in Irvine is available from several sources:

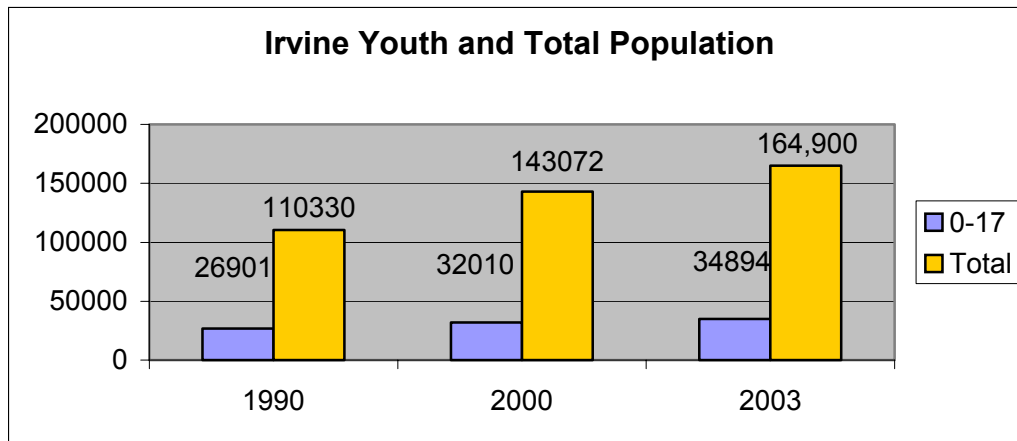
1. City service and demographic information
2. School district information
3. County data on services provided to Irvine residents
4. Census 2000 data
5. Special surveys and studies (such as the Irvine Prevention Council's survey of substance abuse problems and regional labor force data surveys)
6. Data collected by other public and private agencies that provide services in Irvine

It was initially proposed that a web-based survey of city residents and youth be a part of this assessment, but city staff pointed out that such a survey might be duplicative of a recent study of city facilities and a pending study by Chapman University.

### What we know about

- Age segments of the population
- Poverty
- Child care and after-school care needs
- Student academic performance
- Family structure
- Diversity
- Housing affordability
- Youth behavior: arrests, use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

### Age Segments



From 1990 to 2000, Irvine became a somewhat older city, with its population under 18 decreasing from 24.4% to 22.4%, although the total of 32,010 children under 18 represents a 5,000 *increase* in children and youth. Estimates of growth since the 2000

Census suggest that there are nearly 40,000 children and youth 0-18 living in Irvine today. The state currently (January 2003) lists 164,900 as the 2002 population, compared to the 143,072 Census 2000 population; if the percentage increase of children and youth in the population increase were proportionate to the 15.2% increase from the 2000 population, that would add 4,884 children in the past two years.

The older population of Irvine increased from 5.8% of the total in 1990 to 7.2% in 2000, representing a total of 10,281 residents 65 and older. The percentage of households in which one or more residents received Social Security rose from 10.7% in 1990 to 13.4% in 2000. Those receiving retirement income rose from 7.5% in 1990 to 10.1% in 2000.

### *Poverty*

Poverty in Irvine, as discussed in a forum on Child and Elder Poverty held in June 2002, is dispersed, less visible than in most parts of Orange County, and relative to the cost of living. A total of 2,009 children (6.1%, compared with the county-wide figure of 16.7%) under 18 live under the poverty line, and another 2,400 live in low-income families. 1549 are eligible for free and reduced lunches in the school system; 492 are in families enrolled in CalWORKs, and an estimated 1000 children and youth are receiving Medi-Cal or Healthy Families health coverage, based on statewide and County estimates. The percentage of students enrolled in free or reduced lunch programs (6.3%) is the lowest of all school districts in the County. Of the 18,500 households with children in 2000, 2,900 of them were single-parent families.

When the cost of housing in Irvine is factored in, the percentage of lower-income families rises significantly. Dr Edward Castronova of Cal State Fullerton has calculated that the countywide percentage of children in poverty would increase from 16.7% to 31.9% if relative poverty were calculated using cost of living and housing costs in the county. If this calculation were applied to Irvine, an estimated 2,000 additional children would be added to the poverty segment of the population, bringing the total to over 4,000 children in poverty or near-poverty when taking the cost of living and housing into account.

A further adjustment in poverty rates, however, is needed to reflect the effects of family support and income support programs available to lower income working parents. The “lifting effect” of these programs that raise some families above the poverty levels is discussed further in Section 4.

Significant portions of the workers in Irvine who have families are paid at or near minimum wage levels, based on available state and regional data on jobs and wages in Irvine. These include service workers in restaurants and fast-food retail outlets, landscape workers and gardeners, entry-level hospital and health workers, janitors and cleaning staff in the city’s nearly 11,000 businesses, including office buildings, colleges, and universities, and domestic workers in homes who perform both housekeeping and child care duties. Few of these workers live in Irvine; a significant number commute from other parts of Orange County or from the Inland Empire.

A total of 71,930 workers were included in the Irvine resident labor force as of April 2003. A total of 168,000 workers are estimated by the City to hold jobs located in Irvine, indicating that while the city has 5.6% of County population and 4.7% of its workers, it has over 12% of the jobs located in Orange County.

### *Family Structure and Income*

Of the 19,267 households with children in 2000, 1,110 (5.8%) lived below the poverty line. Irvine had a total of 3,072 female-headed families with children; 576 of these (18.8%) lived below poverty. A total of 2,745 families lived below 150% of the poverty level; 3,505 lived below 185% of the poverty level, with 2,299 of those under 185% with children.

A total of 1,927 grandparents lived in households with one or more children under 18; 485 of these grandparents were the primary caretakers for their grandchildren.

### *Child Care and Afterschool Needs*

A total of 24 accredited child care centers serve Irvine, out of a total of 69 centers. An accredited center has to meet standards set by national organizations that include play space, facilities, and training of its staff and director. There are currently 3,772 licensed infant/toddler/preschool spaces in Irvine's center-based programs, 118 of them in Head Start programs operated by the School District. Licensed spaces refer to the total number of spaces licensed at each facility by the California Department of Social Services. Average tuition rates, based on the City's survey in 2002-2003, range from \$211/week for infant care to \$174/week for 3-5 year olds.

An additional unknown number of children are served in over 175 licensed family child care homes in Irvine, and an unknown number of children are served in programs that are not licensed and in informal arrangements between neighbors and relatives. The 2000 Census indicated that there were 9,819 children aged 0-5 in Irvine, if this is updated by a proportionate increase based on the citywide population increase, the total in 2003 is approximately 11,292.

The 2000 Census found that there are 4,947 "stay-home" parents (i.e. two-parent families in which one parent does not work) with children under five, compared with 4,778 families (49.1%) with children under five in which both parents work. The national total of families with children in which both parents work is around 60%.

After-school needs are addressed by a network of centers and programs supported by the City and the School District, with a total of 2,201 licensed center-based school age spaces in these programs during the 2002-2003 school year. Irvine had a total of 13,704 children aged 6-12 in 2000. After-school and before-school care is offered on every elementary school campus in Irvine, and there are four City-operated community park site programs transporting children from school to offer after-school programming. Seven additional

private child care centers offer transportation from school campus to after school programs.

These numbers suggest that there are gaps in the availability of both preschool care and afterschool care, though information is not available on the availability of affordable child care relative to the specific needs of lower-income working families in Irvine. The available data also does not account for parents who may work during part of the day and arrange their schedule to be home when their children are home from school.

### *Academic Performance*

Irvine leads all school districts in the County in academic achievement, and is among the top districts in the State. Its students have the highest average SAT scores of all county districts, and seven of its elementary schools are in the top ten-ranked schools in the County in SAT-9 reading scores.

Yet for approximately 5-10% of all youth, graduation from high school is either not achieved or not adequate to connect them with employment that provides a decent wage. Available data on this group is included in Section 3 on IUSD.

### *Diversity*

In the 2000 Census, 32.1% of Irvine residents were born outside the United States. Nearly 40% of all Irvine homes include residents who speak a language other than English; 23% of all homes include residents who speak Asian and Pacific Islander languages and 5.4% speak Spanish. In the 2001-2002 school year, 3,255 students classified as English learners spoke a total of 38 languages. The highest totals were Korean (773), Japanese (535), Mandarin (499), Spanish (345), Farsi (299), and Vietnamese (191).

Religious diversity in the City is also extraordinary, with recent development of new churches for Korean and Chinese congregations, a Buddhist temple, a Jewish K-12 day school, and an Islamic education center.<sup>1</sup>

### *Housing Affordability*

As discussed in Section 4 in greater detail, housing affordability for families with children in Irvine is a significant issue, with average housing sales in the Irvine zip codes (including condos) at the level of \$450,000 in April 2003. A Census Bureau report as of May 2003 confirmed that Irvine's rentals are the highest-priced of any city over 100,000 in the nation, with 20,147 units paying cash rent and a median gross rent of \$1,272 a month. There are currently 3,379 affordable housing units in the City of Irvine, with additional units approved that will come on line in 2004 and thereafter.

## *Youth Behavior*

Several thousand youth participated in youth recreation programs sponsored by the City; the actual number is not available.

A significant minority of older youth (estimated at more than 1,000 of the approximately 8,000 high-school aged youth) has had some contact with the police department, in some cases in the form of informal warnings rather than arrests. The 973 juvenile arrests in 2002 can be compared with 1006 arrests in 2001; 36% of the 2002 arrests and 35% of the 2001 arrests were of non-resident youth.

20% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 13% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders reported being in a physical fight at school in a survey conducted during the 2001-2002 school year. These figures were virtually unchanged from a prior survey conducted in 1999-2000.

## **The Problem of Under-age Drinking in Irvine**

Ten years ago, the 1993 Safe Community Task Force Report concluded that

...illegal alcohol use is pervasive and...police see only a small percentage of alcohol-related problems among youth....concerns about youthful drinking in Irvine include easy access to alcohol and problems of retail availability...  
...Underage parties where alcohol is consumed are frequent occurrences in Irvine...Frequently, the parent is fully aware of the illegal drinking going on among the party guests...The availability and accessibility of alcohol to Irvine youth contributes to a number of problems affecting the health and safety of Irvine citizens.

Since this report, considerable effort has gone into both prevention and enforcement aimed at the underage drinking problem in Irvine. Available data on the problem provides a mixed picture of progress made in those efforts, with some measures of progress improving over time and other surveys of community perceptions showing a concern that conditions are worsening.

- The biennial survey of youth in Irvine schools—the Healthy Kids survey—indicates a reduction in alcohol, illicit drug, and tobacco use. In a 2001-2002 survey, 26% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 17% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders had used alcohol within the past 30 days; this can be projected to approximately 2000 high school aged youth (out of a total of 8000) using an illegal drug—alcohol. This is a significant reduction, however, from comparable figures of 39% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 29% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the survey conducted in 1999-2000.
- A recent survey by the Irvine Prevention Council of parents and school staff who work with youth revealed high percentages of respondents who believe that underage drinking is “prevalent” in Irvine and that use of alcohol is

“increasing” among Irvine youth. Details of this survey are included in Appendix 5.

- Even higher percentages of high school youth surveyed in January 2003 said they thought usage of alcohol and other drugs was increasing, with three out of four youth saying that underage drinking is prevalent in Irvine.
- IPD arrest statistics show a marked increase from 1993 to 2002 in alcohol-related juvenile arrests, from 5 to 52; the total is down, however, from a high of 98 in 1998 and 89 in 2001. This data does not indicate whether the arrests are of Irvine residents.
- IUSD data on alcohol and drug offenses on or related to school campuses have risen from 39 in 1993 to 91 in 2002; this is slightly lower than the high of 99 in 1999.

