

SAN DIEGO CHILD & YOUTH STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE 2025-2026



Office of Child
and Youth Success

San Diego -- a city where children and youth thrive!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MAYOR

Todd Gloria

CITY COUNCIL

Joe LaCava, District 1

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Marni von Wilpert, District 5

Kent Lee, District 6

Raul Campillo, District 7

Vivian Moreno, District 8

Sean Elo-Rivera, District 9

OFFICE OF CHILD AND YOUTH SUCCESS

Tara Ryan, Program Coordinator

Brilly Gonzalez, Community Development Specialist

Denise Amavizca, Management Analyst

Tianna Fair, Youth Intern

Tessa Garrison, Youth Intern

Amy Gianetto, Youth Intern

Kwincy Lambert, Youth Intern

CYP UPDATE CONTRIBUTORS

Ady Huertas, Youth and Family Services Project Manager, Library

Salina Villegas, Program Manager, Division of Race and Equity

Yay Morales, Program Coordinator, Division of Race and Equity

OCYS Advocacy Committee

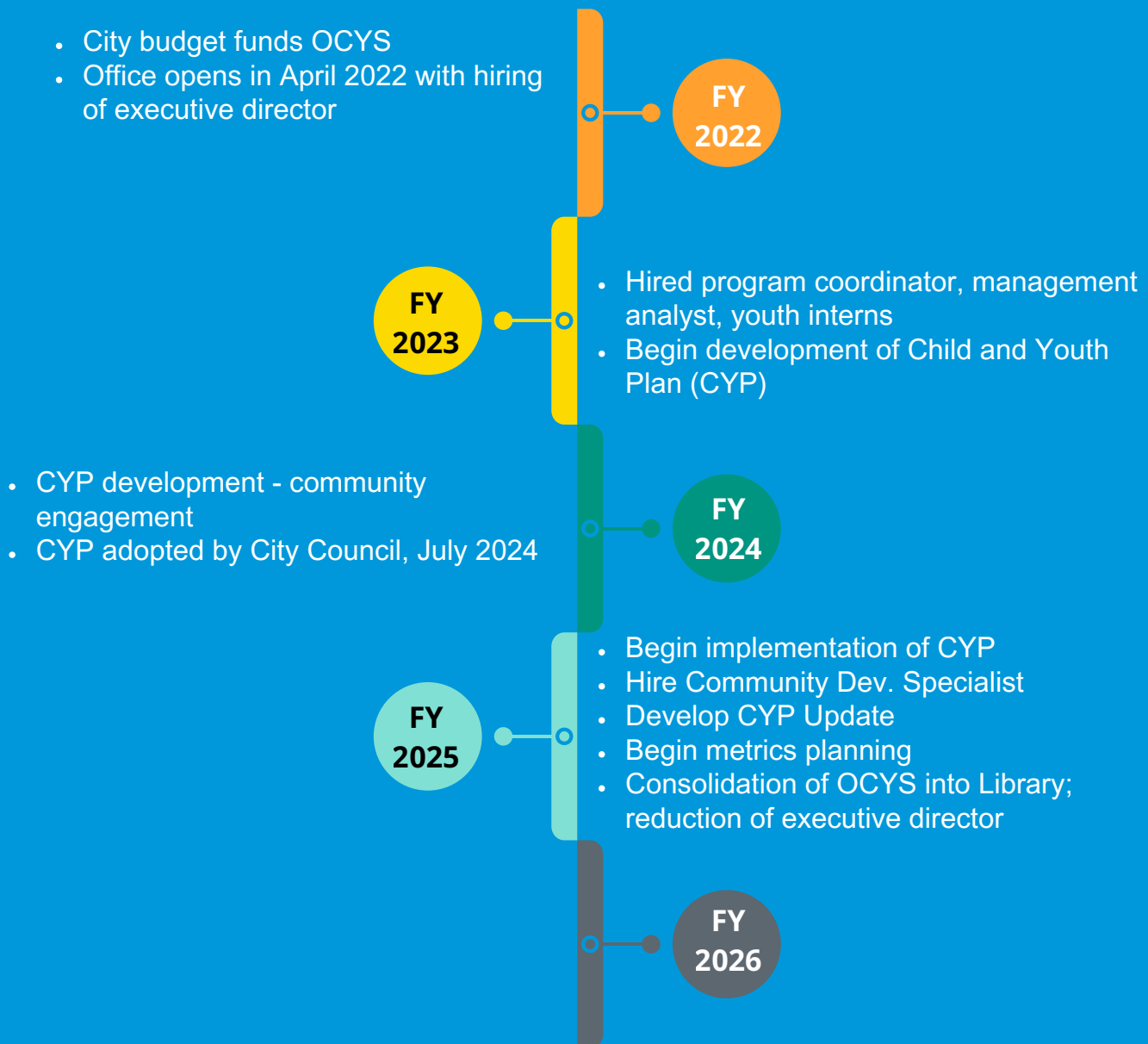
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ABOUT US

