November 2021

San Francisco Community Hubs Initiative

Final Report

Prepared for San Francisco's Department of Children Youth and Their Families

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SPR

Acknowledgements

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1 | Introduction

Throughout the 2020–2021 school year, when schools in San Francisco were closed to in-person instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic, San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) and the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department (RPD), in partnership with other city departments, operated the Community Hubs Initiative (CHI). The CHI was an ambitious effort aimed at mitigating learning loss and supporting the socioemotional development of the city's most vulnerable youth during the COVID-19 pandemic. The CHI created 86 Hubs in recreation and community centers, libraries, and nonprofit organizations; students received support with distance learning, socialized with peers, and participated in enrichment activities. The Hubs were concentrated in higher-need neighborhoods and prioritized low-income children and families of color, youth living in public housing, homeless youth, youth in foster care, and English learners.

Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) was engaged by DCYF in the summer of 2020 to conduct an evaluation of the CHI, documenting the evolution of the initiative and providing evaluation data to inform program improvement. This final evaluation report documents CHI implementation, outcomes, and lessons learned. It is informed by observations of CHI planning meetings, interviews with staff from DCYF and CHI city partners (e.g., RPD, community-based organization partners [CBOs]), surveys of anchor agency staff,[1] two parent surveys, a youth participant survey, CHI attendance data, and data from San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). See Figure 1 and Appendix A for detailed data sources; see Appendix B for a list of interviewees.

Figure 1: Evaluation Data Sources

Data Source	Description
Meeting Observations	Observations of 29 CHI planning and implementation meetings between August 3, 2020, and February 25, 2021
Agency Staff Surveys	A survey of agency leaders in November 2020 (Phase 1 Hubs) and December 2020 (Phase 2 Hubs); a survey of all CHI staff in April 2021
Parent Surveys	Two surveys of parents of Hub participants in Grades K–8—one in December 2020 (completed by 391 parents) and one in May 2021 (completed by 259 parents)
Youth Survey	One youth participant survey, completed by 106 youth in Grades 5 and above

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[1] Anchor agencies operated the Hubs. They include all organizations that led a Hub, including those operated by CBOs and RPD (which also served as a city partner).

Data Source	Description
Interviews and Focus Groups	Twenty-five one-on-one interviews and seven focus groups that solicited feedback from 45 unique stakeholders involved in the planning and implementation of the CHI
Document Review	Spreadsheets of Hub characteristics, student data dashboards, maps of Hub placements, planning documents, health and safety guides developed by the state, data from SFUSD, and presentations created by city departments
Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) Interviews	A structured interview of Hub leaders that gathered information on Hub logistics (e.g., number of participants and staff), distance learning schedules, enrichment offerings, efforts to foster cultural competency, contributors to program success, and modes of communication to families.

This introductory chapter provides a succinct overview of factors leading to the development of the Hubs and the roles of partners in their design, launch, and operation. (Additional details on these aspects of the initiative are covered in SPR's Mid-Project Synthesis Report.) Subsequent chapters provide an overview of CHI implementation, student characteristics, and outcomes. The report concludes with lessons learned and recommendations.

Context for the Community Hub Initiative

When the COVID-19 regional Bay Area shelter-in-place order went into effect on March 16, 2020, over 57,000 students attending SFUSD shifted to distance learning. At the same time, many parents and caretakers lost their jobs or had reduced workloads that threw their families into crisis, compromising their ability to pay for shelter or feed their families. Parents who were able to work from home had to balance their work life with the need to take care of their children and support distance learning. Many children and youth who could not log in for online classes due to lack of technology or knowledge about how to connect began to fall behind academically. Meanwhile, both parents and children struggled with the mental health effects of social isolation.

DCYF, RPD, SFUSD, and other city agencies immediately sought to reduce the differential negative impact of the shelter-in-place order on the city's most vulnerable families by mobilizing to provide them with laptops, internet access, educational materials, meals, and other forms of support. DCYF-funded organizations, in coordination with SFUSD, reached out to families to identify and meet their needs. A small group of DCYF-funded organizations and RPD recreation centers converted their sites to Emergency Child and Youth Care centers that provided emergency childcare for healthcare professionals, disaster service workers, and other essential workers. As the 2019–2020 academic year came to an end, however, it was clear that this type of outreach and support was not, in and of itself, enough to bridge educational inequities or to meet the needs of low-income parents who required safe places for their children to be while they worked.

On July 15, 2020, SFUSD announced that schools would continue with distance learning at the start of the 2020–2021 school year's fall semester (beginning on August 17, 2020). One week after SFUSD's statement, on July 23, Mayor London N. Breed and DCYF's director, Maria Su, announced the launch of the CHI. This announcement reflected a commitment to transforming facilities around the city into supervised learning centers to support distance learning for high-need students.

Design, Planning, and Oversite of CHIs

Providing facilities, technology, and staffing to support 86 Hubs in neighborhoods across San Francisco was a citywide effort coordinated by DCYF. It required the collaboration of the Office of the Mayor, RPD, San Francisco Public Library branches, HOPE SF, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Technology, the San Francisco Beacon Initiative, CBOs, and other stakeholders. Mayor Breed knew from the outset of the CHI that "it will take a village to address the wide range of learning needs for our city's children and youth during the COVID-19 pandemic."[2] Figure 2 provides an overview of the roles of city agencies and partners that helped to support the Hubs; Figure 3 highlights all the partners that eventually offered Hub programming or hosted a Hub.

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[2] Office of the Mayor. (2020, July 23). *Mayor London Breed announces Community Learning Hubs to support distance learning and extension of emergency child and youth care for COVID-19 frontline workers* [Press release]. https://sfmayor.org/article/mayor-london-breed-announces-community-learning-Hubs-support-distance-learning-and-extension

Figure 2: Hub Partners and Roles

San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families
Primary Coordinating Body For Hubs

Key Partners

San Francisco Recreation and Parks Dept.	Community-Based Organizations	San Francisco Public Library
Participated in CHI planning, hosted Hubs, and led programming	Hosted Hubs and led programming (See Figure 3 for a full list of CBOs)	Participated in CHI planning and hosted Hubs

Supporting Partners

SF Human Services Agency	SF Beacon Initiative	SF Department of Public Health	Xfinity Internet
Partnered with DCYF to do outreach to foster care youth	Served as a facilitator and supported capacity building	Provided health directives for Hubs and connected Hubs with behavioral health	Provided technology assessments, ongoing support, internet access or upgrades, and donations

SF Dept. of Technology	HOPE SF	SF Dept. of Homelessness and Supportive Housing	SF Unified School District
Conducted technology assessments and ongoing support, assessed internet bandwidth, offered laptops as back-ups for students at Hubs	Partnered with DCYF on outreach and recruitment and secured public housing locations to host Hubs	Partnered with DCYF to do outreach to homeless families	Supported identification of priority youth and recruitment

Hub Hosts

Marriott Hotel, Union Square	Yerba Buena Center for the Arts	Calvary Hill Community Church
Hosted Hubs	Hosted a Hub	Hosted a Hub

Figure 3: CHI Host Organizations and Site

Community-Based Anchor Agencies

- Asian Pacific American Community Center
- Bay Area Community Resources
- Bayview Hunters Point YMCA
- Booker T. Washington Community Service Center
- Boys & Girls Clubs of San Francisco
- Buchanan YMCA
- Buena Vista Child Care
- Cameron House
- Catholic Charities of SF
- Chinatown YMCA
- City of Dreams
- Collective Impact
- Community Youth Center of San Francisco
- Embarcadero YMCA
- Family & Child Empowerment Services SF
- Family Connections Centers, Portola
- Felton Institute
- First Graduate

- GLIDE Foundation
- Good Samaritan Family Resource Center
- Hamilton Families
- Indochinese Housing Development Corporation
- Ingleside Community Center
- Jamestown Community Center
- Jewish Community Center of San Francisco
- Mission Graduates
- Mission Neighborhood Centers
- Mission YMCA
- Our Kids First
- Peer Resources
- Potrero Hill Neighborhood House
- Presidio Community YMCA
- Real Options for City Kids
- Richmond District YMCA
- Richmond Neighborhood Center

- The Salvation Army
- Samoan Community Development Center
- Shih Yu-Lang Central YMCA
- Southeast Asian Development Center
- Stonestown Family YMCA
- Success Centers, San Francisco
- Telegraph Hill Neighborhood Center
- Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation
- United Playaz
- Up on Top
- Urban Ed Academy
- West Bay Pilipino Multi Service Center
- Young Community Developers
- Youth First

Department of Recreation and Parks Sites

- Betty Ann Ong Chinese Recreation Center
- Eureka Valley Recreation Center
- Herz Playground
- Joseph Lee Recreation Center

- Minnie & Lovie Ward Recreation Center
- Mission Arts Center and Recreation Center
- Palega Recreation Center
- Youngblood Coleman Playground

In the planning phase for the project, DCYF worked with city officials and departments to agree on which students and neighborhoods would be prioritized. Available spaces and facilities had to be assessed for student capacity and for the technology infrastructure needed to support distance learning. CBOs serving as anchor agencies were brought into the planning and implementation phase of the CHI to help determine the types of services and programming that would be offered at the Hubs. Finally, when the details of the CHI were solidified, DCYF coordinated with multiple

city agencies to procure and deploy the resources necessary to open fully functional Hubs (e.g., internet connectivity, laptops, meals, and personal protective equipment [PPE]).

The speed with which city leaders and agencies coordinated to launch the Hubs was enabled by a shared commitment to equity at the highest levels of city government and a healthy infrastructure of social supports and relationships. As illustrated in the text box on DCYF's role in planning, launching, and operating the Hubs, DCYF served as "connective tissue," helping to coordinate city agencies and translate public health information for its extensive network of community partners. DCYF staff provided hands-on support for the CHI by engaging community partners in collaborative planning processes, coordinating distribution of PPE and technology, helping to parse and translate shifting public health guidance to Hub sites, assisting with student recruitment and enrollment, and so much more.

DCYF's ability to effectively spearhead this work was enabled by its role as the grantmaking body that allocates resources from San Francisco's Children and Youth Fund. This fund, which guarantees resources for children and youth services in the city's budget, provided DCYF with flexible resources that they were able to creatively redirect in order to fund the Hubs. Because of its long history of supporting youth services in the city, DCYF also has strong relationships with CBOs and city agencies, which helped them to gain buy-in and support for the initiative despite anxieties associated with launching in-person services during the pandemic.

Along the way, the CHI faced many challenges that could have derailed the initiative, including shifting public health guidelines, labor concerns, and high levels of uncertainty associated with the pandemic and its spread. The ability of the city to successfully launch the Hubs is a testament to the leadership, hard work, and determination of a diverse ecosystem of agency and organizational staff dedicated to doing whatever they could to meet the needs of San Francisco's most vulnerable children and youth.

DCYF's Role in Planning, Launching, and Supporting the Hubs

Starting in the summer of 2020, the CHI became DCYF's highest priority. DCYF devoted a significant number of its staff from multiple teams to support the initiative and ensure that the Hubs had resources to launch and implement their programs successfully. While supporting the Hubs increased staff workloads exponentially, every staff member we interviewed relayed a sense of commitment to the CHI's success, rooted in deep concerns about the welfare of the children and youth they serve and a belief in the urgency and importance of this initiative. DCYF initiated and supported the following:

- **Co-design and planning**. DCYF began its organizational recruitment efforts by inviting a cross-section of CBOs into a conversation about the CHI. Once the decision to launch the project was made, an intensive planning effort began. Representatives from Hub sites engaged in 2-hour program planning meetings twice a week, and the meeting agendas were packed with information sharing and activities. Each meeting included time for community building and peer learning across organizations, information updates, logistics discussions, and question-and-answer sessions with DCYF staff.