Interviews with City and IUSD staff and parents familiar with the issues of underage drinking in Irvine suggest that in-home underage drinking is “a community norm,” as one staff member put it. Echoing comments by parents in many other communities, the recurrent phrases are “it’s a rite of passage that we all did” and “I’d rather they were drinking in my own home than out driving.” Other communities and prevention agencies that have addressed the problem of underage drinking have emphasized that such statements tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies, and also ignore the risks taken by youth driving to and from homes where alcohol is available. A community facilitator employed by the IUSD who is familiar with Orange County substance abuse issues over more than two decades was quoted saying “Irvine has one of the biggest denial systems in parents around. They are either too busy or think ‘not my kid.’”<sup>ii</sup> The city staff members who are most familiar with student behavior acknowledge the existence of significant levels of weekend underage drinking parties, with specific sites and schools mentioned.

In the 1993 report, reference was made to the Police Department’s review of a new process of compiling information on the involvement of alcohol in youth-related arrests; the report also recommended a city ordinance including fines for homeowners who allowed underage drinking. Neither of these measures was implemented, however.

The issue of alcohol use by youth is not isolated from other risky behavior by youth; its connection with violence is widely documented and was referenced in the 1993 Safe Community Task Force report.

## **The Data Gaps**

For all the data included in this section and the appendices, the City and its associated agencies lack information about some critical children and youth issues. This is surprising in part because a significant portion of the business life in the City is oriented

to the most sophisticated information systems available in a 21<sup>st</sup> century information society. But the city and school district staff members have both described numerous areas where they were unable to collect data due to resources constraints or the use of older systems that don't allow adequate analysis of available data.

These gaps include

- The career destinations and entry wages of high school graduates and students who do not complete high school (as noted, an information effort that once collected this data has been discontinued)
- The achievements in the K-12 school system of children who attended quality pre-school programs
- Whether arrested youth who are diverted to intervention programs are re-arrested
- Any measurable changes in behavior or academic performance by youth who are involved in prevention programs
- Records of repeat calls to homes where underage drinking is detected
- Regular updates of county-level data on Irvine residents in county caseloads
- City staff report that they do not know how many of the families residing in low and very-low income affordable housing in Irvine have children, or how many children they have.

Some of these items could become part of an annual indicators report on the conditions of children and families in Irvine, a recommendation discussed in Section 7 of this report.

## **The Invisibles**

Some community members we spoke with referred to the “invisible children and families” in Irvine. By this they meant at least three different groups:

- Children and youth who were not exceptional, who were neither outstanding academically, athletically, or in any other way, and who do not therefore come to the attention of school or community agencies;
- Families who are living in Irvine, at or near the poverty level, but who are “getting by,” living in subsidized housing, and trying to blend into the rest of the community; and
- Those family heads, both male and female, which make their living in Irvine but do not live here or participate in the social life of the community except within the narrow circle of the families or businesses where they work.

The latter group was the focus of a recent survey in Santa Clara County—the county in California in many ways most like Orange County. As a UC Santa Cruz professor stated in January 2003, speaking of the Silicon Valley but equally relevant to Orange County

“...behind every software engineer is a nanny or a food-service worker. There’s a tremendous amount of economic energy there. The question is how do you harness it.”<sup>iii</sup>

## **Diversity as a Community Asset**

Children and families in Irvine have the opportunity to participate in a more diverse community than in many other parts of California, even recognizing the diversity of the state as a whole. As noted above, a total of 39.7% of homes in Irvine include residents who speak a language other than English, for a total of 53,570 persons; the comparable percentage in Orange County is 41.4%. The religious diversity of the city has become more visible in recent years, as temples, mosques, and new schools are built and open to active religious congregations throughout the community.

City schools have been involved in a variety of activities that celebrate the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity of its students. The City itself sponsors a variety of cultural arts programs, as reviewed in its 2002 annual report, including a Human Rights film festival co-sponsored with UCI, sister city activities, and a multicultural festival, the Irvine Global Village.

## **Section 3: Key Agency Partners and Other Providers of Services to Children and Families**

### **Irvine Unified School District's Role in Children and Youth Programs**

The School District is the single largest agency in Irvine that provides services to children and youth, and its activities range considerably beyond its basic mission of education. The District operates 22 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 4 comprehensive high schools, and 1 continuation high school. In addition to serving 24,400 children and youth (and nearly 1800 adults as well) in classroom education, the District also operates or provides facilities for

- A school readiness program that includes parent education
- Child care programs
- Special education programs in K-12 classes that also serve some pre-school aged children
- Prevention programs that operate in the classroom and in extra-curricular programs
- Pre-employment and vocational programs
- After-school child care and recreation programs
- Diversity and human relations programs
- Community service programs for some of its older students.

More than ninety percent of the school-aged children and youth in Irvine attend public schools in Irvine, although the percentage of children in private schools rose from 4.8% in 1990 to 6.9% in 2000.<sup>iv</sup> The enrollment of District schools is projected to rise gradually as the city's total population increases, reaching 30,000 in 2012.

In the aggregate, students from the District have scored higher on statewide standardized tests than any other district in Orange County for the past several years. A larger percentage of Irvine students graduate from high school and attend college than those of any other district in the County. As summarized in the City's 2002 Annual Report: "Good schools rank as the number one reason for people choosing to live in Irvine."

### **Links to the City**

A joint powers agreement guides relationships between the City and the School District, covering multiple areas where the two entities work together. The District receives the equivalent of an estimated \$3 million annually in city support (in the form of crossing guards, school resource officers, and other staffing). The District and the City work most closely in three areas:

- prevention and youth development programs
- pre-school, child care, and school readiness activities
- joint use of school and community facilities

## **IUSD Prevention Programs**

The District operates a number of prevention programs that address violence, tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. Some of these programs are designed as primary prevention in which an attempt is made to reach all students in a given grade level, as with the DARE program operated by the City in District schools or the tobacco prevention programs operated by the District. Other programs are based on referrals of students needing special help and intervention that goes beyond a generalized prevention message to provide specific help to students with specific needs or problems. Within the District, Guidance Resources, a grant-funded unit of the District, provides coordinative services over all these efforts. Separate activities are directed at students in elementary and middle schools, with full- and part-time counselors and links to other organizations that provide family counseling support, such as Families Forward.

A U.S. Department of Justice Drug-Free Communities Support Grant and a U.S. Department of Education Safe Schools-Healthy Students Grant fund the Irvine Prevention Coalition (its website is at <http://www.irvinepreventioncoalition.org/>). The IPC, which includes more than twenty partner agencies such as county and local private nonprofit agencies, meets monthly and operates through several subcommittees. The IUSD serves as the core staff of the Coalition. “Project Success” is the title of the secondary school prevention activities, under which there is a close working relationship with key agencies that provide staff to the overall effort, notably the Irvine Police Department, County probation, and Families Forward.

Most of the specially targeted programs are funded by external grants from state and federal sources, while general funds—primarily City funding—are used for broad-based prevention efforts aimed at all students of a given age. Private funds are used in support of city and District child care programs through the efforts of the Irvine Children’s Fund. These funds and other resources from the District enable the equivalent of fifteen full-time staff persons, primarily in the form of part-time counselors, to operate prevention programs, parent education programs for parents of District students, and targeted counseling for students referred as needing special support.

The District staff and the Coalition have been very resourceful in seeking out public and private funding for a wide array of prevention and intervention efforts. In some cases Irvine has faced special challenges in seeking funding, since it has no schools in which there is an excessive concentration of lower-income students. The city’s dispersal of its affordable housing reduces the weight that can be given to Irvine as an applicant in some programs that require school-specific levels of need.

Some of the District’s state and federally funded prevention and intervention programs require outcomes-based evaluation, and in those cases data exists that documents the degree of effectiveness achieved by some of the programs operated by the District.

## College and Non-College Attendance

Nationally, an increasing proportion of high school graduates are now attending college—currently 65 percent, compared with 42 percent in 1970. Irvine figures are estimated at even higher rates, with approximately 87% of all graduates attending some form of two- or four-year higher education. A total of 1,192 or 69% of 2001 graduates were qualified to attend a UC or CSU university. But attending does not mean graduating with a four-year degree.

Unfortunately, the District is no longer able to track the career intentions of its graduates, and does not have any data about the actual college attendance of its graduates. Until last year, the Transition Focus project surveyed seniors about their college and vocational plans, but this survey was discontinued for lack of funding. A total of 1,429 students responded to the last survey, with 267 saying they intended to attend community college, 979 saying they intended to attend college, and 182 intending to enroll in community or career training programs (one of the respondents did not expect to graduate). These data are the basis for the estimate of 87 % college attendance.

High college attendance among youth reflects in part the higher education levels of the adult population; a total of 58.3% of adults in Irvine over the age of 25 had at least a 4-year degree in 2000.

Of the 1,953 graduates (excluding the 170 adult graduates and the 12 GED graduates) in June 2001, 1,468 were enrolled in the system four years earlier. Of those who left, records indicate the destinations of 211, but it is not known whether the remaining 274 transferred without records or simply dropped out. Of the 211, 34 were listed as age dropouts (meaning they were old enough to simply stop attending school legally) and 29 were listed as “non-graduate/non-completer.”

A further set of indicators of career and college readiness is the 2002 performance of high school students on the California High School Exit Exam. Districtwide, 59% of students passed the math test and 73% passed the English language test. These totals compared to countywide figures of 43% and 63% and statewide figures of 32% and 54%.

The number of Irvine youth who are at risk of not being able to enter the labor market or higher education and advance to a position with adequate wages to support a family is difficult to document. However, it can be estimated using several data points:

- Total HS graduates from public schools (1,838 in June 2002)
- Total 12<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment (1,988 in June 2002)
- Total 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders in private school (345)
- Total 17 year-olds (the total number of 18 year-olds in Irvine includes a significant number of college freshmen) (2,012)
- Total 16-19 year-olds not enrolled in school (569)

- Total 16-19 year olds in Irvine who did not graduate from high school (177)
- Total 18-24 year olds who did not graduate from high school (1,364)

Using all of these figures, it is possible to estimate that 5-10% of the graduation-age cohort, or 100-200 youth a year, (for a total of 500-1,000 youth and young adults in the 17-21 age group), are in the category of under-employed dropouts or high school graduates without adequate skills. In other words, between 5-10% of all students reaching high school graduation age in Irvine either do not formally graduate or do not graduate with the ability or motivation to pursue education or a career in which they can support a family adequately. Acquiring this ability is an appropriate minimum level measure of the value of high school graduation for an Irvine student. For some of these youth, military service, education received while incarcerated, or “second chance” programs such as GED certificates may eventually provide that opportunity. But the system and the community appear unable to help a small but significant portion of its youth to make the transition from school to careers, and in addition, do not currently have the data to monitor in detail how well they are achieving this function over time.

It should also be noted that the District’s continuation school, Creekside High School, provides excellent academic support to a small but significant number of students who are unable to complete their education at the one of the four other high schools. Creekside has received state and federal funding in recognition of the strong counseling services and effective individualized education provided to its students.

### **Early Care and Education: the School Readiness Role of the District**

The District also has a substantial role in pre-school education, housing 20 after-school care programs run by the Irvine Child Care Program and operating six pre-school programs of its own, including two Head Start programs and an Early Start program. With funding from the County Commission on Children and Families (the “First 5” Commission), the District also operates a School Readiness Program, which provides parent education to parents of younger children, works to familiarize parents with the elements of quality child care, and seeks to expand communications between early care providers and elementary school teachers and administrators.

