

School-Age Children & Youth

According to the SOAR *King County School-Age Action Agenda*, it is critical that a community prioritizes children and youth as both a future investment and a reflection of our current quality of life. Bellevue as a community clearly values that priority. Responding to the needs of and creating a strong foundation for healthy growth and development for all youth, especially those for whom there is limited access to resources they need to succeed, can improve the overall health of the community. This is even more important during the current economic downturn: research shows that children living in low-income families experience more negative life outcomes, such as poor health and lost economic potential.¹

What's Working?

- Friends of Youth staff provide a Street Outreach Program for homeless youth up to age 23. A van supplied with food, clothing, hygiene supplies, bus tickets and resource information goes where homeless youth gather in East King County. This outreach helps to break down barriers and build trust that will allow youth to engage in services that will help them out of homelessness.
- Eastside Pathways, a “crib to career” effort, launched in Bellevue in 2011. Its goal is to enable every child to approach adulthood ready to thrive in college, in career, and in life. Many partners, including the Bellevue School District, the City of Bellevue, the Bellevue Schools Foundation, Bellevue College, non-profit agencies, foundations and community members, joined together to identify goals and develop a set of metrics to define progress towards the vision that every child will succeed.
- Bellevue Youth Court, a year long program in partnership with King County Superior Court and the King County Prosecutors Office, is one of the Action Teams of Youth Link. As of August 2011, Bellevue Youth

Court worked with 36 youths involved in the King County Juvenile Justice System; 43 cases were heard in Bellevue Youth Court; and 284 youth and 58 adults were trained and volunteered in the program.

- For the fifth time, in 2011, the City of Bellevue was included on the list of 100 best communities for young people by America's Promise Alliance.

Prevalence Demographics

- According to the 2010 Census, school-age children and youth 5-19 made up almost 18% of the Bellevue population. This age group grew at a faster rate between 2000 and 2010 than Bellevue's overall population. Bellevue has a smaller proportion of school-age children and youth than does the nation (20.4%), state (19.8%) and county (17.7%) but a larger proportion than did Kirkland (14.7%), Redmond (16.2%) and Seattle (12.9%).²

Education

- As of October 2011, the Bellevue School District's (BSD) enrollment was 18,048, a slight increase compared to 2010 when enrollment was 17,783. Enrollment in the Kelsey Creek Home School Center, a support program for home schooling, was 122 in 2011, slightly lower than the number enrolled in 2010.³
- Approximately 911 Bellevue households have students that attend school in the Issaquah School District which had a total enrollment of 16,873 students as of May 2011.⁴
- Funding for Head Start and the State Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program in King County is insufficient to meet the need for quality early learning for children from families with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty level.

Bellevue School District and Bellevue College only have a total of 158 Head Start slots in 2010 and 2011. Bellevue College has 25 of those slots. It is projected that only 59% of 4 year olds eligible are being served in Bellevue due to lack of federal funds.⁵