- **Technology support.** Supporting the technology needs of the Hubs proved extremely complicated and layered. It included procuring enough laptops and headphones to ensure that all students had the equipment they needed to engage in distance learning, ensuring that the Hubs had storage and charging carts to keep their technology safe and powered up, and ensuring facilities had internet access and Wi-Fi, as well as enough bandwidth to cover the needs of all their students.

- **PPE procurement and distribution.** DCYF took on the responsibility of procuring and distributing PPE, recognizing that it would cost too much and be too burdensome for Hubs to try to procure it individually. This was described by staff as a "huge undertaking," involving everything from securing the supplies, storing them, sorting them, preparing them to go out to sites, delivering them to sites, and tracking inventory.

- **Public health guidelines and behavioral health support.** It was not easy to keep up with the evolving knowledge around COVID-19, best practices to ensure community safety, and ever-shifting guidelines about program practices and restrictions for in-person youth programming. DCYF forged a strong partnership with the San Francisco Department of Public Health to support the Hubs in receiving the most up-to-date information related to the virus and public health requirements.

- **Student recruitment and enrollment support.** DCYF enrollment specialists oversaw the enrollment of youth into Hubs, processing applications, engaging with families, and coordinating with Hub organizations around recruitment questions and processes and checking in with them about attendance.

Overview of This Report

The remaining three chapters of this report provide detail on the implementation, outcomes, and lessons learned from the CHI. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the types of services that were provided at the Hubs and the activities that students engaged in. Chapter 3 highlights the characteristics of the students served by the Hubs as well as outcomes for students and families. The report concludes with a discussion of lessons learned to date.

2 | Overview of the Community Hubs Initiative

Community Hubs were created in response to educational shifts and hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to meet the ambitious launch date for the Hubs while recognizing the challenges of having all the necessary pieces in place in such a short period of time, DCYF created a two-phased approach to program planning and implementation. After only seven weeks of planning, Phase 1, designed to support elementary school students, launched on September 14, 2020. Outreach and application periods for Phase 2, which opened services to students in Grades 7 through 12, started on September 24; these youth began attending Hubs on October 26, 2020.

Having a phased approach enabled DCYF and its partners to open as many Hubs as possible as quickly as possible while continuing to focus on securing more facilities to host the Hubs and recruiting more organizations to run them. It also enabled DCYF and its program partners in Phase 1 to iterate and refine their program practices, and to share their learnings with each other and with the new organizations that participated in Phase 2.

This chapter provides an overview of the Hubs themselves, including where they were located, how they recruited students, and how they approached programming, program content, and health and safety precautions. Throughout the chapter we share information about how stakeholders mobilized and adapted to provide students and families with meaningful supports across both phases, as well as common challenges and the strengths that were leveraged to address these issues.

Hub Locations

From the outset, the CHI sought to position Hubs in neighborhoods with the highest levels of need to best reach priority populations, such as English-language learners, low-income families, and youth living in public housing, experiencing homelessness, or in the foster care system.[3] To the degree possible, CHI partners also worked to position Hubs close to public transportation so that priority populations without access to vehicles could easily reach them. As illustrated in Figure 4, Hubs were located all over the city but were concentrated in the highest-need neighborhoods: Bayview–Hunters Point, the Mission, the Tenderloin, South of Market (SOMA), and Visitacion Valley. While the interim report outlined details for 78 sites, these numbers reflect the creation of an additional eight Hubs since January of 2020.

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[3] The definition of homelessness in San Francisco includes individuals who are "doubled-up" in the homes of family or friends.

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Figure 4: Hub Locations
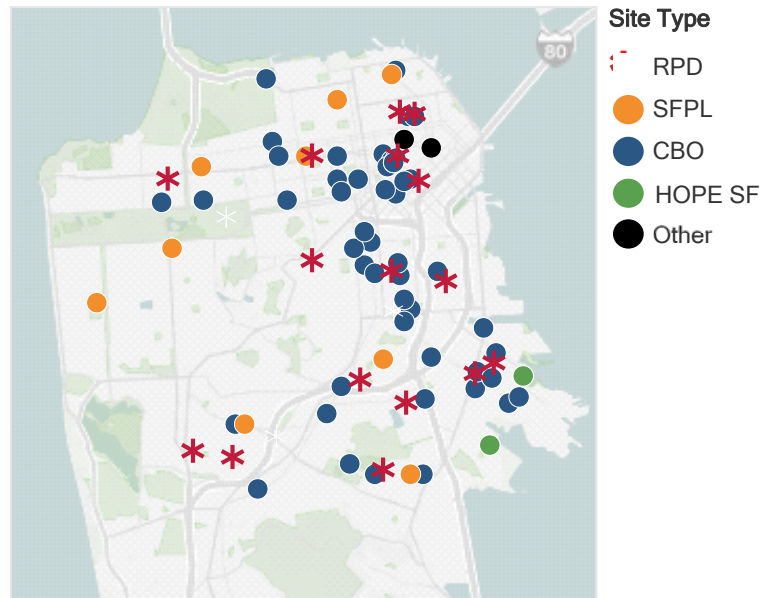
Although most anchor agencies (including RPD sites) had access to their own physical space, 14 did not. Without access to SFUSD's school buildings, DCYF staff leveraged support from city departments, such as the San Francisco Public Library and HOPE SF, which offered their facilities to CBOs that needed a physical space.[4] These included nine sites at libraries and two at HOPE SF public housing sites. In addition, two Hubs were hosted at the San Francisco Marriott Union Square, and one was hosted at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, as shown below in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Host Sites for Hubs

53	19	9	2	2	1
CBO	RPD	SFPL	HOPE SF	Marriott	Yerba Buena

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[4] The HOPE SF initiative seeks to transform four of San Francisco's most distressed public housing sites into thriving communities through revitalization.

Programming Approach and Content

At their core, Hubs were intended to serve as safe spaces that provided in-person supports, Wi-Fi, and access to computers for children and youth, particularly those who were already facing significant barriers and were likely to experience challenges in a distance learning environment. In interviews at the conclusion of the 2020–2021 academic year, program leaders explained that beyond these essential elements, CBOs leveraged existing resources and new partnerships to piece together their Hubs' structure. These efforts were made with careful consideration of public health guidance, planning time constraints, and variation in students' distance learning schedules. As one interviewee noted, "The primary learning time was in the morning….We found that most kids were done with their Zooms at 2:00, and that's really when we started implementing our afternoon activities."

> " *There's a huge academic loss this year, huge. Being able to provide this space, this center for students, and being able to take that off of the minds of the parents also is helpful because they're not as stressed, too. They come home from work and back to the kids."*
>
> – Hub Director

Hubs initially designated most of their time to supporting distance learning and to the provision of academic support. Program leaders also relayed that students' need for socioemotional supports, the availability of enrichment resources (e.g., external donations, subcontractors, staff expertise), and public health guidelines were just a few of the factors that ultimately shaped nonacademic program offerings over time. As they got into the rhythm of running their Hubs, programs worked to provide more recreation, enrichment, and support for socioemotional learning. They also sought to support families by connecting them with additional resources. Key Hub program features included:

- **Distance learning.** Common distance learning supports consisted of managing student schedules, assisting with technology, helping students log in to class, and sharing insights on students' academic performance with both educators and parents. Final program interviews described staff as being in close contact with teachers, often ensuring students were engaged during lessons and back from course breaks in a timely fashion.

  Findings from a survey of program staff noted that this was not an easy feat, with one respondent sharing that "everyone's schedule is so drastically different. I literally created a Google calendar and support documents just to *try* to stay on top of it all. And that doesn't count [the number] of changes in the day or when educators forget to tell us of changes, and vice versa." Each Hub had students from different schools and at different grade levels, leading to high variation across course schedules and breaks. Thus, supporting individual variation was a significant challenge.

- **Academic support.** Over time, staff provided considerable academic support through individual tutoring across multiple subjects and assistance with homework. In our survey of program staff, respondents on average reported spending just over half of their time (52.5 percent) on supporting distance learning, providing homework help, and tutoring, and an additional 12.8 percent of their time on "providing other academic activities." As part of these efforts, staff often played roles in helping students who were below grade level in reading, getting students caught up on assignments, and providing extra monitoring for students with IEPs.

- **Recreation and enrichment.** By and large, responses to Youth Program Quality Assessment interviews relayed that most programs did not have a set enrichment curriculum or long-term enrichment plans. In interviews, staff reported that students were becoming increasingly frustrated by the routine of having to sit in front of a computer screen and that the group's interests varied with the set of students who attended each day. Thus, whenever possible, Hubs that had access to outdoor spaces regularly engaged youth in recreation, sports, and play. Enrichment activities included card games, shirt tie-dyeing, dance classes, group discussions, crafting decorations for upcoming holidays, various STEM activities, Mayor's Youth Employment and Education Program programming, cooking, gardening, and other interactive learning activities.

Hubs with set curricula typically had a structure provided through partner organizations, teachers, or program leaders. A separate program director described their site's

Program Spotlight: Jamestown Community Center at San Francisco Community Music Center

With as many as 42 youth spread across four pods, Jamestown Community Center's 10 core staff and specialists worked to balance academic support with music, dance, and play. Distance learning typically ran from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m., leaving afternoons for rotating enrichment activities, like drumming and media arts. While teachers were trained to

build curricula using youth development principles, newer staff were offered a higher degree of structure and seasoned staff typically had more flexibility. An enrichment curriculum was also provided and continuously adapted by partners like San Francisco Community Music Center, which offered a variety of music and dance opportunities. In efforts to foster connections with students and families, bilingual staff, staff experienced in working with nearby schools, and those from nearby communities were prioritized in the hiring process.

development of a social justice STEAM curriculum that built on principles of culturally

responsive teaching while exploring different aspects of identity, often related to the time of the year (e.g., Women's History Month).

- **Family assistance.** Many Hubs provided direct support to families by taking a more active role in the registration process, sharing food, adjusting Hub hours to match family work schedules, assisting guardians with navigating technological challenges, practicing mindful communication, offering virtual communication options, and sometimes serving as a sounding board when parents opened up about the pandemic's toll. In a parent survey, 95 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the Hubs' activities. One respondent noted, "Their Hub is safe, the kids are happy, my kid is paying more attention—more, but not always—and the kids are fed….Thank you."

- **Culturally responsive practices**. Importantly, understandings of and intentionality towards culturally responsive practices varied across Hub leaders. In most cases, examples of related practices included informal language translation services, variation in food offerings, awareness of holidays, having photos in Hubs that reflected the diversity across students, art or dance classes with cultural aspects, and/or programmatic components focused on cultural or community awareness. The latter encompassed narrated neighborhood walks, hiring staff with community ties, and addressing racial justice movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Stop Asian Hate).

  In some instances, program leaders described their practice of waiving program fees or providing basic needs supports as culturally responsive. Some respondents described using community circles, restorative practices, or generally holding conversations with students who made negative comments about their peers. In responses obtained through Youth Program Quality Assessment interviews, a few program leaders reported engaging in staff trainings on equity, implicit bias, inclusive language, and/or a growth mindset approach.

