

**San Francisco Girls:
A Snapshot Report
March 2009**

Introduction

The Department on the Status of Women has made the unique needs of girls in San Francisco a priority over the past several years, with the notable release of the 2003 *Report on Girls in San Francisco, Benchmarks for the Future*, the first report of its kind. What follows is a summary report updating the findings of the Girls Report, providing a snapshot of certain indicators that will allow us to ascertain where we as a City have improved in our care for girls, and where gaps persist. Indicators include economics, foster care referrals, educational attainment, violence, mental health, and criminal activity.

Demographics

A basic overview of the demographics of girls in San Francisco shows that the City is incredibly diverse. In San Francisco County, there are 55,212 girls and 57,742 boys ages 0 – 17, for a total of 112,954 children and youth. The table below shows that the majority of these girls are below 10 years old, with adolescents making up just 28% of the total girl population.¹

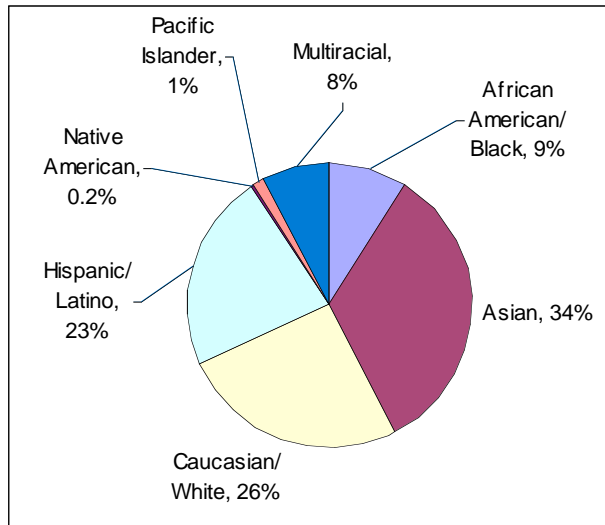
Figure 1: San Francisco Child Population by Age, 2008

Age	Girls	Boys	Total
0 - 2 years	13,012	12,532	25,544
3 - 5 years	11,813	11,380	23,193
6 - 10 years	14,781	14,192	28,973
11 - 13 years	7,621	7,143	14,764
14 - 17 years	7,985	12,495	20,480
Total	55,212	57,742	112,954

The racial makeup of San Francisco's youth is comparable to that of its adults, with over a third (34%) Asian children under age 17. About a quarter (26%) of San Francisco's children are White and another quarter (23%) are Latino.

¹ Kidsdata.org (2008). Child population, by age: 2008. Retrieved March 6, 2009 from: http://www.kidsdata.org/topictables.jsp?csid=0&t=24&i=4&ra=3_132&link=related.

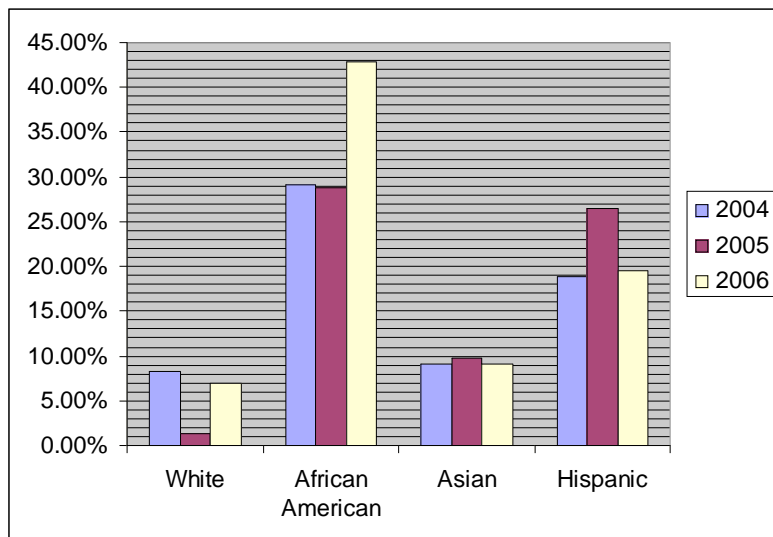
Figure 2: San Francisco Child Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2008²