The School Readiness Program works with the District’s elementary schools to improve students’ readiness for kindergarten, though it does not as yet collect district wide or standardized measures of readiness. The School Readiness Program does not at this point have information on how the children and parents they have worked with compare with the Irvine students who are most at-risk in socio-economic terms. One measure of school readiness used by some other districts—the number of students retained in kindergarten and first grade—indicated that there were 51 students retained (in Fall 2001) out of a total of 3039 students in the two grade levels. A program for kindergartners who are having difficulty provides a six-week program offered two or three times a year, for a total in each session of six children and their parents.

For academic year 2002-2003, over 1100 families have been provided service through the Early Childhood Learning Center in Irvine. More than 400 early care providers have also attended educational workshops on preparing children for kindergarten.

A recent workshop convened by the School Readiness Program discussed several problems encountered by parents in addressing school readiness for their children, including the extent to which “at risk students don’t get identified early,” which refers to the problems of parents whose children are eligible for screening by the District at age 3, but are not assessed until they enter school.

The District is also the co-sponsor of the Irvine Child Care Project, described below under City programs. Currently, there is after-school and before-school care offered on every elementary school campus in Irvine. In addition, there are four City-operated community park site programs transporting children from school for after-school programming. Seven additional private child care centers offer transportation from school campus to after school programs.

## **Children with Special Needs**

A total of 2,011 students are enrolled formally in special education programs in the Irvine District, under thirteen different categories. An additional 200 pre-school-aged children are screened annually for conditions ranging from mild and moderate disabilities to more severe disabilities; of these, approximately 150 preschool-aged children are enrolled in special education programs under federal and state legislation requiring the District to identify and serve these children prior to school enrollment. Irvine serves as its own Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), which is the planning entity required for state and federal funding.

Enrollment for free or reduced-price school lunches, which is a measure of the school-age lower-income population, totals 1,549 students (this represents 6.3% of District population, compared with 38.2% countywide and 47.1% statewide).

## **Facilities**

Despite the minority percentage of households with children in school, Irvine schools function as very important community centers of activity. As noted in a recent *Register* article reporting on the passage of the 2003 assessment district measure,

Irvine’s idea may be unique: Most school fields don’t get as much public use as in Irvine, where schools are the social hubs of many neighborhoods.<sup>y</sup>

City planning reflects the use of neighborhood parks and city school grounds in many inter-related ways, with privately funded youth sports activities benefiting from parks adjacent to schools that can be used for school athletics during the school day. This connection was the basis for the passage in May 2003 of a

special assessment district that recognizes city residents' use of school facilities for recreation.

## **Voluntary Community Service**

The School Board has a formal policy encouraging recognition for 25 hours of community service during any high school year, with the summer prior to the school year counting for that school year. Academic units of credit for community service are not awarded, but community service is displayed on a student's transcript by adding the community service course number to the student's grade file and using a "no mark" category. Community service hours are recognized beginning with hours served subsequent to the end of the junior year.

University and Irvine are the only schools keeping records available to the central office; UHS has 1585 entries among current students for 25 hours or more (some students may have more than one entry), and IHS has 185 entries. District staff note that despite the lack of records, a significant number of students at the elementary and middle schools levels participate in some form of community service, including the "Kids Helping Kids" program.

The District also cooperates with the AmeriCorps program at Irvine Valley College, which is a collaborative effort including the Tustin and Irvine Unified School Districts, the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges, the California Commission for Improving Life through Service, the Corporation for National Services, and the State Department of Social Services.

## **Health Services**

The District also provides limited health services to students in its schools, although health clerks and school nurses have been cut back as a result of recent budget cuts. A total of eight full-time and part-time school nurses share responsibilities across all schools, with 24 health clerks assisting them. The District funds ten of those clerks, and the other 14 are supported by private funding. During the 2001-2002 school year, nearly 50,000 student visits were recorded for first aid or illnesses, and the health staff conducted screening for vision and hearing and other conditions.

Despite the extensive health-related employment base in Irvine,<sup>vi</sup> the District does not have any formal links to the health industry for vocational training opportunities. A number of other districts have established formal health careers programs aimed at the health industry. The Coastline Regional Occupational Program serving Irvine includes sixteen different career pathways under its health sciences options.

A further resource, according to those familiar with the regional health industry, is the presence in Irvine of a significant number of retired nurses and doctors, who might serve

as an excellent training resource and a part of an intergenerational community service team.

### **The Irvine Public Schools Foundation**

With private donations, the Irvine Public Schools Foundation provides several enrichment programs for Irvine schools. It has supported afterschool programs, math tutorials, science classes, summer schools, an honors concert, and subsidized instrument rentals for music classes. At present, it is working with private corporations and individual donors to raise funds to attempt to save reduced class sizes for IUSD third grades, which have been jeopardized by recent state funding cuts. In 2002 the Foundation raised a total of \$4 million.

## **Special City-Operated and City-Sponsored Programs for Children and Families**

### **Community Services Department**

The City's business plan states "provision of facilities and programs to occupy youth during non-structured, non-school time is a key disorder prevention strategy." The plan lists a total of 21 separate programs operated by the Community Services Department, and five operated by the Public Safety Department (described below). Methods of assessing the effectiveness of these programs are discussed below in Section 5.

There are many different definitions of *youth development*; the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development defined it as the process through which "adolescents actively seek and are assisted to meet their basic needs and build their individual assets and competencies." The common elements of most definitions include

- An emphasis upon the positive outcomes intended for youth, rather than their problems or deficits
- An emphasis on integrated programs rather than categorically defined programs that treat or seek to prevent a single problem such as drug use, violence, or teen pregnancy
- An understanding that developmental milestones in the lives of youth offer opportunities to achieve new skills
- An emphasis upon active participation of youth themselves in the design, operation, and evaluation of youth development programs

The business plan of the City describes some, but not all of these ingredients as elements of its youth development programs. As the business plan notes, both the City and the District are oriented in their work on youth development toward the "asset development" perspective set forth by the Search Institute and other organizations. Asset development stresses building positive strengths of youth, rather than emphasizing youths' deficits. Despite placing youth development in the context of disorder prevention, the general approach of the City's programs is positive and seeks youth involvement through a variety of methods.

These efforts include support of the Youth Action Teams from the middle and high schools, which involve thirteen paid high school students who serve as staff members of the Youth Services unit who attend the five public and three private high schools represented. Other activities include a series of community forums under the heading of Let's Talk, after-school sports programs, a Youth Employment Service, and special events and drop-in activities such as pizza nights, movie days, and monthly dances. Youth Action Team members are involved in community service projects such as Coastal Clean-up, Earth Day, canned food drives, hospital visits and the Helping Hand Program (assisting seniors and disabled Irvine residents with light housekeeping and gardening).

Youth Discussion Forums are held three times during the school year as an outlet for students' opinions; recent topics have included discussions about the relationship between the police and teens, ethnic diversity, city spending, gangs and drugs, and health issues.

Children, youth, and their families use the city's community and neighborhood parks extensively. City staff do not have estimates of the total percentage of park use by children and families; staff and facilities maintenance clearly represent a major city budget item on behalf of children and families.

In response to the Safe Community Task Force recommendations, and for the ninth consecutive year, the Irvine City Council awarded a total of \$200,000 in funding for Community Youth Program Grants. For FY 2001/2002, seven providers received funding: five programs offer recreation/activity options for Irvine youth in grades 3-12, and two programs offer city-wide parent training. Last year's grant recipients were the Central Orange Coast YMCA, Irvine Public Schools Foundation, Orange County On Track, Woodbridge Village Association, CSP, and the Orange County Bar Foundation.

As part of several strategic initiatives designed to combat visible deterioration, the City of Irvine has adopted a "Zero Tolerance Policy" regarding graffiti. Responsibility for the Graffiti Removal Program is shared between the Community Services and Public Safety Departments. The City states that eradication of graffiti on public and private property is generally completed within 48 hours of discovery.

### *The Irvine Child Care Project*

The Irvine Child Care Project is a Joint Powers Authority between the City of Irvine and the Irvine Unified School District. The partnership promotes quality before and after school child care through placement and maintenance of modular units on all elementary school sites; the selection of non-profit organizations to operate the programs; and the monitoring of program quality. Through funds raised by the Irvine Children's Fund, a community-based nonprofit organization, the ICCP is able to provide financial assistance to children from low-income working families. In 2002, a total of 88 children were provided financial assistance, with a waiting list of 30 at present.

These services are coordinated through the City by the Child Care Coordination Office. This office tracks enrollment in licensed center-based programs, the salaries of Irvine's child care center teachers, and staffs the Child Care Committee.

In response to the limitations on the availability of adequately priced child care, the Irvine Child Care Project (ICCP) is addressing the need for school-age child care. The pays 50% of lower-income participants' child care tuition for up to 2 years at any of the child care sites on the elementary school campuses. In addition, there are five ICCP sites that are on a State grant, which offers subsidized tuition to 100-125 children. In comparison, there are only three child care centers serving children under five with subsidized child care availability. Only one of the three centers serves infants.

In 2002, the Child Care Committee convened by the City held Family Friendly Business Forums, held a Super Saturday Staff Development Day event for Preschool providers, with over 90 providers participating, continued networking and educational Directors' Forums, revised the Child Care Center Standards for the City's Building Regulations, and advised several new child care centers developed and being built in the City. The Child Resource Center, located in Heritage Park Multi-Services Center, offers a variety of resource materials related to caring for children from birth to age 12 for parents, employers, students and child care providers

## **Irvine Police Department**

In close cooperation with the Community Services Youth Development unit and the School District, the Police Department operates several youth-related programs. The Youth Services Unit includes a supervisor, a gang investigator, three DARE officers and a DARE program assistant, and five School Resource Officers assigned to each of the five high schools (University, Woodbridge, Irvine, Northwood, and Creekside). These eleven members of the IPD have full-time youth-related assignments, which do not include the part-time role of crossing guards at the city's 22 elementary school or officers working with the Police Explorer units.

The five School Resource Officers are important assets in the city's youth prevention efforts, and they illustrate that the line between broad prevention and targeted intervention is not always strictly delineated. At times, the SROs are able to respond to specific problems with specific students who may require special help—or special scrutiny. Their familiarity with the students at the schools to which they are assigned enables them to see patterns of behavior that an on-call response might not detect.

The single largest interaction between the Department and youth, however, is the patrol function of the Department. It has proven difficult to collect accurate information on the percentage of regular patrol time that is devoted to youth-related activities; if it were restricted to arrest percentages, the total would be 17%, since 17% of all arrests are youth (only 64% of those are Irvine residents). City staff do not believe this figure is accurate, but have not developed any methods for estimating time spent on youth-related patrol activities, including time for transporting youth, booking them, preparing reports, testifying in court when needed, and interaction with youth that does not lead to an arrest.

## **Other City-Funded Programs**

Families Forward is the major nonprofit agency in Irvine that serves families in need. Along with Human Options, a domestic shelter agency, it provides temporary housing and family support for several dozen families annually, and a much larger number who are helped with non-housing problems. Families Forward works with nine on-site partner

agencies in its 7000 square foot facility. Its services include a family services office, counseling offices, a resource library, a computer lab, a child enrichment center, a classroom, and a food distribution center.

FOR Families is an internal city staff agency that also provides family support services and referrals from an office located in City Hall. Its services include information on family support programs, links to child care services of the City, and help for families dealing with economic and social problems. In 2002, the office reported increases in city residents seeking help for financial problems and housing problems. More than two hundred families were helped in direct contacts and over 1100 community residents were helped through telephone contacts.

### **Children with Special Needs**

In addition to programs funded and operated by the IUSD, the City also operates a wide variety of programs for children and youth with disabilities, as reflected by its receipt in April 2003 of the 2002 Accessible City Award. The sports programs of the city, in particular, include numerous opportunities for parents of children with disabilities to participate in activities such as Little League and the Irvine Junior Games.