  Notably, there were a few instances of interviewee resistance to culturally responsive practices. Specifically, a few staff stated that they "treat everyone the same."

- **Socioemotional supports.** Socioemotional supports to students rose in prominence over the course of Hub development, as the pandemic's toll on students' well-being, family circumstances, and social connections were observed by Hub staff. For most sites, these efforts were largely informal and unregulated; they included ensuring students had fun during their time in the Hubs, teaching students to talk to adults about their situation and to advocate for their own needs, mitigating social isolation, allowing students to take a break from their home life, celebrating birthdays, and encouraging peer interaction, as well as staff members' individual communication with youth. A few Hubs formalized socioemotional supports by creating conversational groups, which broke down students'

social circles, integrated shy or isolated students through activities, and provided space for youth to engage their peers on pandemic-related personal challenges that staff perceived students as commonly experiencing. Despite limitations to formal socioemotional

Program Spotlight: Youth 1st at Merced Heights Playground

In efforts to serve 16 youth with two staff members, the executive director of the Youth 1st Hub at Merced Heights Playground credited parents for being "so steadfast and supportive." With an interest in youth relationship building, the program made deliberate attempts to be in tune with families and participated in trainings on trauma to support families through pandemic-related challenges. Similar to other programs, the Youth 1st Hub focused on distance learning from 8:30 a.m. until around lunchtime and offered enrichment until 6 p.m. to meet families' work schedules.

Alongside distance learning support, students were given cognitive assessments to track their progress over the program term. They created progress reports from teachers' insights and rewards for good academic performance. Staff were given flexibility in developing the enrichment curriculum across the week, though Mondays entailed a math lab, Tuesdays featured a science lab, Wednesdays focused on literacy, Thursdays centered arts, and Fridays were "Jambalaya Day," with a lot of celebrations and free choices for youth. Throughout, staff made sure they were "a reflection of the community" and encouraged youth to "honor their neighbor." As a result, Hub norms included respecting all backgrounds, recognizing diversity, having Hub decorations that reflected the community, and intentionally using Hub time to acknowledge social movements like Black Lives Matter and Stop Asian Hate. Staff wanted to show students that "their diverse community supports one another" by connecting with a safety advocacy program, passing out safety kits (including body alarms and hand sanitizer), and shining a light on inequities.

Several external stakeholders provided resource and enrichment supports to the Hub, such as an independent contractor focused on music and the I.T. Bookman Community Center. In addition, partnerships with Inner City Youth and Young Community Developers provided families with employment services. Support from DCYF and other external organizations enabled the Hub to provide transportation assistance, online services to students who could not attend the Hub in person, grocery support, computer access for parents, vaccination access, and one-time bonuses for staff.

supports that could be provided by Hubs, a survey of agency leads found that nearly half of organizations (47.9 percent) made referrals for behavioral and mental health supports.

- **Unique facets.** In their final interviews, several program leaders described having unique or uncommon program offerings, thanks to their external partners. These Hub features included family unemployment services; transportation for students; gift cards or grocery support for families; community food distribution; mask distribution; vaccine distribution; attendance incentives (e.g., $100); stipends; dissemination of voting and census information; and referrals for families to low-barrier testing sites after COVID-19 exposure.

Program Spotlight: Mission Graduates at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Through a collaborative effort between the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and Mission Graduates, six staff and three directors supported as many as 34 K-5th grade students across two pods. Mornings began at 8 a.m., with youth washing their hands and eating breakfast. Students would then join their distance learning classes until around 2 p.m., after which, they participated in enrichment activities, recess, and outdoor games until getting picked up at 5 p.m. In moments of teacher absences, staff provided academic programming through "educational learning centers." These included a project on butterflies, work with worms in food decomposition, and exploration of the water cycle. Afternoon enrichment offerings rotated across the week, with a YBCA Arts instructor on Mondays and Fridays, a YBCA Theater teacher on Thursdays, and a soccer coach from America Scores on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Outside of this structure provided by key partners, staff were given flexibility to both create and lead their enrichment activities, following lesson planning training from Mission Graduates. Additional professional development training was provided by Spark Decks and DCYF. In efforts to address cultural competency and build community, there was "a lot of learning through the diversity of students and their ability to engage and teach each other." For example, students from Yemen explained Ramadan, while Hub staff explained Thanksgiving. In these efforts, staff sought to explore cultures and deepen connections through celebrations. As they interacted with families, staff had Spanish and Tagalog language capacity and access to translation services when needed. As a result, staff were able to connect with families in the mornings and afternoons, to build the relationships and communication pathways needed for students' success.

Several interviewees spoke to the need for flexibility in dealing with the challenges and uncertainty of the pandemic. For some, this was exemplified through limited program structure up front. For example, as one Hub leader shared, "At first, we didn't have a whole lot of a model for our program, because it was nothing that we've ever done before....Slowly, we started to figure it out." Flexibility was also shown through staff members' willingness to implement changes to initial plans over time. Another interviewee explained: "The pandemic and these new restrictions, that was just a whole other level of adjusting. And it wasn't just us that needed to adjust, but how we adjusted in response to how this impacted the children." Importantly, Hub changes also reflected leaders' ability to leverage various forms of community support and staff skillsets over the course of the academic year, enabling the programs to ultimately reflect stakeholders' collective investments during pressing times.

Programming Challenges

Respondents shared a number of challenges related to their ability to design and implement programming that best fit the needs of Hub participants. These included:

- **Insufficient time for program planning.** The fast-paced nature of Hub development and the unpredictable nature of the pandemic posed barriers to sufficient advanced planning, subsequently limiting the ability of program staff to be more intentional around program offerings and delivery. While acknowledging this as a reality of coordinating an emergency response service, many Hub leaders still pined for a process with additional forethought. One said, "I wish I knew what I know now back then—everything that the families needed, that I learned on the fly. But everything was pivotal and everything was changing daily, just like the CDC guidelines. I wish I knew everything that we needed. That's the only thing."

- **Staffing challenges.** Some Hub leaders said the process for hiring staff proved draining for a host of reasons. Many who were initially interested in supporting the Hubs were faced with a host of personal challenges in addition to commuting challenges, health and safety concerns, wavering investment in the Hubs' mission, and competitive wage offers at for-profit companies. This ultimately led to high turnover or unfilled positions at some locations. For Hub leaders, this meant additional time spent interviewing applicants instead of implementing their programs. This also left some directors with less capacity to train staff and fewer team members to whom they could delegate tasks. Given capacity and timing constraints, some Hub leaders said it was challenging to keep program logistics moving forward while providing staff with adequate training.

- **Capacity constraints around providing effective academic supports.** Across the board, Hubs often encountered challenges supporting students with different levels of academic preparation (e.g., reading levels), disabilities, limited bandwidth to focus during distance learning, and language coursework (e.g., Tagalog). Multiple respondents also shared the overarching challenges they faced in trying to support students academically when they themselves were not certified teachers, especially given the wide range of grade levels and subject matter they had to support in each pod. These challenges were especially acute for staff who were not youth development professionals or who had little experience working with the populations that were served by the Hubs.

> "We have people who are certified teachers. And for them, it was probably a breeze. But I think the mindset of staff is what evolved, continually. It had to. A lot of our staff did not have those type of direct relationships or job duties around children. Think lifeguard who's used to shouting out orders and maybe not even knowing children on a first name basis, just generally speaking. Their relationship to children evolved."
>
> – Partner Agency Leader

- **Capacity constraints around addressing significant socioemotional and mental health needs.** Staff shared that there were times when student needs around socioemotional and mental health supports were beyond the capacity that the Hubs were able to provide. Moreover, many staff members reported not having the capacity or the training to support students with special needs or those with behavioral challenges. While the Hubs were able to make referrals to behavioral health specialists—indeed, a survey of agency leads found that nearly half of organizations (47.9 percent) made referrals for behavioral and mental health supports—at least one respondent expressed concerns about the lack of cultural alignment between behavioral health specialists associated with the San Francisco Department of Public Health and the students being referred to them, and how this could impact the effectiveness of these behavioral health supports.

> "It is not lost on me that the families that were able to take advantage of [services] were the families that had both parents, had internet connections and the ability to jump on their smart device or whatever, and get that ASAP, versus parents that are going to be working at 10:00 on a Wednesday."
>
> – CHI Site Director

- **Coordinating and communicating with some families.** Some staff relayed frustration towards the process of coordinating and communicating with families, though many of these individuals also considered this challenge to be connected to guardians' essential worker roles or personal difficulties. In some instances where Hubs served families across a range of socioeconomic statuses, staff expressed concerns that they were inadvertently reproducing broader inequities in

that certain students, whose parents were in a better position to communicate and coordinate with the Hubs, were better able to take advantage of their services and resources than other students.

- **Numerous logistical challenges.** Several respondents reported logistical challenges that affected program implementation. These challenges ranged from issues with outdated facilities to inconsistent Wi-Fi quality. Some also noted issues in Hub locations, hours of operation, and, subsequently, attendance once in-person instruction was available. As one interviewee explained, "Many [students] returned for the reopening of school, and so that meant that our numbers have taken a dip." Similarly, another Hub director explained: "With schools reopening—we were at 10 kids consistently, then we dropped down to two. Right now we're at four."

Programming Strengths and Promising Practices

Though Hub staff faced a number of challenges in their efforts to implement effective and responsive programming in the context of a pandemic, they were also able to lean on their formidable strengths, creativity, and resourcefulness to help them meet the needs of the students and families they served. These qualities helped them navigate, address, and/or adapt to emerging challenges. Examples of programming strengths and promising practices include:

- **Incentivizing participation in distance learning.** Staff from multiple Hubs shared a range of strategies they used to motivate or incentivize students to participate more consistently in distance learning. Successful strategies included using behavioral charts or attendance incentives and leveraging enrichment activities as motivators. Many program directors also leveraged outdoor spaces and peer circles to help students decompress from mornings spent on distance learning; doing so also provided opportunities for students to process their experiences and break down social barriers.

- **Focusing on building connections and fostering relationships.** Building strong and supportive relationships is a core aspect of youth development work. Youth development professionals who staffed the Hubs leaned on their skills in this arena to improve lines of communication with teachers and to foster connections with students and their families. Program leaders at some sites noted that having staff members who were from the community and were CBO program alumni also helped facilitate strong relationship building and trust. For example, these staff fostered connections by holding virtual meetings and one-on-one calls with parents and caregivers, streamlining

> " We've had hit-and-miss parent orientations. One of the things that staff has talked about is using Zoom to connect with families better. During the pandemic, some of our sites did that. They actually set up meetings with families to say, 'Okay, tell us about your kid. Where are they? What do you want us to emphasize?' We had a whole gambit."
>
> – Partner Agency Leader

communication from teachers, and capitalizing on food access efforts to connect with families.

- **Leveraging partnerships to complement resources and extend capacity.** Most interviewees credited DCYF for the resources that made the Hubs' creation possible. This included Hub supplies (e.g., markers, Chromebooks, masks), updated COVID-19 safety protocols, and, in some cases, testing and vaccine access. Given the time and capacity constraints, however, completing all the necessary steps for successful Hub launches required a proactive approach from program staff as well as an ability to leverage complementary partnerships. Existing partnerships and subcontractors mitigated some capacity constraints and communication challenges. These partnerships varied from long-standing relationships to new ties from summer programming, and they offered assistance in areas that included staffing, venue support, and enrichment. As one Hub leader explained, "Community really was a strong show in this process." Relatedly, despite initial coordination challenges with SFUSD as an entity, many Hub leaders shared that they were able to forge and leverage relationships with individual teachers to better support students.