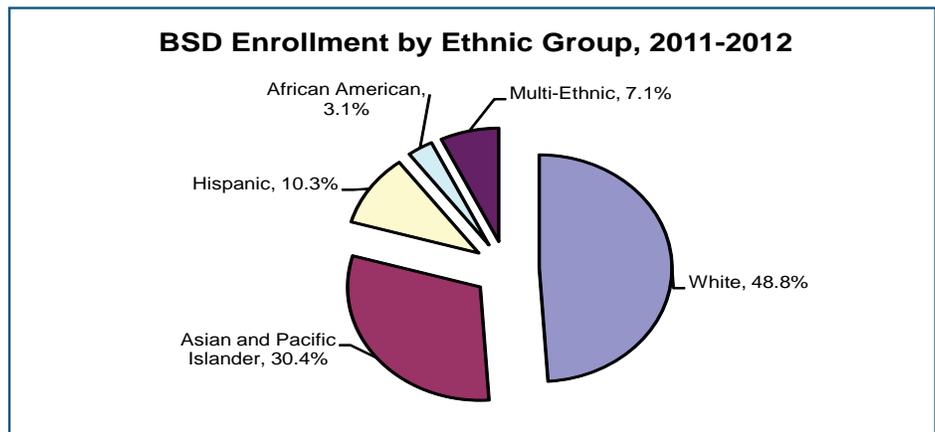
- Research shows that school dropouts have a tougher time finding employment and earn significantly less than those students who finish high school and go on to at least some college. Other studies indicate that high school dropouts are three and one-half times more likely than high school graduates to be arrested, and over eight times more likely to be in jail or in prison.⁶ The State of Washington defines dropouts as 1) those who actually drop out of school before graduation and 2) those who withdraw from the district before graduation without giving information about whether or not they enrolled in another district (these students are called “unknown withdrawals”).
- The Bellevue School District in 2009-2010 had an on-time graduation rate of 88.3%, compared to 78.1% in Seattle and 90% in Lake Washington School Districts. These reflect the results for those students who complete their education in the standard number of years, or “on-time” which is in four academic years for most students. Graduation rates disproportionately affect some students of color. In the BSD, Black students had an on-time graduation rate of 76.8% compared to 89% of White students. Hispanic/Latino students had an on-time graduation rate of 71%. The on-time graduation rate is the indicator used across the State as part of “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP) calculations. Currently there is an national effort to have states report graduation rates in

the same way, which will make state to state comparisons more valid.

- The extended graduation rate includes those students who took longer than four years to graduate. To meet all district and state graduation requirements sometimes takes 5 or 6 years. Grads in this group might include students who entered the district after 9th grade, English language learners, certain students receiving special education services, and others. In Bellevue, the extended graduation rate was 90.9% in 2009-2010.⁷

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

- According to the 2010 Census, the racial and ethnic diversity of the population in Bellevue under age 18 is higher (51.4%) than the diversity of the adult population (38%).⁸
- Over the past 14 years, the percentage of Hispanic students in the Bellevue School District has almost doubled. The percentage of Hispanics in 1996-1997 was about 5.3%; in 2006-2007, it was 8.1%. As of October 2011, the percentage grew to 10.3%.⁹



- The percentage of White students has declined every year, which reflects the increasing diversity in the district. In 2011, 48.8% of Bellevue’s students were White, compared to 71.4% in 1996.¹⁰
- Including English, Bellevue School District students speak 82 first languages, increasing from 81 in 2009. Almost a third (30.4%) of students speaks a language

other than English as their first language. Spanish is the most common language after English, followed by Chinese-Mandarin, Korean, Chinese-Cantonese, Russian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Teluga, Hindi, French Tamil, and Arabic, and Farsi (Persian).¹¹

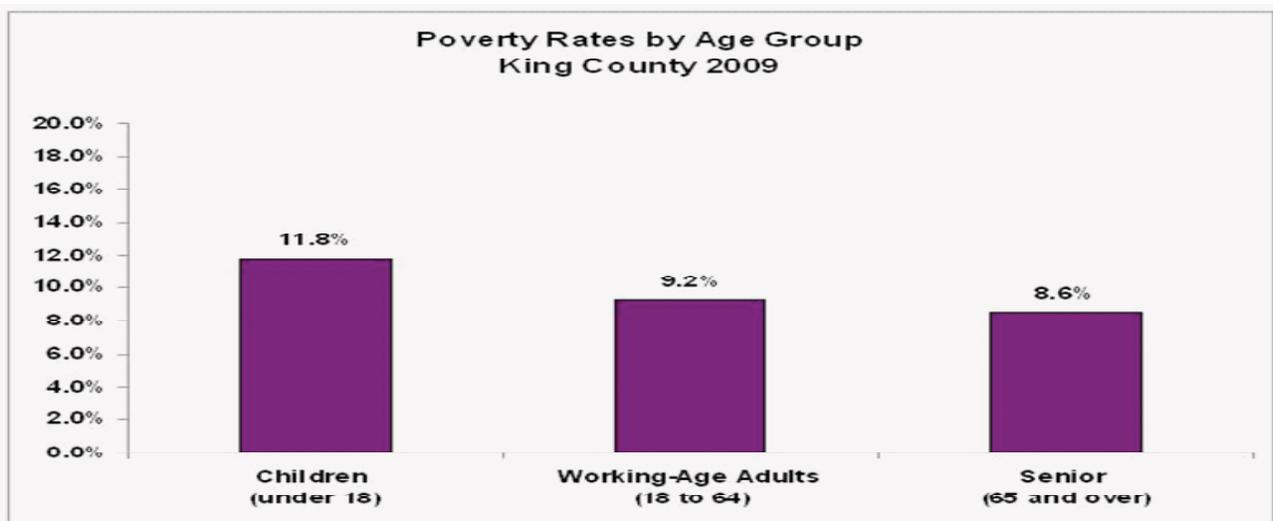
- Almost 9% of Bellevue School District students are enrolled in English Language Learner (ELL) classes. The majority of ELL students are in grades K-5.¹²
- In the Issaquah School District, the following racial breakout was reported: White, 68.3%; Hispanic, 5.5%; Black/African American, 2.6%; Asian 22.2%; .4%, Pacific Islander; American Indian, .6%. Over 700 students received ELL services in 2010-2011. These students represent 49 different cultures and language groups. The most common are Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Russian and Japanese.¹³