### **City Human Resources Policies**

The city has several “family-friendly” personnel policies, and has received awards for its openness to employees with disabilities. An active youth outreach program involves some students in city work-study programs and summer employment. But as noted below, there is no formal ongoing effort to inform lower-income full- or part-time employees—or any of the employees of the city’s contractors—about the full range of income support programs they may be eligible to receive. Few city employees use the city-sponsored child care programs. Employees must use their own personal leave time to cover any involvement in their children’s academic or athletic activities during work hours. The City does not have data on how many employees have used parental leave for adoption or infant care.

### **Programs for Older Residents of Irvine**

A concern for families necessarily includes a concern for older residents of the city, for a number of reasons:

- Some are relatives of younger residents of the City, providing an intergenerational dimension to life for grandchildren and other related family members, with the benefit of continuity for individual families and a living link to the history of the whole community.
- Nearly 500 grandparents are raising their own grandchildren, in formal and informal kinship care arrangements, while others provide valuable child care support services for working parents.

- Older residents round out the intergenerational diversity of a community, ensuring that family-oriented or senior-oriented residential areas are available as residents choose, while ensuring that a mix of age groups is also available. Some studies indicate that intergenerational living can be healthier for some older persons than living only with persons of their own age.
- Older residents are a great community asset, in an era in which retirement brings new activism and redirected lifestyles for some older residents, who seek out voluntary activities through which they can give something back to the community they know and value. One measure of the potential of this resource is that if only 10% of the older residents of the city provided 10 hours a week in voluntary service, the total would be greater than half of the City government's work force. If these activities were directed by the many nonprofits in the community, the supervisory burden on City staff would be minimized.

The City of Irvine has reflected these values in an active set of programs and community services activities for older residents. The Lakeview and Rancho Senior Centers are two of the most active venues for community services in the entire city, with a wide variety of activities under way day and night.

Within the Community Services department, several ongoing programs help seniors with many different talents and needs. These include Friends of Outreach, a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting frail and homebound seniors; assistance programs include health assessment, health insurance counseling, financial counseling, legal counseling, income tax preparation, homeowner/tax rebates, and assistance with care-giving. A directory of public and private transportation services and a roster of volunteer opportunities are kept current. Recreational activities including theater groups, arts and crafts, dance, travel programs, and exercise programs are offered.

The TRIPS transportation service for residents with disabilities and senior citizens provides a much-needed support, but is currently experiencing a six to nine month wait to register for services for medical appointments, work, school, social, etc. Shuttle services for grocery shopping and senior center participation are available.

## **City Budget Summary**

The total City budget in 2002-2003 was \$98 million, including 593.5 positions. Although city staff indicate that they do not track youth and family-related expenditures as a set of activities, an analysis of the portions of that budget that have direct impact on children and families yields an estimate that approximately 15% of the budget is child- or family-related. Similar analyses of three other Orange County cities' budgets in 1995 yielded estimates ranging from 5.5-8%. The Irvine analysis is included in Appendix 2.

In assessing resources available for children and families, it is also important to note the two recent special assessments that have both had a direct impact: the 2002 election for a parks and street lighting assessment and the May 2003 ballot in favor of a second

assessment district for additional funds for Irvine’s schools, which is intended to raise \$3.2 million for public use of school recreation facilities.

*What is the value of a children and families budget?*

1. The value of any interagency budget focused on a specific function, such as public safety, public health, or families, is to tell us how much we are spending on something that matters enough to view as a separate set of expenditures. It tells us what items should be connected as a set of linked activities, even if they are scattered throughout the budget, because they make up a significant total.
2. It allows us to see what our priorities are—and what isn’t a priority, because it isn’t visible or isn’t very significant compared to the rest of the budget.
3. It tells us what we are investing in achieving results in a given policy area—what dosage of resources we are applying to that set of programs and functions compared to others.

The final point reinforces the discussion on measuring performance and programs’ effectiveness in Section 5. If prevention is a major activity within the budget, making up a significant part of the spending on Public Safety and Community Service, as well as IUSD and county expenditures, the obvious question arises as to how well the goals of prevention are being achieved. But without a set of annual prevention indicators that go beyond counting participation in programs, it is impossible to assess the effectiveness of the several million dollars allocated to prevention programs across the city agencies and city-funded programs within the total budget.

## County Services to Irvine Children and Families

For many services to children and families in Irvine, the County is the primary service provider. These services include

- Child abuse and neglect reports and investigations
- Foster care and adoption
- Child support payments
- CalWORKs (welfare)
- Enrollment in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families
- Probation monitoring of juveniles
- Libraries
- Drug and alcohol prevention
- Drug and alcohol treatment
- Children's mental health services
- County affordable housing and homelessness programs

For some of these programs and activities, annual reports are available that break out data by city. Some of these are summarized in the annual Conditions of Children report sponsored by the County and compiled by Cal State Fullerton's Center for Community Collaboration. An estimated \$15 million of county services are provided to children and families residing in Irvine.<sup>vii</sup>

A limited number of county agencies are organized to assign Irvine-specific staff for some of these functions. Probation staff, for example, are assigned to work with city high schools and Project Success staff. Project ADEPT staff from the Health Care Agency's prevention unit work with city and IUSD on prevention programs, especially around alcohol issues. Child protective services staff from the Social Services Agency are not currently assigned to work on a city-specific geographic basis, although IUSD staff work directly with one SSA staff person who is their contact point. In the most recent month (July 2003), a total of 67 reports of child abuse or neglect in Irvine were received by the County child abuse intake unit; in 2002 a total of 775 reports were received. Countywide a total of 27,584 reports were received in 2002.

The county also funds a number of nonprofit agencies that provide services to Irvine residents, including Community Services Program (CSP), Families Forward, Human Options, and several others.

## **Section 4: Other Programs and Community Needs**

### **Affordable Housing**

The City has a clear commitment to providing affordable housing, which is expressed most clearly in the requirement that all development plans for residential housing include a 15% set-aside of units or fees in the amounts of 5% for each of the three categories: very low, low, and moderate housing<sup>viii</sup>. At present these totals are 1,613 very low; 1,097 low; and 527 moderate. These numbers will increase with new units coming on line in the Planning Area 17 and Northern Sphere areas. Homeless set-asides at the El Toro base of more than 165 units. In March 2003 the Council voted to expand affordable housing in the Northern Sphere by an eventual 2,544 units, most of which will be built in the Northern Sphere area over the course of its development. These units will be clustered in single apartment complexes, rather than dispersed, based on recent changes in federal and County policy.

The City uses a combination of federal, state, and county subsidies to subsidize these units, which are typically built by nonprofit developers. The City has also used a portion of its own CDBG funding from the federal government for these units.

Because market rates rents in Irvine are so high, the affordable levels are very high. As a result, the increases in rent have in some cases moved faster than residents' ability to afford the higher rents. In May 2003 national figures were released by the Census Bureau documenting Irvine's median rent as the highest in the nation in cities over 100,000. In August 2001 the Renter's Advisory Task Force presented a report to the City Council in August 2001, which stated

Because of the increase in the area median income, rents in affordable units financed with bond funds have risen greatly, adversely affecting low-income residents.

Waiting lists for the lower priced units can be as long as 7-10 years for the few 3-4 bedroom units that are available (a total of 135 3-bedroom units and 25 4-bedroom units are available). In 2002, a total of only 11 units with 3 or more bedrooms came on line (i.e. were built new or turned over) in the City. None of these were built new in 2002. A new 120-unit affordable project will have 44 3-bedroom units in summer 2004.

The Orange County Housing Authority has some data on the demographic characteristics of individuals and families residing in Irvine units that are linked to OCHA, and on those persons and families on the waiting list for affordable housing in Irvine. As of December 2001, 570 applications were on file, of which 283 or 38% were from families, including an estimated 200 children (the remainder of the applications were from elderly-56, disabled persons-174, veterans-78, and single persons-57). The City staff do not formally analyze turnover within the units; there is an annual certification of the waiting list, but it combines families, children, and singles into one total.

The City of Irvine has two nonprofit agencies that provide shelter to homeless families and children (Families Forward and Human Options). County staff have indicated that because shelter beds and affordable housing units are scarce in the County and the City, families that become homeless in Irvine are forced to move to central or north Orange County. Families Forward and Human Options have a limited number of shelter beds and service slots. As a result, these two agencies must refer numerous homeless families and children to other agencies outside of Irvine.

To better address this growing problem, the City of Irvine is working in partnership with the Navy, OC Shelter Partnership, the County's Homeless Coordinator, and the El Toro Homeless Service Providers Collaborative to develop additional transitional shelter units and supportive services at the planned Great Park (former MCAS El Toro Base). Specifically, 165 transitional shelter units, food bank warehouses, child care facilities, and other services are being planned to comply with requirements that base closures provide accommodation for the homeless. Once in place, these additional shelter units and services will help to address the growing needs of homeless families and children in the City of Irvine.

A recent effort has been made to recruit a limited number of city employees for newly available affordable housing. This program provides loans for down payments by first-time homebuyers. The first family in this program, headed by a single parent who is a city worker, moved into a condominium unit in May 2003.

### **Family Economic Self-Sufficiency**

Some of the family support organizations in Irvine assist parents who work for lower wages in connecting with the economic support programs for which they are eligible, but the City does not at present require any feedback on the success of these agencies in securing income support programs for working parents. A list of these programs is included in Appendix 4.

At the Lakeview Senior Center, there are weekly informational sessions on Medicare, HMOs, health insurance, and long-term care. These sessions are conducted bimonthly in Chinese. Prior to tax filing season in 2003, the FOR Families office of the City sent materials to Irvine residents on a free tax seminar provided by the Legal Aid Society of Orange County on the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Care Tax Credit. The seminar resulted in a substantial number of new EITC enrollments, with an estimated increase in family income of \$50,000.

However, information on the full range of income support programs available to lower-income working families is not available in any comprehensive way to residents, the city's own workers, or workers who add to Irvine's economic life by working here while living in other communities. While these functions are not normally performed by city governments, recent publications by the National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors have spotlighted cities that have emphasized this kind of support for their residents and workers.<sup>ix</sup>

Some of the family support agencies' staff also pointed out that state and federal agencies have become more difficult to work with on income support programs; e.g. the newly proposed (May 2003) twice-yearly status reports for adults on Medi-Cal, which would require families to do new paperwork with the expected effect, as indicated by the State, of causing about 100,000 people to lose their Medi-Cal health coverage.

What challenges face the more than three thousand single parents in Irvine? On the one hand, she (most are women) has access to a far better school system than most of her counterparts in other Orange County cities, to excellent parks and recreation, and to child care opportunities that are relatively higher in quality, if she can find a vacancy and can afford the costs or connect with subsidies she may eligible to receive. But she may have transportation costs, even if she works in Irvine, which can approximate \$5000 a year. If she lives in a subsidized 2-bedroom apartment, she may be paying approximately \$750-1000 a month in rent, with child care or after-school care costs that may total \$500-750 a month or more. If she makes \$10-12 an hour on a full-time basis—assuming she has adequate child care—her monthly expenses are very close to her after-tax income, leaving little for any form of recreation outside Irvine, entertainment, or enrichment for her children.

Family economic self-sufficiency has a close link to both housing affordability and child care quality. Numerous studies have documented the effects of family income on child development.<sup>x</sup> Lower-income work affects the time, quality and stresses of parenting, the type of housing that can be afforded, the kind of child care that is affordable, and impacts on literacy from the time available to parents to read to their children.

For an older resident, income and housing support programs can make a big difference. A grandparent who has part-time responsibility for her grandson, who is receiving \$13,000 a year in Social Security and is able to live in senior affordable housing, has access to the TRIPS program and thus does not need to own a car. The equivalent income from the housing support and transportation can mean that in effect, she is living on \$25,000 a year—far from luxury, but far more comfortable than her Social Security income would enable by itself.