- **Providing tailored support to address individual needs.** Over the course of their work with students in the Hubs, several youth development staff realized a need for behavioral management strategies and other tailored support not typically provided in nonacademic spaces. To that end, they focused on understanding and endeavoring to meet the unique needs of their students. Examples of these efforts include incorporating an awareness of students' home circumstances, addressing transportation challenges, obtaining teacher insight on academic performance, and working collaboratively for holistic student support.

- **Leveraging staff talents.** Program leaders needed to be creative and flexible in developing the Hubs' offerings, as enrichment activities and playground accessibility were, at times, limited due to pandemic precautions. Staff were widely regarded as fundamental to meeting this challenge; they often proactively contributed individual talents and knowledge to Hub programming, whether artistic, STEM-related, or rooted in their understanding of students' interests.

- **Maintaining a "floating" staff member.** Once it was allowed by public health guidelines, some programs were able to engage an additional colleague with flexibility to rotate across Hub responsibilities could relieve staff during any potential quarantine periods, support health and safety practices, stand in during unanticipated logistical challenges, provide breaks, and generally serve as an extra set of hands for the ongoing demands that might arise across the program's duration. In addition to meeting these practical needs, respondents shared that an additional staff member eased the pressure and subsequently supported the mental health of colleagues who may have felt peace of mind from the added support.

Health and Safety Precautions

Addressing the safety needs of students and staff during a pandemic required significant work, coordination, and preparation. To this end, all Hubs incorporated specific strategies to comply with health guidelines and ensure the safety of their Hub communities. These include:

- **Meeting pod size restrictions.** Guidelines set out by the California Department of Public Health set the adult-to-student ratio for the Hubs at a maximum of 2:14. These guidelines also emphasized that sites should minimize adult-to-adult interaction, since this was the most common way for the virus to spread. To satisfy this requirement, programs created "pods" of students within the Hubs, each with a ratio of 2:14 or smaller, and made efforts to minimize adult interaction across pods. Hub data collected since the interim report depict the number of pods within each Hub as ranging from one to as many as seven with each pod. The overall effects of these shifts were that staffing for the Hubs was leaner than anchor agencies are used to and staff worked longer days with limited breaks.

- **Instilling COVID-19 safety practices across pod members.** Because the physical space varied from one Hub to the next, anchor agencies were in charge of implementing their own safety precautions as long as they followed state health orders. Programs emphasized social distancing, mask wearing, and hand washing, and they took extra steps to keep pods separated. Although anchor agencies were responsible for implementing public safety features, DCYF and city partners played a key role in distributing the supplies necessary to launch the Hubs, such as plexiglass frames, temperature assessment devices, hand sanitizer, and PPE (e.g., gloves and masks). Many programs drew on their

Staffing at Hubs

Although staffing numbers have fluctuated due to turnover and other factors, the available data indicate that over 700 staff worked at the 75 Hubs that reported staffing in SPR's survey. Staffing ranges from two to 35 staff members per Hub (depending on the number of pods and other staff roles), with an average of nine at each.

Promoting Health and Safety

Hub staff pointed to three promising practices for promoting health and safety practices among youth:

- **Strategically placed posters** to remind students to wash their hands, keep their masks on, and social distance from their peers.

- **Students' periodic use of a six-foot rope** to assess if they are too close to their peers.

- **A "start small, then grow" approach** of enrolling a small number of students, establishing health and safety norms, and then slowly increasing enrollment to acclimate new students.
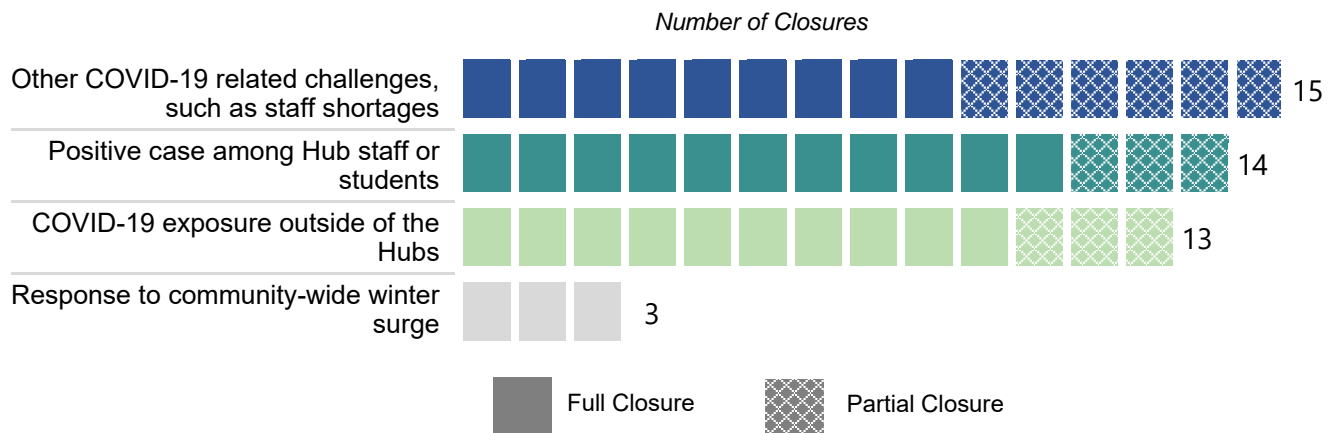
youth development background to identify youth-friendly ways to encourage students to follow health protocols.

- **Adapting interpersonal interactions for the COVID-19 context.** In interviews since the interim report, program leaders described the additional hours most staff spent completing health and safety precautions before students' arrival as well as Hub practices that supported student and staff safety. These included sending students home if they had sniffles or a cough and checking their temperature on the day of their return; sanitizing equipment and areas throughout the day; closely monitoring student interactions; and having parents meet youth in designated waiting areas during pick-up and drop-off periods. Notably, one site director described a shift in health and safety guidelines:

  "We were so adamant about 'we need to make this disinfectant spray with the bleach and the water and spray down everything every hour.'...I think that changed....We had a DCYF visit one day, and it was something that we prepared for a long time....From the start I was like, 'We do not socially distance.' Trying to get a kindergartner to not give a hug, or a high five, or whatever....Over time we realized that's not really how they're going to get sick."

Ultimately, the Hubs underwent relatively few shutdowns or infections, which is a testament to their vigilance overall. Throughout the year, programs reported 33 full Hub closures and 12 partial closures (the closure of a pod within a Hub) related to COVID-19. As shown in Figure 6, 13 of these closures were due to positive COVID-19 tests among staff or students. During these closures, Hubs were closed from 1 to 13 days, with an average closure of 6 days.

Figure 6: Reasons for Program Closures

Number of Closures

Other COVID-19 related challenges, such as staff shortages	15
Positive case among Hub staff or students	14
COVID-19 exposure outside of the Hubs	13
Response to community-wide winter surge	3

Full Closure   Partial Closure

Health and Safety Precautions: Challenges

While following health and safety precautions was critical to keeping students and staff safe, this presented important challenges to Hub program implementation and staff well-being. These challenges included:

- **Restrictive staff-to-student ratios.** Health guidelines, including the 2:14 adult-to-student ratio, played a heavy hand in restricting program logistics and services. Subsequently, tensions arose during the planning phase as Hub leaders wrestled with their deep desire to serve and their concerns about a host of issues that could affect their ability to do so safely, effectively, and in ways that would allow them to honor prior commitments. As such, the number of students each Hub was able to serve, given spacing and ventilation requirements, was sometimes lower than desired.

- **Inadequate facilities.** Having to navigate new facilities or challenges to existing space (e.g., ventilation concerns) added a layer of complexity for many program coordinators who were trying to adhere to health and safety guidelines while implementing effective programming. Hub leaders appreciated the support of external stakeholders in sharing space, but facilities that were available and met guidelines were sometimes outdated or in need of repair, or they presented social distancing challenges related to proximity to non-Hub members. As expressed in one interview, "We had to deal with the neighbors, we had to deal with the people that work there. Just the cleaning, and if something needs fixing, it was hard to get the maintenance there to fix things." Thus, while donated spaces for Hubs were greatly appreciated, adjusting to new or inadequate settings at times presented its own share of difficulties.

- **The stress of working in the COVID-19 context.** Hub leaders were ever-mindful of the toll the process took on existing staff members' health and well-being. One of the strengths of youth organizations is that their staff often reflect the diversity of the youth being served. This means that many of the Hub workers who took on higher levels of risk by doing this work also identified as Black, Indigenous, multiracial, or People of Color (BIMPOC)—a group that has had disproportionate infection and death rates from COVID-19. Because of these concerns, managers from many anchor agencies raised concerns over access to hazard pay and health insurance for

> " Everybody has their own families. This is people's job in the global pandemic. But you also have your own worries. And I felt there's that piece around people having to live on several planes. You always have to do it when you're doing youth work. But you really had to do it this time. You really had to be like, 'These kids, we have to keep them safe. You have to social distance.' [At the same time] it could have dire consequences for you going home. You could bring something from these kids to your house."
>
> – CHI Executive Director

their staff. As time progressed, mental health proved to be an additional safety concern. Staff not only felt the stress of their own workload but also faced challenges from covering lunch breaks or colleague absences, or from stepping in during times of staff turnover. Staff often had to balance their own personal stress and sacrifice with their commitment to serving students in their Hubs.

Ultimately, teachers, parents, network partners, subcontractors, third-party donors, and DCYF were all named as critical stakeholders in Hubs' successful efforts to support student learning, development, and well-being. In particular, Hub leaders noted teachers' willingness to share insights on students' academic performance, families' investment in getting their children connected to meaningful supports, partners' contributions to program offerings, and the countless resources provided by DCYF, including updated health and safety protocols, vaccine access, food, interpersonal support, and new partnerships. As a whole, the Hubs' success was deemed a reflection of the collective investment across community members. The next chapter illustrates these successes by sharing outcomes tied to the implementation of the CHI.

3 | Outcomes

Despite the compressed timeline, the lack of a blueprint for implementation at the outset, and the multiple challenges posed by the pandemic, the partners in this initiative successfully opened 86 Hub sites and served 2,750 high-needs students across more than 30 neighborhoods. In this chapter, we share how this initiative benefited students, families, and schools.
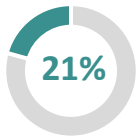
CHI Enrollment and Attendance

Between September 2020 and June 2021, a total of **2,750 students attended a CHI Hub**. We provide information related to CHI participant demographics in Figure 7.