Economics

In 2005, 19% of California children were living in poverty, down 25% from the 1997 rate. Child poverty is measured by the percentage of children ages 0-17 living below the federal poverty level. In 2006, the Federal Poverty Line was \$20,000 for a 4-person family. Of 6 Bay Area counties, San Francisco had the highest rate of child poverty. Although the rate declined from 2004 to 2006 for white children in San Francisco, it increased for both African American and Latino children.³

Figure 3: San Francisco Childhood Poverty Rates by Race, 2004-2006⁴



² Kidsdata.org (2008). Child population, by race/ethnicity: 2008. Retrieved March 6, 2009, from: http://www.kidsdata.org/topictables.jsp?csid=0&t=24&i=7&ra=3_132&link=related&.

³ Kidsdata.org (2008). Children in poverty by race/ethnicity: 2004-2006. Retrieved June 23, 2008: http://www.kidsdata.org/topictrends.jsp?t=32&i=4&ra=3_132&m=3&csid=0&r=137.

⁴ Ibid.

Foster Care

The number of San Francisco youth in foster care decreased by 31% from 2002 to 2008.⁵ As of January 2008, 1,645 San Francisco children were in foster care: 784 (48%) were females and 860 (52%) were males. Two-thirds (66%) of the girls in foster care today are African American, although that value has decreased from 72% in 2002. Latina girls are the only group whose representation in foster care increased from 2002 to 2008. The following chart illustrates the racial composition of San Francisco girls in foster care in 2002 and in 2008.

Figure 4: San Francisco Girls in Foster Care by Race, 2002 and 2008⁶

Race	2002 Amount	2002 Percent	2008 Amount	2008 Percent
African American	841	72%	518	66%
Latina	99	8%	139	18%
White	126	10%	70	9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	63	5%	48	6%
Native American	---	---	9	1%
Other	42	4%	0	0%
Total	1,171	100%	784	100%

Education

San Francisco girls are making progress in education by closing (and reversing) historic gender gaps in science and math. In both San Francisco and in the State of California, the enrollment rate of girls exceeded the enrollment rate of boys for most advanced courses in math and science. The enrollment rate was higher for girls than for boys in Intermediate Algebra, Advanced Math, and 1st Year Chemistry, but was slightly lower for 1st Year Physics.⁷

Though San Francisco girls are matching males in high school dropout rates, the rates for San Francisco students are notably lower than those statewide. In 2006, the high school dropout rates for females and for males in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) were each 2%, compared to a 3% rate for females and a 4% rate for males in the state of California. However, the dropout rate for females still exceeded the rate for males in 8 San Francisco high schools, with Balboa High facing the greatest gap: 5% for girls and 3% for boys.⁸

⁵ San Francisco Department of Human Services (2002). Retrieved on April 1, 2002, from: <http://www.sfgov.orh/dhs>; and Center for Social Services Research, University of California at Berkeley (2008). Children in Foster Care. Retrieved July 14, 2008 from: http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/PIT.aspx.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit (2008). Enrollment in upper level math and science classes as percent of grade 9-12 enrollment: 2007-2008. Retrieved June 23, 2008: <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

⁸ California Department of Education Educational Demographics Unit (2008). Dropout rates by ethnicity, gender (with school data): 2005-2006. Retrieved June 23, 2008: <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>.

