CHOICE CYCLE XI FINAL EVALUATION

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BACKGROUND

- CHOICE Cycle XI ran from July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2024
- Granted \$1.875m of PSAP (Measure O) funds over two and a half years to eight community-based organizations in three categories:
 - Street outreach, intervention, and mediation
 - REACH Boys & Girls Clubs of Sonoma-Marin
 - El Puente Lifeworks of Sonoma County (Sonoma CAN)
 - School engagement and truancy prevention
 - Project T.R.U.E Center for Well Being
 - Roseland Strong CAP Sonoma (Sonoma CAN)
 - Safe School Ambassadors Community Matters
 - Programa Cosecha Raizes Collective
 - School readiness
 - Early Education Outreach Intervention Program 4Cs Sonoma County
 - Rooting Youth in Nature LandPaths
- Applied Survey Research was contracted to conduct evaluation using a Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework

FUNDED PROGRAMS

CHOICE

IMPACT

Raizes Collective

Programa Cosecha

Nurtured cultural identity and artistic expression among youth through mural projects, cultural gatherings, educational field trips and community and school-based art programs.

LandPaths

Rooting Youth in Nature & Healing the Whole Family

Reconnected youth with nature through environmental education, field trips, and camps/treks, that fostered personal growth and land stewardship.

Community Matters

Safe School Ambassadors

Promoted school safety through student-led conflict resolution and anti-bullying activities, fostering youth leadership.

Sonoma CAN

Fuerza & Roseland Strong

Offered crisis support and family resources while fostering parental involvement in education and community events.

4Cs Sonoma County

Early Education Outreach Intervention

Expanded family access to early childhood education by providing wraparound case management and connected families to resources through grassroots outreach and community events.

Boys and Girls Club REACH

Empowered youth via individualized support, cultural healing programs, career exploration activities, and life skills education.

Sonoma CAN (formerly LifeWorks)

El Puente

Provided trauma-informed therapy and support to youth and families impacted by violence, emphasizing emotional healing and safety.

Center for Well-Being

Project TRUE

Led peer-driven health campaigns in schools focusing on substance abuse prevention and mental health awareness, fostering youth leadership and student success.

KEY PROGRAM THEMES

Youth Empowerment and Leadership

 Programs like Project TRUE, Safe School Ambassadors, and Programa Cosecha elevated youth voices and built confidence, civic engagement and leadership skills

Family Engagement and Wraparound Support

Multiple programs, such as Early Education Outreach Intervention and El Puente, addressed social
determinants of health by connecting families with case management and services such as childcare, education,
mental health, food, and housing services

Culturally Responsive Programming

• All grantees delivered community-rooted services, honoring participants' traditions and values, delivered in familiar locations, with food, art, and language accessibility that reflected participants' backgrounds.

Trauma-Informed, Healing-Centered Approaches

• Programs like El Puente provided therapeutic services that supported trauma recovery, family healing, and reduction in high-risk behaviors, while nature-based and arts-based healing were emphasized by Rooting Youth in Nature and Programa Cosecha.

COMMUNITY REACH AND OUTCOMES

 CHOICE-funded programs reached over 16,700 community members and provided more than 53,000 hours of service, with broad engagement across race, ethnicity, risk level, and neighborhood

Early Education Outreach	88% of clients who requested childcare were enrolled
REACH	98% of youth did not incur new criminal charges
El Puente	83% of particiants reduced trauma and high-risk behaviors
Project TRUE	98% of youth leaders increased knowledge about alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
Fuerza / Roseland Strong	69% of participants reported increased school attendance
Safe School Ambassadors	94% of participants felt more connected to their school
Rooting Youth in Nature	73% of students reported a positive attitude about time outdoors
Programa Cosecha	76% of students learned at least one tool for self-regulation

NAVIGATING CHALLENGES

Common barriers facing grantees included:

- Staffing shortages
- Transportation and access issues
- Inconsistent youth participation
- Lack of available childcare
- Limited culturally-relevant behavioral health services

Programs adapted by:

- Expanding outreach
- Partnering with schools
- Strengthening partnerships with each other to better support participants
- Adjusting programming to meet changing needs

Cycle XI CHOICE grantees demonstrated a shared commitment to empowering youth, strengthening families, and fostering safe communities. Through collaborative, culturally grounded, and trauma-informed approaches, they delivered vital services and promoted healing and resilience. Despite systemic challenges, their efforts reached high-need areas and diverse populations, generating measurable benefits in safety, connectedness, and individual well-being. The findings from Cycle XI show that community-based solutions are essential to preventing violence and nurturing thriving youth.

NEXT STEPS: LOOKING AHEAD TO CYCLE XII

Building on the lessons and successes of Cycle XI, the CHOICE Grant Program and Violence Prevention Partnership have aligned Cycle XII (2025–2028) with a new five-year strategic plan that expands impact and sharpens focus:

Updated Strategic Focus Areas

- Cycle XII programs are aligned to the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan and cover four core service categories
 - Workforce Development (e.g., job readiness, vocational training)
 - Reentry and Diversion (e.g., cognitive skills, restorative justice)
 - Whole Family Support (e.g., therapy, system navigation)
 - Pro-Social Activities (e.g., outdoor education, youth engagement)

Focus on Equity and High-Risk Youth

• CHOICE is continuing to prioritize youth ages 0-24, particularly those who are at-risk, high-risk, gang-impacted, or gang-intentional, or those living in Equity Priority Areas.

Enhanced Performance Tracking

• The evaluation framework will continue to use RBA, with refined outcome measures including job attainment, reduced recidivism, improved family functioning, and increased sense of belonging

Long-Term Vision

• The CHOICE Grant Program continues to evolve as a model of shared responsibility - one that uplifts youth, strengthens families, and creates safer, more connected communities

QUESTIONS

Questions?