

December 2010



Multi-Disciplinary Research Methodology for Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions

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HYHR2010-13



This paper is a product of Healthy Youth/ Healthy Regions, a collaborative partnership of the UC Davis Center for Regional Change, Sierra Health Foundation and The California Endowment. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions was commissioned and funded by Sierra Health Foundation with additional funding from The California Endowment to document the connections between youth well-being and regional prosperity in the nine-county Capital Region of Northern California.

Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions produced a series of twelve related Working Papers. These papers can be accessed via the Center for Regional Change website: <http://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu>.

Published By: Center for Regional Change
University of California, Davis
One Shields Ave, 1309 Hart Hall
Davis, CA 95616
530.751.8799

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Citation Information:

London, Jonathan K., Nancy Erbstein, Chris Benner, Patsy Eubanks Owens, Gloria Rodriguez, Michael Rios, Mindy Romero, Rebeca Burciaga, Kindra F. Montgomery-Block, Anne-Marie Flynn. 2011. *Multi-Disciplinary Research Methodology for HealthyYouth/Healthy Regions*. Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Working Paper. Center for Regional Change, UC Davis.

Introduction

Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions employed a mixed-method, multi-disciplinary, and multi-scale approach to understanding the inter-dependence of youth and regional health and well-being. In this document, we provide an overview of Healthy Youth/Healthy Region's unique research design, data analysis and documentation processes.

The study design embodies several important and innovative characteristics that make it unique in the field of youth studies.

- The study reflects the evidence that many different factors determine health and well-being, while focusing on five major, interrelated contributors: education, physical and mental health conditions, employment, civic engagement, and the built environment. The breadth of these factors reflects the understanding that health is not simply a product of health care, but instead is shaped by multiple and overlapping influences, sometimes called the social determinants of health.
- It is multi-disciplinary, employing the tools of statistics, demography, geography, economics, political science, planning, sociology, anthropology and social media across the fields of education, public health, community planning/ development, design and social services/juvenile justice.
- Data employed include quantitative secondary data focused on education, health, employment, and population demographics and qualitative data generated via both ethnographic methods and a variety of community-based participatory research methods.
- The youth participatory action research component of the study provided direct access to youth voice, in a way that was genuine to youth experiences of health and well-being providing a crucial check on the adult researcher's interpretations and offering an empowering and educational opportunity for the youth researchers themselves.
- It spans multiple scales and multiple-populations, and, therefore, sensitive to spatial variations and distributions across the region.
- GIS mapping technologies were utilized to identify and highlight these distributions and any existing disparities.
- To ensure that the research was relevant to policymaking and advocacy efforts in the region, an advisory committee of regional leaders from the business, education, social service, political, and philanthropic sectors as well as nationally-renowned academics was formed to review and comment on the data collection, analysis and documentation throughout the process.
- During and following the final phases of the research documentation, the project team implemented an intensive regional outreach process to infuse the study findings and recommendations into the arenas of policy, advocacy, philanthropy, business, and youth-serving institutions.

Capital Region Study Area

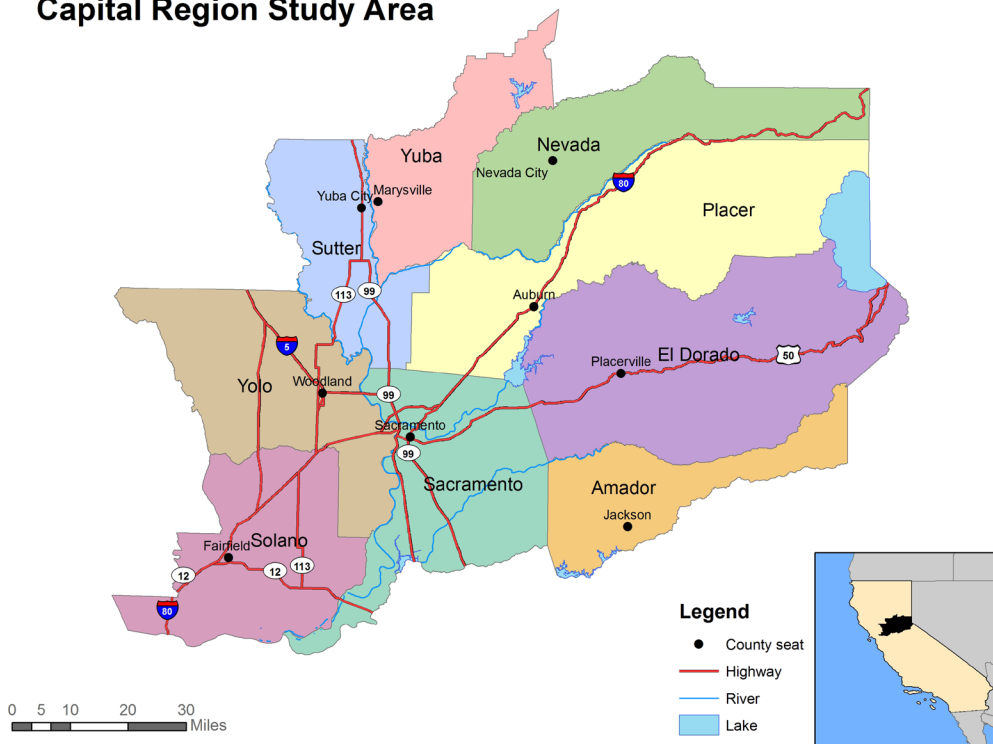


Figure 1. The 9-County Capital Region Study Area

Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions explores the following broad questions:

1. How is the health of the Capital Region's young people shaped by regional structures, systems and patterns?
2. How is the health of the Capital Region shaped by the health of its young people?
3. What Capital Region assets could be mobilized on behalf of youth health and regional health?
4. What steps could be taken to improve outcomes for youth and the region as a whole?

Research Process

Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions data collection and analysis progressed through eight key steps (see Appendix- Figure 1 for a diagram of our research conceptual framework and process):

1. Assemble a multi-disciplinary team with expertise across the spectrum of issues relevant to a holistic analysis of youth well-being. The team brought together nearly 100 members: including 35 faculty and students from Education, Human Development, Community Development, Geography, Environmental Design, Sociology, Public Health, several non-profit youth organizations embedded in a diverse array of communities, and over 50 teen-age action researchers.
2. A key early decision made by the project team was to examine youth well-being as woven from five “strands” that are fundamental and inter-dependent components of youth transitions to adulthood: education, physical and mental health, work, civic participation, and the built environment. Furthermore, the study adopted a developmental approach to youth health and well-being, using the notion of “pathways” for a successful transition to adulthood.
3. Organization into three methodological teams (quantitative, qualitative and participatory action research) to allow for triangulation between different types of data and methods and to take advantage of unique strengths in the research team.
4. Collecting and documenting data within these methodological teams.
5. Performing analysis within and across methodological teams and at multiple scales (e.g., individual, population, neighborhood, county, region).
6. Development of 11 topical working papers as products of cross-cutting methodologies and regional analysis.
7. Utilization of working papers as an interpretive step toward the development of a synthesis report.
8. Design supporting products such as a Youth Story Map and a Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions data system to provide on-going access to and further development of data sets.

Study Scope, Scale and Limitations

We focused our data collection within California's Capital Region, the nine counties (Sacramento, Yolo, Solano, Yuba, Sutter, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, and Amador) that encircle the State Capitol. This region includes the six counties organized through the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, the Metropolitan Planning Organization that plans for and distributes federal and state transportation funding, and therefore aligns with the principal institutional of regional governance. By adding the Solano, Nevada, and Amador Counties, the study unit matches the definition of region that has been used by the Sierra Health Foundation for their REACH initiative and it also represents a recognized regional commute-shed. It is important to note that while the quantitative data covered the whole of these nine counties, the qualitative data was collected in a more focused circle, approximating a 45 minute commute-shed, and therefore excluding the Sierra foothill and Tahoe sub-regions of El Dorado, Placer, Nevada and Amador Counties and the western extent of Solano County that is more oriented to the Bay Area. Time constraints also made extensive qualitative interviewing less feasible in the far east and north extents of the region.

While broad in scope, encompassing multiple dimensions of youth health and well-being, there were a number of important elements that the study did not fully address based on resource constraints.

As a study primarily on adolescents, the youth participants included young people from ages 11-24 (The older youth, ages 18-24, were considered on the issues of voting and employment). For resource-constraint reasons, the study did not include data the early childhood years (with the exception of some of the secondary health data) even though there are important precursors to health and well-being in later life phases in these years. Future research that focuses on issues such as chronic absenteeism and low-literacy in elementary school, and early childhood influences such as placement in foster care, access to academic enrichment programs and other factors would provide important value to build on this study.

On the other end of the age spectrum, the study did not include an explicit focus on parents and adult family members of youth in the region and addressed these issue more indirectly. For example, the study analyzed teen births in the secondary health data, included the participation of a several teen parents in the young adult ethnographies, integrated household income in the vulnerability index and examined young people's perceptions of social, emotional, educational and career support received from adults. Future research that both includes parents and family members in interview samples and greater breadth of secondary data on family demographics (e.g., single parent families, educational and economic outcomes, health conditions) would be an important elements to build on this study.

The study's attention to juvenile justice was limited to inclusion of juvenile arrests by zip code in our youth vulnerability index, and some mention within the youth ethnographies (methods for which are included below). Problems with data availability, for example that fact that only arrest data is available at the precinct level (and even there not broken out by race and ethnicity) with other data to describe overall contact with the juvenile justice system (e.g., court

diversion, convictions, parole, probation available only at the county level. Second, access to youth involved in the juvenile justice system (especially those currently incarcerated) was highly restricted and not logistically feasible within the study period. Future research on the profile of youth in the juvenile justice system and the implications for this experience in multiple dimensions of the health and well-being.

More broadly, a limitation of the study is paradoxically, that its ambitious and holistic scope made it challenging to integrate all elements into one analysis. For example, to ensure the genuine incorporation of youth voice into the study, the youth participatory action research component of the project operated independently for much of the project. Similarly, while there was significant triangulation between the qualitative and quantitative data, more time for an iterative data analysis in the final phases of the project would have further enhanced the study.

A further challenge for the study was its engaged scholarship stance, one that necessitated a constant process of balancing rigor and relevance. This balancing act worked to hold simultaneously, the interests of the foundations that sponsored the project and who legitimately sought policy relevant results and a study that could serve as a catalyst for change with the academic culture of producing knowledge in a neutral space considered outside of the influences of politics and unfamiliar with the time pressures and drive for messaging that can be associated with applied research. A related challenge came in the writing of the final research report itself, through a tension between the conventions of academic writing, that emphasis a dispassionate and data-driven style and an applied policy style of writing that is values based and seeks to message the data in compelling ways to lead specific audiences to take specific actions. Likewise, the research team and foundation partners both had to contend with the range of regional stakeholders who sought access to the research during the study period to apply to their own action agendas: a laudable goal, but one that made focusing on the research itself more challenging. A strategy in which the foundation would have funded a complementary set of partners to lead a policy development and a community organizing component to the larger project might have allowed an for on-going regional engagement and greater momentum for the action agenda proposed by the study.

Before describing the study methodology in more detail, we will lay out the elements of the study's conceptual framework: Why Regions Matter; Developmental Pathways and Resisting and Reframing, "Cultural Deficit" View of Youth, and Social Disparities and Determinates of Health.

Why Regions Matter

This report is rooted in a regional perspective, recognizing that metropolitan regions are an increasingly important scale for both understanding and acting upon many kinds of development challenges. The following section describes what we mean by a regional perspective, and what we know about the importance of regional dynamics and action, and the nature of healthy regions.

Throughout this report, the term "region" refers to what is, essentially, a metropolitan area consisting of an urban core with a high density of population and employment, along with the surrounding areas (typically sub-urban and rural) that are socio-economically linked to that urban core. Although the importance of metropolitan regions has been well understood by urban planners for at least the past century, it is only in the last several decades – as part of what has been described by some as the "new regionalism" – that other key social actors (e.g., the business community, policy makers, environmental planners) have come to see "region" as an important geographic locus for planning and development (Wheeler, 2002). The constituencies that make up the multiple streams of new regionalism are diverse, yet they share at least three fundamental perspectives on the importance of regions.