Children and Youth Living in Poverty

- The official measure of poverty in the U.S. was developed in 1963 to track the impact of the Johnson Administration’s War on Poverty. Children are referred to as “poor” if they live in families who earn below 100% of the federal poverty level (\$22,350 for a family of four in 2011) and “low-income” if they live in families below 200% of the poverty level (\$44,700 for a family of four in 2011). Nationally, the num-

ber of poor children is predicted to rise by nearly 1 million, from 14.7 million in 2009 to 15.6 million children in 2010. The national child poverty rate is estimated to increase from 20.0% in 2009 to 21.3% in 2010. Based on a model of the historical relationship between state child poverty rates and economic conditions, child poverty rate predictions for 2010 were developed for each state. In Washington State, predictions are that it will be 18%, compared to 16% in 2009.¹⁴

- In 2009, it was estimated that 11.8%, nearly 48,000 King County children ages 0-17 were living in poverty.¹⁵ The 2008-2010 ACS estimated that about 13 percent of King County children lived at or below the poverty level, compared to about four percent within the City of Bellevue. However, certain areas within Bellevue have historically had much higher rates of children in poverty than others. For instance in 2005-2009, it was estimated that 24 percent of children living in West Lake Hills were living in poverty compared to zero percent in Somerset and Northwest Bellevue.¹⁶ (Note: For more information, see *Bellevue: A Community Profile* section in this report.)
- Another measure of poverty and low-income status in the area of food security is the percentage of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch. According to the Bellevue School District, the total percentage of students qualifying for lunch



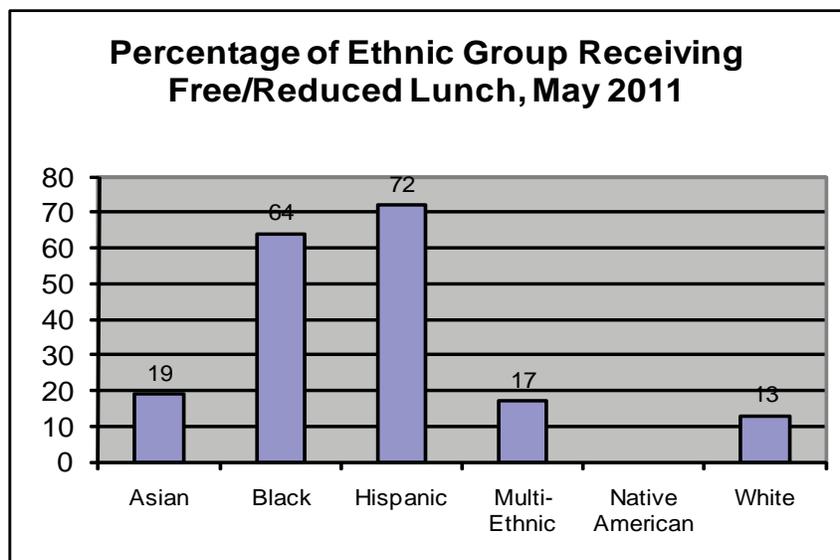
assistance remained relatively steady until 2009. Over a ten year period, the percentage peaked at 19.2% during the 2004-05 school year. It declined marginally, from 18.9% in 2005-06 to 17.7% in 2008-2009, then jumped to 22.8% in 2011-2012. The percent of students qualifying for free and reduced price lunch varies by school. As shown in the chart below, there are fourteen schools out of 32 in the district with more than 20% of students eligible for free or reduced price lunches, up from ten schools in 2009.¹⁷

