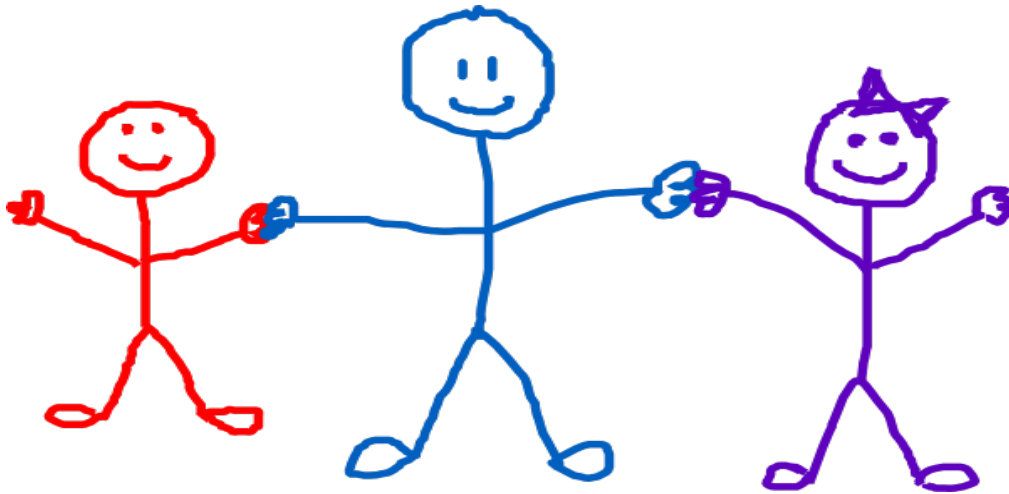


The Bay Area Women's and Children's Center

Survey of Tenderloin Family and Children's Issues 2016

Summary Report



Survey conducted and compiled by:
Kara Wright, MD, MPH, & Midge Wilson, MDiv, BAWCC Executive Director
Special thanks to our Survey Advisory Committee:
Dr. Katy Broner, St. Anthony Medical Clinic; Mike Daniels, De Marillac Academy;
Paul Chilvers, GLIDE; Tim Troy, SF Main Library-Children's Center.

Bay Area Women's and Children's Center's Survey of Tenderloin Children and Family Issues Data Summary

The Tenderloin at a glance - what the US Census Bureau tells us:

The Tenderloin is defined in this survey as the neighborhood bounded by Van Ness St., Market St., Powell St. and Post St. This includes 8 census tracts.

Population/Kids:

- Total population: 26,085
- Children 0-18y: 2,579*

Economic Profile/Poverty:

- 60% of households in TL have income < \$25,000/year (2013 dollars). SF overall 21%.
- 53% of individuals in the TL fall below 150% of federal poverty level. SF overall 13.4%.

Median annual household income range:

- Average across TL: \$21,000/year: \$12,000 in 3 tracts, max \$35,000 in one tract. SF overall \$78,000.

Parental employment:

- 58% of families with kids (<18y) have BOTH parents in the workforce in some fashion. SF overall 72%.

Diversity/Language isolation:

- 43% of TL population is foreign born. SF overall 36%.
- Average of 25% of households have "No one 14yo and over who speaks English only OR English 'very well' ". SF overall 12.8%.

Housing density/crowding:

- 91.2% of rental housing units in the TL are studio or small 1 bedroom units. SF overall 39%.

Source: American Community Survey (US Census Bureau) 2009-2013 5-year Estimates

* Per BAWCC's Tenderloin Kids Count, our building to building count of Tenderloin children, this number is closer to 3,000+. Historically, the number of children in the Tenderloin has been undercounted.