Regions are the scale at which fundamental processes occur and problems are created. Regional processes and dynamics drive much of what determines our social, economic, and environmental conditions and futures. These dynamics include daily commute patterns; interactive innovation processes shaping economic dynamics; suburban sprawl and auto pollution shaping environmental problems; and the flight of middle and upper income families, speculative housing investment and gentrification driving patterns of poverty and urban blight. In the economic realm, for example, it is the relationship between firms, both large and small, and their connections with educational and research institutions, along with the residential, entertainment, and aesthetic amenities to attract 'creative class' workers, that largely determine innovation and economic competitiveness (Florida, 2004).

Regions are seen as an important scale for solutions to problems that emerge. Around the country, a large and growing number of coalitions are coming together around shared interests and to solve common problems that cross social and geographic boundaries. Urban and suburban congregations, in order to improve transit access, unite to advocate for the creation of a regional transit authority and 'fix-it first' transportation policies that support transit and maintenance of existing roads before building new freeways. Environmental groups come together with labor unions and neighborhood advocates to help clean up the air pollution in a region's trucking industry. Business leaders address economic concerns by creating

a regional organization to promote ‘civic entrepreneurship’, linking multiple counties and promoting regional solutions to disparate levels of access to quality education, spatial mismatch between jobs, housing and transportation, and the continued concentration of poor minorities (Blackwell & Fox, 2004).

Regions are an important scale for building the political will to achieve solutions.

In some ways, this is surprising—politics are normally played out at local, state or federal levels, where the strongest levers of political power still lie (Benjamin & Nathan, 2001). Yet it is precisely the entrenched nature of politics in these traditional spheres that all too often has contributed to seemingly intractable metropolitan-level problems (e.g., sprawl) and that continues to hinder the development of new solutions (Wheeler, 2002). Many political actors have found that engaging in politics regionally (e.g., in establishing regional councils of governments, or Federal metropolitan planning organizations in the transportation arena) leads stakeholders to move out of traditional institutional silos and ingrained self-interests. Similarly, community development leaders, despite having been long-rooted in neighborhood-based interventions, have increasingly recognized that attracting resources to poor neighborhoods often requires redirecting resources from places of opportunity elsewhere in the region—essentially building an ‘outside game’ designed to build alliances with suburban allies, along with the traditional urban ‘inside’ game (Pastor & Benner, 2010; Pastor, Benner & Matsuoka, 2008).

While promising, it is important not to over-state the power and pervasiveness of the new regionalist movement. The U.S. lacks significant regional government institutions and many stakeholders and potential stakeholders are wary of regional solutions. Governmental policy is still predominantly developed and implemented in non-regional institutions, whether in local city councils, state capitals, or the Federal Government. In a region like the 9-County Capital Region that has a relatively strong urban core, some suburban and peri-urban constituencies fear that a regional perspective will do no more than disguise further redirection of resources to dominant the urban core. Different types of regional activity can favor certain interests over others, depending on the dominant perspective(s) of those at the table. Moreover, regionalism can be pursued through top-down processes dependent on existing leadership networks or through more bottom-up processes emphasizing new voices and perspectives (Wheeler, 2002; Benjamin & Nathan, 2001). The very boundaries of how regions are defined can include or exclude important constituencies, especially in our sprawling mega-regional complexes. Think, for example, of the thousands of middle-income residents of Central Valley communities such as Tracy, Manteca and Stockton who commute daily to the Bay Area but are excluded from Bay Area regional government processes. Nonetheless, new regionalism efforts are emerging across the country with powerful outcomes, and are highly relevant to the 9-county Capital Region.

Developmental Pathways

Taking a developmental approach to youth health and well-being focuses attention, not only on outcomes (such as school drop out, pregnancy, unemployment) but the processes that support a healthy transition to adulthood. The HY/HR study adopted this framework to both

identify the key dimensions of health and well-being and the analytical lens through which to view these dimensions. Schorr and Marchand (2007) identify four goal areas associated with a pathway on which “more young people make a successful transition to adulthood.” They are: (1) youth are prepared for employment and higher education, (2) youth have expanded labor-market prospects, (3) youth have increased prospects of thriving, belonging and engaging, and (4) the highest risk youth receive effective services and supports. While not using the same terminology, these pathways align well with the HY/HR focus in education, work, civic engagement, and health. Similarly, critical attention to the framework of “pipelines”, from high school to college, from school to career, and conversely, from school to prison (Wald, 2003) offer a powerful imagery for these developmental processes and embed them in social structures of education, economy, policy and politics.

Pittman (Yohalem, Ravindranath, Pittman & Evennou, 2010) from the Forum on Youth Investment provides a useful addition to this notion of developmental pathway with the image of an “insulated pipeline.” Youth pipelines to life success are insulated to the degree to which their strands are integrated with each other and to the degree that broader social systems and structures facilitate and don’t impede movement along these pipelines. Such factors can include public policies (e.g., punitive versus restorative and rehabilitative justice policies), institutional structures (e.g., mono-lingual versus multi-lingual services, workplaces with generous versus limited family leave) and the form of the built environment (e.g., youth-friendly, safe and connected versus unsafe, unwelcoming and fragmented neighborhoods.) See Figure 2 for a representation of this integrated and insulated pipeline using the four primary success strands explored in HY/HR.

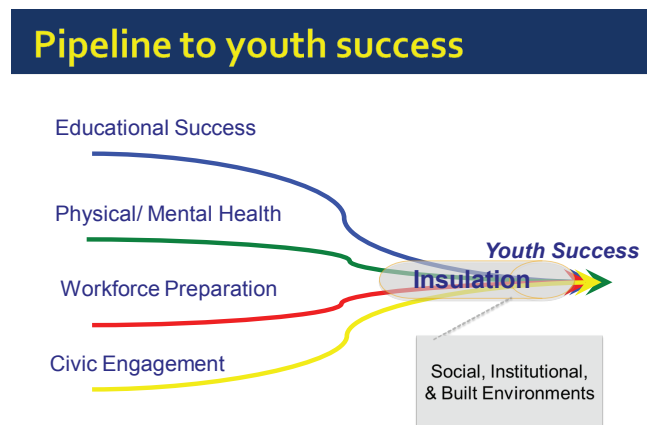


Figure 2. Pipeline to youth success

Resisting and Reframing a “Cultural Deficit” View of Youth

As a core organizing framework for the study, we draw upon the work of education researchers such as Moll (1992) and Solórzano (1988), who argue for resisting the tendency in educational research and practice to characterize “educational failure” or other vulnerabilities as

stemming primarily from the social and cultural backgrounds of students. Such “cultural deficit” views of youth also promote the belief that certain cultural and social practices that are typically associated with white and/or upper-/middle-class youth and families are (or should be) the norm against which all youth—regardless of background—are assessed. Moll (1992), Solórzano (1988), Yosso (2005) and Valenzuela (1999) argue that young people bring a wide range of beliefs, values, skills, knowledge, and experience that develop and emerge in the process of their interactions with multiple social systems, which can be utilized as assets upon which to build for successful transitions to adulthood. In this study, we sought to incorporate various strategies to ensure that the conditions and disparities are framed within the context of needs and strengths so as to maximize the opportunities to tap into the cultural wealth of the region’s diverse communities that we might otherwise miss or dismiss as community/youth deficiencies. Such a stance is also found in the fields of public health and youth development and we tapped the experience of our entire research team to reinforce this cultural wealth conceptualization of youth throughout the project.

Social Determinants of and Disparities in Health

Across all three of the above elements of the study’s conceptual framework the notion of social equity is a common denominator. This reflects scholarship (Pastor, Benner and Matsuo-ka 2009; Pastor, Benner and Rosner 2006; Fox and Blackwell 2004), which demonstrates that regional success is dependent on the equitable distribution of opportunities across all places and populations in a region. Delving more deeply into the health implications of social inequities, scholarship on health disparities and the social determinates of health make the argument that “place matters” (Bell and Rubin 2010; Winkleby and Cubbin 2003, Haan, Kaplan, and Sorlie 1987). That is, where you live and under what conditions, has a fundamental impact on how you live and your lifetime health. Expanding health research beyond epidemiology population health statistics, and social determinates of health analysis considers factors such the built environment (e.g., proximity to parks, access to fresh and affordable food, transportation), social environment (e.g., institutional bias based on race, ethnicity, class, immigration status) the economic environment (access to quality and living wage jobs as well as the economic vitality of the surrounding area) and the service environment (access to health and social services that are affordable, culturally relevant, and effective (Bell and Rubin 2010). This social determinants analysis is coupled with an analysis of racial, ethnic and class segregation to illustrate how such factors tend to be closely correlated with worse health conditions for low-income and people of color. Furthermore, because of these structural factors, improving health conditions is not achievable by improving the quality or access to health care, but must address deeper political, economic and social conditions (Williams and Jackson 2005, Williams, Neighbors and Jackson 2003; Williams, and Collins 2001).

Adding value to this scholarship is the HY/HR analysis that the success of young people is an integral element to regional success, so disparities in youth well-being has a material effect on the prosperity, vitality and sustainability of the region.

Methodological Components

Methodological components include the following and will be addressed in turn:

1. A quantitative component employing statistical methods and GIS mapping to analyze data on key inputs and outcomes related to youth health, employment, civic engagement, and education. A map atlas and archive of data sets from the study can be accessed at: www.mappingregionalchange.ucdavis.edu.
2. A qualitative component employing semi-structured interviews and other ethnographic methods to investigate relevant regional institutional networks and the school dropout experiences of youth and their adult allies. This included:
 - Adult Allies: 51 interviewees throughout the region
 - Young adults: 16 life-course interviews (testimonios) throughout the region including youth-generated maps and photographs
 - Institutional leaders: 60 interviewees throughout the region
3. A youth participatory action research component in which young people throughout the region use media to document community/neighborhood conditions that they view as supporting and inhibiting their well-being and to make recommendations for change. This included:
 - 11 youth participatory action research projects
 - 55 youth ages 11-21
 - Youth-produced videos, photographs, poems, digital maps.

1. Quantitative Component

We employed quantitative analyses of existing datasets related to our research domains of education, health, employment, and civic engagement. This allowed us to document disparities within the region, both spatially and socio-demographically, while quantifying the conditions and characteristics of those places and populations of greatest disadvantage. We combined this documentation of disparate outcomes with a detailed quantitative analysis of “inputs”—indicators of the processes that lead to the disparities in outcomes identified. Here the focus was on identifying the factors associated with disparities and analyzing the causes of inequity and the implications for the overall health of the region.

GIS mapping drew from secondary data sources such as the California Department of Education and the U.S. Census Bureau. For example, we examined 4-year derived dropout rates among the nine counties in our region and compared those along gender and race/ethnicity. We also contextualized data by discussing the distributions and concentrations of populations throughout the region, using census-based demographic maps. These maps revealed a variety of patterns that we characterize as non-random distributions of vulnerability and opportunity/strengths.

Quantitative Team Questions

The questions that guided this analysis were:

- What are the patterns of outcomes in youth well-being in the Capital Region (in education, health, employment and civic engagement)?
- What are the most important factors (inputs) associated with particular youth outcomes?
- What are the patterns of opportunities for youth in the Capital Region (in education, health, employment, civic engagement)?
- What is the relationship between youth opportunities and youth outcomes?

We outlined a set of youth outcomes and inputs to determine the current status and future implications of youth disparities in and across the region. In addition, we identified points of intersection between the five strands of well-being (e.g., education and work, education and health, civic engagement and work) and examined some of these by constructing an index of youth vulnerability and an index of youth well-being. Part of the initial challenge within the quantitative analysis was to identify publicly accessible and spatially and temporally comparable datasets.

Although this project is aimed at understanding how the region supports youth well-being overall, we prioritized our efforts by focusing first on the most vulnerable youth. Within the education strand, we view the most vulnerable youth as being those who have dropped out or who have considered dropping out of school. We recognize that dropout prevention efforts are often targeted at the earliest sign of potential dropout, which is well before students enter high school. However, to prioritize depth over breadth and to capture the complexities of life among youth in our region, we decided to focus on older youth (ages 15-24) as we explored the connections among education, labor, health, and civic participation.

