The Young Women of San Francisco

How the Community Empowers Its Girls

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GABHS for Gals Intern
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Agenda

- Background (Internship & Project)
- Organizations & Programs
- Issues Facing SF Girls – Program & Client Perspectives
- Overall Strengths (Best Practices)
- What’s Still Needed
- What it All Means!
- Questions & Answers
Background of Internship & Project

- Coro Exploring Leadership Program
- Mental Health Board
  - GABHS for Gals
- Poster!
What was going on before this
– Research
– Needs Assessments
  – Discovering needs of SF females
  – Organized by neighborhood
  – Contacted SF Programs
  – Compiled & Identified Patterns
My Assignment

- To learn about how non-profits in San Francisco’s diverse neighborhoods are meeting the needs of high school girls.

- What are these non-profits doing in order to empower girls to live healthy and productive lives?
Assignment #1

- **What “Empowerment” is...**
  - *United Nations Definition (1995):*
    - Women’s Empowerment
  - Sense of self-worth
  - Right to have & determine choices
  - Access to opportunities & resources
  - Power to control own lives
  - Ability to influence the direction of social change

Focus & Goals Cont.

- Importance
  - Demographics (next slide)
  - Personal connection

- Relation to behavioral health

- Why girls, why empowerment?
Demographics of Female Youth in SF

- 805,235 total population, 49.2% Female

- 22% Latino
- 11.3% African American
- 23% White
- 6.3% Multiracial/Other
- 37.4% Asian-Pacific Islander

Sources: 2010 Census Bureau & Annie E. Casey Foundation Data
What I Did

- Researched organizations & programs
- Contacted Executive Directors/Program Managers
- Interviewed staff on best practices, safety, needs, etc.
- Interviewed young women (clients) about their experience
SF Programs and Organizations

- San Francisco Youth Commission
- Youth Justice Institute
- LYRIC*

* = spoke to program clients
SF Programs & Organizations

- About-Face*

- Horizons Unlimited*
  - Females Against Violence
  - Young Women Arise Project

- Girl Ventures

* = spoke to program clients
SF Programs & Organizations

- Oasis for Girls* - Arts
- Oasis for Girls* - Life Skills
- Oasis for Girls* - Leadership & Technology

Rising Women, Rising Voices*

* = spoke to program clients
Issues Facing the Young Women: Programs’ Perspective

- Family Problems
  - Communication
  - Split-up or absent members
  - Lack of support or a safe space

- Bullying -> Isolation

- Drug or Alcohol Use
Issues, Program Perspective Cont.

- Violence
  - Dating violence/sexual assault
  - Gangs

- Unsafe Environment
- Body Image & Media Illiteracy
- Education
  - Poor quality or low level of education
  - Misinformation about drugs or sex
Issues Facing the Young Women: Girls’ Perspective

- Peer pressure toward drugs
- Resources
  - Lack thereof
  - Not knowing about location/existence

- Body Image
- Being Judged or Bullied
Overall Strengths: Best Practices

Preventative Measures
- Addressing drug and mental health issues
- Providing a safe & fun space
- Encouraging relationships and connections
Major Best Practices

- Letting the Girls Take the Lead
  - Oasis for Girls
  - About-Face
  - Rising Voices

- Responsibility
  - Girl Ventures
  - SF Youth Commission
  - Youth Justice Institute
  - Seven Programs -> Group Agreements
What’s Still Needed

❖ Girls’ Recommendations
  – Continuation of programs or centralization of resources
  – More support of organization itself

❖ Safety
❖ Needs of organizations
  – Funding/materials
  – Community involvement, spreading the message
  – Diverse female staff as role models (cultural competency)
  ❖ Both girls & organizations: centralized resources
What We Can Do

❖ **Government**
  - Support of effective, gender-responsive programs
  - Gender-responsive policy recommendations for SF programs

❖ **Businesses & Nonprofit Organizations**
  - Understand gender differences and needs
  - Hiring diverse female, role-model-like staff or training existing staff
  - Cultural Competency
  - Offer programs or places with a focus on girls
What We Can Do Cont.

- Community
  - Awareness of current issues facing girls
  - Encouragement of young women’s success
  - Filtering media; critical thinking of societal expectations regarding females

- Advocate to go above and beyond “gender neutral” to “gender responsive” in non-profits, governmental policies, health services
Shout Outs!
to Organizations & People who Made this Happen

- **SF Youth Commission** – Mario Yedidia, *Executive Director* & Phimy
- **Youth Justice Institute** – Robin Morales, *Advocacy Program Manager*
- **LYRIC** – Erik Martinez, *Youth Advocate* & Vanessa Lee, *Case Manager* & Alumna
- **Oasis for Girls** – Jessica Van Tuyl, *Executive Director*
Shout Outs! Cont.

- **Rising Voices** – Michelle Torres Maxson, *Program Director* and Alumnae Kisha & Theresa
- **About-Face** – Jennifer Berger, *Executive Director*
- **Girl Ventures** – Sarah Heath, *Executive Director*
- **Horizons Unlimited** – Nora I. Rios Reddick, *Executive Director* and Deborah, *Program Coordinator & FAV alumna*
Special Thanks

- My supervisors Sarah Accomazzo & Helynna Brooke
- Coro Trainers Ikenna Acholonu & Andrew Rothman
Sources, Bibliography

- Each organization’s website, for images & logos
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The End!

Thanks to everyone in the room for coming!!

Questions & Answers