

POLICY BRIEF

BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR IN FRESNO COUNTY:

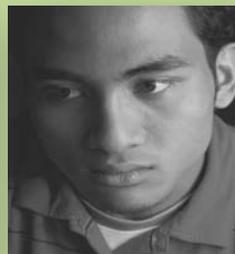
Advancing Equity through Policy and Systems Change

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INTRODUCTION

This report synthesizes existing data and presents new research findings regarding the health, education and well-being of boys and men of color ages 6 – 25 years in Fresno County, CA. The goal of this work is to contribute to the development of policies and practices that will reduce disparities in several areas and lead to more equitable outcomes for boys and men of color. The report was developed by the Fresno Boys and Men of Color (BMOC) Community-Academic Task Force. The Task Force was first convened in June, 2010 with the purpose of developing policy recommendations specific to Latino and Southeast Asian boys and men. From the outset, it was the intention of the Task Force to weave into its work the recent research and policy advocacy efforts conducted on behalf of African American boys and men by the Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development. Therefore, the policy recommendations put forth in this document represent the culmination of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-year effort intended to lift up all boys and men of color in Fresno County.

Part I of the report summarizes data and research from multiple sources regarding BMOC outcomes in Fresno County in three policy domains: Community and Economic Development, Health and Safety, and Education. *Part II* presents a set of shared policy recommendations designed to improve well-being across three racial/ethnic groups: Latino, Hmong and African American. *Part III* provides greater detail regarding the needs and perspectives of these three racial/ethnic subpopulations. This section culminates with a summary table that shows how the three subpopulations are disproportionately affected in the policy domains of interest.

Additional supportive data contributing to this brief can be found in the following documents: *The Fresno Boys and Men of Color Data Chartbook* (Central California Children’s Institute, 2011), *A Comparative Analysis of Disparities Facing Boys and Men of Color in Fresno County* (Powerpoint presentation, Central California Children’s Institute, 2011), and *Lifting Up Boys and Men of Color* (The Ramsay Group, 2010). This project, and the above-referenced reports, was made possible by the generous support of The California Endowment and Kaiser Permanente.

BACKGROUND

In 2009, The California Endowment (TCE) commissioned a study by the RAND Corporation to examine the conditions of boys and men of color in the state of California. This report, *Reparable Harm: Assessing and Addressing Disparities Faced by Boys and Men of Color in California* (Davis, Kilburn, and Schultz, 2009) prompted further research in three of California's larger urban areas: Oakland, Los Angeles, and Fresno. Each of these communities has undertaken various data collection efforts to better understand the relevance and implications of the statewide findings to local communities.

This report is a synopsis of the research gathered by two TCE-funded projects in Fresno County: The Fresno County Boys and Men of Color Data and Policy Initiative (Central California Children's Institute or CCCI) and The Black Men and Boys Coalition (Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development or FWCED). While the research methodologies for the two projects differed, both projects utilized the RAND report as an operating framework for data gathering. The two research projects were conducted between 2009 and 2011.

The RAND report identified four major disparity domains faced by California's boys and men of color: socioeconomic, health, safety, and education. The domain-related outcomes for boys and men of color were then measured against White boys and men. The socioeconomic domain included indicators such as numbers living in poverty and familial unemployment, among others. The health domain addressed issues such as asthma, obesity, and lack of health insurance. The safety domain included indicators related to community violence, juvenile arrest and custody rates, firearm-related deaths, and homicide rates. Finally, the education domain considered high school dropout rates, suspension rates, and English/Language Arts and Mathematics proficiency rates.

The research question posed by both the CCCI and FWCED projects was, "How do outcomes in these four major domains differ for Fresno County's boys and men of color as compared with their White counterparts?" Fresno County was selected as a research site by The California Endowment in part because it is different from urban areas in northern and southern California. Fresno represents the heart of the Central Valley, a region that stretches approximately 500 miles from the northern Sacramento Valley to the southern San Joaquin Valley. The Central Valley is also one of the most agriculturally productive areas in the world and is home to a large number of immigrant families who come to the Valley to work the fields. Due to its vast size, Fresno County is also a region where its population is divided approximately equally across urban and rural communities.

Most importantly, Fresno County is a region that has been historically underserved, and is home to some of the highest levels of per capita poverty. Program planners, policy analysts and others are often faced with inadequate, insufficient, and incomplete data regarding the Central Valley. Further, when data is available, it is typically collected by outside researchers with limited connection or accountability to the region. Qualitative data that help explain the

nuances of the unique experiences of Fresno’s boys and men of color is also lacking, and was therefore collected in the present study to help humanize and validate existing numerical or quantitative data.

Underserved boys and men of color in Fresno County are not only Latino and African American, but also Southeast Asian, particularly Hmong, Laotian, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. Fresno has the second largest Hmong population in the U.S. The diversity of the population of boys and men further necessitates research that can contribute to efforts to address the specific needs and disparities of racial/ethnic subpopulations.

PURPOSE AND METHODS

The purpose of this research effort was to address a key question pertaining to the outcome disparities of boys and men of color in Fresno County:

What are the perspectives/experiences of Fresno County boys and men of color in regards to socioeconomic concerns, health, safety, and education, and how are these perspectives and experiences facilitated/compromised by their engagement/non-engagement in their families, communities, spiritual, and academic lives?

Building on the RAND report, the research team from the Central California Children’s Institute at California State University, Fresno worked in collaboration with academic and community representatives and leaders who were predominately men of color to collect quantitative and qualitative data across the four outcome disparity domains: socioeconomic, safety, health, and education. Where possible, the researchers also sought to weave in findings from the Fresno West Coalition for Economic Development’s environmental scan of disparities facing African American boys conducted a year prior by The Ramsay Group, “Lifting Up Boys and Men of Color” (2010) . The combined findings are also designed to contribute to the aims of TCE’s *Building Healthy Communities Project* in Central, Southeast, and Southwest Fresno (Building Healthy Communities, 2011) and to TCE’s Statewide Boys and Men of Color Network.

Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used to investigate the outcome disparities of boys and men of color in Fresno County. Quantitative data was obtained from national, state, and county-level databases across racial/ethnic subgroups. In most cases, publicly available data was used (e.g., U.S. Census) to determine each group’s standing on each indicator. Only when there was an apparent lack of data was data requested from specific county-level organizations. This was particularly the case for investigating the outcome disparities in the education domain. In this case, data was requested from and generously provided by Fresno Unified School District (FUSD), the largest school district in Fresno County and the fourth largest in California with a total enrollment of 76,621 (CA Dept. of Education, 2010). Only in certain instances were data not available disaggregated by sex and race/ethnicity (see Table 1).