The following is an overview of our quantitative methodology for both outcomes and inputs. For more detail on specific data sources and analysis see Methods Appendix #X or the relevant Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions working papers.

Education¹

Within the initial data collection and analysis, we sought to develop a view of educational outcomes at multiple geographic scales, including school, district, county, and region. We considered in particular how population demographics and other general regional characteristics intersect with and possibly influence the patterns in educational outcomes.

Key indicators were:

- Dropout numbers and rates
- Graduation numbers and rates
- Completion rates of UC/CSU prerequisites

- First-year college enrollment in 4-year and 2-year public California institutions from all high schools and districts within the nine counties.

Work²

The analysis of available data on labor market disparities in the Capital Region was focused on young adults, aged 20-24. This age group provides a good indication of the conditions of new entrants to the labor market, and how those conditions have changed over time. Our goal was to document overall employment opportunities, and to examine in more depth social and spatial disparities in both participation in the labor market and in the quality of jobs accessible to different social groups and communities.

Our initial stage of research on labor market conditions for youth was focused on analyzing the overall labor market conditions in the Capital Region, starting first from overall employment for all workers in the labor market, then moving more specifically to employment of workers from 20 to 24 years of age. In subsequent analysis, we conducted more detailed analysis of particular social groups and target communities.

Civic Engagement³

To understand how youth civic engagement (YCE) is occurring in the Capital Region, three basic questions were addressed:

1. What are types of YCE opportunities available to youth within the Capital Region?
2. What are youth experiences of YCE in the region?
3. What are lessons learned about key barriers and supports for YCE?

Quantitative measures of youth civic engagement examined include those focused on traditional electoral participation: the proportion of voting age and voting eligible 18-24 year olds voting; and those centered on community service and volunteerism: youth participation in various community service and volunteer projects. This analysis draws on a range of data sources:

- Registration and Voting Data for young adults (ages 18-24).
- UC Davis REACH Program Pilot Survey (7th and 8th grade students).
- California Healthy Kids Survey, questions on civic engagement.
- Qualitative Interview Data: Institutional, Adult Ally and Youth Ethnographies.
- Participatory Action Research with youth from around the region.

Health⁴

The health of young people can be defined broadly, as in the overall sense of this multi-disciplinary research. But even when defined through the more specific lens of mental, physi-

cal, and health safety factors, the variables influencing youth health are comprised of broad and often overlapping segments of health care, social and environmental systems. In order to advance equity in youth health the following health indicators were examined to develop an understanding of existing health and health inequities in the Capital Region:

- Global Health Measures (e.g., life expectancy, major morbidities)
- Health Care Delivery
- Social Support Issues
- The Physical Environment
- Health Behaviors
- Health Data Information
- Teen Birth
- Mental Health
- Excess Death

Health information is subject to privacy laws and regulations, which are even more stringent in the context of a vulnerable population such as young people. The consequence of these constraints was that most health data was limited to the county level. Therefore, in order to provide the most complete picture possible of the factors affecting youth health, multiple data sources were consulted including:

- The U.S. Census Bureau
- The Community Health Status Indicators
- The Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings
- California Department of Public Health and National Vital Statistics
- The Annie E. Casey Foundation's Kids Count website
- The Child Welfare Dynamic Reporting System
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- The Sacramento Business Journal

Looking Across Sectors

To begin examining youth experience across these sectors, two index projects were pursued: the Index of Youth Vulnerability and the Index of Youth Well-Being.

Index of Youth Vulnerability⁵

This index identifies geographic areas with high concentrations of adolescents facing disproportionate levels of challenge in making a healthy transition to adulthood. It provides baseline data for tracking change over time, and provides a tool for modeling potential effects of focused attention on particular populations. We employed the following 5 research-based indicators associated with young adult marginalization from the institutional settings that facilitate pathways to a healthy adulthood (Osgood et al., 2005; Settersten et al., 2005). Our dual objectives of presenting an analysis at the smallest possible geographic enumeration unit and using data that can be updated guided our selection of data sources and data points:

- not completing high school
- teen parenting
- foster care placement
- involvement with the juvenile justice system
- low family income

To construct the index, each of the variables noted above were normalized to the youth population and then categorized into quintiles. Each quintile was given a rank from 1 to 5 with 1 representing lowest levels of vulnerability or need and 5 indicating the highest levels. The map shows the zip code level rankings for each variable. Then all five variables were combined to create the overall index. It is worth noting that the quintile classification system used in this index provides a good method for comparing vulnerability from zone zip code relative to another (i.e. there will always be a top 20% and a bottom 20%). In order to track vulnerability over time, evidence-based thresholds for each variable must be set so that representational interval classification can be used.

Index of Youth Well-being⁶

To construct an index of youth well-being, we collected a number of indicators that were organized within four research-based domains - physical, educational, psychological, and social well-being. These data were organized by school district in the Capital Region. We converted each indicator into a percentage, in the positive direction, such that 100% would reflect the best possible score. A composite index looks across all four domains.

- Physical/Health Domain. We examine results of the Physical Fitness Test administered at public secondary schools to assess physical health. We also use youth survey data on substance use and other safety factors to assess avoidance of health risk behaviors.

- Intellectual/Educational Domain. We employ youth survey data on school engagement and a sense of belonging. We also use high school graduation rates and the percentage of high school graduates who have completed requirements to attend a 4-year California public university.
- Psychological Domain. We employ youth survey data on freedom from fear at school. Questions cover safety and bullying.
- Social Context Domain. We include youth survey data focused on community participation and relationships with supportive adults, as well as median household income to assess material well-being.

Data sources include the California Department of Education (CDE) (physical fitness test results, graduation rates, and UC/CSU requirement completion rates), the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), and the US Census Bureau (median income). Each map (one for each domain and the composite index) was classified using four equal sized intervals based on the inherent range in the data. The advantage of this method was that any number of school districts could fall into an interval (for example, 90% of school districts could be in the ‘highest well being’ category), allowing for improved tracking over time.

2. Qualitative Component

The qualitative component of Healthy Youth Healthy Regions was designed to address three primary questions:

- What contributes to youth (dis)connection with school, work, and other sources of support for a healthy transition to adulthood?
- How does the ‘region’ as a unit of analysis matter in the process of youth (dis)connection and patterns of disparities?
- Are there regional factors that might be addressed through regional advocacy, planning, policy development, and/or investment?

We posed an overarching question regarding whether responses to each of these questions varied geographically and demographically.

The design employed three strands of data: (1) a series of 3 testimonio interviews and mapping activities with 16 young adults who had left traditional high schools prior to graduating, (2) semi-structured interviews with 51 “allies” of young people who are characterized as “school dropouts,” and (3) semi-structured interviews with 60 leaders of institutions or networks that have significant responsibility for fostering youth well-being. Sampling and data collection were pursued concurrently, in light of the project timeline. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, transcripts and visual materials were cleaned of personal identifiers, and data were coded using NVivo 8, a qualitative data analysis software package. Analytical codes were both developed for each data strand to reflect their particular emphases, and organized into an overall qualitative coding structure that included parallel constructs that enable analysis across the three strands of data (See Appendix Table 6). To

facilitate coding consistency, codes were co-constructed and agreed upon by all involved in coding over the course of several team meetings. All coded data were made available to all HY/HR paper-writing teams, in order to inform multiple project analyses.

Young Adult Testimonio

The young adult strand of qualitative research focused primarily on learning about the factors contributing to youth disconnection from school and work, the types of resources that young people draw upon and construct as they navigate their circumstances, and whether and how the region as a geography matters to their experiences. This study used the method of testimonio to document the experiences of these young adults. Testimonio is a qualitative method developed in Latin America that incorporates the political, social, and cultural histories that accompany one's life experiences. Testimonio is similar to oral history, yet involves the participant in a critical theoretical reflection of personal, political, spiritual, and intellectual understandings of self and community. Testimonio, then, provides an epistemic lens to support an analytical inquiry of experiences within larger social contexts such as those outlined by Healthy Youth Healthy Regions: education, health, civic engagement, employment, and the built environment (Benmayor, 1988; Burciaga, R. 2007; Burciaga, R., Delgado Bernal, D., Cruz, C., & Perez Huber, L., 2008; Negron-Gonzales, 2009; Partnoy, 2006; & The Latina Feminist Group, 2001).

Sample

The testimonio interview sample is comprised of 16 young adults between the ages of 18-24 who left high school before graduating. Participants were recruited through a purposive sampling method to engage the diversity of populations that tend to be over-represented amongst students who are not graduating from high school (Breslau, Rodriguez et al 2010). Outreach to Capital Region participants was pursued through adults who were considered (by community members) to be close allies to young adults who had “dropped out” or considered leaving high school without graduating. The experiences of the following groups are represented (but not representative of their group): males, females, African American, Latina/o, Southeast Asian American, Native American, White, LGBTQ, 1st generation and 2nd generation immigrants, parents, foster, and some with former experience with the juvenile justice system. About half of the students have reconnected with schools to pursue certification including Certificates of Proficiency or GEDs. All 16 participants experienced movement throughout and/or beyond the Capital Region.

Data Collection

The testimonio interviews were conducted in three phases across three meetings (See Appendix (Table 3) for interview protocols). The first phase began with a testimonio interview and mapping or drawing exercise (Lynch, 1960) on youth perceptions of their environment and ended with a demographic interview questionnaire. Each participant was given a disposable camera to take photographs of places or things in the area that were important to their life-stories. The second phase, a testimonio interview and mapping exercise, focused on their

school experiences from pre-school to the present. The final, third phase, a testimonio interview about their life in the area they live in⁷, included a mapping exercise, photographs they took, and a discussion of their future aspirations. Each participant was given a total of \$75 in Target gift cards for their participation in the study and invited to participate in future work with HYHR. All participants were interested in continuing their participation.

Data Analysis

Testimonios were coded for two purposes using two methods. One purpose of coding was to explore young people's experiences of support, or lack thereof, in the areas of education, work, civic engagement and health. In addition, we were interested in being able to compare young people's responses to the characterizations of adult interviewees (e.g. to look at how young adults described experiences of healthcare in comparison to how adult allies spoke of healthcare for youth). All 16 testimonio transcripts were also coded by hand into an analysis matrix using Microsoft Word. This analysis matrix focused on five areas:

- The terms drop-out vs. push-out,
- Stereotypes of dropouts in comparison to their own experiences
- Factors contributing to leaving school
- Current schooling status and aspirations
- Prominent forms of community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005)

From this analysis, three participants' transcripts (roughly 120 pages) have been revisited and quotes reflecting the analyses were pulled and organized into a story-like format (7-10 pages). Each counterstory is roughly 95% original transcript. Participants whose testimonio counterstory appears in the final report were contacted again and sent a draft version for their approval. The interviewer reviewed each testimonio counterstory with participants, shared where their voices may appear in the future (e.g. reports, publications, and news stories), and asked about concerns or questions. The participant and interviewer then edited the testimonio counterstory for accuracy.

Adult Allies

In order to extend our learning about the factors contributing to youth disconnection from school and work, the types of resources available to young people, and whether and how the region as a geography matters to their experiences, we interviewed 51 adults who had demonstrated a strong capacity and commitment in their work with vulnerable youth populations.