For lower-income working families, having full access to the array of income benefits to which a family near, at, or below the poverty level is entitled could mean as much as \$3-5,000 annually (excluding health benefits). The average “poverty gap” for a female-headed household in an urban area in the Western U.S. is about \$5,300.<sup>xi</sup> For a working poor family which is above the poverty level, off welfare, but still eligible for all these benefits which are set based on levels ranging from 125%

to 185% of poverty, these amounts are critical to providing the margin between inadequate and barely adequate housing or the amount between inadequate custodial child care and good child care with a developmental component.

Some of these benefits, especially those related to housing, have waiting lists, but most are entitlements provided by state and federal budgets based on the lower-income working status of these parents.

### *The “lifting effect” of City and other programs*

An estimate can be developed of the “lifting effect” of city programs that have the effect of lifting families above the poverty or near-poverty levels. These programs include affordable housing, family support, and subsidized child care.

- The affordable housing programs of the City and its regional and private sector partners provide housing to more than six hundred very low-income families.<sup>xii</sup>
- The family support services provided directly by the City through For Families and indirectly through its links with agencies such as Families Forward and Human Options provide services to several hundred families, some of which receive state and federal benefits for which they were eligible but not previously enrolled.
- The efforts to enroll working parents in Earned Income Tax Credit programs for which they are eligible.<sup>xiii</sup>
- State and local child care subsidies are provided to approximately 200 families in Irvine’s child care programs, some of which fall below the poverty or near-poverty lines.

In all, these programs serve an overlapping group of more than 2,000 families. The combination of these family income support programs—both those funded by the City and those funded by state and federal entitlements—results in an estimated 500-1,000 of these families being lifted above poverty or near-poverty levels. This additional funding from income supports and housing programs enables these families to play a more active role in the economic life of the community, and enables their children to reap the benefits of increased family income, which has been shown to have a concrete effect on child development. A more intensively organized effort to conduct outreach to these families could result in an even larger number of them being lifted above poverty or near-poverty levels.

These numbers provide the basis for the argument that all family support programs serving lower-income, working poor families should be evaluated in part by their effectiveness in connecting families with these benefits, which they are eligible for because they work and have children.

### **The Drive to Excel**

In a presentation to the Irvine City Council in January 2003, a team of Youth Action Team members summarized several critical points gathered from interviews and discussions with their peers. One of the points emphasized the degree to which some Irvine students at the high school level felt that they were under a great deal of pressure. This pressure was, in their words, “stressing us out,” and included the pressure to excel academically, athletically, or in other ways that made students outstanding among their peers.

This pressure should be placed in perspective. Stories of the lives of national leaders often point to the high expectations of their parents and community as a basis for their success. President Bush and many others have referred to the negative effects of lowered expectations as a barrier to academic achievement by lower-income and minority students. Pressure can be a very positive thing if it means that youth are held up as capable of meeting high expectations, rather than subjected to the self-fulfilling prophecy of low expectations.

In addition, the academic pressure to excel in Irvine clearly does not originate solely among Irvine's parents or its teachers. It is a product of the renewed state and federal emphasis upon test scores as a measure of educational standards, as well as an intensely competitive process in gaining admission to the higher-ranked colleges and universities. Test academies and weekend supplementary instruction have become norms for some Irvine families, who believe firmly that their children need extra emphasis on test-taking in an era when tests remain a large component of college admission in most universities.

So if these factors help to explain and justify pressure to excel, the question becomes whether the good achieved by such pressure outweighs the stress it creates in the lives of students and their parents. For some students, the answer is obviously positive—they excelled, and their hard work and their parents' support brought results. But for others, the answer is not as clear.

As one educational leader in Irvine put it

We ask students why they feel pressured to get high grades, and they say their parents push them to do it. We ask them why they think their parents push them and they say because their parents want them to get into the best universities and make a lot of money. We ask them if their parents are happy based on their own university attendance and income - and some of them become very quiet.... We try to teach them to think.

But it is not just academic pressure that students experience. Athletic excellence can be a source of great community pride in its sports teams. But it can also create its own kind of drive to excel, and can sometimes create further pressure to take short cuts to excellence. At least one Irvine athletic team coach in recent years has sold creatine, a bodybuilding supplement, to team members.<sup>xiv</sup>

The drive to excel and its achievements and excesses are not another set of programmatic issues to be resolved solely by action of public or private agencies. Like the issue of underage drinking, it is more about community norms than program initiatives. The drive to excel, as the two quotations above attest, originates in parents' desires as well as community norms and public policy. But policy leaders help to set community norms, and at times they can resist an "everybody does it" mentality that can lead to an unreflective conformity. Neither a community nor its youth benefit from excluding or downgrading those young people whose given talents are not as stellar as others, or yet as visible in the early years of their lives.

## **Health Issues**

In addition to the health services provided in Irvine schools discussed in Section 3, many other facets of health and health services in Irvine are resources for addressing the long-term health needs of the community and its children and families. The city is home to an excellent medical facility in the UCI Medical School, located partly in Irvine, and to several other health providers, including Irvine Medical Center, Kaiser Permanente facilities, and Bristol-Park medical offices. The Irvine Health Foundation has funded numerous Irvine-specific projects, including a lecture series held in Irvine, smaller community grants, and grants to organizations throughout Orange County.

The City's commitment to hiking and biking trails and its open space plan have been justified in part as elements of an approach to fitness that is extraordinary among cities. The discussion of Great Park options for fitness and anti-obesity initiatives are in keeping with this prior commitment.

There is a national Healthy Cities and Communities movement based in California, with strong ties to the World Health Organization. This initiative has developed measures of cities' overall health, with an emphasis upon public and environmental health, links between urban planning and health, and preventive health care aimed at healthier lifestyles. In these communities, health is defined very broadly as including balanced efforts to encourage growth that supports families, wider citizen engagement in policy decisions, and use of community indicators to gauge annual progress in addressing community problems.

The Irvine Health Foundation and other organizations have also given attention to the health issues faced by the workers in Irvine's parks and remaining agricultural areas, as they deal with use of pesticides and other working conditions affecting agricultural and environmental workers.

## **Another Asset: National Nonprofits and Research Centers**

Irvine is also home to several nationally known nonprofit and academic research centers, which provide a base for information that could be useful to many city and school programs. Some of these organizations are linked to city and school staff, while others are not. These include a national center on tobacco prevention research at UCI, a national child care research project based at UCI, the National Center for Substance Abuse and Child Welfare, a national center that supports fatherhood programs, a legal office that staffs many family foundations around the nation, a national center on education technology, and an organization that supports family day care throughout the region. At present there is no effort to build closer ties among these nonprofits based in Irvine.

One interviewee, however, pointed out that it is difficult to locate new nonprofits in Irvine due to the expense of real estate and commercial rental space. This is especially

true for operating nonprofits that provide services, in contrast with those that are providing research and policy development.

## Section 5: Performance Data and Accountability for Results

### Performance and Effectiveness Measures

City governments have moved significantly in the direction of performance measures in the past decade, in part because the tools to collect and analyze such data—including geographic information systems and improved client information systems—have developed to a point where better measures of program performance are possible.

But fewer cities have yet developed comprehensive measures of the impact of their programs on children and families. The move *from counting to accountability* is still emerging, with a small but growing number of cities having developed their own annual indicators of children and family well-being that correspond with the national Youth Indicators project of the federal government or the KidsCount project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation and its state and county counterparts around the nation.

Community-wide indicators of program progress and client success (such as the dropout rate in a school district or county) are not the same as measuring the outcomes of specific programs (such as the dropout rate for students in a specific dropout prevention program aimed at students with attendance problems). However, the two types of accountability are linked. If a city government has an annual review of the most important measures of child and family conditions, it can help pinpoint the trend lines and problems that city programs are intended to alleviate.

For example, stating that a city is committed to youth development, without any annual review of progress measured in any terms other than youth arrests, suggests that youth are doing well if fewer of them are arrested. But arrest rates reveal nothing about how well non-college youth are doing in securing jobs at decent wages, whether they are healthy, becoming parents prematurely, or contributing to the life of their community through voluntary efforts and community service. It doesn't even indicate whether programs aimed at reducing arrest rates have succeeded in reducing repeat arrests among youth who were previously arrested.

A strong case can be made that a set of annual indicators would provide the critical missing baselines against which citywide progress should be measured. Without some agreed-upon set of results in the form of indicators of youth behavior—using both positive and negative measures of progress—it is impossible to make final judgments about the citywide impact of prevention programs.

The City's business plan includes a strong commitment to performance measures, as documented by a review of the extensive work plans for FY 2002-03 for the Community Services Department. With responsibility for the city's parks, recreation programs, senior centers, child care centers, hundreds of classes, the Department touches the lives of thousands of community members, including many of its children and youth.

The work plan is organized into a series of descriptions of services and activities, each of which includes assumptions, outcomes, and indicators. The outcomes tend to be stated as fairly broad goals or objectives, (“socially responsible behavior in high-school aged youth is maximized”), while indicators include three different types of measures:

- Statements of activity, such as “facility development participation” or “attend IPC meetings”
- Measures of city agency performance, such as “complaints filed regarding city athletic facilities”
- Measures of changes in the community or the clients of city programs, such as “customer satisfaction”, “participation rates of teams” and “participants’ pre and post test scores.”

The third category is generally assumed to be the best measure of true outcomes and indicators, since they are defined as *results*, not simply activities. But these kinds of client outcomes are usually more difficult to collect and analyze than performance measures. Performance measures are about what agencies do; outcomes and indicators are about what happens to residents and the community as a whole *as a result of what agencies do*. As Mark Friedman has put it

Performance measures are absolutely essential for running programs well. But they are very different from results and indicators. They have to do with our service **response** to social problems, not the **conditions** that we are trying to improve. It is possible, even common, for individual programs to be successful, while overall conditions get worse.<sup>xv</sup>

In Irvine, in several cases, the work plans for city agencies and programs refer to client and community outcomes, but it is not always clear how these are collected, and no annual summary of results other than counts of services usage is available to the public. In the adopted Child and Youth Policy of 1996, the strategic goals included a reference to the need to

Assess annually, progress toward meeting the strategic, tactical goals and strategies of the Child and Youth Policy.

However, this annual assessment has not been compiled thus far. What do exist are the annual work plans of the city agencies, which include primarily participation and output data, not outcomes.

Examples:

- Prevention programs are summarized in terms of how many arrested youth are referred to an external agency, not whether the youth referred behave differently or repeat offenses<sup>xvi</sup>
- 177.75 hours of counseling were provided to Irvine youth and their families
- 7 youth successfully completed a drug and alcohol education group
- 6 youth successfully completed an anger management group
- Two new diversion staff members successfully transitioned to the IPD

- Parent training programs are facilitated

Some of these are performance data in that they describe IPD and its contractors' operations; others simply summarize the number of cases contacted. But "seat time," in which time in classes is assumed to result in better outcomes, ignores the motivation of the youth, the quality of the education or training, whether the program follows models that have proven effective elsewhere, and the many other influences in the life of the youth. Staffing a program is not a measure of the impact or effectiveness of the program. Review of parent training and education that does not determine whether parents behave differently cannot offer any evidence about parenting changes, nor does it capture which parents are involved, since experience suggests that often the parents who most need support are the least likely to attend.

It does not take rigorous evaluation with a control group—what some youth development practitioners have called the "gold standard of evaluation"—to look for outcomes in the lives of youth who have been served by prevention or intervention programs. Rigorous evaluation is appropriately rare in city governments, because it is uncommon that the resources exist to conduct such evaluations. Nor is it necessary. But basic questions about effectiveness in the use of scarce funds do, however, require some follow-up of specific cases to see if arrested youth repeated their offenses or are arrested again for other offenses. That is not done at present in the IPD. To a limited extent, such follow-up assessment is done for a few of the youth development programs operated and funded by the City. One example of this approach is the use of pre- and post-tests measuring Asset Development for Middle School outreach program participants.