- In the Issaquah School District, about 9% of students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch.¹⁸
- Students of color are disproportionately

represented in the free and reduced price lunch program. This is clear in the chart below that shows the percentage of students by racial/ethnic group, and the percentage of students in these categories enrolled in the free or reduced price lunch program.¹⁹

- The BSD reports a large increase in students eligible to receive services funded by the federal McKinney-Vento Act because they are homeless. In 2007, 48 qualified; in 2009, the number increased to 93. As of April 2011, there were over 160 students in the district that qualified.²⁰ In the Issaquah School District, in 2009-2010, 95 students were enrolled, and in 2010-2011, that number increased to 135 students.²¹

% of School Enrollment Qualifying for Free/Reduced Lunch (Based on 10/1/11 Counts)				
	Elementary (16)	Middle (8)	High (6)	Other (2)
0-10%	Bennett, Cherry Crest, Clyde Hill, Medina, Somerset, Puesta del Sol	International	International	
11-20%	Enatai, Spiritridge	Tyee, Chinook, Big Picture (Grade 6)	Bellevue, Newport, Big Picture (Grade 9)	Kelsey Creek K-12
21-30%	Woodridge, Eastgate, Newport Heights	Tillicum	Interlake	Transition Program
31-40%	Phantom Lake	Odle		
41-50+%	Lake Hills, Sherwood Forest, Ardmore, Stevenson	Robinswood, Highland	Sammamish	
Source: Bellevue School District (2011-2012)				



Health and Mental Health Issues

- Beginning in July 2007, all children birth to 18 years old in families with incomes up to 250% of the FPL in Washington State became eligible for health care coverage, with no waiting lists. Due to the huge State budget deficit in 2009, funding for that program, called *Apple Health for Kids*, was at risk. Changes in federal law, however, made states eligible

for Children’s Health Insurance Program funds, so the program was preserved, and expanded to uninsured children living in families earning up to 300% of the FPL. However, State budget cuts during the 2011 Legislative session reduced the eligibility for no-cost care to 200% of the FPL; those earning above 200% FPL will pay premiums and co-pays. The Children’s Health Care Program, serving families with undocumented immigrant children, was maintained, but families with incomes over 200% of poverty will pay higher premiums.²²