Sample

Potential interviewees were defined as "adults demonstrating authentic, meaningful relationships with youth who have dropped out, or considered dropping out, of school." A purposive snowball sampling process was pursued throughout the region via initial outreach to youth, youth workers, and institutional leaders that were known to Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions team-members, advisors and foundation partners. A total of 51 adult allies, were selected to

reflect the diversity of geographies, youth supports and youth experiences of the region, as noted in Tables 1 and 2 below.⁸

Table 1. Adult Allies: Organization Types

Organization Type	# of Interviewees
Continuation school/alternative education	10
Comprehensive wraparound	9
High school	9
Mentoring	8
Employment training	6
Youth center	3
Youth civic engagement	3
Health services (including mental health)	3
Law enforcement/Probation	2
Affordable or Transitional housing	2
General youth development/other	2

Table 2. Adult Allies: Specific Youth Populations Served

Youth Population	# of Interviewees
Juvenile justice / Incarcerated parents	8
Immigrant	8
Homeless	8
Foster care	6
Gang-affiliated	4
Pregnant / Parenting	2
LGBTQ	2

Data Collection

A total of 39 in-person, semi-structured interviews were conducted over a period of six months. Most interviews were one-on-one, although in three cases interviews were conducted with groups of two to four individuals. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Interviewees selected interview locations. The interview protocol was designed to focus on several key questions (see appendix (Table 2) for full interview protocol):

- Who makes up the population of youth ages that's out of school and out of work here?
- What accounts for their leaving school?
- What's in place to support school completion/healthy transition to adulthood? How would you describe their accessibility/efficacy for various populations?
- What's in place to support youth who leave high school without graduating? How would you describe their accessibility, efficacy for various populations?
- Are there untapped resources to support youth in this area?
- What needs to change to help youth make healthy transitions and address disparities in opportunities and outcomes?

Data Analysis

All adult interviews were coded in NVivo 8. Codes were generated to explore: (1) ally perceptions of the factors contributing to school disconnection, (2) the nature and quality of existing supports for youth across the arenas of education, health, civic participation, and workforce preparation and attachment, (3) the causes of demographic and geographic disparities in youth opportunities and outcomes, and (3) critical next steps to increase support for youth well-being. To-date, most analysis has focused on emergent themes and their frequencies.

Institutional Leaders

Two phases of in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with leaders representing youth serving institutions as well as policy and advocacy organizations in sectors related to education, health, civic engagement, built environment, and workforce development in the Capital Region. Inquiry was made into the extent and function of institutional networks; and, the opportunities and limits of multi-scale coalition efforts that address patterns of disparity in the Capital Region.

Institutional Interviews: Sampling Strategy

Sample selection criteria for these interviews combined a snowball technique with a stratified

sample based on sectoral representation with respect to education, health, workforce, civic engagement, and the built environment. Selection of participants also considered geographic diversity of the nine-county study area, although this was unachievable due to the concentration of institutional representatives in Sacramento County.

Table 3. Institutional Interviews: Sample Description

Focus	# of Interviewees*
Education	31
Workforce	20
Civic Engagement	36
Health	28
Built Environment	20
Youth Development	10

* Many interviewees are counted more than once because the interviewees and their organizations work across multiple sectors.

Data Collection

Phase I:

An initial set of thirteen exploratory interviews lasting between one and two hours was designed to assess the region as a place for youth and to map the institutional landscape of youth-serving organizations in the nine-county Capital Region. An interview protocol was developed for phase one interviews and consisted of semi-structured questions focused on collection of descriptive data and identifying key stakeholders. Questions focused on:

- View of the region as a place for youth
- Organizational descriptions
- Youth development partnerships
- Broader network(s).

Phase II:

A second set of forty-seven interviews went into more depth on three research questions related to youth well-being: (a) the framing of problems, solutions, and motivations; (b) the mobilization of financial and organizational resources; and (c) policy opportunities and constraints. Questions focused on:

- Existing collaborative relationships
- How youth problems and solutions are framed
- Resources and resource gaps
- Policy barriers and opportunities.

(See appendix Tables 4 and 5 for institutional interview protocols).

Data Analysis

An analytical framework was used to identify the scalar framing of problems, solutions, and motivations concerning youth well-being, development, and equity (Table 5). Of the three research questions above (framing of issues, resource mobilization, and policy opportunities and constraints), the choice to use collective action frames as a basis of studying youth-serving institutions in the Sacramento region was to test the legibility of broad youth frames at the regional scale and to collect baseline data concerning the multiple and, often divergent, perceptions among institutional actors concerning the problems and solutions facing youth; motivations that might impel people to act (including youth) on these issues; and the opportunities, constraints, and affordances in navigating regional and local systems focused on health, education, civic engagement, workforce, and the built environment.

Policy networks, coalitions, and industry groups, among others, use “frames” to fashion shared understandings, or representations, of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate action toward shared goals (McAdam and Snow, 1997). This includes the purposeful framing of problems and issues, and the construction of an identity around movement activities (Buechler, 2000; Melucci, 1996). Some of the more common collective action frames include diagnostic frames based on problem and justice/grievance arguments, prognostic framing that proposes strategies and solutions to a problem, and motivational frames purposively created to mobilize individuals and groups into action (Benford and Snow, 2000).

Table 4. Scale and Collective Action Frames (Rios 2006)

Scale Typologies	Core Framing Tasks
Scales of Attribution: Representations that identify a problem, grievance, or injustice	Diagnostic frames based on problem and grievance arguments
Scales of Association: Representations that resonate between different social groups to create a shared understanding, identity, or ideology	Prognostic framing that proposes strategies and solutions to a problem
Scales of Agency: Representations that bound an environment in which collective action is to occur	Motivational frames used to mobilize individuals and groups into action

The analysis of institutional interviews coded data with respect to diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames. One limitation is the major themes emerging from the analysis, which relied on the frequency of themes mentioned by interview participants rather than other types of categorizations based on sectoral representation or geographical location, for example. The decision to ‘lump’ together these data was meant to identify themes and sub-themes that, in some cases, contradict one another—the purpose of which was to foreshadow challenges that lie ahead concerning the framing of youth issues.

3. Youth Participatory Action Research (Y-PAR) Component⁹

A youth participatory action research approach was used to incorporate youth perspectives

on the factors that support and impede their success, and to identify assets that can be mobilized to improve conditions in the Capital Region. Our PAR approach includes “a commitment to conducting research that shares power with and engages community partners in the research process and that benefits the communities involved” (Israel, et al., 2008, p.4). Youth can be true partners in research rather than passive spectators or recipients, resulting in mutual benefits for the participants as well as the organizations, communities, or schools that they help improve (O’Donoghue, Kirshner & McLaughlin, 2002).

The youth participation component of HY/HR consisted of three clusters of projects: Youth Voices for Change, REACH Youth Media Project, and Youth In Focus. All three clusters used youth-produced media techniques to gather and share youth perspectives with the broader community, to increase community awareness, and to gain and influence adult support for change. A total of approximately 75 youth, ages 11 to 22, were involved in gathering and sharing stories through eleven youth research and media projects.¹⁰ The youth participants came from culturally and ethnically diverse urban communities and small towns; the majority of youth are also from low-income families. Many are disenfranchised or marginalized because of their access to equipment or technology and/or because of the social identity (race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, primary language, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, etc.)¹¹

The participants were recruited in partnership with community-based organizations that hosted each project, with specific attention to gathering a diverse set of groups and individuals in order to convey the multiple stories and a regional story of youth in the Capital Region. Incentives were offered to encourage participation and consistency. The Youth Voices for Change participants who completed their project got to keep digital cameras, participants in the REACH Media project received stipends or other incentives such as gift cards, and the Youth In Focus participants received either gift cards, stipends, cameras or some combination of incentives. The YIF photo project’s host organizations received stipends as well. Youth and their organizations were also assured acknowledgment and credit for their work when cited or incorporated into the Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions study and into any other academic publications and presentations.

Youth Voices for Change. This effort engaged 17 West Sacramento youth, the Sactown Heroes, in identifying and recording conditions in their community that they liked and did not like, and in recommending changes. Those participating in the PAR effort ranged in age from 11- to 18- years old. Most were male and were from low-income and ethnically diverse families.

Along with the Heroes, The Youth Voices for Change (YVC) team included adult members of the West Sacramento Youth Resource Coalition¹², the UC Davis Art of Regional Change¹³ program, and the Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions research team¹⁴. This effort included four



Youth Voices for Change Story Circle

primary phases: 1) partner selection & project definition, 2) engagement and data gathering, 3) media production, and 4) dissemination and action. In general terms, each of the first three phases took place over four-month periods. The last phase is ongoing.

Table 5: Youth Participants in Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Participatory Action Research Projects

PAR Sub-Team	Site(Location)*	Project Name (type)	Participants (#)	Age	Gender	Race/Ethnicity**
REACH Youth Media Project	Galt Area Youth Coalition	Small City, Big Problem: What Would You Do About It? (Video)	4	15-18	3F, 1M	1 African American; 3 Latino Americans
REACH Youth Media Project	Sacramento ACT Meadowview Partnership	Lack of Role Models in Our Community (Video)	2	15-16	2F, 3M	2 Latino Americans
REACH Youth Media Project	South Sacramento Coalition for Future Leaders	Education Depletion: Rising Up & Taking Action (Video)	2	17-19	1F, 1M	1 African American; 1 Hmong
REACH Youth Media Project	Woodland Coalition for Youth	Open Your Eyes: Teen Pregnancy (Video)	5	15-18	2F, 3M	5 Latino Americans
Youth In Focus	Hmong Women's Heritage Association (South Sacramento)	Voice Thru Photos (Photos)	4	15-17	1F, 3M	4 Hmong
Youth In Focus	La Familia Counseling Center (South Sacramento)	Gifted Young Ladies (Photos)	3	17	3F	1 African American; 2 Puerto Rican; 1 Chicana/o; 2 European American
Youth In Focus	Sacramento Gay and Lesbian Center	Rainbow 916: A Sacramento LGBTQ Youth Narrative (Needs Assessment, Video)	25	13-22	10F, 12M, 2 Trans, 1 Intersex	5 Latina/o; 4 African American; 2 Asian/Asian American; 1 Native American; 10 European American; 3 Multiracial/Multiethnic
Youth In Focus	Sutter/Yuba Friday Night Live (Marysville)	Youth Memories (Photos)	4	12-16	2F, 2M	3 Latino/a; 2 European American
Youth In Focus	The Met Sacramento Charter High School	One Day at a Time: The Making of the Resource Room (Needs Assessment, Video)	5	15-17	3F, 2M	1 African American; 1 East Indian; 3 European American; 1 Latino/a
Youth In Focus	WIND Youth Services (Sacramento/Del Paso Heights)	Eyes of the Youth (PhotoVoice)	4	19-21	2F, 2M	3 African American; 1 East Asian
Youth Voices for Change	Sactown Heroes - West Sacramento Youth Resource Coalition	Youth Voices for Change (Mixed Media: Photos, Video, Google Map, Comic Book)	17	11-19	2F, 15M	7 African American; 7 White; 6 Native American; 3 Latino; 2 Portuguese; 1 Chicano/Latino, 1 Pacific Islander

*Sites listed are the meeting locations; some groups drew members from a wider geographical area than others.

** Numbers represent the total of each racial or ethnic group; respondents were able to indicate multiple groups. Each project was conducted by a group of young people that was sometimes in flux, and some of the demographic information was estimated and/or collected differently at each site.

The initial design of the YVC effort focused the four strands – lifestyle, education, economics, and civic engagement – outlined in the Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions research design. Weekly one and one-half hour meetings were held with the Heroes. Each topic was discussed during one meeting through interactive exercises (e.g. collages, mapping) and the youth were asked to think about and photograph things in their community that represented that week's topic. The following week the youth were to return with photos. After several weeks, it became clear that this approach was not capturing the youths' true feelings about their community; they seemed to be giving what they thought were the "right" answers rather than their honest opinions. (We later learned that this assessment was correct. In the final debrief meeting one participant said that he felt like in the beginning they were just telling us what they thought we wanted to hear.) The following weeks' discussions evolved to focus on the things in West Sacramento that the Heroes like, do not like, and want to change. The group engaged in group reflections, mapping, poetry activities, story circles and more. This data gathering process culminated in a week-long event, the Spring Fling, in which youth were transported to locations around the community to photograph and video places and stories they had identified. (See Figures 2 & 3.¹⁵)

With support from the adult project members, the youth produced a web-based map embedded with these photos and videos (ross, Schmidt & Owens, 2009, see Figure 4).¹⁶ Posters highlighting the youth's haiku poetry produced during workshops and comic style posters with photos and balloon captions were created. These materials, along with a digital photo collection, a youth-run video studio, and a wall for public comment, were displayed at a Project Exhibit and Idea Exchange. Following this public showing, several youth helped to develop a comic book entitled Youth Voices for Change: Opinions and Ideas for the Future of West Sacramento (Owens, 2010) that makes recommendations on issues of transportation, community pride, education and recreation. The materials were also developed into two exhibits – one on long-term display at the West Sacramento City Hall (Youth Voices, 2010) and the other premiering at the UCD Buehler Alumni & Visitor Center and currently at Sierra Health Foundation (ross, 2010).