As part of the City of San Diego's fiscal year 2022 budget adoption process, Mayor Todd Gloria approved funding to establish and bring to reality the creation of the Office of Child and Youth Success (OCYS). The Office will serve as a navigation and connection point for residents seeking services and programs for children and youth (up to age 24).

OCYS TIMELINE



VISION

All of San Diego’s children and youth thrive, are empowered, and feel successful. They are supported by a coordinated network of City and community partners with a shared framework to provide high-impact and equitable programs, services, resources, and opportunities.



MISSION

The Office of Child and Youth Success is dedicated to prioritizing San Diego’s youngest community by ensuring access to resources, services, and high-quality programs to support positive social, health, and educational outcomes for all children and youth.

WHAT OCYS DOES



Develop and strengthen partnerships



Navigate and strengthen systems and resources



Support and expand access for youth leadership and voice



Collect, share, and use data



Prioritize children, youth, and families within City planning and policymaking



Seek local, State, Federal, and philanthropic grants to support City departments with priorities for children and youth

VALUES

Inherent throughout the Child and Youth Plan are values that guide planning and implementation:

- **Equity and Inclusion** -- The goals and outcomes of the CYP are intended for ALL San Diego children and youth. The strategies will focus on those who are part of communities or groups that have historically been underinvested in, discriminated against, or have been otherwise marginalized, based on race; ethnicity; gender; socio-economic status; LGBTQ+ identity; immigrant status; disability; or experience with housing instability, the foster care system, or the justice system.
- **Partnership and Collaboration** -- Recognizing that we are stronger together, the CYP focuses on building partnerships both internally and externally across the eco-system that supports children, youth, and families. We are committed to equitable and inclusive community engagement.
- **Strengths and Assets** -- The CYP starts with recognizing the strengths and assets that already exist within systems, communities, and individuals -- and builds on them.

INTENTION OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH PLAN AND THIS UPDATE

The Child and Youth Plan creates an intentional roadmap for the City of San Diego to support children, youth, and families, in partnership with community partners, public agencies, schools, and other stakeholders.

This update builds on the plan that was developed through community engagement and adopted by City Council in July 2024. It is intended to provide clarity on the plan’s goals and focus areas and to expand on the action plan with further developed objectives, strategies, and actions to guide the work of the Office of Child and Youth Success along with City and community partners.

CITYWIDE ALIGNMENT

The Child and Youth Plan is aligned with San Diego’s Strategic Plan priority areas:

 Create Homes For All of Us	 Protect & Enrich Every Neighborhood	 Advance Mobility & Infrastructure	 Champion Sustainability	 Foster Regional Prosperity
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A number of City departments work with or impact children and youth, including:

- Library
- Parks & Recreation
- Economic Development
- Cultural Affairs
- Human Resources
- Planning
- Homeless Strategies & Supports
- Race & Equity
- Office of the Mayor
- City Council Offices

The Child and Youth Plan is a Citywide plan. Although implementation will be led by the Office of Child and Youth Success, collaboration among various City departments as well as City leadership is critical to carrying out the strategies included herein and to realizing the goals and objectives outlined. Additionally, OCYS is poised to develop and strengthen partnerships with other regional agencies, education partners, and community partners to support Citywide efforts across all departments.