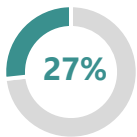### *Figure 7: Student Characteristics*

Gender

47%	53%
Female	Male

Special Education

21%

English Learner

27%

Race/Ethnicity

Hispanic/Latinx	29%
African American/Black	26%
Delined to State/Unknown	15%
Asian	11%
Multiracial	10%
White	4%
Pacific Islander	3%
Middle Eastern	1%
Native American	1%
Other	1%

Grade Level

TK	<1%
K	8%
1	12%
2	13%
3	13%
4	14%
5	12%
6	8%
7	6%
8	5%
9	2%
10	2%
11	2%
12	2%
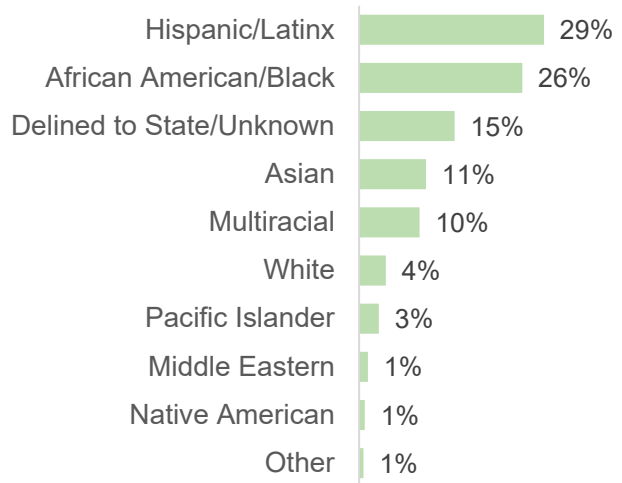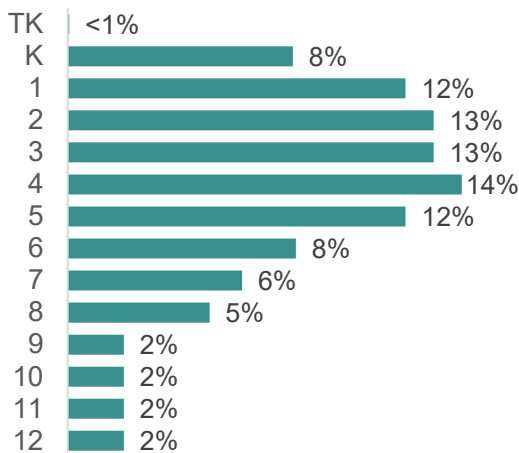
Neighborhood of Residence

Percent of CHI Students

0%

22%
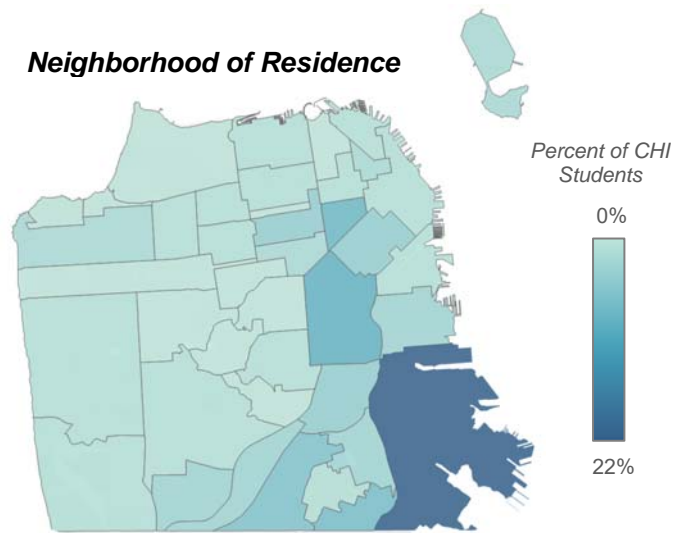
With Hubs opening throughout the year, the number of days students attended a Hub varied widely. As shown in Figure 8, about one quarter of students (26 percent) attended a Hub for at least 100 days. An approximately equal number (28 percent) attended for fewer than 25 days. At least 654 students left the Hubs when schools reopened in the spring. [5]

Figure 8: Total Days of Hub Attendance
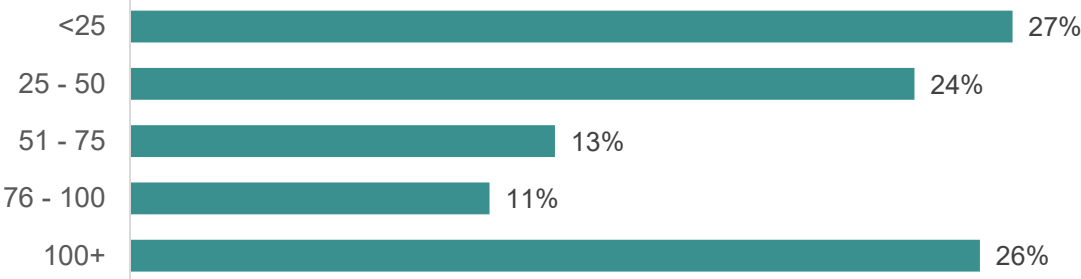
<25	27%
25 - 50	24%
51 - 75	13%
76 - 100	11%
100+	26%

On average, the following subgroups of students attended a Hub for more days than their counterparts:[6]

- **Asian American students.** On average, Native American, Pacific Islander, and White students attended fewer days than other students.
- **Students in kindergarten through sixth grade.** This was expected, as the CHI prioritized opening Hubs for elementary-aged students first. However, elementary-aged students also had more consistent attendance than older students while they were enrolled.
- **Students who spoke a language other than English at home.** These students were also more likely to have consistent attendance than their peers.

Student Outcomes

> *"My daughter has become better at her schoolwork. She is more confident in herself and happy about learning overall."* – Parent of Hub Participant

The Hubs were designed to support students who were least likely to succeed in a distance learning environment and under the stressors introduced by the pandemic. In this section, we present academic and social emotional outcomes for the students who participated in a Hub, drawing on survey responses from students, parents and caregivers, and CHI staff, as

91% of older youth agreed they would **recommend their Hub to a friend.**

88% of older youth agreed they **liked going** to their Hub.

94% of parents agreed their child liked going to their Hub.

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[5]   This data was available for 76 of the 86 Hubs.

[6]   Appendix C includes an overview of attendance by student subgroups.

well as from staff interviews.[7] The parent survey was completed by families with students in grades K-8 and the youth survey was completed by students in grades 5 and up.

Academic Engagement

Concerns about learning loss due to COVID-19 and the shift to distance learning made supporting academic engagement one of the Hubs' most urgent priorities. Feedback from parents and youth suggests that students were more engaged in school after participating in a Hub.

Specifically, staff and parents noted the following ways that students increased their academic engagement while attending a Hub:

- **Students connected daily to distance learning.** Some Hub staff shared that several of the students in their programs were extremely behind in their assignments; some had never even logged into a Zoom meeting. In addition to having the necessary equipment, internet access, and logistical support to effectively engage in and navigate distance learning, students benefited from adult supervision and support to make sure that they logged into Zoom meetings, stuck to their schedules, and completed assignments.

   Indeed, 62 percent of parent survey respondents reported that they enrolled their child in a Hub specifically because they needed this type of support in coordinating distance learning activities. Hub staff and parents both noted that this support was particularly beneficial for students whose parents and caregivers did not speak English. Moreover, Hub staff reported that teachers told them that students attended more

"My son is able to concentrate more and keep up with his classes. Also, he loves to play and interact with his peers through these hard times."

– Parent of Hub Participant

89% of parents agreed that the Hub **helped children with their schoolwork** and that their children attended more distance learning as a result of the Hub.

80% of youth agreed that they **attended distance learning more** since coming to the Hub.

Several students told me if not for coming to United Playaz they wouldn't even have gotten up for the first couple of classes. Combin[ing] this with having staff there to make sure they got online in time for class made a huge difference."

– Staff Survey Respondent

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[7] On the staff survey administered in the spring, CHI line staff and managers had the opportunity to assess their Hubs' success in supporting students in key areas.

often and finished more work after attending a Hub.

- **Students focused more on lessons and completed more schoolwork.** Many parent survey respondents shared that their children were better able to engage academically because the Hub environment was much more conducive to learning than their home environment and because there were dedicated staff to supervise them, which many parents were unable to do. Notably, over three quarters of youth survey respondents agreed that they were more confident in and better at their schoolwork as a result of their Hub experience.

78% of older youth were **more confident about their schoolwork.**

77% of older youth agreed they were **better at their schoolwork.**

> "Children receive supportive care and the occasional push they need. The teacher/student ratio is outstanding for kids who need the support to do work."
>
> – Parent of Hub Participant

- **Students received individualized attention.** Small class sizes helped students focus, access one-on-one tutoring, and get the targeted support they needed. For example, at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco, younger students rotated through learning stations where they could get extra practice and individualized support in skills like handwriting and reading. As several staff observed, they were able to provide a level of attention that these students had not experienced in traditional school.

Student Stories

During interviews, Hub staff shared stories about how individualized attention benefited students.

- United Playaz shared a story that a participant who had historically been an average student due to their attention deficit disorder earned a 4.0 grade point average because of the individualized method of learning provided by the Hub.

- Richmond Neighborhood Center staff coached their students on how to advocate for themselves in the new context of distance learning. For example, a middle school student was struggling in a class because of negative interactions he was having in his breakout room group. "No faculty was supervising the breakout room, so he was just having a really negative relationship, which was impacting his, just completion of work and general engagement in the class." Staff were "able to work with him to speak with his counselors about what was going on and ask for an accommodation or change to the environment so that he could be more successful."

Socioemotional Well-Being

Results from the staff survey and interviews indicate that Hub staff felt the most confident in their effectiveness in areas related to supporting socioemotional well-being. Notably, 70 percent of youth felt happier since attending the Hub, 66 percent felt less sad, and 51 percent felt less overwhelmed or stressed. Moreover, close to 90 percent of staff agreed that students felt happier and less overwhelmed, stressed, or sad after participating in a Hub.

The Hubs supported students' socioemotional well-being by providing the following opportunities and supports:

- **Students had fun.** Survey results indicate that youth enjoyed being a part of a Hub. In fact, 88 percent reported that they liked coming to their Hub and 85 percent reported that they had more fun since attending.

- **Students interacted with peers.** More than three quarters of youth (77 percent) agreed that their participation in the Hub meant they had more opportunities to interact with other people their age. Several Hub staff described how the smaller cohort size allowed youth to make stronger bonds and build a truer community in their Hub than they traditionally had at school or afterschool programs. "Because of the connectedness, smaller group, you can be seen now, and even heard." Staff from Youth First heard from school-day teachers when schools reopened that the students who attended the Hub were far more well-adjusted in their peer interactions than students who had been isolated at home.

91% of parents agreed that their child was **doing better emotionally** because of the Hub.

70% of older youth **felt happier** since attending the Hub.

"*Each student has grown healthier and happier. When they are supported to be successful, they feel better about themselves, they're learning skills to self-regulate and to make new friends. Students who first came to the Hub were not speaking, and now they are thinking critically and expressing emotions and opinions.*"

– Staff Survey Respondent

Since attending the Hub…

85% of older youth had **more fun.**

77% of older youth reported having **more opportunities to interact with peers.**

- **Students felt safe and supported.** Hub staff felt they were most effective in their efforts to provide a safe space for students to come to regularly, which was critical to supporting their socioemotional well-being. In fact, 99 percent of staff believed that they provided a safe space for students. Nearly all youth felt that Hub staff cared about them (92 percent) and felt that staff believed that they would succeed (90 percent). Staff discussed how important it was for students to have someone to talk with during the day, someone to ask them how they were when they become frustrated with distance learning. According to some Hub leaders, being in a small group all day with the same adults enabled some youth to open up about challenges they were facing more readily than if they were in a full classroom.

- **Students developed socioemotional skills.** Almost all staff survey respondents (97 percent) agreed that students developed socioemotional skills at their Hub. Much of this development stemmed from opportunities to interact with peers. As one staff member noted, "They had a chance to not only learn through their school Zooms, but also through being able to go on a playground with a group of kids." These interactions, and the inevitable disagreements and conflicts, provided many opportunities to learn communication skills and effective conflict resolution. The small pods also allowed for more personal coaching around communication and emotional regulation.