For several programs, "participants' satisfaction ratings" are described as outcomes. Getting such feedback from youth themselves is an excellent addition to program evaluation, but by itself, it may not reveal much about the ultimate effects of the program. For most of the work plans, it is also not clear how such participant surveys are conducted, whether they are handed in to the staff whose performance is being evaluated, or how the data is analyzed and disseminated.

### *Issues of Targeting*

Another measure of programs' effectiveness raises the issue of whether the youth with the highest risk factors have received any benefits from the program. In Irvine's programs, there is an explicit assumption, stated at several points in the work plans for community services, that "all kids are at-risk." As a result, most city-sponsored programs do not target specific groups of youth who are at risk. It should be noted, however, that other programs, especially Project Success, the School District's counseling programs for at-risk students, and its continuation schools, are designed more as intervention programs than broad-based prevention, and they do target specific youth who are referred for services or who seek them out on their own.

In some cities, such as San Francisco's Beacon Schools program, an effort is made to determine how youth enrolled in after-school programs compare with *all* the youth in the

city, or a specific area of the city served by the program. Comparisons among different groups with different needs are infrequent in Irvine’s programs. For example, one program measures whether “parents have access to reduced-rate school-age childcare programs,” but it does not make clear which parents are targeted and what rates are used as the measures of success.

Unless all clients are equally in need of services, it matters whether those with greater needs were served less often than those with less serious needs. For example, if 5-10% of the city’s 12-18 year-old youth have already had an encounter with law enforcement (approximately 4% have been arrested, and an unknown, but larger number have received warnings by police and/or been discharged to their parents), the broad goal of reducing youth crime may need better targeting than an equal emphasis on each of the city’s 15,189 youth aged 12-18. If there are roughly 1,000 youth with a higher degree of risk for delinquency and other anti-social behavior, it is appropriate to ask how well those youth have been targeted—whether for prevention, intervention, or monitoring. But this information is not tracked at present.

This issue of targeting is also related to a fundamental tension in youth development programs and policy: the demonstrated evidence that sustained “dosage” is required for effective programs. Most programs allocate modest resources (an average of \$50-100, in one study of state programs) across a wide population of youth. Investments often do not achieve the levels needed for maximum impact for the most at-risk children and youth (the most thorough study of program costs, for example, found that \$3000 a year was needed for high-quality year-round after-school programs<sup>xvii</sup>).

Again, it should be made clear that the breadth of programs serving children and youth in Irvine is extraordinary—a far richer mix of services and self-help opportunities than exists in any other city in the County, and certainly more than virtually all others in the state. But breadth in itself may need to be complemented by an emphasis upon targeting and the development of measures to determine whether either universal or targeted programs are achieving their intended goals.

### *Suggested Annual Indicators of Youth Prevention Programs*

The estimated total resources devoted to youth prevention activities in the City are \$5 million.<sup>xviii</sup> Yet despite this significant level of funding, there is no set of consensus measures of effectiveness for these programs. What follows is a suggested list of outcomes and indicators that would allow annual accountability review of the outcomes, not just the performance of the agencies that provide prevention services.<sup>xix</sup>

1. Tobacco use
2. Alcohol use
3. Illegal drug use (the first three could be measured both by the biennial Healthy Kids survey done in the schools and by regular administration of the questionnaire developed by the Prevention Council in 2003)
4. Parents’ perceptions of youth alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drug use

5. School attendance improvement/truancy reduction
6. Analysis of non-arrest police patrol time involving alcohol-related youth calls and incidents
7. On-line survey of local businesses' perceptions of youth activity (this could also be done voluntarily as a part of retail license renewals)
8. Youth arrests and re-arrests after diversion program enrollment
9. Continuation school graduations
10. Qualitative assessment of prevention activities taking place across agency lines: referrals, follow-up, shared outcome measures, and other indicators of effective collaboration and program management capacity.

## **Section 6: A Future Vision: The Great Park and Its Impact on Children and Families**

In addition to the shorter-range options that have been set forth in this report, we have added this section on the impact of the conversion of the El Toro facility into a Great Park because it was a subject that kept recurring in our discussions, and because the potential impact of so big a project will clearly affect children and families.

The Great Park at El Toro, by definition as a recreational site, will have an impact on children, youth, and families. But its scale—4700 acres, the largest parcel of available undeveloped land in Orange County—raises additional issues:

- How will housing plans affect affordable housing opportunities in the City?
- How can the Park’s facilities be shared with the wider regional community, especially its children and families?
- How will the new elementary school provide opportunities for families to be part of a school more fully designed to be an intergenerational community center than any yet built in Irvine?
- How will the county’s use of its space set aside for institutional use be linked with community-based programs and services based in Irvine?
- What kinds of health and family services programs could be provided in the Park?
- How could residents of the city and region without cars be provided transit access to the Park?

Irvine’s openness to the region of which it is a part is manifest in many of its existing regional roles. But the Park will raise the visibility of those efforts greatly. The reality is that votes from outside Irvine made the Park a possibility, but translating that shared goal into an obligation for shared benefits will be a challenge that will reveal something basic about the character of the City’s residents and leaders.

Some of the concepts that are emerging are suggested by the questions raised above. Others include

- The potential for a nonprofit “village” to be housed in the Park in the same way that the city’s multi-service center once housed multiple agencies, with the synergy of shared facilities enabling closer connections among these public, private, and nonprofit agencies as they work with children and families;
- The potential for a portion of the university space within the Park to be used for students involved in internships, field placements, and community service to Irvine and regional residents, using a model of interprofessional education that would work across disciplines to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century work force able to work across systems with children, families, and communities, as several California universities have implemented;<sup>xx</sup>

- The potential for fitness and health promotion programs to be located and operated in the Park for children and families and seniors, with a special emphasis on obesity prevention and family-oriented sports;
- The opportunity for the county’s institutional uses of its space in the Park to house county workers and contract agencies able to serve Irvine and South County residents without the necessity to go to central county offices.

The Park could also serve as a regional resource for a variety of family activities, including

- Family camping for children and youth who have never had the opportunity to go camping
- Environmental awareness trips for students from regional schools
- Summer work and career opportunities for youth from Irvine and throughout the region<sup>xxi</sup>

## **Future Planning for the Great Park**

Since a Master Plan for the Great Park—with separate segments for each of the individual parks within it—will be developed over the next few years, the recommendation of this report is that a Master Plan for Children and Family Services and Facilities in the Great Park be developed as part of that overall process. This Master Plan element could involve children and youth organizations from throughout the region, as well as including outreach to Irvine and Orange County youth themselves as active participants in the planning. Advisory groups will be established for the purpose of providing the city and the new governing board with feedback on the models of community services and regional outreach which may be appropriate for the Great Park, drawing upon relevant experience from around the country.

A separate advisory group could be established to assist with the Master Plan for Children and Family Services and Facilities, to ensure that the appropriate emphasis upon physical design and architecture not overlook the need for an emphasis on the social impact and community-wide potential of the Park. This advisory group could hold one or more forums on options for services and facilities in the Park, drawing upon Orange County, national, and international talent in raising these options to visibility.

## Section 7: Strategic Choices Facing the City

The choices facing the City in the area of children and families include those that are *policy choices* and those that are *organizational choices*. The first choices are about priorities among many different possible policies and programs; the second are about the *how* of policy—what actions within the government are needed to strengthen the City’s ability to act effectively in carrying out policy.

### Critical Policy Choices

While there are many policy options that have been presented in this report, seven of them appear to be critical as of mid-2003:

1. Decisions about the range of family support, recreation, health, and self-sufficiency activities to be pursued in the Great Park, and the decision to create a distinct Master Plan for Children and Family Services and Facilities as part of the Great Park planning effort.
2. The choice to respond with more effective measures to the underage drinking problem in the City.
3. A decision that heads of families who are city residents, city workers and contract workers, and those who work in the city but do not live here should all be provided by the City and its employers with the fullest possible information on income support programs that can assist them to provide their families with a decent level of income and financial security.
4. The opportunity to expand community service options for young and old in an intergenerational approach to community service at a new scale.
5. Decisions about the future of affordable housing, framed in a way that addresses explicitly the counter-forces of new land availability and the value of increasing the resident worker population, contrasted with increasing housing prices and rental costs.
6. Decisions about assessment of prevention programs sponsored by the City that could lead to shifting funding from the least effective to the most effective programs, combined with decisions about the balance between universal programs and those targeted programs that are aimed at a smaller number of youth involved in behavior that is risky for them and the community
7. Decisions about the extent to which the School District is able to better target the students who are entering and leaving the school system without the tools needed for success.

## Critical Organizational Choices Facing the City

Within the City government, four major changes are proposed:

1. An ongoing strategic planning process that encompasses all programs affecting children and families, enlisting youth, parents, and other stakeholders throughout and beyond the community
2. An annual indicators report on the conditions of children and families in Irvine
3. An annual summary of the city budget's total effects on children and families
4. An annual prevention assessment that summarizes the impact of all prevention programs—this overlaps with the final policy choice above, but without the organizational change, the policy choice cannot be framed.

### *Ongoing Strategic Planning: the Role of the City's Youth*

Within the City's business planning, youth issues are briefly discussed under public safety and community services, but there is no citywide focus on children, youth, and families that assesses progress against priority goals using annual indicators of success. The listings of programs for children and families do not reflect a review of which of these programs require more resources, or an assessment of which may be most effective based on program outcomes. Institutionalizing such an assessment within city government as part of both the budget and strategic planning processes would ensure annual review of progress made in moving toward strategic goals, both as a part of monitoring specific programs and of monitoring community-wide conditions. As proposed in the 1996 Youth Policy report, regular reports could be made on the status of progress in implementing those items that the Council agrees to prioritize.

Earlier in this report, the City of Thousand Oaks was mentioned as one of the very few comparable cities to Irvine in California. In 2001-2002, the City of Thousand Oaks completed an exemplary planning process producing a Youth Master Plan that involved hundreds of youth and an extensive survey administered to a sample of middle- and high-school youth. Implementation planning will continue over a five-year period from 2003 to 2007.

In Hawaii, during the middle and late 1990's, more than 6000 youth participated in a year-long process, the Ke Ala Hoku Hawaii Benchmarks effort, sponsored by the Hawaii Community Services Council and other organizations to promote the development of shared measures of progress. The project began by asking 6000 young people—from elementary school to college undergraduates—to "describe the Hawaii you want to live in."

A similar future-oriented process in Irvine could yield similarly impressive results in participation and in innovative ideas. The exciting prospects of the Great Park may serve as a focal point for some of this effort to widen youth involvement, as could a next phase of citywide strategic planning that structures youth involvement into the process in a much broader way than has been possible in this initial assessment.

What is proposed, therefore, is a six-month-long planning process in which this planning framework, summarized with special emphasis on its youth-related issues, be circulated to high schools in the city and become the subject of an intensive review by the city's youth. This could include:

- A website which youth could use to select priorities among the proposals in this plan and to suggest others; youth could be encouraged to compile periodic summaries of the “voting” on these issues
- A series of public forums held at the high schools to enable further feedback and discussion of the plan's concepts
- Discussion of the most important measures of progress to be included in the annual prevention assessment and the annual indicators report
- Compilation of these reactions in a “Volume II” supplement to this report, so that the diverse voices of the city's youth would be a part of the record of this planning phase
- Development of an ongoing role for youth organizations and the Youth Action Teams in the strategic planning described below.

### *An Ongoing Annual Strategic Planning Process*

Despite the gaps mentioned in this report, Irvine has the capacity at present to emulate the cities, counties, and states that have developed annual reports on the conditions of their children and families, using consensus indicators. An outline of such a report and suggested indicators are listed in Appendix 1.