It is important to note that when publicly available data for Asians is reported, all Asian subgroups are typically combined or aggregated. This aggregation minimizes the major differences that exist between Asian subgroups, particularly between Southeast Asian (largely Hmong) and other Asian subgroups. Therefore, this available data may not accurately reflect the conditions of the Hmong and other Southeast Asian subpopulations in Fresno.

This study adopted the RAND study's use of the odds ratio to determine the "odds" for determining outcome disparities of boys and men of color, as compared to Whites. The odds ratio was estimated by dividing the rate or percentage of boys and men of color by that reported for Whites for each indicator. Similar to the RAND study, an odds ratio greater than or equal to 2 was used to identify a large disparity on an indicator. The odds ratio can be interpreted as the odds (or likelihood) that a particular group will report an outcome (e.g., juvenile arrest rates). The odds ratio also provides a way to compare outcome disparities across studies. As applicable, however, we report disparities found across boys and men of color groups to inform future policy and research directions.

Qualitative data collected includes focus group interviews with Latino and Hmong male youth between the ages of 14 and 24 (CCCI), and a small number of one-on-one interviews with African American males (FWCED). Specifically, seven focus group interviews were conducted with Latino male youth ($n = 35$) in middle school, high school, college, and some high school dropouts. Two focus groups were conducted with Hmong male youths ($n = 10$) in high school, community college, or 4-year university. Interviews were conducted with 13 Latino and two Southeast Asian community leaders, as well as three African American youth. Data saturation was achieved with the focus groups and interviews with Latino males; however, due to the small number of interviews conducted with Hmong youth, further research is recommended to better understand the issues facing this population.

Part I. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS ACROSS KEY POLICY DOMAINS

Recent U.S. Census (2007-2009) data estimates Fresno County's population at 902,763. Its racial/ethnic makeup is 48.7% Latino, 34.9% White, 8.7% Asian, 4.9% African American, and 2.8% Other. Boys and men between the ages of 5 to 24 comprise 16.6% of Fresno's total population, with the majority (**73.5%**) of these youth being boys and men color. The specific race/ethnicity of the male population between these ages is 56.6% Latino, 24.7% White, 9.8% Asian, 4.1% African American, and 3% Other (U.S. Census, 2007-2009).

Building on the RAND study's four disparity domains and for ease of synthesizing this research with the earlier landscape analysis regarding African American boys and men conducted by the Fresno West Coalition, study findings are reported in terms of **three policy domains: (a) Community Development and Economic Opportunity, (b) Health and Safety, and (c) Education.**

In general, Fresno County study findings pointed to notable outcome disparities for boys and men of color within each broad domain. These findings provide the rationale for systematic and collaborative policy change to improve outcomes for boys and men of color. Table 1 shows the list of data indicators collected for each of the three domains.

Table 1: *Overview of the Three Policy Domains and Associated Data Indicators*

Domain 1: Community Development and Economic Opportunity

- Median Household Income*
 - Single-Parent Households*
 - Maternal Education (Less than High School)*
 - Ages 6 to 24, Below Poverty Level
 - Ages 16 to 24, Unemployment Rate
 - Ages 25+, Unemployment Rate
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Domain 2: Health and Safety

- Childhood Asthma Hospitalization (Ages 6 to 19, rate per 100,000 population)
 - Teen Births
 - Usual Source of Care
 - Health Insurance
 - Fitness Standard
 - Reported Health Status
 - Risk for Depression
 - Sexually Transmitted Diseases
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Childhood Obesity (Ages 6 to 17)
 - Number in Foster Care (Ages 6 to 17)
 - Substantiated Cases of Abuse and Neglect (Ages 6 to 17)
 - Juvenile Felony Arrest Rate
 - Homicide-Related Death Rate (Ages 20 24, rate per 100,000 population)
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Domain 3: Education

- Attends Preschool / Nursery School / Head Start at Least 10 Hrs/Wk (< Age 6)
 - English/Language Arts Proficiency Rates by Grade Level
 - Mathematics Proficiency Rates by Grade Level
 - School Suspension Rates
 - Ages 25+ With Less than High School Diploma
 - Ages 25+ With at Least a Bachelor’s Degree
 - High School 4-Year Dropout Rate
 - 12th Grade Course Completion for Univ. of California and California State University Eligibility
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*Only provided for entire race/ethnicity populations (not disaggregated by gender).

Community Development and Economic Opportunity

Our research found high levels of familial economic poverty (U.S. Census, 2006-08) and low levels of formal education (California Dept. of Public Health, 2002-04) among boys and men of color. Latino and African American families in Fresno County also experience high rates of single-parent households (U.S. Census, 2006-08). The high levels of poverty and unemployment of boys and men of color contribute to high levels of family poverty (California Dept. of Public Health, 2002-04; U.S. Census, 2006-08).

Despite these troubling data, our qualitative research found that Fresno's boys and men of color are resilient and empowered to improve their lives and uplift their families. Many of the boys and men of color had dreams of going to and graduating from college, and being leaders in their communities thereafter. Only familial economic needs superseded their desires for higher education. Overwhelmingly, they spoke of the need for **more and better job opportunities** in their communities, which they believe is in part complicated by structural racism that plagues their communities.

Health and Safety

The disparities in this domain stem from various challenges across grade levels and racial/ethnic groups in Fresno County. Health data shows that over 50% of young boys, beginning in the 5th grade, have unhealthy weights, which are predictors of other health issues, such as depression (California Dept. of Education, 2006-08a). In regard to safety, data shows that more than 10% of Fresno County's males report membership in gangs as early as the 7th grade (California Dept. of Education, 2006-08b). African Americans and Latinos having the highest arrest and custody rates in the county (Fresno County Probation Dept., 2009-10).

In group interviews, participants articulated how their limited access to health care negatively affects their lives. They spoke about the **need for improved health care access** in their communities, and how **exposure to violence** (i.e., gangs, bullying, and police racial profiling) in their communities negatively affects both their health and their educational experiences.

Psychological/emotional health was also a major concern due to the **structural racism and personal experiences of discrimination** boys and men of color experience in their schools and communities. There is also intense racial/ethnic conflict between and among various racial/ethnic groups. Youth centers, sensitivity training for police and school leaders, ethnic studies and more community/school leaders of color were cited as important needs by youth in our study.

