



### San Diego Promise Zone

### Safety Working Group

Tuesday, July 13, 2021 | 2:30 – 4:00 PM

Via Zoom

Working Group Goal: To create a priority of safety in the Promise Zone

#### In Attendance

SBCS (formerly South Bay Community Services), Project AWARE, Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) San Diego, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), San Diego Unified School District, City of San Diego, City of San Diego – Public Libraries, San Diego State University

#### Meeting Notes

##### Welcome & Agenda Review

- May meeting minutes were approved.

##### Partner Announcements:

- **City of San Diego:** The Economic Development Department is [currently hiring](#) for four positions. Application deadline is Monday, July 19. Contact Daichi Pantaleon for more information, [dpantaleon@sandiego.gov](mailto:dpantaleon@sandiego.gov).
- **SAY San Diego:**
  - National Night Out is coming back on Tuesday, August 3 from 5:00-7:30PM. Contact Mary Baum for more information, [mbaum@saysandiego.org](mailto:mbaum@saysandiego.org).
  - Jamie Wilson was recently hired for a new position with [Project REJUVENATE](#), a comprehensive intervention program to reduce violence and gang involvement among youth living in opportunity zones in San Diego.
- **SANDAG:**
  - The [SANDAG 2021 Regional Plan](#) is still open for comment. A comment box is still being added to the site, but SANDAG will be hosting public hearings on Friday, July 16 and Friday, July 23.
  - SANDAG is also [currently hiring](#) for multiple positions.

##### Project AWARE

*Reginald Washington, Founder and CEO*

- Project AWARE (Attitude When Angry and Resolving Emotional Issues Nonviolently):
  - Project AWARE is focused on social development, problem solving, and emotional literacy skills. Their mission is to find community-based solutions to create community awareness of problems facing youth and their families.

- Project AWARE is primarily based at the Malcolm X Library, but services are offered throughout San Diego. Reginald will resume in-person services at the library soon. Currently offered programs include:
  - Project AWARE Bootcamp, Monday-Friday 8:00-9:00AM
  - Restorative Circles, Monday-Friday 2:00-3:00PM
  - Resilience Program, offering services in the probation office
  - Summer internships through Project Elevate and Safety SD
- San Diego Unified School District observed reduced referrals, suspensions, and expulsions after enrolling students in Project AWARE's services.
- Project AWARE exclusively employs individuals with lived experience and builds community trust through authentic mentor/youth relationships.
- Reginald's background:
  - Reginald is from Southeastern San Diego and has had experience with the criminal justice system. Reginald observed emotional literacy was directly linked with violence and aims to equip today's children with emotional literacy skills to prevent the trauma of incarceration.
  - Reginald is a federal Gang-State Expert and works with the Public Defendant's Office to provide insight on gang culture and address systemic inequities.
- Multiple attendees provided personal testimonies to the long-term impacts of Project AWARE's services on the community's youth.

### **Strategic Planning Discussion**

- A Community Perception Survey was conducted in 2017 in a joint effort with the San Diego Promise Zone and San Diego State University (SDSU). The survey could be conducted again during the Spring 2022 semester, and Partners are invited to create new questions to determine how adult Promise Zone residents perceive safety. The survey response process is lead by Nicole Bracy, a professor in the Criminal Justice Department at San Diego State University.
  - The first survey was conducted in the beginning of the Promise Zone designation before Promise Zone staff had working data relevant to the working group goals. The purpose of these continued surveys is to obtain direct community feedback directly from residents, as opposed to partners.
  - The desired outcome of this survey is to obtain data to develop programs and opportunities for residents that reflect the current landscape of safety and the goals of other working groups. Questions need to be tailored to facilitate this outcome.
  - Points attendees raised:
    - Conducting this survey may be difficult as community members may not be receptive to the terminology of "safety." The community is based on individuals affiliated with gangs and may not associate gang presence with lack of safety.
      - Interim Co-Chair addressed this is relevant to the survey's purpose. The perspective provided by those with lived experiences may help in getting at the goals of the Promise Zone.

Suggested questions and feedback from this working group can reframe how the questions are asked to promote responses.

- Excluding youth from participating in this survey may be detrimental as this working group largely focuses on youth safety. Perhaps the survey can be administered like the census to be more inclusive.
- The group should explore including questions on violence within the home. This tends to be under-reported, and perhaps increased domestic violence can be observed because of COVID restrictions.
- The 2017 survey was conducted by encountering people at locations with high foot traffic, or intercept style. Perhaps the method needs to be redeveloped to allow survey participants to safely provide other information.
- Blue Shield of California is seeking mural locations to host a program that will bridge youth mental health and community art. This is an opportunity for this working group to collaborate with the Healthy Communities Working Group.

### **Next Steps & Closing Remarks**

- Partner feedback is needed to:
  - Identify mural locations within the Promise Zone
  - Identify a time in August for a subgroup meeting to workshop questions for the next Community Perception Survey

### **Next Meeting**

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 | 2:30 – 4:00 PM

Via [Zoom](#) (Meeting ID: 979 7737 1015 Passcode: 486144)