Through implementation of the Child and Youth Plan, the City of San Diego is committed to not only collecting data but to use it actively to identify disparities, set equity-focused targets, and progress toward equitable outcomes. The data will be used to inform policy decisions, resource allocation, and program development to address disparities and promote equitable outcomes.

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The San Diego Child and Youth Plan is built on the Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework. PYD provides grounding for the strategies laid out in the Plan, guidance for considering programs and services for young people, and a common set of principles for the City of San Diego and partners to use when collaboratively working toward positive outcomes for youth.

About PYD

The PYD framework is an intentional, pro-social approach:

- that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families,
- in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes and enhances youths' strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people,
- by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.



Underlying Principles

- See young people through a strengths-based approach
- Ensure positive outcomes by elevating youth voices, their sense of self-worth and empowerment
- Develop skills and knowledge
- Community-based collaboration
- Building positive relationships

Program Alignment

Guidelines to align program that serve children and youth with the PYD framework:

- Engage youth as equal partners
- Provide access to skills and support
- Foster leadership and self-esteem



CYP FOCUS AREAS

Through the creation of the Office of Child and Youth Success, the City of San Diego has prioritized children, youth, and families. The intention is for strengthened systems, dedicated resources, and increased equitable access to programs and services for children and youth across San Diego.

The Child and Youth Plan is organized into five focus areas. Each focus area is detailed with a goal, objectives, strategies, and action steps. As the CYP provides a holistic approach to supporting children and youth, these focus areas overlap with each under an overarching goal of child and youth success.



GOALS

Overarching Goal - Child & Youth Success

Develop and strengthen networks of City and community partners with a shared framework to provide high-impact programs, services, resources, and opportunities for San Diego's children and youth to thrive, be empowered, and feel successful.

Education & Educational Enrichment

Ensure all students have equitable access to and support to achieve strong educational outcomes, college and career readiness, and postsecondary attainment.

Workforce Development & Financial Well-being

Ensure San Diego youth and young adults have opportunities, skills, and resources for workforce readiness, career pathways, and financial literacy.

Youth Empowerment

Provide and promote safe, supportive, and inclusive opportunities to empower San Diego children and youth to be informed and active members of their community, participate in civic processes, and develop skills for leadership and collaboration.

Engaging Activities & Spaces

Provide safe, fun, engaging, enriching, and inclusive community-based activities and spaces for children and youth to be active, creative, and inspired.

Child Care

Increase access to safe, quality, and affordable early learning and care opportunities for San Diego families by strengthening systems, partnerships, and resources while also strengthening the early learning and care workforce.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Strategies


Develop & strengthen partnerships


Navigate & strengthen systems & resources


Support & expand access for youth leadership and voice


Collect, share, and use data


Prioritize children, youth and families


Seek funding

Intermediate outcomes

Increased Collaboration

Internal & external
Maximize resources
Build on strengths

Strengthened Systems

Identify and address gaps & barriers
Use data
Youth-informed

Informed Decision Making

Use data
Youth-informed
Equitable solutions

In order to

Develop and strengthen networks of City and community partners with a shared framework to provide high impact programs, services, resources, and opportunities for San Diego's children and youth.

Ensure all students have equitable access to and support to achieve strong educational outcomes, college and career readiness, and postsecondary attainment.

Ensure San Diego youth and young adults have opportunities, skills, and resources for workforce readiness, career pathways, and financial literacy.

Provide and promote safe, supportive, and inclusive opportunities to empower San Diego children and youth to be informed and active members of their community, participate in civic processes, and develop skills for leadership and collaboration.

Provide safe, fun, engaging, enriching, and inclusive community-based activities and spaces for children and youth to be active, creative, and inspired.

Strengthen systems, partnerships, and resources to support the early learning and care ecosystem.

So that

Long-term outcomes

San Diego students are engaged in their education and have positive outcomes, including college and/or career readiness and postsecondary attainment.

San Diego youth and young adults are financially independent and resilient and contribute positively to San Diego's economy and workforce.

San Diego's young people are engaged and contributing members of their community and are empowered to pursue their dreams and interests.

San Diego's children and youth are active, creative, engaged, and inspired by experiences, spaces, and activities in their communities.