Spring Fling Photo & Video Shoot

The West Sacramento Youth Resource Coalition emphasized the importance of making public presentations and reported that these presentations shifted the organization's reputation in West Sacramento, brought them key exposure that they have been able to leverage into new grants, and got the youth fired up to keep doing media projects. The Sactown Heroes are extending their work by participating in efforts to improve parks and recreation facilities in West Sacramento. Specifically, the Heroes were active participants in a design charrette for a park redesign and in City-led, recreation-planning focus groups. In tandem with their

actions on the YVC project, the Heroes led the effort to revive a city youth commission that

reports directly to the City Council; three Heroes were elected to this commission. In addition, the Heroes are currently working on securing a seat for a youth voting member of the school board as well as numerous other community-based projects.

Schmidt (2009) conducted an evaluation of the Youth Voices for Change project's levels of youth participation, benefits to participants, and success of the media creations, noting that the project "create[d] opportunities for meaningful youth participation through strong adult/youth relationships, youth directed curriculum and effective transfer of ownership at the conclusion of the research portion of the project" (pp. 5-6) despite some limitations of time and resources. The Youth Voices for Change Guidebook (Owens & Perry, forthcoming) created from the methods and take-aways of this project will provide a resource for other youth and youth allies throughout the region to complete a similar community assessment. These regional youth perspectives will be shared through an online Youth Story Map.

REACH Youth Media Project. The REACH Youth Media project was designed and directed by staff from the UC Davis Center for Community School Partnerships (CCSP)¹⁷, who combined the "action learning" pathways of social justice youth development,¹⁸ participatory action research, and documentary videos as the framework to guide the approach to planning and implementing the REACH Youth Media Project. A "social justice youth development" matrix was used to connect project principles, practices, and outcomes while planning the project.

From the outset, the REACH Youth Media Project was intended to be a voluntary opportunity for the original seven REACH Community Coalitions of the Sierra Health Foundation¹⁹. The project was planned as a social justice video documentary PAR initiative for older youth members that needed or wanted a stronger role in their respective REACH coalition's community assessment and evaluation process. In the spring of 2008, an application to participate in the project was distributed to REACH Coalitions. The application detailed the project objectives, participation benefits, roles, responsibilities, stipend allotment, and the time commitment of the project. (See Figure 5.) In June 2008, four REACH coalitions signed-up to be a part of the year-long REACH Youth Media Project. Those coalitions participating were: Galt Area Youth Coalition, Sacramento ACT Meadowview Partnership, South Sacramento Coalition for Future Leaders, and Woodland Coalition for Youth.

Trainings and group meetings were scheduled monthly after school or on the weekends throughout the 2008-2009 school year. Training topics and learning outcomes were designed to be progressive and to build the skills set of the youth involved. Content training meetings were held at the Sierra Health Foundation facility. Video and editing trainings were held at the UC Davis School of Education computer lab. The video-editing curriculum was based on resources produced by the Educational Video Center (2010) and a contracted video media teacher Raul Gonzo. All workshops and trainings were designed and facilitated by CCSP staff. Many times the youth involved were charged with completing assignments outside of regularly scheduled meeting times as "community work."

The REACH Youth Media Project teams first unveiled all four of their youth-led documentaries at an invitation-only red carpet showcase on May 22, 2009, at the Guild Theater in the Sacramento community of Oak Park and displayed the tremendous work, dedication, re-

search and creativity of the REACH Youth Media teams and validated the value and power of youth-led documentaries.

The four videos portray issues of youth-defined interest such as community planning, teen pregnancy, education and role models and are featured on the Sierra Health Foundation REACH website.

Events such as the REACH Youth Media Project Showcase represent the power of youth voice through civic action and community pride. Celebrating and embracing youth culture through such events also helps to solidify adult allies and community wealth. The projects also each had individual action plans. The Galt team engaged community members and increasing buy-in for the Galt Youth Master Plan, one of few such plans in the United States. The ACT/Meadowview youth intend for their video to increase student engagement with the Burbank school leadership teams. The South Sacramento team is using its video in its work with the Committee Addressing Race Equity. Lastly, the Woodland video supports and coincides with a change in the delivery of life education courses at middle schools.

Youth In Focus – Photo and Video Projects

Staff from Youth In Focus (YIF), a Sacramento-based nonprofit intermediary,²⁰ facilitated four photo projects in conjunction with Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions and contributed two videos for analysis.²¹ These six sites and products were chosen because they engaged especially marginalized young people in order to capture some of the region's diverse stories as well as shared youth experiences. YIF attempted to locate at least two of the projects in more rural locations and outside of Sacramento in order to garner more geographic diversity; however, because of various challenges in establishing partnerships, five of the projects ended up being within the City of Sacramento. Nonetheless, the YIF projects do capture insights of diverse young people as explained here.

The YIF photo projects involved 15 young people for two months in four community partner organizations: Hmong Women's Heritage Association in South Sacramento (See Figure 7), La Familia Counseling Center in South Sacramento, WIND Youth Services (a homeless youth services center) in Del Paso Heights/Sacramento (See Figure 8), and Yuba/Sutter Friday Night Live in Marysville with participants from Linda, Marysville, Wheatland and Yuba City (See Figure 6).²²

To conduct the photo projects YIF gained inspiration from The PhotoVoice Manual (Blackman & Fairey, 2007) and Jesika Maria Ross (2001) in order to augment YIF's existing, field-tested Youth REP Curriculum (Youth-led Research, Evaluation, and Planning). Each group of youth at the four community sites created a set of photos and accompanying narratives. Through cycles of discussion, photo taking (data collection) and reflection (data analysis), participants assessed the opportunities and issues in their communities and brainstormed recommendations.



'Voice Thru Photos'



'Youth Memories'



'Eyes of the Youth'

In addition, the PAR Team reviewed two youth-produced videos from earlier Youth In Focus efforts, both of which had been funded through a REACH grant from Sierra Health Foundation in 2007-08 and were in the final editing stages during the time of the HYHR study. The two video productions were completed by 30 youth (5 at The Met Sacramento High School and 25 at the Sacramento Gay and Lesbian Center) as culminating efforts of needs assessment projects also facilitated by YIF²³. The Met Sacramento High School group created a video that described how their survey of classmates' needs led to the creation of an on-campus resource room "where students could get information about internship programs, community service projects, higher education, and health" (Barrick, 2009, p.9; Youth In Focus, 2009b).

The Sacramento Gay and Lesbian Center youth research team conducted a needs assessment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) youth in Sacramento, surveying 100 youth and ultimately making recommendations about mental health services, training for educators and youth workers, increased programming and supports, and transportation needs (Sánchez, Lomeli-Loibl, & Nelson, 2009). This project's video, *Rainbow 916: A Sacramento LGBTQ Youth Narrative* (Youth In Focus, 2009a) shares the findings of the needs assessment alongside interviews of five youth and two adult allies. The video continues to be shown at community forums to raise awareness and organize advocacy efforts

Cross-Project PAR Analysis

In order to gain an understanding of the issues emerging across these projects, the PAR team conducted a cross-analysis of products generated by the three sub-teams. The process we used to analysis the data collected in the PAR projects was qualitative. We did not attempt to quantify the frequency of responses, but instead used a grounded theory approach to understanding the data collected; we sought to identify issues or concerns that were common, unique, and relevant to understanding youth perspectives in the Capital Region. Using the issue strands identified for the Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions project proposal – health, work, education, and civic engagement – as a starting point, we reviewed each video, photo caption and image, and noted mentions (including video time location) in a matrix. Based upon the occurrence of answers relating to other themes, we established two additional categories -- one on the physical environment and the other on parents/family/culture/social capital. This matrix facilitated an examination of youth comments on these

identified issue areas. For example, all responses related to education could then be culled for the range of issues or ideas emerging around that topic.

In addition, we developed a set of codes (i.e. education, transportation) that drew from possible research topics papers developed across the fully Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions team. The PAR visual, verbal and written materials were coded using NVivo software. This database allowed team members from the other Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions research teams to access the PAR data and search for topics relevant to their own research. In addition, to further increase the availability of the PAR data, we created NVivo mini-websites.

Cross-method Triangulation

Throughout the data collection and analysis process, we engaged in triangulation - a potent methodology that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from multiple sources (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Project members reached out to one another, working across methodological teams to employ the different insights and vantage points of each Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions methodological component toward a fuller understanding of youth experiences.

Supporting this cross-analysis, internal presentations of each team's work were scheduled to invite dialogue, feedback and collaboration. As principle data collection neared completion, an internal call for collaborative proposals led to the reconfiguration of working teams into those with a mixed methods approach to analysis. Sharing qualitative and PAR data, a key element to this collaboration, was achieved with the use of NVivo software, allowing for all interview and youth voices data to be organized, coded and shared efficiently across teams.

As products of the cross-cutting analyses, Working Papers were developed, building on the expertise of each team-member, further promoting cross-team/cross-disciplinary learning, and producing innovative and well-developed analyses at the regional scale. We then utilized these Working Papers as an interpretive step towards development of the final synthesis report. For all team products (including Working Papers and the synthesis report), members of the larger Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions team reviewed and provided feedback to further capitalize on team members' unique specializations and perspectives, as well as ensure the accuracy of cross paper references.

As a complement to this formal collaboration process, we also created separate spaces for informal communication (e.g. brown bag presentations). These spaces encouraged open-discussion, challenged data interpretation, and served as a continuous "status check" on the planned research process. These informal spaces also allowed for thoughtful consideration of emerging challenges to the research design and to develop creative revisions to the design, as warranted. This interplay among the teams' activities created a dynamic that pushed the boundaries of conventional mixed methods approaches. The result of this process was interdependent research, data collection, and data analysis techniques that were in a continual process of triangulation and cross-fertilization; ultimately better informing action on a regional scale.

Conclusions

Healthy Youth/ Healthy Regions is, to date, a unique study in its integrated analysis of multiple spatial scales (individual, to neighborhood, to city, to region), jurisdictions (municipal, county, regional governance bodies), sectors (education, health, business, civic engagement), subjects (youth, grassroots leaders, front-line youth workers, institutional leaders), and methods (qualitative, quantitative, and participatory with a socio-spatial approach through all three types of methods). In addition to its breadth, the study's methodological contributions center on the ability to ask and answer significant questions about the health and well-being of young people in a holistic sense across the Capital Region. Furthermore, this empirical and analytical breadth allows for the generation of policy recommendations that are grounded in a robust data set. At the same time, the breadth of the study's methodology and its seeking to bridge the academic and policy realms through an engaged scholarship model provided for a range of challenges. Future research that applies this comprehensive approach in other regions as well as those that track the changes over time of the factors documented in this study would be great value to the scholarship and practices to promote youth health and well-being.