Bay Area Women's and Children's Center's Survey of Tenderloin Children and Family Issues Community Survey Findings

Total number interviewed for this Survey: 152

Parents: 91 (21 individual, 66 focus groups)

Community: 42 (all individual)

Teens/Youth: 19 (focus groups)

Number of TL residents: 83

Gender:

Female: 123

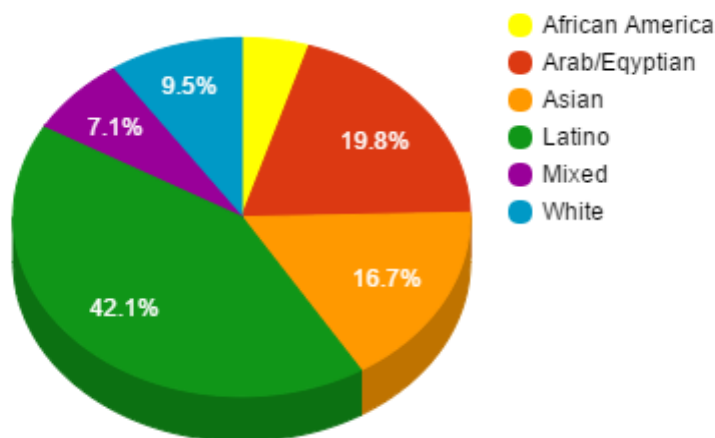
Male: 29

Age Range: 15y-68y

Languages: (with translation assistance)

Conducted in English (83), Spanish (40), Arabic (19), and Chinese (10)

Ethnicity of Respondents



Note: This survey involved lengthy one-on-one interviews and in depth focus group discussions.

Health:

We asked about both access to, and need for, more medical, dental and mental health care services.

Medical

- All parents responding had a place to take their kids for regular medical care (UCSF, SFGH, Kaiser, St. Anthony's accounted for majority).

Dental

- Most had a place to take kids for regular dental care (UCSF, University of the Pacific, North East Medical Services, private dental clinics primarily).
- The UCSF/Bay Area Women's and Children's Center dental clinic at Tenderloin Community School provides free dental care for any student in need.

Mental Health

- Very few respondents knew of any reliable resources for mental health support, though many feel there is a significant need for that.
- Per one respondent: *"Mental Health is a big mess. It's a giant mess. (There) REALLY isn't enough child mental health."*
- And another: *"There seems to be a big need for more support in this area - teachers/school staff see a lot of kids dealing with stress, acting out - there's definitely a need for more services, but not sure where/how to get them."*
- Many expressed a wish for mental and behavioral support services for kids and families incorporated into a school or community center.

Food and Nutrition

We also asked where families shop for food, what they have access to, and what they would like to have more of in the neighborhood.

- Many families shop at FoodsCo (SOMA), Costco (SOMA), Chinatown, and/or the Mission regularly for groceries. Many are aware of the Civic Center farmer's market and use it as well.
- Neighborhood markets viewed as expensive and poor quality, used only for last minute, small purchases by most families. (Anecdotally, many families lack transportation and time, leaving them more dependent on local stores despite cost and quality concerns).
- Parents and community members split on whether there is a need for, and interest in, nutrition education in the neighborhood.

⇒ Few could identify any resources for mental health services, but many parents and community members identified that as a major need in the neighborhood, preferably located on site in schools and community centers.

⇒ A large majority of people surveyed wanted more fresh fruits and vegetables/quality meats at affordable prices available in the neighborhood.

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Safety:

We asked how people view the level of safety in the Tenderloin for kids in particular, and what their primary safety concerns were. This subject sparked the most conversation and discussion in the focus groups and often triggered long responses from individuals.