San Diego families have access to safe, quality, and affordable early learning, while the early learning and care workforce is strengthened.

So that

Impact

San Diego's children and youth are empowered, feel successful, and thrive.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

1. OVERARCHING GOAL: CHILD & YOUTH SUCCESS

GOAL 1



Develop and strengthen networks of City and community partners with a shared framework to provide high impact programs, services, resources, and opportunities for San Diego's children and youth.



OUTCOME

San Diego's children and youth are empowered, feel successful, and thrive.



OBJECTIVES



- Youth and parents/caregivers report high rates of easy access to services, programs and resources that meet their needs and ambitions and are equitably distributed.
- Children and youth in San Diego show increased outcomes over time across a range of wellness indicators, especially those from communities that have historically been underinvested in or have otherwise been marginalized.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



- 1A)** Develop a Citywide plan for implementing the Positive Youth Development framework.
- Provide introductory training and resources to key department leadership and staff.
 - Work collaboratively to develop a shared vision, goals, and metrics; update along with CYP Child and Youth Plan on a regular cycle.
 - Work collaboratively to track progress toward goals; provide data and analysis to City leadership and department staff.



- 1B)** Collaborate with City departments to strengthen and streamline systems and processes, use data in decision-making, and streamline partnerships with external partners.



- 1C)** Identify and track investments in child, youth, and family initiatives, programs, and services across City departments.
- Identify current metrics and outcomes data.
 - Identify and coordinate tools and resources for collecting additional metrics and outcomes data.
 - Assess resource allocation, identify disparities, and provide recommendations for addressing gaps.



- 1D)** Seek local, state, federal and philanthropic grants to support City departments with priorities for children and youth.

1. OVERARCHING GOAL: CHILD & YOUTH SUCCESS

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



1E) Facilitate collaboration and coordination of community partners.

- Identify key community partners across service providers, public agencies, education agencies, researchers, and other stakeholders.
- Convene regular working groups and identify areas of collaboration.
- Identify opportunities to increase efficiencies and collectively expand and strengthen systems and services, especially to address gaps or disparities.
- Ensure equitable access for community engagement, which includes the following principles: compensating community members for time and expertise, holding meetings in accessible locations and convenient times, provide child care and transportation assistance, use culturally appropriate communication methods, and ensure that feedback directly informs decision-making.



1F) Create and maintain a landscape of programs, services, and resources for children and youth.



1G) Develop data reports on child and youth wellbeing.

- Identify measures of child and youth well-being to research and measure
- Work with the Performance and Analytics department to identify existing data sources, collection resources, and display opportunities.
- Collect data along with research on social determinants of health and positive outcomes, by collecting disaggregated data by race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and other relevant equity factors.
- Develop accessible data dashboards for internal and public use.
- Inform and engage City leadership, policymakers, and decision-makers about using the dashboard to make decisions and allocate resources.



1H) Advise on the priorities of children, youth, and families in city planning, decision-making, and policymaking.

- Collect and share relevant data.
- Elevate youth voice and perspective.
- Research current practices and program models.



2. EDUCATION & EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

GOAL 2



Ensure all students have equitable access and support to achieve strong educational outcomes, college and career readiness, and postsecondary attainment.



OUTCOME

San Diego students are engaged in their education and have positive outcomes, including college and/or career readiness and postsecondary attainment.



OBJECTIVES



- Students have increased educational engagement in diverse pathways and options.
- Decrease the number of young people considered “disconnected” or “opportunity youth.”
- Decrease educational outcome disparities based on race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, foster status, and disability.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



2A) Facilitate collaboration between education agencies and community organizations to increase mentorship programs for students in communities with disparate educational outcomes.

- Create landscape of existing programs.
- Convene community-based collaboration meetings with education and community organizations.
- Ensure mentorship programs are culturally relevant, match mentors and mentees based on shared backgrounds and interests, and provide resources to address systemic barriers faced by marginalized youth (e.g., transportation, access to technology).



2B) Facilitate connections with education agencies, community organizations, and resources to expand and strengthen out-of-school-time and other educational enrichment programs with increased access for students in communities with disparate educational outcomes.



- Create landscape of existing programs
- Convene community-based collaboration meetings with education agencies and community programs.