> " My child feels so loved and supported by the staff at [her Hub]. She has grown so much socially and emotionally with their support. She has also excelled in distance learning with the support of the staff."
>
> – Parent of Hub Participant

92% of older youth felt that **staff cared for them.**

95% of parents agreed that their child **felt safe** in the program.

> " Our students now know how to take breaths and say how they feel. And that is absolutely a huge thing, especially coming for a seven-year-old or an eight-year-old. It's just become a common language and form of communication where students share how they're feeling."
>
> – Staff Survey Respondent

- **Students learned new skills and built confidence.** Staff and several parents shared that students became more confident while attending a Hub. For example, one student who had been struggling with tennis received one-on-one coaching from one of the Hub staff until his confidence increased and he was excited to get off his computer and join his peers in a game. At another site, a number of students were self-conscious about their soccer skills; staff saw their confidence grow as they persisted in practicing and improved.

> " We have a lot of students that came in really self-conscious, very shy, a lot of negative self-talk....A lot of the work with the young people has been about flipping that script and focusing on the positive, on growth, and on improvement."
>
> – Staff Survey Respondent

Student Stories

During interviews, Hub staff shared stories about youth who learned to identify their emotions and solve problems:

- One young student from the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco struggled with his emotions and was physically violent with staff when he first attended the Hub. After the Hub staff created a chart that tracked positive behavior and provided direct coaching, they observed tremendous growth in his confidence and self-regulation.

- A student at Jamestown Community Center repeatedly melted down over frustrations like being cold or not being called on during Zoom instruction. Staff helped the student name and verbalize these frustrations. Similarly, a student at the Salvation Army who was being bullied over chat during Zoom sessions learned to identify how the behavior made them feel, calm themselves down, and then decide how they were going to respond.

- A student at Richmond Neighborhood Center had earned a reputation of being disengaged prior to joining the Hub. He often attended without his camera on and his teachers assumed he wasn't engaged. Staff coached him on how to advocate for himself with his teachers. "He was still attending, still engaged, but his teachers were just....They had developed an impression that he wasn't attending. And so [we worked] with him around how to advocate for himself and tell the teacher, 'I am here. I am present. Here's the evidence that I have. Here's the reason that I'm not engaged in the way that you want me to be, but here's how I can be best involved in the activity.'"

While COVID-19 guidelines and space limitations created challenges for some Hubs to fully implement their physical activity and recreation activities, 86 percent of staff agreed that youth got more physical activity at the Hub than they had while at home. Likewise, 77 percent of youth agreed that they got more physical activity and exercise since attending the Hub. Many parents expressed gratitude for these opportunities when they were made available, noting how important they were for the mental health of their children. Hub staff also supported students' physical well-being by providing them with meals and snacks. Some expressed worry about the effects of economic insecurity on the students they served, noting that through the Hubs they were able to ensure that students experiencing food insecurity were receiving meals on a consistent basis.

Family Outcomes

> *"The bond amongst the staff and the families given support during the toughest times of the last 14 months is something I'm so proud to be a part of."* – Staff Survey Respondent

While the Hubs' main priorities were to support students, staff were also keenly aware of the challenges faced by students' families during the pandemic. With capacity stretched thin, the Hubs did their best to support families by connecting them with supportive services, but their ability to do so varied. Overall, staff were less likely to feel effective in this area compared to their ability to directly support students.

94% of parents agreed that having their child at the Hub **helped their own emotional well-being.**

Hubs provided varied supports, including connection to mental health services, direct access to food, referrals to employment services, and parent education. One Hub noted that their families "felt like they were well informed, not just about schools, but about resources like COVID testing and vaccination, employment, city/state/federal programs, and more." Some parents just needed a supportive person to talk to when they were struggling.

Moreover, staff recognized that supporting students through the pandemic supported families. Multiple Hub staff reported that parents and caregivers had expressed appreciation for the Hubs, sharing that having a safe place for their children to go allowed parents to focus on their own responsibilities, thereby helping their own mental well-being. As one staff member shared, "Parents have expressed their gratitude for the program, as most parents...going back to work find it difficult to support their child at home."

Whether they were able to connect families with resources or just ensure that children were safe and learning during the day, a strong majority of staff (93 percent) agreed that Hubs helped parents and caregivers feel supported.

Youth Ecosystem Outcomes

"What are we going to leave behind? Attitudes, silos, shaming, judgment, blaming, leave that aside. And let's move out with cohesiveness, collaboration. And let's just keep it moving." – Partner Agency Leader

The ability to build the initiative so quickly stemmed from a long history of collaboration and a foundation of trust within the youth development field in San Francisco; the process of developing the CHI further strengthened this ecosystem. Operating a new initiative under new and uncertain challenges, organizations and city agencies were forced to break out of their silos, form new partnerships, and engage as a united team in ways they had not in the past.

- **Relationships between city agencies deepened.**
  As described in detail in SPR's Mid-Project Synthesis, providing facilities, technology, and staffing to support 86 Hubs in neighborhoods across San Francisco was a citywide effort coordinated by DCYF. It required the collaboration of the Office of the Mayor, RPD, the San Francisco Public Library, HOPE SF, the Department of Public Health, the Department of Technology, the San Francisco Beacon Initiative, CBOs, and other stakeholders. DCYF, RPD, the San Francisco Public Library, SF311,[8] and the San Francisco Beacon Initiative met at least once every week for planning and coordination; they plan to continue even after the CHI is no longer needed to discuss issues like duplication of services, supporting each other's programming, and coordination around priorities. Leaders from these agencies are hopeful that their experience collaborating over the last year and their resulting partnership will enhance the services available for families after the pandemic as well.

> ❝*This pandemic and the CHI allowed us to see that we can work together to do things for the kids and families in this city, and the burden doesn't have to be on one of us alone. Working together we can reach a greater part of the population."*
> – Partner Agency Leader

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[8]   SF311 is the primary customer service center for the City of San Francisco.

- **CBOs collaborate more often.** CBOs also formed new partnerships as a result of the initiative.[9] With their traditional ways of delivering programming upended, youth development professionals learned about each other's services and identified new ways of partnering to best support students through biweekly CHI meetings, which included intentional opportunities to build community and to network. Although some anchor agency leads were initially wary of the frequency of these meetings, they ultimately expressed deep gratitude for the opportunity to problem solve together, share ideas, forge new partnerships, and simply find community with others experiencing the same challenges. The new partnerships included "calling each other and picking each other's brains," sharing resources like extra PPE, and providing services at each other's programs. One anchor agency lead shared that other collaborative meetings of youth development professionals he attends have improved and become more effective because of the relationships formed through the CHI meetings, and that feelings of competition and scarcity have declined as more partnerships have formed. Some CBOs also reported that they now work better with DCYF as a result of collaborating to operate a Hub.

  > " *Instead of working against each other, we are working together, which is great. And I'm appreciative of that partnership. …I'm happy about building a lot of bridges. I can name 100 things that have come out of this Community Learning Hub as far as positive collaborations."*
  > – CHI Site Director

- **New partnerships formed between CBOs and city entities, like libraries and housing authorities.** Relationships also formed outside of the CHI meetings among organizations and agencies that partnered out of necessity. For example, one anchor agency lead shared that the manager of the housing authority that hosted their Hub was thinking about ways that other service providers could continue to use their space to serve the community after the Hub closes. Similarly, CBOs that operated out of library sites appreciated the support they received from library staff; they are now eager to partner more with library branches in the future.

- **Providers found new ways of delivering services.** The pandemic forced service providers to operate in new ways. Although providers expressed excitement about a return to normalcy, they have also learned new practices that may strengthen services in the future. For example, several organizations and agencies plan to continue offering some services virtually, such as parent orientations. RPD also plans to offer both in-person and virtual formats for workshops that traditionally have long wait lists, increasing the number of San

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9   In general, DCYF-funded Hub leads reported strengthening relationships with other agencies and CBOs, while Hub leaders from RPD sites did not. This is likely because they did not participate in the biweekly CHI meetings.

Francisco residents they can serve. Zoom meetings have enabled organizations to meet with each other more frequently, and this has made attending community meetings more accessible.

- **Some relationships between CBOs and individual teachers and principals deepened.** Several staff expressed that, although SFUSD was largely absent from this initiative at the district level, their relationships with individual teachers and principals deepened over the last year. Many shared their direct phone numbers with teachers for the first time, and the ease of Zoom enabled more direct contact between CBO staff and school staff. Teachers were able to communicate directly with Hub staff if a student had their video off or if they needed extra support in specific areas. Importantly, not all staff felt like relationships with teachers or principals had improved.

> 66 *Over the course of the pandemic, our partnership with our school site is stronger than it has ever been because they saw our value. We know how to reach out to the families, we have those relationships, we know how to get out there."*
>
> – CHI Site Director

- **Appreciation for youth development professionals and recreation providers grew.** As mentioned above, families frequently expressed their appreciation for Hub staff and the support they provided. Staff also shared numerous stories of teachers expressing appreciation. Moreover, RPD staff believed that families attending a Hub had become more aware of and likely to engage in RPD services. Still, several staff reported that their contribution was underappreciated by the school district.

> 66 *I am thankful to have the opportunity to be a part of a Hub. I am thankful that I can give the student the ability to be outdoors with them. I also have the ability to put a smile on their faces during these hard times in our communities."*
>
> – Staff Survey Respondent

Considerations

> *"Having to adjust again to being around other human beings is a long process. But introducing that in safe manner to our students was good. [After being in the Hub], students can be in a classroom with 12 other students, so going back to school isn't going to be night and day for them. They are going to be equipped mentally and socially on how to respond to their peers."* – Staff Survey Respondent

As noted in this chapter, providing academic support to students at-risk of learning loss was the impetus for the CHI. Feedback from staff, parents, and students indicates that students were more

connected to school, completed more assignments, and felt more confident about their schoolwork as a result of the initiative. In fact, the small pod size may have allowed some youth to thrive in ways they could not in a traditional school. Furthermore, staff felt most successful in their support of students' socioemotional well-being. Their experience demonstrates how bringing students together in consistent, small groups with trained youth development professionals offers opportunities to build community, find joy, and develop socioemotional skills.

> " *The overall experience of the pandemic will affect kids' social skills, academic retention, and focus when school does resume. While the Hub did help to alleviate some of these consequences, I believe that most students will have a harder time returning to school in the fall."*
>
> – Staff Survey Respondent

Although Hub staff generally believed that students developed socioemotional skills, attended more distance learning, and completed more assignments as a result of the CHI, **several still expressed concern for students transitioning back to regular in-person school.** Tellingly, 97 percent of staff believed that students developed socioemotional skills and 90 percent agreed that students completed more assignments, yet only 74 percent agreed that students were better prepared for next school year than if they hadn't attended their Hub. On the youth survey, 64 percent of youth agreed that they were more ready for the next school year as a result of attending their Hub, perhaps hinting at their apprehension around returning to school as well.

In interviews, **staff identified implementation challenges that affected student outcomes**. As described in Chapter 2, issues such as facility limitations and staffing shortages at times affected the quality of enrichment and academic support. In addition, limited access to paraprofessionals to assist students with special needs and behavioral health care for students experiencing socioemotional challenges affected the Hubs' ability to support some of the most vulnerable students.