Education

Despite the fact that Fresno's boys and men of color attend preschool, nursery school, or Head Start at a slightly higher rate than Whites (California Health interview, 2007), they experience notably poorer academic and behavioral outcomes through high school. Fresno's boys and men

of color are also less proficient in English/Language Arts and Math than Whites, and African Americans and Latinos have the highest suspension rates in Fresno Unified School District (Fresno Unified, 2007-2009). From high school to college, Whites continue to outperform boys and men of color, as indicated by: (a) significantly lower high school dropout rates and higher high school completion rates (California Dept. of Education, 2008; U.S. Census 2006-2008), and (b) higher bachelor's degree attainment rates (U.S. Census 2006-2008).

Fresno's boys and men of color explained how school activities (e.g., band, sports, and leadership programs) kept them engaged and interested in learning. Teachers who are devoted to school success for all youth are critical; however, Fresno boys and men of color provided frightening details of how **too many teachers lack the cultural knowledge and sensitivities** to be a positive influence in their lives. Boys of color were also aware that their **schools were of lower quality** that those in predominately White communities; and their stories provided insights into how underfunded schools were in greater need of **bilingual and culturally competent teachers, anti-bias curricula**, as well as role models that were males of color.

The focus groups and interviews conducted as part of this study also reveal deep levels of family stress, problems with substance abuse, lack of family support and poor parenting skills, concern about the cradle to prison pipeline, and intergenerational cultural conflict (the latter being particularly prevalent among the Hmong). Findings within each racial/ethnic group are described in greater detail later in this report.

A comprehensive overview of these research findings was shared with community leaders, residents and academic leaders at a local policy forum on April 12, 2011. At the forum, policy changes were recommended in each of the three policy domains. A smaller group of the Fresno Boys and Men of Color Community-Academic Task Force met subsequent to the Forum to prioritize policy strategies and to identify the target audiences for the recommended policy changes. These shared policy recommendations, which cut across racial/ethnic lines, follow.

Part II. SHARED POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES OF BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR

The following recommendations address the socioeconomic, health, safety and educational disparities facing African American, Latino and Southeast Asian boys and men in Fresno County. The recommendations emerged from a number of community dialogues and gatherings involving stakeholders from each of the racial/ethnic groups. First, the findings of our research conducted were presented to a group of 80 community leaders and representatives at the Fresno Boys and Men of Color Policy Forum on April 12, 2011 at Westside Church of God. Two dialogue sessions were held that day to: 1) elicit community members' responses to the research, and 2) hear their recommendations for policy change. The sessions were organized by the three policy areas used throughout this report: Community and Economic Development, Health and Safety, and Education; therefore, three sets of policy and practice (service-related) recommendations were developed.

Major themes embedded in the recommendations were tabulated in rank order using the NVIVO software program. The recommendations receiving the highest frequency count were taken to the Fresno BMOC Community-Academic Task Force for further refining and shaping at its Task Force meeting held on June 14, 2011. The Community-Academic Task Force thought it was important to identify policy, practice and service needs as we work to build constituent support for boys and men of color at the local level. The recommendations blend together policy changes and service delivery enhancements that can address the more immediate needs of boys and men of color. At the same time, we will push upwards for high level policy change that supports the needs of boys and men of color as well.

The need to build local constituencies, political will, and a unified voice for boys and men of color in the San Joaquin Valley led us to an overarching recommendation regarding the need for stronger, more representative leadership on equity issues in each of the three policy domains, as presented below.

A Critical Overarching Need: Strong, Representative Leadership

The socioeconomic, health and educational disparities experienced by boys and men of color are a clear indication that supportive policies and practices towards equitable outcomes are sorely lacking. Public institutions have summarily failed boys and men of color. While the reasons these organizations have failed are complex --- ranging from resource limitations to lack of political will --- strong leadership on issues of equity is needed if change is to be made.

There is a dearth of racially/ethnically-sensitive and/or representative leadership in decision-making positions in Fresno County. Dialogue about equity, and resulting opportunities to move an equity agenda forward, are largely avoided and/or dismissed. When equity issues do gain attention, the tendency is to implement strategies for which there has been no evidence of

effectiveness with the target populations, nor any community engagement or consensus about the approach. While there are certainly exceptions, it is nonetheless important to train and develop new leadership from the communities most affected by inequity. Therefore, an overarching recommendation is **to increase representation of racial/ethnic populations in decision-making roles and in elected positions**. Leadership and political organizations such as the Mexican American Political Association, the Hmong American Political Association, the National Association of Latino Elected officials, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Black Women Organized for Political Action are among the potential resources that can be tapped to assist with local leadership development and cultivation.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS: Community Development and Economic Opportunity

High rates of poverty and unemployment call for policies that focus on reducing incarceration, promoting job preparation and training programs, and minority business/contractor development for boys and men of color. In particular, the following policy change strategies are recommended:

1. Expand alternatives to incarceration for juveniles and non-violent offenders

Zero tolerance policies in schools and drug enforcement policy are major pathways to incarceration for boys and men of color. Youth who either drop out or are pushed out of school are more likely to become involved with the juvenile justice system. Further, many of those incarcerated are non-violent offenders, particularly drug offenders. A significant number of these individuals may also suffer from a dual diagnosis or co-occurring disorder involving both untreated mental illness and substance abuse.

Stopping the cradle to prison pipeline requires reducing penalties associated with drug use, improving access to mental health services and substance abuse treatment programs, and providing alternatives to incarceration such as restorative justice programs. The Fresno County Juvenile Behavioral Court identifies youth with mental health challenges and provides those youth with needed services, stopping the “revolving door” into the criminal justice system for youth with mental health needs. However, this program can only accommodate small numbers of youth. The TCE Building Healthy Communities project is currently funding a restorative justice program through Fresno Pacific University. Restorative justice focuses on healing the hurts and repairing the harm done to victims, using punishment as a path of last resort.

Both of these programs, and similar ones, should be expanded to benefit larger numbers of boys and men of color. In addition, increased advocacy is needed to reduce the number of boys and men of color incarcerated for drug offenses and economically-motivated crimes.

Gang involvement is also a major pathway to incarceration. Youth in Fresno County complain, however, that they are racially profiled as being gang members or gang involved, leading to unjust arrests. Increased education and advocacy with law enforcement officials is also needed to reduce racial profiling related to gang suppression.