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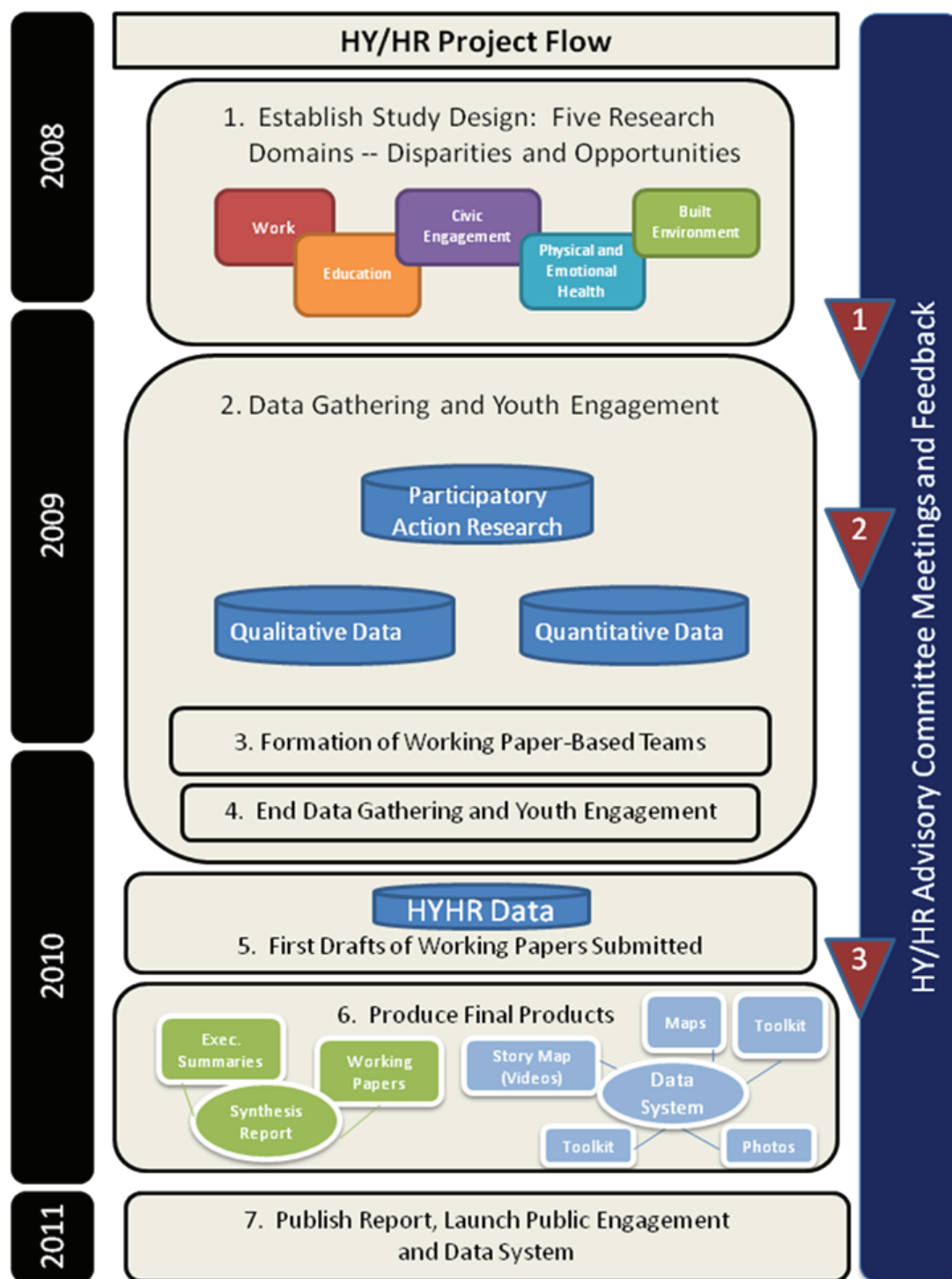
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Appendix 1: HYHR Project Flow, 2008-2011



Appendix 2: Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions Data Inventory

Section I. Quantitative Data			
Dataset	Description	Source	Source Link
Census	Demographic, economic and educational attainment data for 2008. See list of maps for selected variables.	American Community Survey (ACS)	http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html
Census	Demographic, economic and educational attainment data for 1990 and 2000. See list of maps for selected variables.	US Decennial Census	http://www.census.gov/
Census	Demographic, economic and educational attainment data for 2008. See list of maps for selected variables.	Geolytics	http://www.geolytics.com/
Education	<p>Four years of data for “cohort” that entered high school in 2004-05</p> <p>DROPOUT & GRADUATION NUMBERS AND RATES Dropout and graduation numbers for 2007-08</p> <p>GRADUATES WITH COMPLETED UC/CSU COURSES High school seniors in 2007-08</p> <p>COLLEGE ENROLLMENT Class entering public college Fall of 2008</p>	CA Dept of Education	http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/
CA public college enrollment	First-year college enrollment in 4-year and 2-year public California institutions from high schools for all nine counties (and all school districts)	California Postsecondary Education Commission	http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/

Section I. Quantitative Data			
Dataset	Description	Source	Source Link
Census	Demographic, economic and educational attainment data for 2008. See list of maps for selected variables.	American Community Survey (ACS)	http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html
Census	Demographic, economic and educational attainment data for 1990 and 2000. See list of maps for selected variables.	US Decennial Census	http://www.census.gov/
Census	Demographic, economic and educational attainment data for 2008. See list of maps for selected variables.	Geolytics	http://www.geolytics.com/
Education	<p>Four years of data for “cohort” that entered high school in 2004-05</p> <p>DROPOUT & GRADUATION NUMBERS AND RATES Dropout and graduation numbers for 2007-08</p> <p>GRADUATES WITH COMPLETED UC/CSU COURSES High school seniors in 2007-08</p> <p>COLLEGE ENROLLMENT Class entering public college Fall of 2008</p>	CA Dept of Education	http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/
CA public college enrollment	First-year college enrollment in 4-year and 2-year public California institutions from high schools for all nine counties (and all school districts)	California Postsecondary Education Commission	http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/

Section I. Quantitative Data			
Dataset	Description	Source	Source Link
National Establishment Time-Series Data	California 1990, 2008. Name, location, industry, sales, employment, near universal private-sector coverage and some public sector. Restricted access.	Walls & Associates	http://www.cpec.ca.gov/
California Secretary of State's Statement of the Vote and Statement of Registration	Registration and Votes Cast for the Nov 2004 and Nov 2008 elections by Age (18-24, 25-34, 35-44 45-54, 55-64, 65+) Gender, Party Registration (Dem, Rep, Decline to State, and Other. Years: 2004 and 2008. State, Region and County level, Party)	Statewide Data Base - UC Berkeley	http://swdb.berkeley.edu
Registration and Voter Data	Reported by California Elections Offices. Includes State, Region, County, Cities, Unincorporated Places, Precincts. Processed by William C. Velquiaz Institute (WCVI) to identify sub-populations. Includes 2008 and 2010.	William C. Velquiaz Institute	http://www.wcvi.org/
GuideStar and 211 Sacramento (CSPC)	Combined database of non-profits in the Sacramento Region		http://www2.guidestar.org/ http://www.communitycouncil.org/
California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)	Year: 2010. Student survey on school climate, student engagement and non-academic learning barriers and supports. Demographic, attitudes, lifestyle, and behavioral variables. Restricted data.	WestED	http://www.wested.org/cs/we/view/pi/245

Section I. Quantitative Data			
Dataset	Description	Source	Source Link
California Communities Pilot Survey	Student survey on student engagement, safety and non-academic learning barriers and supports. 2009, restricted data.	California Communities Program, UC Davis	
Youth Development Organizations Data	Identification of youth development organization with the Sacramento region. Data utilized are addresses and mission statements.	Guidestar and the Community Services Planning Council	http://www2.guidestar.org/ http://www.communitycouncil.org/
Births in California	All California births by zip code. Includes age < 20.	California Dept. of Public Health	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/statistics/Pages/BirthProfilesbyZIPCode.aspx
Birth Statistical Master Files	Detailed birth data for each birth in California. Obtained with IRB approval.	California Dept. of Public Health	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/dataresources/requests/Pages/BirthandFetalDeathFiles.aspx
Deaths in California	All California deaths by zip code.	California Dept. of Public Health	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/statistics/Pages/DeathProfilesbyZIPCode.aspx
Death Statistical Master Files	Detailed death data for each birth in California	California Dept. of Public Health	http://www.cdph.ca.gov/data/dataresources/requests/Pages/BirthandFetalDeathFiles.aspx
Community Health Status Indicators	CHSI includes 3,141 county health status profiles representing each county in the United States excluding territories. Used for preliminary analyses.	US Dept. of Health and Human Services	http://www.communityhealth.hhs.gov/homepage.aspx?i=1

Appendix 3: Interview Protocols:

A. Adult Ally Interview Protocol, Healthy Youth Healthy Regions/REACH Evaluation

Explain project goals, confidentiality, what happens with interview information, when/how we'll be getting products back to them. Ask whether/how want to be acknowledged in project materials.

1.
 - a. Please describe the role that you play in your organization (or “with youth,” if not in an organization). [probe length of time, how came to work with this youth population formally, informally]
 - b. Please describe the role that your organization plays with respect to youth. [probe on population served (particular needs/interests, geographies, demographics), key partner organizations]
2. How would you describe XXX (neighborhood, community) as a place for kids to grow up? What changes, if any, have you seen in these patterns over the past 10-20 years (or however long you've been in the area)? [probe on access to key developmental supports/challenges for youth populations across geography, demographic populations]
3.
 - a. Do you see any particular similarities amongst youth who are not graduating from high school? What changes, if any, have you seen in these patterns over the past 10-20 years (or however long you've been working in this region)? [probe on school experience, workforce, health, physical environment; any trends amongst children/early teens that play out over time to affect late teens, “types” of dropouts, demography, geography]
 - b. Do you see any particular similarities amongst youth who overcome challenges to making a healthy transition to adulthood? What changes, if any, have you seen in these patterns over the past 10-20 years (or however long you've been working in this region)?
4.
 - a. What types of supports (formal and informal) are available to local 10-15 years olds to help ensure that they'll make a healthy transition to their late teens and succeed in school?
 - b. How effective are they from your vantage point?
 - c. Have there been (dis)investments that have made a significant difference?
5.
 - a. What types of opportunities and resources (formal and informal) are available to youth who are dropping out of school and not staying healthy ? [probe availability, accessibility (cost, transport, culture/language), gaps]

- b. How effective are they from your vantage point?
 - c. Have there been (dis)investments that have made a significant difference?
- 6. Often communities have informal resources--such as particular people, ethnic/cultural networks, knowledge, places—that are untapped or under-used in efforts to support youth. When you think about this [community/neighborhood] or the broader area, what are the key untapped resources?
- 7. Based on your experience, what are the top 3 steps that need to be taken to increase the numbers of youth reaching adulthood happy, healthy, and ready for work/higher education?
 - a. Are you aware of the [REACH coalition]? If so, what type of contact have you had with it?[Be prepared to explain what it is, in case they have not had contact with it]
 - b.[If they've had contact] Do you expect to have further contact with [coalition]? If so, in what way?
 - c. Do you see [coalition] as a valuable addition to the community? Why or why not?
- 8. As you know, we're interviewing adults in the region who have strong, respectful relationships with older youth who have left or considered leaving school. Are there other adults beside yourself who you would suggest interviewing?
- 9. We're also planning to conduct a set of interviews next fall with young people throughout the region. If we end up working in this community, would you be willing to have a follow-up conversation during the summer about the best way to connect with youth here?

B. Testimonios Protocol

Description:

This ethnographic research protocol is designed to interview each participant three times. Each of the three phases of interviews will take, at most, two hours to complete. The participant will be asked to sketch or draw as we speak. In addition, the participant will be provided a disposable camera to take photographs of places or spaces that are important to their experiences (see instructions included).

Phase I: Demographic Interview

- 1. Tell me a little bit about yourself
 - a. What do you like to do for fun?
 - i. What kinds of music do you like/dislike?

- ii. Do you like to read? What? (magazine, book, website, etc.)
 - iii. If you could learn more about one thing what would it be? (prompt: some thing they heard about from a friend, something on TV they were inter ested in, a different country, a line of work, etc.)
 - 1. Why?
 - iv. Tell me three qualities you look for in a friend or someone you trust.
1. Where do you hang out with friends?
 2. Tell me more about the [LOCATION] (neighborhood/city) area?
 - a. When you think about [LOCATION], what words come to mind?
 - b. How would you describe [LOCATION] as a place for you (or other kids) to grow up?
 - c. I'd like you to draw [LOCATION] on this sheet of paper. It doesn't have to be perfect, a rough sketch will do. You can begin by drawing or writing anything you'd like.
 - i. Please describe what you drew here.
 3. What other places or spaces come to mind when you think about [LOCATION]?
 - a. Please draw or sketch these places in relation to what you just drew.
 - i. Please describe what you drew here.
 4. What about the school(s) you attended in this area – what words come to mind when you think of these schools/this school??
 - a. Please draw or sketch this/these schools.
 - i. Please describe what you drew here.
 - b. In our next interview we will talk more about schools but are there any other schools that you want to draw here?
 5. In the next exercise, we'll look over all the sketches you've done so far.
 - a. I'd like you to draw a circle around the sketches where you feel supported or cared for and a square around the places where you did not feel supported. Let's start with the circle. (Prompt: You don't have to circle everything on the paper)
 - i. Why did you circle these?