Safety and Violence

San Francisco girls are still facing a high levels of violence and threats to safety, compared to boys. In a 2005 survey of San Francisco high school students, girls were more likely than boys to have skipped school because of safety concerns: 8.3% of high school females and 7.8% of high school males in the SFUSD reported having not gone to school because of safety concerns. Although girls were in fewer physical fights, they were more likely to experience verbal slurs regarding their gender or sexual orientation, with 8% of girls and 6% of boys reporting such verbal attacks in the past 30 days. Over a third (36%) of males and a quarter (25%) of females in the SFUSD reported having been in a physical fight one or more times in the past 12 months.⁹

Girls are experiencing high levels of dating and/or sexual violence: 9% of SFUSD females reported being hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the previous year, compared to 8% of males.¹⁰ The statistic for girls is up from 7% in 2001.¹¹ In addition, girls were almost twice as likely to have been physically forced to have sex, with 8% of females reporting having been physically forced to have sexual intercourse in their lifetimes, compared to 4% of males.¹² This statistic for girls is also up from 6% in 2001.¹³

Teen Pregnancy

The teenage birth rate increased in California in 2006 for the first time in 15 years but continued to decrease in San Francisco.¹⁴ There were 52,770 babies born to teen moms in California in 2006, for a rate of 37.8 births per 1,000 teens. In San Francisco, 288 babies were born to teen moms, amounting to a rate of 18.9 births per 1,000 teens, the 3rd lowest rate of the 9 Bay Area counties.¹⁵

Mental Health

While Bay Area girls were among the country's riskiest in 1970, they are now considerably less suicidal than girls nationally, according to a 2005 San Francisco Chronicle article.¹⁶ However, there is a gender discrepancy. Girls are still significantly more suicidal than boys in San Francisco: 14% of females compared to 9% of males in the SFUSD reported having attempted suicide in the past year.¹⁷

⁹ ETR Associates (2006, January). 2005 Youth risk behavior survey: high school level summary report. Retrieved June 23, 2008: http://www.healthiersf.org/Statistics/docs/YRBSReport2005HS_Final.pdf.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ San Francisco Unified School District (2001). 2001 Youth risk behavior surveillance survey.

¹² ETR Associates (2006, January).

¹³ San Francisco Unified School District (2001).

¹⁴ Public Health Institute. (2008). No time for complacency: teen births in California. Retrieved June 23, 2008: <http://teenbirths.phi.org/2008TeenBirthsReport.pdf>.

¹⁵ Allday, Erin (2006, May 20). State sees costly increase in teen birthrate. *San Francisco Chronicle*.

¹⁶ Males, Mike (2005, December 2). Kids not so suicidal after all. *San Francisco Chronicle*.

¹⁷ ETR Associates (2006, January).

Juvenile Justice

In 2005, there were 2,026 juvenile arrests in San Francisco. Girls accounted for 527 (26%) and boys accounted for 1,499 (74%) of these arrests. The number of juvenile arrests decreased by 34% from 2000 to 2005, and girls accounted for fewer of the total arrests in 2005 than in 2000 (26% in 2005 versus 34% in 2000). The majority (68%) of male juvenile arrests were felony level arrests, whereas fewer than half (44%) of female juvenile arrests were felony arrests. The following table is a breakdown of the type of felony offenses girls and boys were arrested for in San Francisco in 2005.¹⁸

Figure 5: San Francisco Juvenile Felony Arrests by Gender, Offense, 2005

Felony Type	Juvenile Males	Juvenile Females
Other	319	60
Robbery	240	47
Drug	89	44
Assault	146	30
Burglary	72	25
Theft	50	20
Motor Vehicle Theft	99	8
Forcible Rape	1	0
Homicide	1	0
Total	1,017	234

Child Prostitution

In 2004, San Francisco was home to 3,000 child prostitutes. In a survey of 7,000 local high school-age girls, 20% admitted to having traded sex for food, shelter or clothing. More than 100 minors are arrested each year for prostitution in San Francisco.¹⁹

¹⁸ California Bureau of Justice (2005). Juvenile arrests: offense by jurisdiction and gender, 2005. Retrieved July 14, 2008 from: http://stats.doj.ca.gov/cjsc_stats/prof05/38/17.htm

¹⁹ Herel, Suzanne (2004, April 27). Group to offer shelter for child prostitutes to get off street. *San Francisco Chronicle*.