Several specific data gaps have been mentioned throughout this report. Once decisions have been made on an annual indicators report, those indicators and baselines that represent the most serious gaps should be the focus of ongoing efforts by city planning and data analysis staff in the affected departments. As mentioned, the paradox of a lack of information in a city with advanced planning and an extensive information-based industry suggests the need for enlisting the talent available from both City government and the businesses located in Irvine to address the most serious data gaps in children and family conditions and programs.

### *An Annual Budget Summary and Analysis of Impact on Children and Families*

A process built into the annual budget review that institutionalizes the initial assessment of spending included in this report would build a base for more detailed analysis of the relationship between resources and results. In Arizona, it has taken eleven years of annual

reports to expand the detailed, site-specific prevention budget compiled by the Arizona Prevention Resource Center to become the great resource that it represents.<sup>xxii</sup> But the process is now built into the budget preparation cycle, as it must be to be taken seriously.

### *An Annual Assessment of Prevention Progress, Using Specific Indicators for Prevention Programs*

As noted in Section 5, a set of indicators of prevention programs' outcomes would provide annual benchmarks against which youth behavior could be measured regularly. Since state and federal grants require outcomes and measures that change over time, having the City and District develop their own measures would ensure that locally determined baselines, rather than those imposed by external funders, would guide Irvine's prevention programs.

Such an organizational shift would also enable a better focus on those prevention programs that are universal and those that are targeted on specific youth who may need more help, or may be more likely to engage in risky behavior. Determining who participates in prevention programs—and who doesn't—may be an important way of assessing programs' impact on different groups of youth.

### **Specific Action Options**

Depending upon the policy responses to these options, a detailed action agenda could be developed which would respond to each of these. That agenda could include the following action steps:

1. Develop cross-agency teams (including IUSD staff and nonprofit agency members) to work on
  - a. Development of a set of consensus indicators for an annual indicators report to be disseminated for the first time in 2004
  - b. Development of a budget analysis that would refine and institutionalize a process for annual reports beginning with the 2004-2005 budget
  - c. Compilation of additional data elements from the county and other sources of information not included in this report
  - d. Review of the new Police Department data system to determine which of the needed data elements could be made available from the Department's sources
  - e. Development of questions for the survey of Irvine residents to be undertaken by Chapman University, with over-sampling of Irvine youth to enable compilation of baseline measures for key indicators for which data does not now exist
2. Request that the Irvine Prevention Council review the information on underage drinking, including both the Healthy Kids surveys and its community attitudes survey, assess current programs aimed at the problem, and develop a citywide response, including annual measures of progress.

3. Convene a cross-section or expanded version of the Youth Action Teams to develop a formal response by youth members of the community to this report and the follow-up action agenda, and to determine how ongoing youth involvement in strategic planning could be ensured
4. Convene a Master Planning working group for the proposed children, youth, and families element of the Great Park master planning process
5. Assemble needed information to conduct a workshop on family income support programs for all city and nonprofit staff in Irvine who work with families
  - a. Develop new contract language to cover city contractors that would require them to provide information about income support programs to all their employees as a requirement in city contracting

## **Section 8: Conclusion: No Crisis, Some Losses, and Many Opportunities**

There is no immediate perceived crisis affecting children, youth and families in Irvine, such as those leading to earlier efforts to spotlight these issues. However, along with many achievements, there are also daily, quiet losses or setbacks. These sometimes take the form of students who find themselves left behind as most of their class “gets it,” or parents who are struggling to stay ahead of economic pressures and who may be unaware of help they should be receiving *because* they are working. The many agencies, groups, and organizations that address these issues are great assets. But their efforts should not obscure the continuing need for even wider efforts to respond to the serious problems still faced every day by thousands of Irvine’s children and families.

As this report has sought to document, Irvine is blessed with many attributes that contribute to children and family success. Its residents, planners, and policy leaders have worked hard to create this foundation of support for families and enrichment of children’s lives. They are all entitled to feel very satisfied with what has been achieved.

But it has been written, “Of those to whom much is given, much is asked.” It may be fair to ask how Irvine’s residents, planners, and leaders will respond to the multiple opportunities set before them early in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

- How much will they be willing to demand results from the use of public dollars and private time intended to improve children’s lives and community safety?
- How will they “keep score”—tracking the annual wins and losses and shifting resources toward the highest priority and most effective programs?
- How much will they be willing and able to share the great new asset of the Great Park with a regional community?
- How will they balance the need to target resources on youth with special problems, while making opportunities available to all youth in Irvine?
- How will residents and policy leaders respond to a growing fiscal climate of scarcity, while recognizing that scarcity is always a relative concept, and that Irvine has significant untapped capacity for both community spending and community spirit, as demonstrated by recent local fund-raising and the breadth of ongoing voluntary activities by city residents and youth?
- How will a new spirit of involvement in civic participation and community service be tapped for young and old alike?

## Appendix 1

### **Proposed Data Elements for Annual Indicators Report for Irvine**

These are not the only indicators that would be collected annually; these are those proposed as priority measures because they best represent the positive and negative trends over time. These are also some of the indicators that have been included in other cities' and counties' annual indicators reports on the conditions of children and families.

#### *Economic Well-Being*

1. CalWORKs
2. FRL total
3. \*Affordability of housing [needs definition]
4. Expanded enrollment in family work support programs

#### *Health*

5. \*Health insurance coverage
6. \*Births [low-weight/adequate prenatal care-residents]

#### *Youth Participation*

7. \*Community service [needs definition]
8. \*18-year-old voting

#### *Academic Achievement*

9. \*Graduates from freshman totals
10. UC/CSU eligible
11. Test scores [4<sup>th</sup> grade reading/math]
12. \*Non-college attending [deferrals?]
13. \*Child care quality/total need [at-home?]

#### *Risky Behavior by Youth*

14. Youth arrests
15. Use of alcohol [HK survey adequate?]
16. Use of illegal drugs [HK survey adequate?]
17. School violence [HK survey questions or police calls?]

#### *Family Stability*

18. Child abuse/neglect calls
19. Domestic violence arrests [calls?]

#### *Community Responsiveness*

20. \*Total public spending on children and family programs

21. \*Total volunteer hours devoted to children and family programs
22. \*Total private donations devoted to children and family programs

*Community Involvement*

23. Social capital measures; see <http://www.cfsv.org/communitysurvey>

*\*= not available at present*

## Appendix 2

### Availability of Proposed Indicators for Annual Indicators of Children and Family Conditions

<b>Economic Well-Being</b>	<b>Available from Current Sources</b>	<b>Number/Date</b>	<b>Source</b>
Students in free and reduced-price lunch	Yes	1549 6.3%	2001-2002 IUSD to state
CalWORKs enrollment	Yes	492	County
Residents in affordable housing	Yes	Est. 3000	City/OCHA
Expanded enrollment in family work support programs	No		
<b>Health</b>			
Health insurance coverage	No		
Low birth weight births/total births	Yes	1734 births to Irvine residents in 2001	County/hospitals
<b>Academic Achievement and School Readiness</b>			
Graduates from freshman totals	Yes		IUSD
UC/CSU eligible	Yes	1192/1734= 69%	2000-2001 IUSD
4 <sup>th</sup> grade reading scores	Yes		
Non-college attending	No		
Child care quality/need	Partial		
<b>Youth Participation</b>			
% in community service	No		
18 year-old voting	No		
<b>Risky Youth Behavior</b>			
Youth arrests [resident]	Yes	623 resident youth in 2002	IPD
Use of alcohol	Yes		IUSD Healthy Kids survey

Use of illicit drugs	Yes		IUSD Healthy Kids survey
School violence	Yes		IUSD Healthy Kids survey
<b>Family Stability</b>			
Child abuse/neglect calls	Yes	775 in 2002	County
Domestic violence calls	Yes	290 in 2002	IPD
<b>Community Responsiveness</b>			
Governmental spending on CYF	No		
Volunteer time on CYF	No		
Private donations to CYF programs and activities	No		

### Appendix 3

#### Irvine City Budget Analysis of Expenditures for Children, Youth, and Families

	2001-2002	2002-2003	Total CYF portion 02-03	Assumptions,%, and estimates
CD Admin	.100	.100	.100	% of CDBG allocated to community services
CS: Aquatics	.556	.363	.272	75%
Athletics	1.545	1.598		75%
Bus services	.050	.050	.025	Registration fees only
CYF	1.436	1.492	1.492	100%
Facility services	3.818	3.973	1.391	35%
Fine Arts	.967	1.037	.363	35%
Open space	.332	.417	.146	35%
Facility Planning	1.546	1.766	.618	35%
Recreation and Parks	3.173	3.206	1.603	50%
Senior services	1.698	1.813	0	
Transportation/ Para transit	.625	.681	0	
PS: Cross guards				
Officers	.050	.050	.050	Estimated wages
Staff	17.957	20.250	3.953	17% total based on arrests + est. 500,000 for youth services
Public Works: Landscape Maintenance	12.475	14.871	2.528	17%
	5.714	8.186	2.865	35%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
	41.037	58.853	15.034	
Capital budget			14.5% of total all-funds budget of 104m	
		13.757		

#### **Assumptions:**

For items such as landscape maintenance and parks and recreation, which are citywide in their impact but have special significance for children, youth, and families using these facilities, a 35% share of the total has been allocated, reflecting that children and youth are 24.7% of the total city population, while there are an additional 33,641 parents in the city's population, for a total of 48.5% of the city's 2000 population in families with children.

## **Appendix 4** **Family Income Support Resource List<sup>xxiii</sup>**

### **Income Benefits Programs**

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)  
Child Tax Credit (CTC)  
IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Sites  
Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)  
Financial Literacy Programs

### **Child Care Resource & Referral**

Child Care Aware  
Child Care Resource & Referral Organizations

### **Child Support Benefits**

County Departments of Child Support Services

### **Work / Vocational / Education Benefits**

California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Subsidies  
Workforce Investment Act (WIA)  
Regional Occupational Program (ROP)

### **Nutrition Benefits / Programs**

Food Stamp Program  
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)  
National School Lunch / Breakfast Programs

### **Housing Benefits**

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
Housing Authority (Section 8)

### **Health Benefits / Programs**

MediCal  
Healthy Families Program  
California Kids  
Orange County Prop. 10 Health Access and In-Home Visitation Program

## Appendix 5

### Summary of ATOD Survey by Irvine Prevention Council

January 2003

While this was not a representative sample, and was not large, it was composed of parents and agency and school staff (some of whom are parents) who are very knowledgeable about Irvine youth. The student survey included nearly 300 students.

Agency survey 37 agency and school staff

97% [n=33] said yes to Q do you think underage drinking is prevalent in Irvine; no respondents said no; 3% were not sure

74% agreed that tobacco use among youth is prevalent in Irvine; 9% disagreed and 18% were unsure.

76% agreed that use of narcotic/illegal substances is prevalent among Irvine youth; 8% disagreed and 15% were unsure.

When asked if they thought that the level of teen substance use is increasing, decreasing, or not changing; most respondents (67%) said they thought it was increasing for alcohol; while 31% thought it was increasing for tobacco, 31% thought it was increasing for marijuana, and 45% thought it was increasing for narcotics/illegal substances.

In answer to the question what five factors contribute most to youth substance abuse in our community, respondents' most frequent answer was "peer influences," with the second and third most frequent responses "social climate that encourages teen partying," and "family issues." The fourth most frequent response was "parental use."

Parent survey (31 plus 14 school staff)

78% [n=36] said yes to Q do you think underage drinking is prevalent in Irvine; only 4% said no; 17% not sure

51% agreed that tobacco use among youth is prevalent in Irvine; 18% disagreed and 31% were unsure.