- ii. What words come to mind for these places?
- iii. Can you tell me a bit about the people in these places
 - 1. Please give an example of how they have supported you.
 - 2. What do you think is the most important advice you have received from this person/these people?
- b. Draw a square around the sketches/places where you do not feel supported or places you avoid or places that were not welcoming. (Prompt: You don't have to put a square around everything on the paper)
 - i. Why did you draw squares around these?
 - ii. What words come to mind for these places?
 - iii. Tell me about the people in these places.
 - iv. Who helped you navigate these spaces? (help, guidance, protection, etc.) How?
- c. What made some of these places good places and others not?
- d. If school was not chosen for supportive/not supportive areas, probe further
- 6. If applicable: How did you keep up with school while all these things were happening?
- 7. My last question before we move on to the questionnaire is about your hopes and dreams. Think about yourself 10 years from now. What are your hopes and dreams for your future? (Probes: Do you have hopes and dreams? Have you considered dreaming?" Consider narrowing timeline to 5 yrs, 3 yrs, months into future)
- 8. [Interviewer: Review and fill out questionnaire – see below]
- 9. Do you have any questions for me?
- 10. [Give participant disposable camera and instructions –see below]

Testimonio Questionnaire

Best way to get a hold of you:around everything on the paper)

- i. Why did you draw squares around these?
 - ii. What words come to mind for these places?
 - iii. Tell me about the people in these places.
 - iv. Who helped you navigate these spaces? (help, guidance, protection, etc.) How?
 - c. What made some of these places good places and others not?
 - d. If school was not chosen for supportive/not supportive areas, probe further
6. If applicable: How did you keep up with school while all these things were happening?
 7. My last question before we move on to the questionnaire is about your hopes and dreams. Think about yourself 10 years from now. What are your hopes and dreams for your future? (Probes: Do you have hopes and dreams? Have you considered dreaming?" Consider narrowing timeline to 5 yrs, 3 yrs, months into future)
 8. [Interviewer: Review and fill out questionnaire – see below]
 9. Do you have any questions for me?
 10. [Give participant disposable camera and instructions –see below]

Instructions for disposable camera:

This disposable camera is a tool we'll use to document some of the places or spaces that we talk about. Please take pictures of some of the spaces or places that we have talked about in the first interview or other places/spaces that are important to you. If you find other places/spaces that are important to you, please photograph them as well. We ask that you please try not to photograph people, as we do not have their permission to use their images. Please bring the camera to the next interview. I will make copies and bring them to our final interview for us to discuss.

Testimonio Questionnaire

First Name:

Middle Name:

Last Name:

Nickname:

Home phone:

Cell phone:

Email:

Best way to get a hold of you:

Birthday:

Birthplace:

Do you currently work? If so, where?

What kinds of jobs have you had in the past?

How do you get to work?

How long have you been working (generally)?

Address:

With whom do you live? Relation to you?

Rent or own?

Are you currently married or are you in a relationship?

Do you have any children?

If yes, name(s) and age(s):

Do you speak a language other than English?

If yes, what language or languages do you speak?

What language or languages are spoken in your home (even if you don't speak them)?

FAMILY	
Mother/same-sex-parent/caregiver:	
Name:	
Birthday or age:	
Birthplace:	
Address:	
Highest level of schooling completed:	
Occupation:	
Father/same-sex-parent/caregiver:	
Name:	
Birthday or age:	
Birthplace:	
Address:	
Highest level of schooling completed:	
Occupation:	

Siblings (include participant in order)					
Names	Age	M/F	Schooling	Occupation	Location

Occupation:
Did you know your grandfather? What words would describe him?
Name:
Birthplace: (If not in U.S. – when arrive?)
Address:
Highest level of schooling completed:
Occupation:

HEALTH

Do you have health insurance?

Did you have health insurance growing up?

Do you have any allergies? Illnesses? Hospitalizations?

Have there been illnesses or allergies in your family?

Do you and your family have access to health care when you need it?

Do you have dental insurance? yes no

Any dental problems? What has been your experience with dentists (if any)?

Do you have vision insurance?

Any vision problems? What has been your experience with optometrists (if any)?

SCHOOLING

Daycare:

Name	Address	Transportation

Preschool:

Name	Location	Transportation

Kindergarten:

Name	Address	Transportation

Elementary:

Name	Address	Transportation

Middle School:

Name	Address	Transportation

High School:

Name	Location	Transportation

Community College:

Name	Location	Transportation

Please provide the names and phone numbers of two close friends or family members in case we lose contact with you:

1. Name: _____
Phone Number: _____
2. Name: _____
Phone Number: _____

Phase II: Testimonio Interview: Schooling

[Did you have a chance to take any pictures of the spaces or places we talked about in our last interview? - Collect Disposable camera or remind to take photographs by next time we meet.]

1. Here are the sketches of [LOCATION] you drew and talked about during our last interview.
 - a. Is there anything you'd like to add to these or talk about?
2. For this interview, I'd like to focus on different periods of your life as they relate to your schooling. Here are five sheets of paper. Each sheet represents one period of your life or schooling. 1) Preschool/kindergarten; 2) Elementary; 3) Junior High; 4) High School; 5) Community College or other schooling. We'll walk through each period of life together. I'll ask some question and ask you to write down words or sketch things that remind you of this time in your life. Let's start with your self before school – preschool . . .

Preschool [new sheet of paper/s]

1. What words come to mind when you think of yourself or your family before you began school?
 - a. Please write them down here.
2. Please write the names of the daycares, preschools, or kindergartens you attended on this sheet
3. Tell me a bit about you before you began school – what you remember or what people have told you about yourself or your family as a baby/pre-school.
4. Tell me a bit about your family when you were a baby?
 - a. Where did your family live? (draw)
 - b. When did they move to where they were then? (draw)
 - c. What kind of work did your parents/family members do? (draw)
5. Did you attend preschool? Daycare? What was it/were they like?
6. Do you remember anyone telling you stories? Do you remember any singing? Books?
 - a. [Prompt: Tell me more or why not?]

Kindergarten/Elementary [new sheet of paper/s]

1. Please write down the name(s) of the kindergarten/elementary schools you attended on this sheet.

- a. Describe your elementary school(s). Write some key words below the school or each school.
2. Describe yourself during this time
3. Describe your family during this time. (living, work, routines, meals [breakfast, lunch, dinner], transportation, etc.)
4. Describe any expectations your family had of your schooling.
5. Describe any expectations your family had of how you behaved in school/out of school/with adults/with peers.
6. Describe what kinds of responsibilities you had during this time.
7. What did you like about elementary school?
 - a. Who or what was supportive in this setting? How? Why?
 - i. Personal vs. academic help
 - b. What subjects did you like? Why?
8. What did you dislike about elementary school?
 - a. Who or what was unsupportive in this setting? How? Why?
 - i. Personal vs. academic help
 - b. What subjects did you dislike? Why?
9. How did your family support (or not) you during this time? (financial, emotional, etc.)
 - a. How did you support your family? [listen carefully for health, economic, or other factors]
10. Tell me about your friends during this time?
 - a. [Prompt: How support - listen for helping others with homework, etc.]
11. What did you do after school?
 - a. Homework? Did you help anyone else with homework?
12. What did you do during your summers?

Jr. High [new sheet of paper/s]

1. Please write down the name(s) of the junior high schools you attended on this sheet.
 - a. Describe your jr. high school(s). Write some key words below the school or each school.
 - b. How did you feel about school during these years? Why?
 - c. Ask about transfer to/from jr. high – were there changes in population?

2. Describe yourself and your family during this time. (living, work, routines, meals, transportation, etc)
3. Describe any expectations your family had of your schooling.
4. Describe any expectations your family had of how you behaved in school/out of school/ with adults/with peers.
5. Describe what kinds of responsibilities you had during this time.
6. What did you like about jr. high school?
 - a. Who or what was supportive in this setting? How? Why?
 - i. Personal vs. academic help
 - b. What classes did you take? Why?
 - c. What subjects did you like? Why?
7. What did you dislike about jr. high school?
 - a. Who or what was unsupportive in this setting? How? Why?
 - i. Personal vs. academic help
 - b. What subjects did you dislike? Why?
8. How did your family support (or not) you during this time?
 - a. How did you support your family? [listen carefully for health, economic, or other factors]
9. How did your friends support (or not) you during this time?
 - a. How did you support your friends [listen for helping others with homework, etc.]
10. What did you do after school?
 - a. Were you in any sports/clubs/after school programs? Why/why not?
11. Did you work/have a job? How long?
12. What did you do during your summers?

High School [new sheet of paper/s]

1. Please write down the name(s) of the high school(s) you attended on this sheet.
 - d. Describe your high school(s). Write some key words below the school or each school.
 - e. How did you feel about school during these years? Why?
2. Describe yourself and your family during this time. (living, work, routines, meals, transportation, etc.)
3. Describe what kinds of responsibilities you had during this time.
4. What did you like about high school?
 - a. Who or what was supportive in this setting? How? Why?
 - i. Personal vs. academic help
 - b. What classes did you take? Why? How did you get into them?
 - c. What subjects did you like? Why?
5. What did you dislike about high school?
 - a. Who or what was unsupportive in this setting? How? Why?
 - i. Personal vs. academic help
 - b. What subjects did you dislike? Why?
 - c. What would have made a difference in your liking high school?
6. How did your family support (or not) you during this time?
 - a. How did you support your family?
7. How did your friends support (or not) you during this time?
 - a. How did you support your friends [listen for helping others with homework, etc.]
8. What did you do after school?
 - a. Were you in any sports/clubs/after school programs? Why/why not? Do/did you want to be? Why/why not?
9. Do you work? Regularly or sporadically? How long have you worked?
10. What did you do during your summers?
11. Have you taken the high school exit exam (CASHEE)?
 - a. If not . . .
 - i. What have you heard about it?

- ii. How do/did you feel about taking it?
 - b. If so, tell me about it?
 - i. How did you do?
- 12. What contributed to your leaving school?
 - a. Prompts: people, health, economic, or other factors
 - b. What do you think would have helped you stay in school at this time?
 - c. If applicable: What contributed to your reconnecting with school?
- 13. My final question for this interview asks what are some stereotypes of people who do not complete high school?
 - a. How do these stereotypes relate to your own experience?
 - b. Has anyone ever said these to you? What have they said?
 - i. If yes, how do you get these out of your mind? How do you stay hopeful?

Phase III: Testimonio Interview: Life in the Capital Region

1. [Ask them to choose a few photographs to discuss OR talk about places they would have liked to take pictures of]
 - a. Why did you/would you choose these places? Tell me what they mean to you?
2. We've sketched and mapped various spaces and places throughout the last two interviews. Begin with asking about places circled. Tell me about your ideal environment. How do schools fit in with this ideal environment?
3. If you could redesign or re-imagine one environment (home, schools, places to hang, stores, healthcare, jobs, etc.)
 - a. What would you change? Why?
 - i. In the areas that were challenging (ex: schools, teachers, administrators, neighbors, gangs, etc.) for you, what could have provided more support? How?
[Prompt: home, school, work, health, etc.]
 - b. It seems that you are who you are because of what you have experienced – the good and bad. What challenges are you glad you overcame or are working to overcome?
 - i. What areas already provide the right amount of support? How?
[Prompt: home, school, work, health, etc.]
4. If you could ask the people (local government) who run this area to do, change, or keep anything, what would it be? Why?
5. If you could talk to President Obama, what would you tell him about this area where you live? Why?
 - a. He asks, "Is this a good place for kids to grow up?" What would be your response.
 - b. What would you ask him to keep and what would you ask him to change? Why?
6. What do you want people outside of this area to know about where you live?