- Pregnancy rates among teens 15-17 years old in Washington State declined steadily from 59.0 per 1,000 females in 1989 to 24.0 per 1,000 in 2009, which was the lowest in almost 30 years. In 2007, the rate increased slightly to 28.7. The State’s birth rate for this age group was 13.8/1,000 in 2009, a decrease compared to 2007 when it was 16.1.²³ The national teen birth rate was 20 births/1000 in 2009. Experts believe that the current recession was a major factor driving down birth rates in general, which would also affect teen births.²⁴ One of the reasons this age group is tracked is because it is at the highest risk for poor birth outcomes, such as low birth weight and prematurity which puts the infant at risk for infant death, blindness and deafness. Children born to single teenage mothers are more likely to drop out of school, give birth out of wedlock, and become dependent on welfare, compared to children with older parents.²⁵
- Between 2007-2009, the average teen birth rate in King County for females ages 15-17 was 10.1/1,000 births. During the same time period, average teen birth rates in South King County (20.4) and Seattle (9.5) were higher than in East (4.2) or North King County (4.3). The Bellevue School District rate for 2004-2006 of 4.4 births/1000 girls 15-17 years of age was lower than the overall King County teen birth rate of 10.1.²⁶
- Average teen birth rates from 2004-2008 in King County were higher among Hispanics/Latinas (55.2 per 1,000), American Indian/Alaska Natives, (36.4 per 1,000), and African Americans (18.7 per 1,000) than among Whites (9.2 per 1,000) and Asians reporting a single race (6.5 per 1,000).²⁷
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) are spread through sexual contact with another person who is infected. Every year about four million teens in the U.S get STDs. The most common STDs for teens are genital warts (HPV), Chlamydia, and gonorrhea. People affected by other STDs are two to five times more vulnerable to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).²⁸ In King County, the most frequently reported STDs among 15-19 year olds are chlamydia infection, gonorrhea and initial genital herpes.²⁹
- Lack of exercise and being overweight are risk factors for serious illnesses such as heart disease, hypertension and diabetes, and contribute to premature death.³⁰ Factors contributing to the increasing rates of overweight in children include fewer opportunities for physical activities, media and marketing, and increased time in sedentary activities, such as watching television or using computers.³¹ According to the findings from the most recent Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS), conducted in 2010 with middle and high school students across the state, 10% of 10th grade students were overweight. In King County in 2010, 8% of youth in grade 8, 8% of youth in grade 10, and 8% of youth in grade 12 were overweight, all lower than in 2008.³² In the Bellevue School district, 6% of 8th graders, 6% of 10th graders, and 5% of 12th graders were overweight, all lower than 2008.³³
- The HYS also provides information about substance use by youth. In 2010 in King County, 40% of 12th graders and 26% of 10th graders reported having drunk a glass, can or bottle of alcohol in the past 30 days.³⁴ Twenty-seven percent of 12th graders and eighteen percent of 10th graders reported smoking marijuana in the past 30 days.³⁵ In the Bellevue School

District, 41 % of 12th graders and 21 % of 10th graders reported the specified alcohol usage in the past 30 days; 25 % of 12th graders and 13 % of 10th graders reported smoking marijuana in the past 30 days.

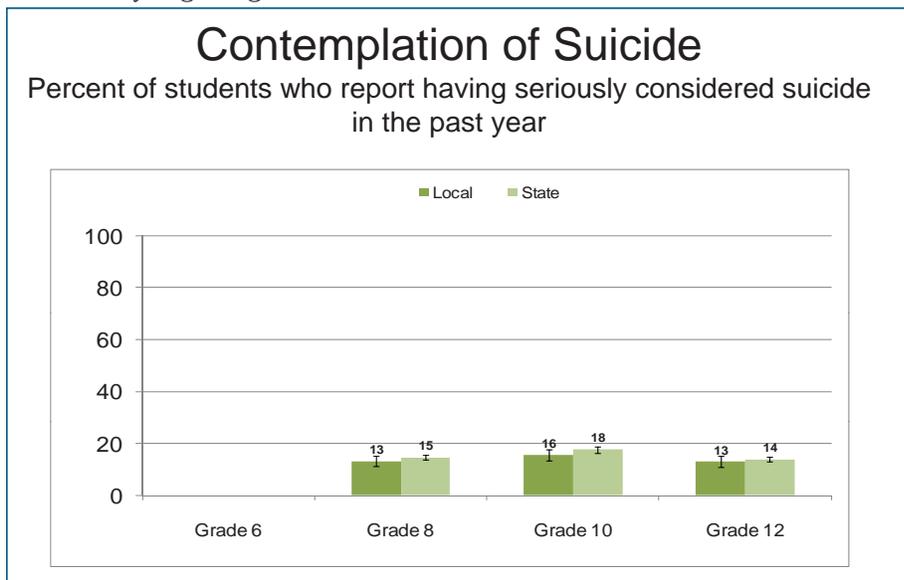
- A study released in September 2008 by the National Institute of Mental Health found that suicides in children and youth aged 10-19 appear to be on the rise after a 15 year decline. Researchers thought a spike in youth suicides in 2004 may be an anomaly, but the study found that the increase continued in 2005. Some possible factors contributing to this trend include higher rates of untreated or undiagnosed depression, an increase in suicide rates among U.S. troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and the decreased use of antidepressants among children, due to increased side effects, such as suicidal thoughts.³⁶
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Washington youth ages 15-24 and the third leading cause of death nationally.³⁷ In Washington, an average of two young people die of suicide each week, and seventeen attempts result in hospitalization.³⁸ According to the National Center for Health Statistics, Washington has the 16th highest overall suicide rate in the nation.³⁹
- In 2008, in the HYS, about 14 % of King County eighth graders and 14 % of twelfth