27% agreed that use of narcotic/illegal substances is prevalent among Irvine youth; 36% disagreed and 38% were unsure.

When asked if they thought that the level of teen substance use is increasing, decreasing, or not changing; most respondents (74%) said they thought it was increasing for alcohol; while 38% thought it was increasing for tobacco, 33% thought it was increasing for marijuana, and 25% thought it was increasing for narcotics/illegal substances.

In answer to the question what five factors contribute most to youth substance abuse in our community, respondents' most frequent answer was "peer influences," with the second and third most frequent responses "social climate that encourages teen partying," and "family issues."

*High school student survey [294=3.8% of total HS enrollment]*

74% [n=215] said yes to Q do you think underage drinking is prevalent in Irvine; only 15% said no; 11% not sure  
68% agreed that tobacco use among youth is prevalent in Irvine; 16% disagreed and 19% were unsure.  
49% agreed that use of narcotic/illegal substances is prevalent among Irvine youth; 21% disagreed and 30% were unsure.

When asked if they thought that the level of teen substance use is increasing, decreasing, or not changing; most respondents (72%) said they thought it was increasing for alcohol; while 49% thought it was increasing for tobacco, 55% thought it was increasing for marijuana, and 37% thought it was increasing for narcotics/illegal substances.

## NOTES

<sup>i</sup> W. Lobdell, "Irvine, Where Faiths Flourish." *Los Angeles Times*, January 26, 2003.

<sup>ii</sup> Teens, parents learn about drugs." *Irvine World News*. March 13, 2003.

<sup>iii</sup> L. Fisher, "Job-rich Silicon Valley has turned fallow, survey finds," *New York Times*, January 20, 2003.

<sup>iv</sup> A growing number of school-aged youth live in Irvine but attend Tustin schools, based on an agreement between the two cities and school districts that students living in the new developments west of Culver, east of Jamboree, and north of the 5 will be enrolled in Tustin schools.

<sup>v</sup> S. Tully, "Irvine OKs novel tax for schools" *Orange County Register*, May 8, 2003, p. B-2.

<sup>vi</sup> The 2000 Census lists a total of 8,810 workers residing in Irvine who work in health-related occupations. This includes out-commuting workers who work in other cities as well as those who work here; citywide, about 39% of employed Irvine residents work in Irvine, but it can be assumed that this number is higher for Irvine health workers because of the health-related employment base locally. These numbers do not include the substantial number of in-commuting workers in Irvine-based health industries who live elsewhere; they also exclude jobs in biotechnology firms or those in health-related firms such as uniform cleaning, health and hospital equipment, health-related research laboratories, food service in hospitals, janitorial and cleaning services, and others. Factoring all of these variables in, it seems a safe estimate to suggest that at least 10,000 of Irvine's total number of jobs are in health and health-related industries. The Chamber of Commerce lists 27 bioscience firms based in Irvine.

<sup>vii</sup> A review of the county budget in 1996-97 estimated that a total of \$483 million of the county's budget (19% of the non-debt spending total at that time) was devoted to children and family-related expenditures. If Irvine received a share of these funds (using an updated estimate of \$761 million out of the 2002-2003 total of \$4.0 billion) corresponding to its percentage of child poverty in the county (2%, as measured by 2000 Census data) the estimated cost of Irvine-specific children and family services provided by the County would be approximately \$15.2 million.

<sup>viii</sup> Very low is equivalent to up to 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI) which is set by HUD and the California Department of Finance; at present the 50% level is \$37,500. Low is up to 80%, or \$60,000, and moderate is up to 120% which is \$90,000. The approximate rents for the very low units are \$750 a month for a 2-bedroom apartment; \$1350 for low, and \$2200 for moderate. There is also a category of "extremely low," which is 30% of the AMI, or \$22,500.

<sup>ix</sup> "Partnership for Working Families" (2002) Washington, D.C.:U.S. Conference of Mayors. [http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/uscm\\_projects\\_services/workingfamilies/](http://www.usmayors.org/uscm/uscm_projects_services/workingfamilies/) "NLC Launches New Project to Help Local Officials Take Action to Reduce Poverty"(2003) Washington D.C.: National League of Cities. [http://www.nlc.org/nlc\\_org/site/programs/workforce\\_development/index.cfm](http://www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/programs/workforce_development/index.cfm)

<sup>x</sup> "Small Boost in Family Income Increases Children's Social Skills and School Readiness," November 19, 2001, Harvard Graduate School of Education press release.

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/features/mccartney11192001.html>

G. Duncan, et.al. "Child Welfare: Does Income Matter?" a presentation at a 1997 Princeton University conference; <http://www.wvs.princeton.edu/~rpd/macarthur/conferences/income1.html>

<sup>xi</sup> Since these are annual numbers computed for the entire U.S. population, cost of living, housing costs, and child care costs should be factored in, which would lower the actual value of these figures by at least 10% in Southern California. Larger family size among some Orange County lower-income families would partially offset this in the opposite direction, however.

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<sup>xii</sup> This assumes that 40% (this is the approximate percentage of families included in the total waiting lists now on file) of the affordable housing units in Irvine—from those 1600 units that are at the very low-income level—are providing cash equivalents that increase the net family income of these families.

<sup>xiii</sup> If national levels of underutilized benefits apply in Irvine, 15% of eligible families are not receiving EITC. In 2000, there were 1746 families below poverty living in Irvine, and 2,748 families below 150% of poverty (with 3,257 children in these families). Using IRS and Census data, in 1998, EITC credits were provided to 2,967 households in Irvine, with a total credit of \$3.8 million, for an average of \$1,281. It can be estimated that between 5,912 and 6,320 households were eligible to receive an EITC in 1999, and that the total federal benefit for full participation would have ranged somewhere between \$4.4 million and \$11.4 million. The difference between actual participation and potential participation according to this analysis is between 2,945 and 3,353 additional households, amounting to somewhere between an additional \$558,000 to \$7.6 million in federal assistance to low-income Irvine households. This data would lead one to conclude that about 3,000 additional lower-income families were eligible for an EITC in 1999, but didn't receive it. The potential for additional federal assistance to low-income families in Irvine, through full-participation in the EITC, is probably close to \$5 million annually. These figures can be compared with the total amount it would take to move all families (including those with no children) above the poverty level, which in the 2000 Census would have been only \$13.5 million. If the effort to enroll lower-income working families were extended to workers not resident in Irvine, substantially higher amounts would be earned. Nationally, approximately 5 million people—roughly half of them children—are removed from poverty annually as a result of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit.

In 2002, families with two or more children were eligible if they earned less than \$33,178 (\$34,178 if filing jointly); families with one child were eligible if they earned less than \$29,201 (\$30,201 if filing jointly); and a taxpayer with no children could still receive the EITC if they earned less than \$11,060 (\$12,060 if filing jointly). The maximum benefit was \$4,140 in 2002. Based on research with the Urban Institute's National Survey of America's Families (NSAF), a recent study found that there are important, statistically relevant differences among demographic groups in their knowledge about the EITC. In particular, those who need the assistance the most - very poor parents, below 50% of the federal poverty level - are less likely to know about the EITC than higher income parents. Knowledge about the EITC is far less prevalent among low-income Hispanic parents, who are the least likely to know about the EITC, and least likely as well to have ever received the tax credit. Roughly 10% of all Hispanics in Irvine are poor, while less than 5% of whites are poor.

This data draws upon work by Dr. Scott Spitzer of Chapman University.

<sup>xiv</sup> In an attempt to control the use of dietary supplements in youth sports, lawmakers in Michigan have enacted legislation making it illegal for public school coaches, teachers, administrators and volunteers to promote or distribute performance-enhancing products to student-athletes. The Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the National Federation of State High Schools Associations recommends that "In order to minimize health and safety risks to student-athletes, maintain ethical standards and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend or permit the use of any drug, medication or food supplement solely for performance-enhancing purposes." The vast majority of research involving the effectiveness and safety associated with the use of creatine has been conducted with adult populations. Whether or not creatine supplements are effective or safe for children and adolescents has yet to be determined. [http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/ysi/Spotlight2001/use\\_of\\_creatine\\_supplements\\_in\\_y.htm](http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/ysi/Spotlight2001/use_of_creatine_supplements_in_y.htm) See also [http://www.healthycompetition.org/hc/news\\_nav.html](http://www.healthycompetition.org/hc/news_nav.html)

<sup>xv</sup> M. Friedman, (1998) *A Guide to Developing and Using Performance Measures in Results-based Budgeting*. Washington, D.C. The Finance Project.

<sup>xvi</sup> February 24, 2003 report provided to CFF.

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<sup>xvii</sup> R. Newman and R. Murphy, (2001) *A Matter of Money: The Cost and Financing of Youth Development in America*. New York: The William T. Grant Foundation.

<sup>xviii</sup> This is an estimate derived from totaling City programs aiming at prevention purposes in Public Safety and Community Services, which are approximately \$3 million, and combining it with an estimate of District youth prevention programs that are specifically focused on ATOD [alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs] and violence, which is estimated at \$2 million. City programs included in this estimate are youth development activities, family support services, and police department activities of a preventive nature. This does not include Irvine-based county-funded programs.

<sup>xix</sup> To pick an important example, outside but related to the youth development mission of the Department, the DARE program has become controversial in some communities because of a debate over whether it really achieves client outcomes in terms of youth who use alcohol and other drugs less than they would if they had not participated in the program. The performance measures of DARE include how many students received the program's services; the outcomes of DARE raise the far more difficult issue of whether the services achieve the goals they intend to achieve—reduced alcohol and drug use. Numerous studies have documented a lack of impact on those intended outcomes. But if the ultimate outcomes are not measured, the accountability of the program is limited to how many students were served, and whether they “liked it,” rather than whether they behaved differently. When resources are scarce, it may be important to ensure that accountability achieves results, not just activity or popularity.

Sources: D. Nott, “It’s costly. It doesn’t work. It can’t reform. Kill D.A.R.E. now” *Orange County Register*, February 9, 2003. ...“the six long-term evaluations of the DARE elementary school curriculum that we reviewed found no significant differences in illicit drug use between students who received DARE in the fifth or sixth grade (the intervention group) and students who did not (the control group)... All of the evaluations suggested that DARE had no statistically significant long-term effect on preventing youth illicit drug use.” “Evaluations of the DARE Elementary School Curriculum Show No Significant Differences in Drug Use Between DARE and Non-DARE Students” General Accounting Office, January 2003.

The national DARE program leadership cites recent changes in their model; the Irvine version of the program has not at this time adopted any of those changes, since the revised curriculum is not available and District staff are awaiting national evaluation results of the DARE changes before altering the elementary school program in Irvine. The District’s middle schools are implementing a model differing substantially from DARE, Project Alert, which is a national program assessed as exemplary by the federal government and evaluated by RAND as effective.

<sup>xx</sup> J. McCroskey., & S. Einbinder. (Eds.). (1998). *Universities and communities: Remaking professional education for the next century*. Westport, CT: Praeger

<sup>xxi</sup> The National Parks and Recreation Association, recognizing that over the next decade there will be a large number of park and recreation employees retiring, has developed a "NRPA National Youth Congress" (NNYC) program, a workforce development initiative designed to develop new careers and expose the recreation field to youth workers and college students. [<http://www.nationalyouthcongress.org/>]

<sup>xxii</sup> Information on the Arizona inventory is available at [http://www.azprevention.org/Research\\_And\\_Reports/Evaluation\\_Services/PrgInvent.htm](http://www.azprevention.org/Research_And_Reports/Evaluation_Services/PrgInvent.htm)

<sup>xxiii</sup> A detailed description of each of these programs and contact numbers has been prepared by Children and Family Futures and is available for downloading at [www.cffutures.org](http://www.cffutures.org).