Other challenges outside of Hub implementation affected student outcomes, mainly that **managing distance learning and living through a pandemic is hard, even with the support of a Hub**. A couple of Hub staff noted that many students were struggling with Zoom and pandemic fatigue after an entire year of distance learning. Many students became tired and increasingly disengaged. One site reported that students started demonstrating increasingly challenging behaviors over time. Some Hub staff noted that the work assigned by SFUSD was not very challenging in the 2020–2021 academic year or that distance learning was not effective. As such, even students with high engagement in distance learning may be unprepared for the next school year.

At the start of the 2021–2022 school year, San Francisco's school children returned to classrooms throughout the city. Although nothing is certain given the changing nature of the COVID-19 virus, it appears that the CHI has run its course. As an initiative forged in a time of crisis, the CHI can provide us with unique insights regarding how and in what ways large city agencies, which normally operate in a slow and measured way, can respond and adapt quickly when needed. Thus, we conclude this report with considerations and learnings for agencies and organizations seeking to tackle the persistent and ongoing challenges facing the city, such as a still-evolving virus and entrenched inequities based on race and income.

Recommendations

In the spring and early summer of 2021, program staff and partners anticipated many of the challenges that characterized the launch of the 2021–2022 school year. In interviews they stated that they were concerned about the magnitude of the work to be done in order to get students back on track socially and academically, particularly those in the early elementary grades and those who were academically behind prior to the pandemic. As DCYF and other city stakeholders sought to quickly scale up programming to help facilitate students' transitions back to school, respondents were unsure if their programs would have adequate staff or enough space to provide such programming. They also raised questions about whether students would have the transportation support they would need to attend programs. Finally, they worried about the unpredictability of the virus and whether variants would lead to additional shut-downs.

With these challenges in mind, and based on the insights they gained through the CHI, we asked respondents to articulate considerations for schools and teachers, youth development programs, and other city agencies. For example, what are the largest areas of need for students and families at this moment? And what promising practices can be leveraged to enhance programming? We have outlined considerations for these key stakeholder groups below.

> " I believe this Community Learning Hub was one of the greatest things to come out of the pandemic. To be honest with you, when everyone else was afraid to be in-person, and we were able to show the schools and show everybody, 'Hey, you can do this safely and still provide great services.'"
>
> – *CHI Site Director*

Teachers and School Staff

- **Recognize and lean into the strengths of community and youth-serving organizations.** As they transitioned to in-person instruction, respondents felt that it was important for schools and teachers to recognize the value that community and youth organizations can have in the recovery process. These organizations have dedicated and diverse staff who are good at relationship building with students and families, often come

from the same communities as the youth they serve, and can help connect families to external community resources. As captured in the following quote, youth program staff hope that they can partner with schools and teachers on more equal footing moving forward.

> *"I imagine that [moving forward] the partnership with the school will continue on the same path in more of a shared partnership, equal level, where before it was almost like dictation. The school would say, 'Hey, we need you to do this. Go do this.' We wouldn't have much of a say in it, where now I think that we have a place at the table, and our opinions are valued, and things like that. Next school year we're already planning on doing professional developments together, instead of 'We do our thing and you do your thing,' and then we kind of meet in the middle."* – CHI Site Director

- **Prioritize social and emotional support, recreation, enrichment, and culturally relevant content in partnership with community programs.** Interviewees emphasized that, while it is crucial that children get additional academic support in the 2021–2022 school year, the social isolation that many experienced in the prior school year may make it challenging for them to stay focused on academics. Some respondents worried that the types and degree of trauma that many youth experienced since the beginning of the pandemic will become more visible as they begin attending in-person instruction again. In one respondent's words, "therapy is going to be key for everybody." As described in the previous bullet, community programs are uniquely positioned to partner with schools to provide enriching activities that will help students express themselves and integrate back into the broader school community.

> " How do we as a whole system recognize the need to slow down for young people, to allow for them to truly have spaces to heal and to not feel as if everything continues to move on in spite of life being lost or life being altered?"
>
> *– CHI Site Director*

> *"I also think because of the Hubs, what we have experienced thus far in this 18 months, CBO partners are partners. They're the best partners any school can have, especially if you had this relationship with agencies for such a long time. They are an extension of the school and can work with families in ways that maybe the school might not be able to, and vice versa."* – DCYF Staff

- **Open up school spaces to community organizations in order to maximize services for families.** Respondents talked about how hard it was for school-based programs to operate Hubs because they did not have their own brick-and-mortar buildings; they expressed frustration that SFUSD did not "let the communities in" to provide services. Acknowledging how expensive space is in San Francisco, stakeholders hoped that agreements could be reached that would allow schools to open up their spaces to CBOs, with the goal of expanding services for children, youth, and their families.

> " I would say focus on the community building, the [socioemotional learning] element of the work, and be willing to forgo your benchmarks and your current expectations of where a young person should be, and really just meet them where they are, without judgment, without shame. Our system is so good at creating shame. And again, this is a situation where it's like, no one should feel ashamed about where they are in terms of their learning after the end of this year. No one."
>
> *– CHI Site Director*

- **Meet youth and families where they are.**
  As described earlier in this report, many students entered the Hubs having never logged into their classes or with a long list of assignments. The staff helped them to reconnect and make progress on their backlog of schoolwork. Recognizing the significant challenges ahead for many students who did not regularly engage in distance learning and did not have the additional support provided by a Hub, those we interviewed hoped that schools and teachers would "meet young people where they are and provide them support based on where their level is" rather than judge them against a set of expectations about where they "should be."

> *"I think there needs to be an awareness of where their kids are at, socially, emotionally, and academically. We've tried our best keeping all of our kids on track, but there's going to be those kids that have just not done anything for the past year. They're not receiving parental support at home. They're doing exactly zero of their assignments. They don't know their ABCs by second grade. They need to really be aware of some of their kids are going to be stepping back into school with some long-standing issues, and it can't be just like, 'Oh, yeah, you roll this out for year, go on to the next grade. Have fun. My job here is done.' It's not anything necessarily against the teacher—they've been trying their best on the other side of that screen also—but they need to really look at some of these kids coming back and, are they where we need them to be before we try and force them into something they're not ready for?"*
> – CHI Site Director

- **Invest in the socioemotional well-being of youth development staff.** The fatigue that program staff were facing was palpable in our interviews. Staff put themselves on the front lines of the pandemic but also needed to adjust continuously to shifting public health guidelines and uncertainty about schools reopening. Heading into the 2021–2022 school year, there remained a high degree of uncertainty about how programs would evolve over the coming year. The constant "pivoting" and the lack of predictability has been a huge stressor on staff, making it more important than ever that programs prioritize staff well-being and have forums where they can express their anxiety. As one Hub site director said, "We are learning to give ourselves grace….I keep reminding my staff and myself that we're also learning through this, and that it is ok to be overwhelmed.

- **Continue to nurture relationships with libraries.** Staff at several CBOs and recreation sites spoke of the value they received from libraries over the course of the CHI and how they became much better acquainted with the services they offer.

- **Use virtual platforms like Zoom to enhance partnerships and capacity.** A few interviewees said that virtual meeting platforms had opened up new avenues for their programs, particularly around collaboration with partners, access to training, and their ability to engage in one-on-one discussions with parents. Many program staff spoke of how they had effectively used online programs, such as BookNook, to support student academic development. While most we interviewed felt that face-to-face interaction was superior and preferred in most situations, they also believed that using a mix of in-person and virtual meetings could broaden organizational access to resources and partners.

DCYF and Other City Agencies

- **Continue to support cross-agency coordination when "the stakes are low."** Doing so enables agencies to better serve students, particularly those who are in a priority group, such as those with disabilities. The Childcare Task Force, which eventually evolved into the coordinating group for the Hubs, is a good model for how to break down silos and support ongoing coordination. Many partners said they would like to see such coordination continue. This type of group could help to identify key gaps in services or relationships that became evident during the course of the pandemic and develop a plan for addressing those gaps so the city can be better prepared moving forward.

- **Consider what types of services and supports might be provided across programs, including through access to online programs.** DCYF played a vital role in helping to align programs around the Hub model and to provide Hubs with support (e.g., access to PPE, identification of students for services). While that level of support is not sustainable, there may be ways to strengthen programs by providing some supplemental services. For instance, respondents cited how valuable it was to have access to the BookNook program or to Playworks, both of which were made available to the Hubs. One site director described

this type of support as an important move away from a climate where programs are always asked to do "more with less."

High-Level Learnings

> *"I think with the Hubs, I think that was a good example of how a government agency shifted during this time, shifted its funds and really led with its heart."*
> – DCYF Staff Member

Because the CHI was developed in response to a global crisis, there was no roadmap for staff to follow and they did not have the long-term planning time that typically would precede a citywide initiative of this type and scale. DCYF staff and city leadership needed to make sense of rapidly evolving and inconsistent information while also quickly taking action on behalf of the children and families they serve. In this section, we lift up high-level learnings that arose from the development and implementation of the CHI, with a focus on general principles for guiding decision making in a time of crisis.

- **Values-based leadership simplifies decision making in a time of crisis.** DCYF and city leaders (e.g., the mayor) were able to move more quickly because they used their values as guideposts to developing the CHI. Doing so helped them to clearly see the challenges that needed to be addressed and to prioritize actions. DCYF's mission calls out their "commitment to advancing equity and healing trauma,"[10] and this helped them quickly center their actions on helping children and youth who would be most negatively impacted by distance learning. Similarly, DCYF's mission highlights their goal to "bring together agencies, schools and community-based organizations to strengthen communities," which is reflected in the collaborative processes they engaged in during the design phase of the CHI. In a project this complex, it is easy to get diverted by challenges and tangential issues. The CHI was successful because it continuously refocused the attention of key stakeholders on the underlying values guiding the initiative; this in turn helped partners to navigate challenges and uncertainty in pursuit of a common purpose.

- **Government agencies with large bureaucracies can move quickly through collaboration, knowledge sharing, and transparency.** During the pandemic, there were many examples of organizations and systems that moved slowly and that failed to meet the moment. The Hubs were a strong counterexample to that, illustrating how decision-making processes in a large complex system can be streamlined, silos can be dissolved (or at least reduced), and problems can be solved if stakeholders are willing to communicate clearly, be transparent about what they don't know, and be willing to iterate and adapt in concert with

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10 San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families. (n.d.). *About us.* https://www.dcyf.org/our-mission-our-vision-our-foundation

one another. As part of this process, partners focused on the essentials and provided one another flexibility to respond to the crises. One example of this was the flexibility and trust that DCYF exhibited with their grantees around grant reporting, which freed up CBOs to focus on young people and families.

- **Alignment and collaboration between agencies increases the responsiveness and resilience of those systems in a time of crisis.** As a city, San Francisco responded quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic by activating its Emergency Operations Center (which became the COVID Command Center) in January 2020 and declaring a state of emergency in February 2020, before there were any confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the city. The COVID Command Center was a mechanism to centralize and coordinate response efforts. The Childcare Task Force similarly was instrumental in centralizing and coordinating the city's effort to mobilize emergency childcare and create the Hubs for students who needed distance learning support. These collaborative vehicles, coupled with a willingness among leaders and staff to do whatever it took to execute their plans, were essential to the ability of the entire system to adapt in the face of a crisis. As the city moves to address the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations, it is worthwhile to ask how these cross-agency relationships can be sustained and deepened.