2. Efforts to stimulate new job development should create opportunities for those with low skills and those residents who are most in need, including the formerly incarcerated

The new high speed rail is expected to create 135,000 new jobs in the San Joaquin Valley beginning in October, 2012. An estimated 75,000 new workers will relocate to the San Joaquin Valley to compete for these opportunities. Therefore, the High Speed Rail Authority should develop implement ordinances for hiring locally (known as first source hiring agreements) that would assure that Fresno and surrounding county residents are able to benefit directly from these new jobs.

There is also considerable interest in training low-skill workers for green jobs and livable wages in our region. Green jobs are emerging as a growth industry that emphasizes the provision of environmentally safe and non-toxic physical environments. The creation of green environments is particularly important in communities of color where environmental racism has contributed to poorer health outcomes and health disparities.

In light of the disproportionately high incarceration rate of boys and men of color, policies that encourage and incentivize hiring the formerly incarcerated are also needed to level the playing field for boys and men of color. A community-wide strategy that addresses the full array of needs of the prison re-entry population (social, educational, and health) is also needed as the state releases more prisoners to reduce over-crowding, and return them to their home communities.

3. Increase contract opportunities for minority contractors and assist them in becoming certified and eligible to compete for government contracts, in particular.

Millions, if not billions, of contract dollars flow through the large local governmental agencies and institutions in Fresno such as the City of Fresno, the Fresno Housing Authority, and the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission each year. Minority contractors, however, are underrepresented among those to whom contracts are awarded. It is recommended that local governmental agencies establish numerical standards that would substantially increase the number of minority contractors over the next three years. In collaboration with the Central California Minority Contractors Association, the Fresno Black Chamber of Commerce, the Fresno Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Asian Business and Industry Resource Center, large local governmental agencies should establish an acceptable benchmark (number or proportion) of governmental contracts that are to be awarded to minority enterprises annually.

4. Expand training opportunities such as apprenticeships and remedial skills training programs for boys and men of color.

In May 2009, the Fresno Unified School District's Superintendents' Commission on Workforce Readiness and Career Technical Education released a report of recommendations regarding the preparation of career ready graduates. The report proposes 28 recommendations, including: 1) "create a comprehensive district-wide system to facilitate engagement with business and industry partners", and 2) "evaluate all existing and proposed career-oriented pathway programs and course to ensure quality, consistency, rigor and relevance", 3) Develop or enhance partnerships that provide opportunities for students to see themselves in educational and training environments beyond high school." These and the other recommendations contained in the report lay a solid foundation for expanding training opportunities for boys and men of color, and ensuring workforce readiness. These recommendations should be acted upon and monitored to assess progress on the stated goals over time.

Aside from the K-12 system, local trade unions and community colleges also are well positioned to provide training opportunities. However, training programs must be aligned with available job opportunities that pay livable wages and offer health care benefits. Efforts should be made to protect and expand such training programs with specific outreach efforts directed to boys and men of color. In some cases, these programs are underutilized because of other access barriers facing boys and men of color, such as lack of computer access, lack of transportation, or difficulties navigating program entry requirements. Thus, special outreach efforts to help boys and men of color access these programs are needed.

Fresno BHC is currently supporting State Center Community College District's efforts to make vocational training more accessible to residents in West Fresno. This effort completely aligns with the above recommendation.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS: Education

Lower educational achievement levels of the parents, as well as lower academic proficiency among boys and men of color, call for policies that create a more supportive school climate to increase school attendance, reduce suspensions and expulsions, and better engage boys and young men of color in the learning process.

In particular, it is recommended that:

1. Anti-bias, multicultural curricula be offered in local schools

According to our research, students of color are more likely to disengage from the educational experience when they face low expectations, apathy and/or discrimination on behalf of teachers and administrators. Failing to see themselves or the experience of their communities reflected in the school curriculum is an additional barrier to high school completion. It is recommended that schools offer ethnic studies as a core course to teach students about the

many contributions of people of color, particularly the unique histories and contributions of Latinos, African Americans and Asians in the United States.

Youth speak of intense interracial conflict among the students in the Fresno public schools. This conflict affects students' feelings of safety and their ability to perform academically. Therefore, in addition to ethnic studies, schools should also offer anti-bias curricula that highlight the importance of respect for the various cultural experiences and backgrounds of students. Students in our study spoke frankly about the blatantly racist and biased attitudes of teachers and administrators. Schools should adopt a zero tolerance policy towards interpersonal racism that extends to both students and teachers. Further, professional development opportunities for teachers that emphasize the impact of prejudice, discrimination and bias on the school climate and on academic success of students of color should be provided.

2. Increase racial/ethnic and language diversity and cultural competency of school teachers to better support the demographics of individual school sites

There is a strong sense among the students and community leaders in our study that the small proportion of teachers of color (relative to the demographics of the student population in Fresno County) is a barrier to academic success. It is recommended that increased effort be made to recruit and hire more teachers of color, and to place these teachers in schools with large numbers of students of color. Positive role models for students of color are important for increasing both their interest in the educational process, as well as their academic performance.

3. Improve and expand parent education, outreach and engagement efforts

The need for greater access to parenting education programs has been a consistent theme for improving youth outcomes in the San Joaquin Valley, and was further validated by the present study. Low educational attainment and varying cultural perspectives create an environment where parents may not appreciate the importance of their role as the child's first teacher; nor are they knowledgeable of the developmental needs of their children as it relates to healthy growth and development, resiliency and academic achievement. Greater access to parenting education programs that are culturally relevant and tailored to the age/developmental needs of the child are sorely needed. First 5 Fresno County is currently providing support to the Central California Children's Institute to conduct an inventory and assessment of parenting education programs in Fresno County.

Local programs designed to increase parent involvement in their child's education have met with limited success. The BMOC Community-Academic Task Force recommends that parent outreach and engagement efforts are widely implemented, evaluated and strengthened, particularly as it related to parents of boys of color. Policies should be put into place that prioritize parent engagement programs in low-performing schools, and declares the school's commitment to engaging parents. More health and family support programs are also needed,

such as home visiting programs. These supports should be provided by professionals who represent and understand the cultural backgrounds of the families they are working with. Barriers to parent engagement, such as the requirements and costs associated with obtaining Life Scan clearances (as a requirement for volunteering in the schools) should be eliminated.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS: Health and Safety

Limited access to health care, concerns about legal status, greater exposure to violence, higher rates of depression and asthma call for policies that better link boys and men of color to community health and recreational resources. In particular:

1. Increase access to school based health services

Fresno boys and men of color are disconnected from the health care system, as evidenced by the fact that they are six to seven times more likely than Whites to have a usual source of health care. Boys participating in our study viewed themselves as healthy, although they tended not to be receiving any type of preventive care. Excessively high rates of sexually transmitted infections, however, indicate that boys and men of color are not as healthy as they perceive.