- Many cited the **psychological toll** that repeated exposure to drug use/abuse, untreated mental illness and criminal activity on the streets can have on kids - both the "trauma" and the "numbing effect" kids develop if they see that daily.
- Many cite this as a far greater risk to kids' long term safety and well being - rather than a concern for their kids physical safety in the neighborhood.
- Many thought younger kids are somewhat protected from being "messed with" by that portion of the community doing business on the street, but cited growing concern as kids reach adolescents.
- Per one respondent, *"The reality is they're probably not going to be hurt- there's low risk of physical danger - but they're constantly worrying about it, so the psychological toll is high. Young teens girls can be subject to harassment in particular, and there are lots of anti-Muslim taunts heard on the street, so that group is particularly vulnerable and feels more unsafe than others in my experience."*
- And a 21yo who grew up in the neighborhood noted, *"I saw stuff as a kid that was pretty disturbing. There are lots of folks with mental illness on the streets who are unpredictable and potentially dangerous."*

Police Interactions

We asked about any experience they may have had with the police in the Tenderloin and their impressions of the local station.

- Almost everyone knew about Tenderloin station.
- Many had minimal to no direct experience with the police. For those who did, most described a positive interaction.

⇒The #1 concern among parents and community members was open alcohol use and drug dealing/using and associated behaviors that kids routinely observe walking through the neighborhood. The psychological toll and stress kids and families experience due to this was a major concern.

⇒ Teens report being approached by dealers and more unwanted attention on the streets once they reached puberty or adolescence.

⇒ **EVERYONE** we spoke to felt “*cleaning up the streets*” and decreasing the tolerance for open drug use and sales would greatly improve the safety in the neighborhood.

⇒ **A large majority** want more frequent and visible police presence, including foot patrols in the neighborhood.

Housing:

- **Affordability** was the most commonly cited reason for choosing to live in the Tenderloin.
- Central location close to transportation was also a noted plus for some families.
- Many families spent years on waitlists (and continue on them) to get in a housing development corporation such as Chinatown Community Development Center, Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corp., Mercy Housing, Indochinese Housing Development Corp., and other buildings managed by non-profit organizations.
- The quality of housing varies widely. Parents reflect that non-profit managed buildings are generally better maintained and managed than for profit and individually owned buildings.
- Per one respondent, “*Cheap rents, that's it. The ability to have multiple families in single units. They're not down here because they want to be.*” *
- “*Some have felt that having a Section 8 voucher was a big deterrent for landlords.*”
- “*Families are fearful of causing trouble by complaining when there are problems, and some report that having kids is a big problem with some landlords - they don't want to rent to families*”. Many families don't realize it is illegal to refuse to rent to families with young children.

*Families moving into the neighborhood now face rapidly increasing rents.

⇒ **Affordable, safe and clean housing with on-site services** were top priorities for parents and community members alike.

⇒ **Many cite fear of reprisal from a building manager/landlord if they complain about housing conditions (pests, poor plumbing, etc).**

Education:

- Parents identified strong academics, a safe environment (physically and emotionally) and extracurricular activities (organized sports, art and music) as the most important things they look for in a school.
- Many said having someone on the school staff with language capabilities to communicate with parents was very important to improving parent involvement and engagement.
- Parents identified academic support (homework help), organized sports and enrichment activities as their top priorities in an after school program.

⇒ Strong academic support and school staff that can communicate with parents in a language the parents are comfortable in were top priorities.

⇒ After school programs are plentiful for elementary aged kids, but less so for older kids. Parents and community members reflected that there were enough after school programs for elementary aged students.

Recreation:

- Large open spaces, both indoors (i.e. gym) and outdoors (fields), are a top priority for parents and community members alike.
- Some playgrounds considered too close to dangerous street activity for comfort (Turk and Hyde playground, Macaulay to lesser extent).
- Tenderloin Rec Center used to be a central hub for kids (now teens and older youth are the primary users). Many felt it's underutilized now, despite central location.
- Boeddeker Park is increasingly cited as a good resource, but some felt play space there is not as good for very young kids (0-5y).

⇒ Families and community members would like more:

- **Affordable organized sports/activities**
- **More large, open spaces available for play**
- **Weekend programming for whole family**
- **Options for female only exercise/activity**
- **Access and exposure to the performing and fine arts, especially those in close proximity to the Tenderloin, such as the ballet, the symphony, theater, opera...**

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Special thanks to Dolby Laboratories for supporting this Survey.