- **Addressing racial and economic inequities will take a long-term, coordinated effort.** The pandemic made even more visible the deep racial and economic inequities that have been growing for decades—both in San Francisco and across the nation as a whole.[11] Heading into the pandemic, San Francisco had one of the largest rates of income and racial inequality in the country, and the pandemic has only deepened those differences.[12] Predictably, the pandemic has resulted in significant learning loss in California, in both English language arts and math, particularly for students in earlier grades, low-income students, and English learners. However, the full effects are not yet well understood.[13] All of this points to the need for a sustained and long-term effort to address systemic racial and

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[11]   Bay Area Council Economic Institute. (2021, March). *How has income inequality changed in the Bay Area over the last decade?* http://www.bayareaeconomy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Income-Inequality_3.10.21.pdf

[12]   Wipf, C. (2021, February 17). Report details stunning depth of inequality in Silicon Valley since COVID-19. *San Jose Spotlight.* https://sanjosespotlight.com/report-details-stunning-depth-of-inequality-in-silicon-valley-since-covid-19/; Reitsma, M. B., Claypool, A. L., Vargo, J. Shete, P. B., McCorvie, R., Wheeler, W. H., Rocha, D. A., Myers, J. F., Murray, E. L., Bregman, B., Dominguez, D. M., Nguyen, A. D., Porse, C., Fritz, C. L., Jain, S., Watt, J. P., Salomon, J. A., & Goldhaber-Fiebert, J. D. (2021). Racial/ethnic disparities in COVID-19 exposure risk, testing, and cases at the subcounty level in California. *Health Affairs*, *40*(6). https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2021.00098

[13]   Pier, L., Hough, H. J., Christian, M., Bookman, N., Wilkenfeld, B., & Miller, R. (2021, January 25). *COVID-19 and the educational equity crises: Evidence on learning loss from the CORE Data Collaborative.* PACE. https://edpolicyinca.org/newsroom/covid-19-and-educational-equity-crisis

economic inequities and the exacerbating impact of the pandemic among low-income and BIMPOC youth in San Francisco in the years ahead.

- **There is a need to invest in high-quality youth development through increased wages, additional training for staff, and smaller staff-to-youth ratios.** When asked what made the Hubs possible, many respondents highlighted the courage and dedication of youth development staff, who put their own health and the health of their families at risk in order to be of service to youth. The vital role that these professionals play is often somewhat invisible and, as such, is not well compensated. The pandemic helped to foreground their work as well as the work of other essential workers. Moreover, it pointed to the need for a general wage increase in the field and for more supports to foster professional growth. Though smaller staff-to-youth ratios were ultimately required for safety during the pandemic, this created an opportunity to witness how much more youth development professionals can do (and how much more youth can benefit) when their work context is conducive to individualized attention. Although the context for this individualized attention emerged from the pandemic, this valuable practice does not need to end with the pandemic.

Conclusion

The CHI model demonstrated the commitment of city partners and anchor agencies to serving San Francisco's most vulnerable students while underscoring the unique role that CBOs play in supporting the well-being of students and families. Looking beyond the pandemic, many of those we interviewed pointed to the CHI as a model for the role that community organizations can play in building equitable educational systems that meet the needs of all students. Addressing the racial and economic inequities that were exacerbated by the pandemic is a long-term challenge that will require a continued focus on values-based leadership, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and humility across systems and agencies, and at all levels of government.

Appendix A: List of Sources

This list illustrates the range of quantitative and qualitative sources that SPR used to inform the CHI's mid-year synthesis report.

Source	Description
Planning Meetings	SPR attended twenty-four CHI planning meetings between August 3 and December 10, 2020. The meetings took place twice a week and were facilitated by the San Francisco Beacon Initiative (SFBI). Core attendees included DCYF's Sr. Program Specialists, anchor agencies, and CBO partners. These meetings were created to onboard partner stakeholders. Activities included building community, vision alignment, framework development, measurement and evaluation, individual Hub planning, and monitoring implementation.
Surveys of agency staff	SPR launched a survey for phase 1 and phase 2 Hubs in November 2020 and December 2020, respectively. The online survey included a series of close-ended (Likert-scale) and open-ended (written response) questions designed to understand the CHI's Hub structure, program components, planning activities, implementation processes, and emerging outcomes for students served. For phase 1, thirty-one (46%) out of sixty-seven site s completed the survey. For phase 2, ten (37%) out of twenty-seven sites completed the survey. Because there were some site lead managers that oversaw multiple Hubs but only submitted one survey, it is likely that the response rates are higher. In April 2021, SPR launched a survey to all Hub staff. The survey included questions related to their experience directly supporting students and their perspective on student and family outcomes. Hub leaders also answered questions related to understand the structure of the CHI hub programs. A total of 135 Hub staff representing 73 of the 86 Hubs (85%) completed the survey.
Parent Survey	DCYF administered a parent survey of participants in grades K-8 at two points during the initiative (December 2020 and April 2021); it was administered in multiple language online and in person (paper). The survey included a series of closed- and open-ended questions designed to understand the extent to which the CHI was supporting the academic, social, and emotional development of their children. A total of 650 parents and caregivers completed surveys; it included 404 English, 179 Spanish and 62 Chinese speaking parent respondents. (The language was not recorded for five surveys.)
Youth Survey	In April 2021, DCYF administered a survey to youth in grades 6 and above, as well as 5th graders who attended a pod with older youth. The survey was administered online in multiple languages and was designed to capture youth perspective on program quality and the impact of the Hub on their academic progress and socioemotional wellbeing. The survey was completed by youth from 15 Hubs, representing 22% of hubs with middle school and high school students.

Interviews and Focus Groups	To gather in-depth insights and feedback, SPR conducted 25 one-on-one interviews and seven focus groups that solicited feedback from 45 unique stakeholders involved in the planning and implementation of the CHI. Discussions focused on the planning and implementation of the CHI and the operation of Hubs; including partner agency roles, contextual factors influencing the rollout of the Hubs, the implementation of Hub programming, youth outcomes, and lessons learned.
Documents	SPR reviewed resources made available by DCYF and SFBI. DCYF shared spreadsheets of Hub characteristics, student data dashboards, and maps of Hub placements. SFBI shared copies of materials shared during planning meetings like planning documents, health and safety guides developed by the state, and presentations created by city departments. The document review informed the development of the survey of agency leads, interview and focus protocols, and the analysis on the effectiveness of the CHI.
Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) Interviews	A structured interview of Hub leaders that gathered information on Hub logistics (e.g., number of participants and staff), distance learning schedules, enrichment offerings, efforts to foster cultural competency, contributors to program success, and modes of communication to families.

Appendix B: List of Interviewees

SPR conducted interviews with staff from various partner agencies that supported the CHI.

Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Senior Staff
- **Maria Su**, Executive Director
- **Sherrice Dorsey-Smith**, Deputy Director, Program Planning & Grants
- **Aumijo Gomes,** Deputy Director, Strategic Initiatives and Operations
- **Jasmine Dawson**, Programs & Grants Manager

Other DCYF Staff
- **Jill Berkin,** Sr. Research and Evaluation Analyst
- **Dori Caminong,** Community Engagement and Communications Manager
- **Veronica Chew**, Our Children Our Families Council Senior Analyst
- **Simone Combs**, Our Children Our Families Council Family Support Navigator
- **Monica Flores**, Sr. Program Specialist
- **Mitzi Chavez Gallardo**, Data & Evaluation Analyst
- **Teodora Ildefonzo-Olmo**, Sr. Technical Assistance Specialist
- **Glen Jermyn Andag**, Sr. Program Specialist
- **Armael Malinis**, Program Specialist
- **Lina Morales**, Sr. Program Specialist
- **Prishni Murillo**, Sr. Program & Planning Specialist
- **Greg Rojas**, Sr. Contracts & Compliance Specialist
- **Johanna Rosales**, Sr. Program Specialist
- **Jasmine Serim**, Sr. Program Specialist
- **Lamont Snaer**, Sr. Program & Planning Specialist
- **Debbie Tisdale**, Sr. Program Specialist
- **Helen Lee**, Program Specialist

San Francisco Department of Recreation & Parks (RPD)

- **Lorraine Banford**, Superintendent of Recreation and Community Services
- **Anne Marie Donnelly**, Support Services Manager
- **Amina Zaidi**, Jr. Administrative Analyst

San Francisco Public Libraries (SFPL)

- **Michael Lambert**, City Librarian

San Francisco Beacon Initiative

➢ **Carol Hill,** Executive Director
➢ **Sally Jenkins-Stevens,** Associate Director
➢ **Erica Hernandez**, Program Manager
➢ **Lota Gaetos,** Operations Coordinator

Hub Leads

➢ **Merita Kaulave**, Bay Area Community Resources
➢ **Erica Nave**, Catholic Charities CYO of the Archdiocese of San Francisco
➢ **Kim Wong**, FACES SF
➢ **Jessica Linares**, Jamestown Community Center
➢ **Hillary Buren**, Jewish Community Center of San Francisco
➢ **Gloria Dominguez**, Mission Girls
➢ **Delia Fitzpatrick**, Our Kids First
➢ **Edward Hatter**, Potrero Hill Neighborhood House
➢ **Gina Patterson**, Real Options for City Kids
➢ **Chris Tskuda**, Richmond District Neighborhood Center
➢ **Sophia Bounds-Turnispeed**, RPD
➢ **Renee Strong**, RPD
➢ **Jeanne Sharei**, RPD
➢ **Monica Rios**, The Salvation Army
➢ **Jimmy Rivera**, Shih Yu-Lang Central YMCA
➢ **Renard Monroe**, Youth 1st

Appendix C: CHI Attendance by Race and Grade

Hours of Attendance by Race

Race	<25	25-50	51-75	76-100	100+	Avg. Hours
African American (n=704)	32%	16%	12%	11%	28%	63
Asian (n=290)	20%	23%	15%	7%	35%	72.6
Hispanic/Latino (n=787)	19%	24%	15%	12%	31%	70
Middle Eastern (n=40)	21%	16%	11%	18%	34%	69.4
Multiracial (n=262)	30%	23%	12%	11%	24%	60
Native American (n=25)	77%	18%	6%			19.4
Other (n=19)	6%	24%	6%	24%	41%	84.5
Pacific Islander (n=85)	51%	14%	14%	10%	11%	42
White (n=118)	30%	30%	14%	12%	15%	53.4

Legend: ■ <25 ■ 25-50 ■ 51-75 ■ 76-100 ■ 100+

Hours of Attendance by Grade

Grade	<25	25-50	51-75	76-100	100+	Avg. Hours
TK/PK (n=5)		60%	20%		20%	58.4
K (n=221)	23%	21%	16%	9%	30%	68.5
1 (n=334)	25%	18%	15%	11%	30%	68
2 (n=367)	21%	26%	13%	13%	28%	66.5
3 (n=355)	20%	26%	12%	14%	27%	67.9
4 (n=377)	25%	23%	15%	11%	28%	65.8
5 (n=322)	26%	26%	10%	10%	27%	63.6
6 (n=223)	18%	29%	18%	7%	29%	66.6
7 (n=172)	38%	25%	8%	9%	20%	52
8 (n=140)	27%	34%	7%	13%	19%	54.1
9 (n=64)	47%	13%			14%	45.8
10 (n=65)	55%	9%	14%	8%	14%	41
11 (n=40)	55%	13%	13%	5%	15%	39.3
12 (n=46)	63%	11%	17%	4%	4%	30.5

Legend: ■ <25 % ■ 25-50 % ■ 51-75 % ■ 76-100 % ■ 100+ %