School-based health services have been shown to be successful in linking students to primary care and prevention services. They also are associated with improved academic performance and an improved school climate. Students with access to school based health services are also more likely to receive mental health services when they are offered as part of a comprehensive menu of health services in schools. The mental health needs of boys and men of color are significant; yet, most do not receive the services they need due to stigma and access barriers.

The Task Force recommends school-based health centers be widely implemented to improve health care access and student health outcomes in Fresno County. Mental health services should be routinely offered as part of the menu of school-based health care services. In addition, joint use policies for all schools in Fresno County would increase access to safe places for children and youth to play, and make exercise opportunities more accessible.

2. Expand culturally-specific health outreach programs such as Promotora de Salud

Roughly half of the Fresno County population lives in rural communities. Rural populations are more likely to be engaged in the agricultural work force, and a higher proportions of rural residents face language and immigration-related barriers. Culturally-specific outreach programs such as Promotora de Salud are effective in reducing access barriers and improving health care utilization; as such, these programs should be expanded to reach boys and men of color in Fresno County. Promotoras are lay health workers who encourage health care participation by building personal relationships with community members, providing them with basic health information and awareness, and making referrals and linkages to health care services. Since promotoras are primarily female, the training and hiring of male health outreach workers

should also be pilot-tested to determine their potential effectiveness in reaching and influencing the health behaviors of boys and men of color. Also, male involvement programs such as the program offered by Planned Parenthood Mar Monte should be supported and expanded.

3. Develop and implement youth transition to manhood / spiritual healing programs

Members of the BMOOC Community- Academic Task Force believe that the experience of social exclusion, lack of equal opportunity and economic disenfranchisement of boys and men of color in the San Joaquin Valley demands greater investment in developing their resiliency and self-awareness. These negative forces contribute to the violence, substance abuse and disengagement of boys and men of color from themselves, their families and their communities. It is believed that better appreciating the males' contribution in society and his importance to his family, his neighborhood and to the larger society is needed.

Rites of passage and transition to manhood programs can build resiliency in young boys and men. In some communities, programs such as Circulo de Hombres and Jovenes Integral Youth are offered by community organizations, fraternities or religious institution. As shown in our study, boys and men of color in Fresno rely on their spiritual beliefs for strength and courage. Weaving their faith traditions (Shamanism, curandera, etc.) into culturally-tailored rites of passage programs will allow boys to integrate their views of faith with their views of themselves and their role in the world in which they live. Therefore, it is recommended that community-based and faith-based organizations create rites of passage programs for boys and young men as a strategy for strengthening male resiliency, identity and self-regulation.

The importance of fathers and their impact on the well-being of children also need to be incorporated into rites of passage programs. Many of the boys and young men in our study expressed grief over their fathers being absent in their lives. The active involvement of fathers as a supportive and healing force in the lives of their children should be emphasized.

Mentoring programs have also been shown to have a positive impact on the lives of youth. The Fresno BHC is currently supporting United Black Men and the Men's Alliance in Fresno schools. These projects also align with the recommendations posed here.

4. Increase youth engagement in community problem-solving and advocacy

Engaging youth in solving the problems facing them and the communities they live in is an important principle that local child advocates aspire to; however, there is no infrastructure in place that supports broad youth engagement. While there are a number of local projects that engage youth in community change efforts, such as the Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) and the Center for Multicultural Cooperation, boys of color tend to be under-represented in these programs. Overall, the level of youth involvement in community change efforts is small in Fresno County.

Of the current projects that engage youth in a meaningful way, emphasis should be placed on recruiting boys and men of color. Effective strategies for engaging boys and men, such as leadership development programs, character building programs affiliated with sports and recreation programs, fraternal orders, etc. should be expanded with the goal of attracting larger numbers of boys and men into community-building programs and initiatives. Youth should also be informed of their rights so they can better advocate for themselves, such as their right to have an interpreter when accessing county services, and their legal (Miranda) rights when dealing with law enforcement.

5. Expand gang prevention and education programs

Gang involvement is a major threat to the health and well-being of Fresno youth. Gangs are entrenched in Latino, African American and Asian communities. Some youth affiliate with gangs because their parents are gang- involved; others affiliate because there is nothing else to do, out of fear and seeking protection, or because they are seeking a place to belong. Parents are largely unaware of the gang culture and signs that their child may be gang-involved. While parents have a powerful influence over whether their children become gang-involved, they often lack knowledge about specific steps they can take to reduce the likelihood that their child will become gang-involved.

It is recommended that gang awareness education for parents and gang prevention programs for youth be enhanced such that these programs are ongoing and consistently offered to large number of families. The Fresno County Gang Prevention Task Force is working to expand prevention programs throughout the county. More resources are needed to broaden outreach to both parents and youth, beginning in the elementary school years.

Gang violence and family violence are often connected, as violence in the home can escalate into violence in neighborhood and communities. Therefore, local programs that address family violence and community violence should work together to determine ways to reduce the effects of violence on boys and men of color.

6. Increase the ethnic/racial diversity of the health/mental health workforce

People of color are underrepresented in the health/mental health workforce in Fresno County, and indeed in the San Joaquin Valley region as a whole. The lack of diversity in the health professions contributes to reduced utilization, quality and satisfaction with health care by communities of color. Health career programs in high schools and community colleges are needed on a broader basis to introduce students to various health professions, and to assure they are academically prepared to pursue these programs should they choose to. Active recruitment of young people of color, particularly males and bicultural/bilingual individuals, is needed.

PART III. POPULATION-SPECIFIC RESEARCH FINDINGS

Latino Boys and Men

For Fresno County to secure a prosperous economic future in the 21st century, it will need to seriously address the disparities of Latino boys and men due to their overwhelming size in the population. Latinas/os are 36.5% of California's 36.5 million residents, and 48.7% of Fresno County's population (U.S. Census, 2007-09). Latino boys and men between the ages of 5 and 24 (an age group that is indicative of the future demography of California) are more than half (56.6%) of Fresno County's male youth population of 150,086 residents (U.S. Census, 2007-09). Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data obtained from urban and rural Latinos, the following evidence indicated notable outcome disparities for males in the three domains specified in Table 1.