2C) Partner with City departments and community partners to expand and strengthen early learning opportunities for children 0-5 that offer options for diverse parents/caregivers.



- Collaborate with education and community partners to raise awareness of the importance of early brain development; expand and strengthen early literacy programs in communities with historically low literacy rates.
- Respond to Parks & Recreation community needs survey, where indicated, with programs for young children at parks and recreation centers.
- Collaborate with community partners and agencies to promote and provide resources for family-friendly workplaces.

2. EDUCATION & EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



2D) Facilitate connections to education for disconnected or opportunity youth.



- Identify and promote diverse resources appropriate for opportunity youth.
- Investigate proven practices to reach opportunity youth.
- Partner with LEAs to address barriers that may impact opportunity youth from entering or completing education programs.



2E) partner with education agencies and students to create opportunities for students to provide input and feedback on curriculum that aligns with their interests, job readiness and skills for San Diego's key industries.

- Identify and promote current and new opportunities for students to provide input and feedback on curriculum.



2F) Foster awareness of educational outcome disparities based on race/ethnicity, socio economic status, disability, and foster status to impact policy, decisions making and resource allocation.

- Collect data and make it visible and accessible.
- Engage youth in forums to share their experiences, concerns, and suggestions.
- Convene educational agencies, community organizations, and other stakeholders in opportunities to collaboratively access and understand data on educational outcomes.



3. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

GOAL 3

OUTCOME



Ensure San Diego youth and young adults have opportunities, skills, and resources for workforce readiness, career pathways, and financial literacy.



San Diego youth and young adults are financially self-sufficient and resilient and contribute positively to San Diego's economy and workforce.



OBJECTIVES



- Young people have increased food and housing security.
- Young people have increased and equitable access to employment suitable for financial self-sufficiency and economic mobility.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



3A) Expand access to municipal career pathways

- Expand outreach methods to reach more youth on available and relevant City jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities.
- Partner with various city and county agencies to convene job fairs for youth, including skills building workshops on job searching, interview prep, resume building, etc.
- Identify jobs within the City that are relevant to youth with limited experience, and support hiring managers to be willing and ready to hire.
- Assess the City's mentorship program to identify strengths and areas for improvement to support youth to build job-related and professional skills among youth interns and employees, including the Positive Youth Development framework.



3B) Collaborate with diverse employers, education agencies, vocational/trade schools, and other community partners to develop, expand, and increase access to apprenticeship, internship, and mentorship programs for high school students, college students, and recent graduates, including disconnected youth and youth with disabilities.

- Identify existing programs and models to highlight and learn from.
- Support educational visits with various industries to raise awareness of career options and pathways.
- Partner with local employers with living wages to address barriers that may impact disconnected youth from finding, applying for, or maintaining employment.
- Ensure job fairs, career readiness programs, internships, and apprenticeships include opportunities for youth with disabilities.

3. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & FINANCIAL WELL-BEING

Support schools, colleges and universities, and community partners to increase

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS

- 
3C) Partner with public and private organizations to expand entrepreneurship opportunities for youth.
 - Work with City departments and offices to identify and address City barriers preventing growth in entrepreneurship; identify and expand access to City programs and resources that support growth in entrepreneurship.
 - Collaborate with community partners and education agencies to create opportunities to highlight and educate youth on entrepreneurship development.
 - Engage youth-led small business owners to provide presentations, encouragement, and mentoring opportunities to youth interested in entrepreneurship.
- 
3D) Collaborate with community partners and education agencies to strengthen and expand learning opportunities about financial literacy and healthy relationships with money and finances.
 - Identify current programs and curricula about financial literacy, and identify equitable opportunities to address gaps.
 - Partner with education agencies, community partners, and financial institutions to create, expand, and strengthen presentations, programs, and other learning opportunities for financial literacy.
 - Develop or adopt age-appropriate curriculum on financial literacy and incorporate into appropriate youth programs offered by City departments. Create workshops on financial literacy and financial tasks to be held at City recreation centers and libraries (e.g., tax preparation, budgeting, etc.).
 - Consider multi-generational models to support families to strengthen financial literacy and well-being.
 - Develop a community education campaign on financial literacy, focused on families and youth.
- 
3E) Collaborate with city and county agencies and community partners to increase visibility of and access to services and programs for youth and families to address housing, transportation, and food access.
 - Collaborate with partners to support ongoing development of and access to the Community Information Exchange database and information system.
 - Inform local decision-makers and policymakers about issues impacting San Diego children, youth, and families and opportunities for addressing them.



4. YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

GOAL 4



Provide and promote safe, supportive, and inclusive opportunities to empower San Diego children and youth to be informed and active members of their community, participate in civic processes, and develop skills for leadership and collaboration.



OUTCOME

San Diego's young people are engaged and contributing members of their community and are empowered to pursue their dreams and interests.



OBJECTIVE

- Young people have increased opportunities for community and civic participation, including leadership roles and input on policy and decision-making.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



4A) Strengthen the role and efficacy of the San Diego Youth Commission.

- Identify and address existing internal barriers to filling seats on the Youth Commission.
- Conduct outreach and presentations about the Youth Commission and the application process.
- Support Youth Commission to engage with City Council and Mayor to provide input into policymaking.

4B) Expand access to and raise awareness of opportunities for youth to have their voices and perspectives heard across various decision-making and policymaking bodies, including the City Council and its committees, boards, commissions, etc. with a focus on recruiting and supporting the participation of youth from marginalized communities, including youth of color, LGBTQ+ youth, youth with disabilities, and youth experiencing housing instability.



- Identify and address existing barriers to youth access to these spaces.
- Provide education to youth on civic engagement opportunities and practices.
- Provide education on how the City's budget process works and how youth can have a voice in that process to impact budget priorities and decisions.



4C) Expand youth opportunities for democratic participation, community engagement and leadership.



- Create and facilitate forums for youth to share their voices, network with peers and allies, and develop community engagement and leadership skills.
- Collaborate with youth-led community organizations to convene conferences and workshops to bring youth together to cultivate youth leadership, youth activism, and community engagement.
- Partner with City departments, education agencies, and community organizations to increase access to engagement activities such as voter registration, community involvement, youth led organizing, etc.
- Create an OCYS Youth Ambassador program, which provides paid opportunities for involvement.



5. ENGAGING ACTIVITIES & SPACES

GOAL 5



Provide safe, fun, engaging, enriching, and inclusive community-based activities and spaces for children and youth to be active, creative, and inspired.



OUTCOME

San Diego's children and are active, creative, engaged, and inspired by experiences, spaces, and activities in their communities.



OBJECTIVE

- Children, youth, and parents/caregivers report increased access to safe, fun, and engaging activities that are child-, youth-, and family-friendly.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



5A) Collaborate with the City's Parks and Recreation, Library, Cultural Affairs, and Planning departments to expand and strengthen engaging activities and spaces for children, youth, and families



- Review results of the Planning Department's Child and Teen Friendly City survey, the Parks & Recreation community needs assessment, and other relevant surveys and reports.



- Inventory current spaces, programs, and events offered for children, youth, and families; identify gaps in specific communities; specific age groups, abilities, and diverse demographics; and cultural relevance.



- Identify opportunities to leverage City resources to ensure equitable provision of engaging activities and spaces in San Diego communities, in partnership with the Planning Department's Child and Teen Friendly City initiative.
- Identify priority needs for spaces to improve safety, inclusivity, and accessibility and support identification of resources to address.
- Partner with the Parks & Recreation and Library Departments to assess and strengthen activities and programs provided at teen centers and teen spaces to increase engagement.
- Create an easy to access, single entry point and/or database that links to City offerings of programs and services for children, youth, and families.
- Support the Parks & Recreation department to increase youth and family participation in Community Recreation Groups to ensure decision-making and priority-setting includes their voices and perspectives.
- Support the Library department to increase participation in teen council and teen groups to ensure decision-making and priority-setting includes youth voice and perspectives.
- Collaborate with the Office of Cultural Affairs to amplify opportunities for youth to explore and engage in creative and artistic endeavors.



5B) Explore how green space access and engagement can be further elaborated into college and career pathways in environmental stewardship and climate impact mitigation related careers.