Personal vs. projected image

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. How do you think others would describe you?
 - a. What do you think other people do not know about you?

3. How are these two descriptions the same or different?

Aspirations/Hopes

1. What are your aspirations for your future?
 - a. Who do you share this aspiration with? Why/why not?
 - b. Who/what supports this aspiration? How?
 - c. Who/what does not support this aspiration? How?
2. What are your hopes or dreams for the future of [LOCATION]?
 - a. What hopes or dreams do you have for the children of [LOCATION]?
 - b. What hopes or dreams do you have for the adults of [LOCATION]?
 - c. What hopes or dreams do you have for the schools of [LOCATION]?

C. PHASE 1 INSTITUTIONAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The following are the questions that will be asked during each interview.

Background Information: Name, Title, Responsibility

1. Please describe the role that you (and your organization) play with respect to youth [probe on population served—particular needs/interests, geographies, demographics. Probe formal and informal roles, length of time in this role].
2. How would you describe the region as a place for kids to grow up? [probe on access to key developmental supports for youth populations across geography, demography]
3. How do you or your organization approach working on youth issues? [probe on mission, goal, philosophical, and/or coordinative approach]
4. What collaborative efforts to support youth, formal and informal, is your organization involved in (or that you are aware of) that touch down at the county or cross-county level? [also probe for linkages to other levels such as the state and national levels? What collective efforts is your organization not participating in and why?
5. What is the purpose of these partnerships, collaborations, and coalitions? Why did they form? How long have they been in existence?
6. Who are the participating organizations? Is there any lead or coordinating organization(s)?
7. Are efforts being coordinated among the various partnerships and collaborations? Is there any conflict or competition between these collaborations? If so, why?
8. What is your assessment of each of the entities you described? Successes? Challenges? Opportunities? Threats?
9. Which of these collaborations and partnerships is the most successful or promises to be the most successful? Why?
10. Does your organization identify itself with these collaborative efforts? To what extent are they functioning as a network? [probe about benefits that accrue from participation]
11. Do any of these collaborations, or participating organizations, involve youth directly? If so, how?
12. We plan to conduct in-depth interviews with individuals participating in the collaborations you mentioned. Can you identify 10-15 individuals that you recommend should be interviewed?
13. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

D. PHASE 2 INSTITUTIONAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

We are interested in learning about collaborations focused on youth at the regional level (the county level or larger). However, organizations address youth issues in very different ways, so we are interested in how YOUR organization incorporates youth into its activities as well as the regional collaborations your organizations is participating—if not youth-focused, then other types of regional collaborations that may address youth issues in some way.

1. Of the following-- good, fair, or poor--how would you describe the region as a place for kids to grow up? [probe on why, as well as how they define “the region”]
2. Please describe the role that you (and your organization) play with respect to youth including any collaborations you may be involved with [probe on population served—particular needs/interests, geographies, demographics. Probe formal and informal roles, length of time in this role].
3. In which collaborative efforts do you participate? Why?

The following questions relate to the first of three primary research questions: How do regional collaborations frame problems and solutions related to youth health and well being?

4. What are the main problems, challenges, and opportunities being discussed among the collaborations your organization is participating in and how are these being addressed? Probe on the utility of the regional scale—when/how is working at this scale useful? Also probe for utility of cross-sectoral collaboration].
5. Which collaborative strategies do you think are most beneficial? Why? Are there additional strategies that you think are needed to address these issues?
6. Where would improved coordination (amongst sectors and places) make the biggest difference? [probe in terms of: (a) public policy/advocacy and (b) service delivery]
7. If things went really well over the next five years, what would success look like? [probe in terms of: (a) collaboration and (b) youth outcomes]

The following questions relate to our second primary research question: How do collaborations utilize the resources of different agencies, organizations, and individuals under the goals of youth health and well being? By resources, we mean both the financial support as well as the knowledge, skills, networks, systems and other human and social resources needed. We are not after precise numbers of resources, but best approximations.

8. What resources do you provide to the collaborative efforts that we discussed earlier? Who else provides resources?
9. What do the resources devoted to the collaboration make possible that could not be

achieved any other way? Who benefits from these resources? [probe to identify benefits for the collaborative, for youth in the region, and for the organization represented by the interviewee]

10. What are the major resource issues and concerns, now and in the future that collaborative organizations collectively face?
11. Where are there resource gaps? If you could have your way, what types of resources could help regional collaborative efforts along?
12. From the perspective of building up the strengths of youth, where do you think substantial new investments would make the most difference?

This last set of questions relates to our third primary question: How does the existence of political and policy opportunities inform which strategies are pursued by collaborations?

13. From your perspective, what policies do you see acting as the most problematic barriers to what your collaborative efforts are trying to achieve? How so?
14. What are the best opportunities for new or improved policies to support healthy youth pathways to adulthood? [probe for jurisdiction/ scale]
15. Where are the centers of power with respect to youth development and well-being in the Capital Region? [if none are given then ask what are the most influential organizations and individuals with respect to youth development and well-being in the Capital Region?]
16. As an example of a youth policy effort, the Capital Region Compact for Children and Youth aims to get organizations to adopt specific strategies and be publicly accountable for increasing the odds that all youth are ready by 21 for college, work and life. Are you familiar with the Capital Region Compact for Children and Youth? If so, what do you think of that effort?

Closing

17. Is there anything else that you would like to share that we haven't discussed? [Time permitting, this is an opportunity for us to revisit a portion of the interview worth discussing further]
18. Can we add your contact information to our e-mail newsletter?

Appendix 4: Qualitative Parallel Coding Structure

Institutional	Adult Ally	Youth
Region (operative, assessment)	Important geography (state, regional, subregional, county, other)	Region
Disparity	Disparity (framing of “disparity,” implications of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, other for outcomes, access to opportunity)	Disparity
Framing (diagnostic, prognostic, motivational)	Barriers to persistence/well-being Supports for persistence/well-being	Perceptions of why interviewee/others have ended up dropping out/in circumstances/conditions that make for a challenging transition to adulthood.
Resources (financial, human, intangible)	Resources (financial, human, institutional, other)	Experience of resources, or lack of resources: Personal resources, community resources, and public resources (with attention to use vs. availability AND impact of dwindling as a result of economy) personal wealth
Strategic Action	Key next steps	Recommendations
Polity (laws and regulations, power, analysis)	Policy barriers, policy solutions, presence/absence of political will	Places where particular policies are experienced as impeding/supporting; issues that might be addressed via policy solutions

Endnotes

¹ See Breslau et al., 2010, Benner et al., 2010, which utilize these education data.

² See Benner, Mazinga & Huang, 2010, which uses this work data.

³ See Romero, London, with Erbstein 2010, which uses these civic engagement data. The California Civic Engagement Project archives these and other civic engagement data and can be accessed at: <http://regionalchange.ucdavis.edu/projects/california-civic-engagement-project-ccep>

⁴ See Geraghty 2010, which uses these health data.

⁵ See Geraghty, Erbstein, & Greenfield 2010, which presents this index of youth vulnerability.

⁶ See Geraghty, Hartzog & Erbstein, 2010, which presents this index of youth well-being.

⁷ The testimonio interviews will use “the area they live in” as a proxy for looking at how the Capital Region is conceptualized by youth as a geography.

⁸ Numbers total more than the total number of interviewees because some individuals fit in multiple categories

⁹ See Owens et al. 2010 for more detail on the youth PAR projects and analysis.

¹⁰ Due to issues of confidentiality for some of the youth participants, we have chosen not to list individual youth by name except as authors of products cited and included in these papers’ reference sections. We express our deep gratitude to all the young people who contributed to their groups’ projects and, thus, to this study. For more information on the youth participants, see “Youth Voice Matters,” Figure 3.

¹¹ The youth participants in these projects were not selected in connection with any other parts of the larger Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions study (e.g., the qualitative research component such as in the testimonios). Although participants in these youth projects may resemble other youth participants in the broader Healthy Youth/Healthy Regions study, those described and quoted here should not be assumed to be the same participants as elsewhere, and no conclusions about individual participants are intended to be drawn.

¹² The WSYRC youth director, Yaminah Bailey, was an active member of the YVC team and participated in all the youth meetings, workshops and presentations. WSYRC directors Michael Minnick and James Rodgers provided guidance and support to the effort.

¹³ The Art of Regional Change (ARC) director, jesikah maria ross, and two University scholars, Miroslava Chavez-Garcia and Michael Ziser, participated in this effort. ross, a media artist, contributed to the project formation, research questions and approach, and led the media training and production. Garcia participated in youth-led community photo shoots and presentations. Ziser facilitated youth discussions and poetry reflections.

¹⁴ Patsy Eubanks Owens, a professor of Landscape Architecture in the Environmental Design Department, was the project lead for the PAR Team and the YVC sub-team. Geography graduate student, Evan Schmidt, and Human Development graduate student, Leticia Carrillo, participated in designing and implementing the effort. Community Development graduate student, Amanda Perry, assisted with the data management, analysis and dissemination of the project materials and findings.

¹⁵ All photographs in this report were produced as part of this PAR effort. To protect the identity of youth as requested and to be consistent, we have elected not to provide individual photo credits. However, we would like to note that media artist, jesikah maria ross is the creator of Figures 1 and 2.

¹⁶ First authorship is given to adult members of the team since they served as editors of the Google map and the comic book. Youth participants created and contributed the content.

¹⁷ CCSP engages in research, evaluation and technical assistance to connect schools and communities in ways that promote high quality education for all California children. CCSP staff members Kindra F. Montgomery-Block and bel Reyes created and directed the REACH Youth Media Project as a “complementary” program of the REACH internal evaluation efforts led by Dr. Joanne Bookmyer.

¹⁸ Social Justice Youth Development: This concept focuses on urban youth of color, who have largely been ignored in mainstream youth development literature. The focus on marginalized youth allows us to examine more deeply the social issues they confront and explore how they creatively respond through organizing, political education, and identity development (Ginwright & James, 2002).

¹⁹ Sierra Health Foundation’s REACH youth grant program supports healthy development of youth for their successful transition to adulthood. Community coalitions in the Sacramento Capital Region are working to promote youth development and make long-term change for youth in their communities. Website: <http://reachyouthprogram.org/>

²⁰ Youth In Focus (YIF) fosters the development of youth, organizations, and communities by offering training and consulting in youth-led research, evaluation, and planning as a means for young people to advocate for themselves and their communities (Youth In Focus, 2002). Erbsstein (2009) has described how YIF’s work has contributed to a praxis that engages youth – especially typically-marginalized youth—in movements for justice and equity, and has influenced the emerging frameworks of “community youth development” (Hughes & Curnan, 2002) and “social justice youth development” (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002).

²¹ Alyssa Nelson, YIF Co-Director, participated as a regular member of the PAR Team and the full HYHR research team, and managed the YIF projects. Sergio Cuellar, Jolene Duren, Alyssa Nelson, Jesús Sánchez, Julia Vargas and Michael Young tailored YIF’s existing youth-led action research curriculum for use in the six projects conducted for and/or shared with HYHR. Duren, Sánchez, Vargas and Young worked directly with the community partner organizations and youth participants.

²² Special thanks to the following adult allies at the YIF photo projects’ community partner organizations for their support in arranging and carrying out these projects: Koua Franz and Seng Moua (Hmong Women’s Heritage Association); Anita Barnes, Vidal Gonzalez, and Elisse Sandoval (La Familia Counseling Center); Michael Brim and Sonny Iverson (WIND Youth Services); and Amber Royer, Carmen Smith, and Rochelle Zuniga (Yuba/Sutter Friday Night Live).

²³ Special thanks to adult allies Estella Sánchez and Andrew Frishman at the Met Sacramento High School, and Amy Williams, Jenny Quan, and Lester Neblett at the Sacramento Gay and Lesbian Center for their support of these YIF projects.