Community Development and Economic Opportunity

Latino males were found to have notable outcome disparities across the majority of the domain indicators, as compared to Whites and (notably) Asians. Despite traditionally living in larger families, and with extended family, the median household income of Latinos was \$35,953 (U.S. Census, 2006-08), compared to \$60,632 for Whites and \$51,656 for Asians. This is understandable due to Latinos having less formal education and higher unemployment rates, and that Latinos were found to be 2.3 times more likely than Whites to be raised by single parents (U.S. Census, 2006-08), which is a demographic change from traditional high levels of dual parent Latino homes. Furthermore, Latinos in Fresno County were almost 9 times more likely to be born to a mother with less than a high school education than Whites, severely limiting their access to the type of academic capital that comes from parents with high levels of formal education.

Poverty and unemployment was also found to be a pressing issue for Fresno Latinos. According to the U.S. Census (2006-08), 32.4% of Latino males between the ages 6 to 24 were below the poverty line, and 18.8% of those between the ages of 16 and 24 were unemployed. This translates into the observation that Latino males (ages 6 to 24) were 2.7 times more likely than Whites to live below the poverty line, whereas their unemployment rates were similar to Asians and Whites.

The focused interview groups helped us draw a distinction between economic and cultural poverty, where Latinos may lack the former but not the latter. While many Latino youth were aware of their poverty, and acknowledged how they are perceived because of it, but many spoke of cultural richness, Latino work ethic, and optimism about improves their lives and those of their families. One youth stated that:

[Our] parents come [to the U.S.] determined to advance, and still continue their life and send their kids to school, and other people criticize it. We are poor but honored. I appreciate a lot of our parents. They work really hard, they don't rest, they work all year long. The grapes, watermelon, pomegranates! It's a year round job...

This was a common sentiment from many of the 35 Latino youth we spoke to about their economic conditions. Others were not as optimistic. One in particular that spoke of hardships said he pays \$150 yearly to take the bus to school, which is a financial hardship for him family. Many times he decides to walk over a mile because the bus is crowded. Other times he doesn't take the walk and stay home on a school day. It is nuanced economic issues like this that complicate the economic lives of Latino youth.

Health and Safety

Notable outcome disparities were also found across several of the health and safety indicators. Inspection of the rate of childhood asthma hospitalizations for males between the ages of 6 and 19, the Latino rate was 16 (per 100,000) compared to 56.6 for Whites (CA Dept. of Public Health, 2007). Given the high asthma rates of California's Central Valley, it may be questioned whether the health needs of Latino boys and men are being addressed (under-diagnosis of health needs). For the collective male population, regardless of race/ethnicity, approximately 26% of the students across grades 7th through 11th have depression-related feelings (CA Dept. of Education, 2006-2008).

In consideration that the majority of male youth in Fresno are Latino, they comprise 58.6% of the individuals between the ages of 6 and 17 in foster care, compared to 19% for African Americans, 18.4% for Whites, and 3.3% for Asians. Furthermore, Latino male youth between the ages of 6 and 17 are also 3.4 times more likely than their White counterparts to have reported cases of child abuse and neglect (Needell et al., 2010).

Findings also reported that Latino boys and men in Fresno have high juvenile arrest and custody rates. When compared to White males, Latino youth are 5.1 times more likely to be arrested and 4.7 times more likely to be held in custody. Interestingly, the firearms-related death rate (per 100,000) of 20 to 24 year old Latinos is 49.8 compared to 62.5 for White males; whereas the homicide-related death rate (per 100,000) for these youth is 54.8 for Latinos and 68.7 for Whites (CA Dept. of Public Health, 2007). Regardless of race/ethnicity, inspection of the overall reports of gang membership across grade levels (7th – 11th grade) reported that approximately 11.5% of the males have gang involvement. Within alternative schools, this number escalated to 25.3%, indicating the concentration of gang membership in schools specifically designed to address the academic and behaviors of high-needs youth.

In our focus group discussions, Latino youth voices supported the quantitative data. One youth, those sentiments reflected a general mood of how many of Latino youth we spoke to felt about hospitals, stated that:

I don't trust them because, well, some of them, where there is more poor people, the hospitals down here are more packed because there are more accidents that happen here, hospitals should provide services to everyone...it could be because there's not a lot of money in the poor hospitals.

Few Latino youth had favorable things to say about hospitals or doctors. This is partly explained by the fact that 45.7% of our 35 Latino participants either did not have health insurance or knowledge of having health insurance. Of those that did have insurance, some, like the youth quoted above, had negative experiences with hospitals due to how they treated their parents, who many times were uninsured and Spanish-speaking. When looking at the quantitative data on why the Latino asthma rate is so low, part of the explanation is provided by the qualitative data in that low reporting levels in the Latino community is part of a culture of distrust of hospitals and doctors that lack the language skills and cultural competency to serve Latinos.

When it came to safety, these conversations revealed multiple layers of violence for Latino youth in their communities and schools. One of the problems affected non-Latino as much as Latino youth was cross-racial/ethnic conflict, an indicator of physical and psychological violence that is difficult to quantify and not documented in existing data. One youth, a suspected gang member that grew up being harassed by police because of the community where he lived, explained that:

I grew up on the west side by the Chandler airport; being Mexican and living in a neighborhood where there's a lot of Blacks, you have to be on your toes all the time, I don't know but they just don't get along. My dad would tell me to carry a knife just in case. I can't count how many times our house got broken into.

Other times it was inner-ethnic conflict that permeated Latino communities, and made living difficult, as explained by one youth:

I actually got jumped two times; I managed to get out by breaking one of my hands. They broke my hand twice; in 8th grade, and then last year I got jumped again by my high school. The last time it was worse, they broke my knee and part of my forehead was open[ed]. I just saw a dark fist coming at me and they just started to hit me.

The youth goes on to explain that these violent incidents, perpetuated by "gang members" in his community, happened to and from school. Nevertheless, he was determined to graduate high school and maybe go to college, even though the violence has left permanent physical and mental scars, and even concentrating at school was difficult.