graders said they had thought seriously about killing themselves. In 2010, 15 % of eighth graders and 14 % of twelfth graders reported suicide ideation, virtually the same percentage. In Bellevue in 2010, 13 % of eighth graders and 13 % of twelfth graders said they contemplated suicide.⁴⁰ Almost 9 % of sixth graders and almost 14 % of twelfth graders in King County feel that there are not adults they can turn to for help when they're feeling sad or hopeless.⁴¹ In Bellevue, nine percent of sixth graders and 13 % of twelfth graders reported there were no adults they could turn to.⁴²

Youth Violence

- In 2008, 33,580 juveniles were arrested in Washington State, a rate of 46.8 for every 1,000 juveniles in the state age 10-17, a decrease from 2007 when the rate was 49.8. The 2008 rate is the lowest rate reported in Washington State since prior to 1982. There were 1,523 violent offense arrests of youth for a violent arrest rate of 2.1 per 1,000 youth age 10-17, a 8.7 % decrease compared to 2007(2.3/1000). This was a 36 % decrease from 1998-2008. Girls represented 30 % of the total juvenile arrests in 2008; this rate has remained constant over the past 5 years. From 1998-2008, the percentage increased 11.6 % for girls, while it decreased by 4.2 % for males during the same time period.⁴³

• Juvenile court offense referrals, incarceration and juvenile arrests disproportionately affect youth of color. Forty-five percent of young people in care of the State's Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) are youth of color, yet youth of color make up only 24 % of the state's juvenile population. For example, Black youth make up less than



Source: 2010 Healthy Youth Survey-King Bellevue

4 % of the State population, but are 20 % of the population in JRA.⁴⁴

- In 2010, the JRA reported that more than 60 % of youth held in JRA facilities have “significant mental health issues,” and 59 % of the youth in residential care are substance abusers or chemically dependent. Of juveniles in residential care, 42 % have two of these disorders.⁴⁵
- In 2008, there were 4,945 juvenile arrests in King County, a 27 % decrease compared to 2007.⁴⁶ In Bellevue in 2009, 422 youth were arrested, an 11 % decrease compared to 2008 when there were 475.⁴⁷
- In King County in 2008, there were 379 juvenile violent crime arrests (murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault). The rate of arrests for these crimes was 2.2 per 1,000 juveniles ages 10-17. This rate is slightly lower than in 2007.⁴⁸ In 2009 in Bellevue, 16 juveniles were arrested for violent crimes, slightly lower than 2008 (19).⁴⁹
- In 2010, while 88 % of King County sixth graders feel safe at school, only 60 % report actually enjoying school, similar to 2008.⁵⁰ About the same number of twelfth graders reported feeling safe (89.1 %), and enjoyed school (41 %) also similar to 2008. In Bellevue, almost 90 % of sixth graders and 92 % of twelfth graders felt safe at school, both similar to 2008; 64 % of sixth graders and 36 % of twelfth graders reported enjoying school, also similar to 2008.⁵¹
- In 2010, five percent of King County twelfth graders report having been a member of a gang in the past 12 months; almost six percent of Bellevue eighth graders reported gang membership, the same compared to 2008.⁵² According to Bellevue Police Department statistics, currently, similar levels of gang activity are being reported here as in previous years (e.g. in 2008, there were 11 gang-related cases), unlike King County which is seeing an increase in gang activity. In Bellevue, gang activity is related primarily to one gang, the Crossroads Locos, which is comprised of approximately 10-20 juveniles at any one time. Criminal activity is

based around property crimes, primarily vehicle prowls, but also includes alcohol and drug offenses, malicious mischief or “tagging” and to a much lesser extent, violent crimes. The School Resource Officers continue to work with juveniles in the Bellevue School District as well as with school personnel to identify at-risk youth in an effort to stem gang activity and re-direct youth into more positive directions.⁵³