- Collaborate with the Parks and Recreation department to identify opportunities for pilot programs
- Collaborate with community-based organization and education partners engaged in environmental and climate impact mitigation programs for youth to develop pilot programs.

6. CHILD CARE

GOAL 6



Strengthen systems, partnerships, and resources while also strengthening the early learning and care workforce.



San Diego families have access to safe, quality, and affordable early learning, while the early learning and care workforce is strengthened.



OBJECTIVE

- Child care facilities are increased on City property.
- Child care facilities included in new development plans are increased.

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



6A) Partner with the County of San Diego and other identified partners to implement the strategies and actions of the Child Care Blueprint that reference the City of San Diego and/or OCYS.



- Convene City and community partners on facilities expansion to review upcoming projects, create strategic relationships, and navigate and expedite processes to simplify the experience of entities to secure, improve or develop child care facilities.
- Work with City partners and Community Care Licensing toward changes in zoning and permitting, inclusion of child- and family-friendly community development plans, and innovative solutions to improving and developing child care facilities.
- Work with Economic Development Department to assess the possibility of using development dollars for facilities expansion to include innovative financing mechanisms in redevelopment plans.
- Identify where buildings or land owned by the City could include child care at little or no cost to providers through long-term leases.
- Work with City partners to include incentive points in Notices of Funding Availability for developments that integrate child care spaces into new development based on recommendations from the regional colocation report.
- Support the City to include child care as a component in all community planning.
- Build on local efforts to identify successful community funding models for addressing the child care subsidy gap, and provide financial assistance.



6B) Implement Measure H by creating spaces for licensed child care.



- Partner with Parks and Recreation to identify spaces and facilities suitable for licensed child care.
- Identify and secure funding for facility upgrades and/or procurement.
- Conduct facility upgrades and/or procurements.
- Issue solicitations for child care operators.

6. CHILD CARE

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS



6C) Repurpose existing space to expand recreational pre-kindergarten programs.



- Partner with Parks and Recreation to identify spaces and facilities suitable for safe operation of license-exempt recreational pre-kindergarten programs.
- Identify and secure funding to provide for free-reduced cost programs in identified communities of concern.
- Issue solicitations to contract with operators.

6D) Partner with the City's Economic Development Department to uplift the child care workforce.



- Identify funding sources to make child care more affordable for families while increasing revenue for child care providers.
- Identify and implement programs to support child care providers with business operations.
- Partner with local colleges and universities to expand access to education programs for child care providers to attain degrees, permits, and/or credentials to expand their employment options.
- Host early care and education job fairs and recruitment events.



FUNDING STRATEGIES

The Child and Youth Plan requires a commitment to identifying sustainable funding to carry out the work detailed in the strategies and actions listed, including staffing the Office and Child and Youth Success appropriately to lead the efforts. This includes the various roles OCYS is identified to play in the implementation of the CYP:

- Develop and strengthen partnerships (internal and external);
- Navigate and strengthen systems and resources;
- Support and expand access for youth leadership and voice;
- Collect, share, and use data;
- Advise on the priorities for children, youth, and families in City planning and policymaking; and
- Seek local, State, Federal, and philanthropic funding.

As a sustainable funding source has not yet been identified, OCYS is committed to working collaboratively with City leadership as well as partners to identify and secure funding.

Potential strategies include:

1. Leverage existing public funding. Analyze existing funding streams, look for opportunities to leverage resources across departments and to support system-wide coordination.
2. Work with the City's grants office to identify and apply for County, State and Federal child and youth development opportunities. Identify opportunities for City departments to jointly apply for funding on behalf of the City.
3. Seek philanthropic funds where priorities are aligned.
4. Leverage OCYS to partner with existing funding collaboratives to identify where priorities are aligned and whether the City is eligible for funding. Explore the creation or expansion of public-private partnerships.
5. Identify funding streams that can be earmarked for child and youth development efforts. Consider setting aside funds from development projects, fees, or tax revenue.





Office of Child and Youth Success



sandiego.gov/child-youth-success



ocys@sandiego.gov



[@SDChildYouthSuccess](https://www.instagram.com/SDChildYouthSuccess)