Education

Latino males were found to have outcome disparities across a number of indicators within the education domain. Academically, the three-year average of Latino males scoring at or above

proficiency in English/Language Arts is 2 times lower than Whites (FUSD, 2007-2009). Although not statistically meaningful, but worth pointing out nonetheless, the number of Latino males scoring at or above proficiency in Mathematics was 1.5 times less than Whites (FUSD, 2007-2009).

The association between proficiency rates and college and career readiness can be considered in light of the percentage of 12th grade students who have completed the necessary course work for entrance to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) systems. On this indicator, Latino males were 2.3 and 2.5 times less likely to have completed the required course work required for admission into the UC and CSU systems compared to Whites and Asians, respectively. This corresponds directly with the finding that 50% of the Latino males (25 years of age and older) in Fresno County have less than a high school education (9.3% for Whites), and 6.6% of these individuals possess a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census, 2006-2008). In comparison, 31.2% of Asians and 30.5% of Whites (25 years of age and older) possess at least a bachelor's degree.

Whereas Latino males have lower academic achievement levels they have much higher suspension and dropout rates. In FUSD (2007-2009), Latino males were found to be significantly more likely to be suspended than their African American, Asian, and White peers. For example, of those suspended, 58.7% were Latino, whereas it was 23% for African Americans, 4.4% for Asians, and 12% for Whites, respectively. Although not statistically significant, the adjusted 4-year high school dropout rate for Latino males was 28.5% compared to 19.5% for Whites (CDA, 2008). At FUSD, the adjusted 4-year high school dropout rate for Latino males was reported as 31.8% and 26.2% for Whites. These findings provide clear evidence of the need to promote the academic outcomes of Latino males while simultaneously addressing school-wide behavior outcomes (e.g., suspension rates).

Early on in our group discussions with Fresno's Latino youth we realized that all disparities were centrally tied to education disparities; and educational quality and access were key concerns for youth. We also found the voices that are ultimately tied to data indicators, such as the dropout rate, suspension rates, and educational underachievement. Furthermore, it is important to note that Latino youth and their families do care about education, but their relationship with the education enterprise is often complicated by cultural dissonance on behalf of youth and schools. In one example a Latino youth shares his feelings about the differences between he and his school about what is relevant curriculum:

I want the schools to teach more about Hispanic culture, I don't want to learn about African American culture. And we'll learn about it, but I'd rather know about my own culture: about the [Mexican] revolution, the Alamo, what happened, the real history. I don't think we hear it because they're not educated in it. That sucks! ...They've only talked about César Chavez once, and they never mention Hispanic leaders.

What this youth expressed about relevant cultural education is something that can be fixed by schools if they care to make education relevant to Latino youth. But other problems were more

structural, and have permeated the schools to the extent that they may be detrimental to addressing existing disparities that plague Latinos. One youth, who ultimately dropped out of high school, shared one notable experience:

I went to continuation school, and [there I would get] credits to go to the store to get donuts and play ping pong. The teacher wouldn't care; people would be breaking up weed on the tables, they didn't care about the teacher. The teacher knew what was going on but he didn't care...the lower class schools don't care about the kids...

While clearly this is an anomalous example, the key point was about the lack of respect and caring between Latino students and teachers. In part this is due to teachers who truly don't care, respect, or expect much of Latino youth. Mostly, Latino underperformance and the culture of low expectations are school-wide phenomena where teacher need not do much other than business-as-usual.

Hmong Boys and Men

Asian boys and men in Fresno County do not fit neatly into the stereotype of "the model minority." The majority are Southeast Asians, many coming to Fresno as refugees and due to farming opportunities. It is then no surprise that many have some of the highest levels of economic poverty. Data for Southeast Asians is difficult to attain because many times they are collapsed with all Asians, of which many (primarily Chinese, Korean, and Japanese) do not experience the same levels of economic poverty. Therefore, the data on Asians is misleading and incomplete, and does not paint the real picture of Fresno's Asian community, but it is what exists presently.

Asians are the second fastest growing ethnic groups in the U.S., behind Latinos, composing 13.4 million (approximately 4.4% million) of the population. In California, Asians represent 12.3% of the 36.5 million population, and 8.7% of Fresno County's population (U.S. Census, 2007-09). Asian boys and men between the ages of 5 and 24 compose 9.8% of the county's male population for this age group, which is more than twice the size of African American males in this age group.

Using a combination of national, state, and county data, along with focus group interviews with urban Southeast Asian youth, the following evidence provides context for the three policy domains outlined in Table 1.

Community Development and Economic Opportunity

Asian boys and men were found to experience outcome disparities across specific indicators within the broad community development and economic opportunity domain. Among this population, the percentage of youth in single parent household is 18%, which is lower than other youth of color (i.e., African American and Latino), and associated with a higher median

household income of \$51,656 in the past 12 months (U.S. Census, 2006-2008). Although the percentage of the general Asian youth being raised in single parent households and median household income only differs slightly for that of Whites, Asian youth are 3.4 times more likely to have a mother with less than a high school education (CA Depart. of Public Health, 2002-2004). The high incomes are the baseline for Asians, and data does not exist for average incomes of Fresno's Southeast Asians. The high proportion of mothers lacking formal education is due in part to patriarchal family structures that have traditionally placed less value on female's education, as well as high rates of teen births that serve to derail women from their educational aspirations.

Nonetheless, despite similar levels of unemployment rates to Whites, Asian males (ages 6 to 24) were 2.6 times more likely to live below the poverty level (U.S. Census, 2006-2008). The potential link of this finding may be explained in terms of the educational disparities provided below regarding the number of males (25 or older) with less than a high school diploma.

As indicated by the data that shows a high percentage of Asians below the poverty line, the majority of the 10 youth that we spoke to were optimistic about their economic futures. They understand their economic poverty and how this was different than the White experience, but like Latinos, they admired and respected the hard work of their parents in agricultural employment. They were also seeing Asians succeeding in non-agricultural work as entrepreneurs. As voiced by one Hmong youth:

I want to get into the business industry. It's my dream to own my business, and I don't know why. I want to make it big like the White people. I want to open my own video game shop...

The majority of the youth we spoke with also has faith that a college education was the road to economic freedom, and half of them were already in college, mostly community college because it was more affordable.

Health and Safety

Findings indicated that Asian males experienced substantially lower negative health and safety outcomes compared to the other racial/ethnic groups. The health outcome in which Asian males reported a notable outcome disparity was for childhood obesity. For this particular outcome, 38.2% of Asian males were obese compared to 18.1% for Whites. In consideration of specific safety outcomes, the number of Asian males between the ages of 6 and 17 reported in foster care or with substantiated cases of abuse and neglect was less than 4%. Similarly, the juvenile arrest and custody rates for Asian males were 4.3% and 4.2%, substantially lower than rates for the other racial/ethnic groups.

Much of the quantitative data that provided health and safety indicators for Asians was not alarming, and many times Asians were doing better than Whites. When our youth spoke about

hospitals and doctors, they only had positive experiences. One youth expressed that he trusted doctors because they had education, and he trusted people with education. But, with Hmong, there are medicinal traditions that are getting lost with the youth. One Hmong youth trusted western medicine because “You can’t depend on Hmong herbs!”

When it came to safety, some Asian youth were joining Asian gangs in their community, but this was not as common as that existed in the Latino and African American communities. However, like Latinos and African Americans, Asian youth also had lots of experience with cross-racial/ethnic violence, and this is likely part of the reason for the attraction to gangs that can provide protection in their schools and community. It took a lot of discipline to be continually exposed to racial/ethnic violence in the schools and not react in ways that could lead to more violence. One youth shared his reaction to name calling:

I use to take it seriously when I was young, like before I use to get mad when I heard “chink” or something like that, but now I don’t get as mad because it’s just words. For me it wouldn’t get me into a fight, because I don’t like to get like that.

As the same time, this youth shared that not all his friends has the same temperament, and others did fight back against this type of continual psychological abuse.

Education

The outcomes of Asian boys and men across the educational indicators were also less severe than that for other males of color. The largest disparity found was for the number of students scoring at or above proficiency in English/Language Arts. Specifically, 25.8% of Asian males enrolled in FUSD scored proficient or above on the *California Standards Test* (CST), or slightly more than two times lower than Whites. Asian males scoring at or above proficiency level in Mathematics were 37%, and did not differ from the other race/ethnic groups (FUSD, 2007-2009). In terms of FUSD suspension rates, Asian males had less than two times as many compared to males in the other race/ethnic groups. Furthermore, 44.8% of 12th grade Asian males were found to have completed the required courses needed for UC and CSU entrance, which was slightly higher than the estimate of 40.6% for Whites.

The other noted disparity was for the number of Asian males ages 25 and older with less than a high school diploma. For this indicator, 26.4% of Asians male have less than a high school diploma, compared to 9.3% for Whites.

While the academic achievement data is not alarming, youth in our group discussions spoke vividly of positive and negative experiences with their teachers. One youth, aware of discrimination based on his schooling experiences, stated that:

“My English teacher, she was White and she was always picking on me... She would say you Asian kids are so lazy and you sleep all the time... Then I went to the counselor and

we had a meeting. I said I was tired of her picking on me and marking me down when I was doing good. After a few weeks and I kept complaining about her they ended up firing her. She was like in her 60s and I don't know if she was a redneck because there were only White kids in that class. So I thought she was racist."

This youth ultimately graduated and decided to continue his education at the local community college, but his experiences with this teacher made him and his friends aware that discrimination towards Asians does exist.

African American Boys and Men

The quantitative data collected in the four RAND research domain areas indicate that overwhelmingly, the disparities facing African American boys and men are the most striking among the three subpopulations that were the focus of this study. While the African American population in Fresno is significantly smaller than the Latino, White or Southeast Asian population, the severity of the challenges faced warrants focused attention.

Community Development and Economic Opportunity

African American boys and men were found to display the largest disparities across the collective set of Community Development and Economic Opportunity indicators. With a median income level of \$24,615, African Americans in Fresno County are the poorest of the racial/ethnic subgroups. African Americans are 3.5 and 2.5 times more likely to be raised in a single-parent household than Whites and Asians (U.S. Census, 2006-2008), respectively. Comparatively, the odds of African American youth having a mother with less than a high school education was 2.5 greater than Whites, but 3.5 times lower than that reported for Latinos.

African American males between the ages of 6-24 years of age were found to have the highest rates of living below poverty. In particular, compared to Whites, African American males are 3.4 times more likely to live in poverty, which corresponds to the finding that 46% of these youth living in single-parent households (U.S. Census, 2006-2008). Although the unemployment rate of 16-24 year old youth was similar to the other race/ethnic groups, the unemployment rate for 25+ year old males was more than twice as much as Asians (2.1), Latinos (2.1), and Whites (3.3).

Health and Safety

African American boys and men ages 6 – 25 years were found to have the highest asthma diagnosis rates among boys and men of color, with 62.7% of those surveyed as part of the California Health Interview Survey reporting an asthma diagnosis, compared to 22.1% of Whites. Combined rates of sexually transmitted infections (chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis) were 15 times higher than among White males and five times higher than Latinos. African

American males were also more seven times more likely than their white counterparts to report having no usual source of health care.

Rates of substantiated child abuse and neglect, as well as rates in foster care, were highest for African American males as well, with substantiated cases of abuse being double that of Latino males ages 6 – 17 and more than triple that of Whites males. The juvenile felony arrest rate was highest for African Americans (males and females), 56.0 per 1,000 population compared to 18.1 for Latinos and 9.1 for Whites. Latino male deaths due to homicide represented 57% of deaths across all causes, compared to 28% among African Americans and 10% of deaths to White males.

Education

English/language arts proficiency, as well as math proficiency rates are lowest among African American males in Fresno County. Given the link between school performance and the likelihood of dropping out of school, it is not surprising that both the Fresno County and the Fresno Unified School District's adjusted four-year high school dropout rates are highest for African American males (41.8% compared to 19.5% for Whites). Nearly 20% of African Americans have less than a high school diploma, and only 12% of African American ages 25 and over have achieved a bachelor's degree.

Summary

The following table summarizes the quantitative data compiled in this report and shows how African Americans, Latinos and Asians are disproportionately affected for each of the listed indicators. This table presents only those indicators for which the three population groups experienced rates that were at least twice as high as White rates. As can be seen, African Americans face the highest odds ratios in terms of poverty, no usual source of health care, sexually transmitted infections, and foster care, while Latinos have the highest odds relative to low maternal education, homicide-related deaths, and having less than a high school education. As mentioned previously, the quantitative data for Asians summarizes data for many Asian subgroups, and likely does not accurately reflect the experience of the Hmong population in Fresno County.

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