Service Trends

Support for Youth in the Community

- The VIBES (Volunteers in Bellevue’s Education System) program works in all Bellevue schools to provide one-on-one mentoring and tutoring to students. There are currently almost 400 volunteers in the program. Staff report that with the growing diversity in the district, teachers are asking for multiple classroom volunteers who can work 1-1 with students who need language help and encouragement. Also, the economic recession has impacted more families; teachers note that more support is also needed for those students enrolled in the free and reduced price lunch program.⁵⁴
- The Wrap-Around Services Program, a collaborative partnership between the City of Bellevue, Bellevue School District, and United Way of King County, provides a number of activities for school-aged children and youth including before and after school programs and anti-bullying programs at two elementary and one middle school. In addition to youth focused goals, program staff help parents connect with resources, as well as build good relationships with the school and the community.⁵⁵
- Youth Eastside Services’ (YES) SUCCESS Mentoring Program recruits mentors to encourage youth to develop the skills and qualities they need to be successful in life, help them build self-esteem and provide them with continual support and guidance. Research shows that mentoring can decrease involvement in high-risk behavior.

Staff have seen a significant increase in the number of mentee families becoming homeless during this reporting period. This has created significant challenges for the mentors in being able to stay connected. They have also seen an increase in domestic violence, parent substance abuse, youth being raised by grandparents, and youth diagnosed with ADHD. Many of the YES clients come from single-parent, female headed households, so a positive male model who is a mentor is especially important. In June 2010 YES launched an initiative called “A Few Good Men” with new marketing materials and outreach to potential male mentors in the community. As a result, YES doubled the number of male mentors.⁵⁶

- Bellevue Boys & Girls Club provides a *Be Great Graduate!* program that works with teens in need of academic help to reach their potential as students. The program works with students in grades 6-12 throughout the school year and summer.
- Teen Closet provides gently used and new clothing for homeless and low-income teens on the Eastside, to raise self-esteem and keep youth in school. Organized by a Youth Link action team, youth set up and pick up clothes from a primary sponsor, Plato’s Closet, and provides a monthly open session for teens in needs. The program has grown to additional sites, including the Ground Zero Teen Center, which provides “Teen Closet” every week, during their meals for homeless teens, where counseling and services are provided. World Impact Network provides daily access to the “Teen Closet” inventory by providing the third site for homeless and low-income teens to access clothes and services.
- Jubilee REACH, a family support center in the Lake Hills neighborhood, offers an extensive array of services for children and their families. Some services that specifically address the needs of school-aged children and youth include KidREACH tutoring, a music and recording studio, art

club and studio, one-on-one GED teaching, as well as summer camps and after-school activities.⁵⁷

- Athletes for Kids provides mentorship for children with disabilities, referred by school counselors, by teen athlete mentors. Demand is increasing for mentor matches, with about ten children on a waiting list. Funding is limited so they can only serve a few geographical areas. Some families in East Bellevue participate in the program.⁵⁸
- Providers of recreation programs for children and youth report an increase in requests for scholarships as the recession as more families have fewer dollars in their budgets for these items. Staff at the City of Bellevue Parks & Community Services Department report increasing the funding for scholarships for its many programs and camps by over 50% between 2008 and 2010. The Bellevue Boys and Girls Club report a increase in requests for scholarships. In 2009, they provided over \$709,000 in scholarships; in 2010, it was well over \$750,000. In 2011, they are on track to exceed \$800,000. Lake Hills Elementary School staff report a long wait list for students needing scholarships for the after-school Boys and Girls Club program there because parents cannot afford the full cost of care.⁵⁹

Health and Mental Health Issues

- YES has a variety of Early Intervention Programs for individuals, families or groups in all three departments - General Counseling, Substance Abuse, and Outreach. They see clients with a wide range of problems including those who have experienced trauma and abuse, but also many people with challenges around family communication, parenting skills, peer and social problems, or needing skills to cope with anxiety, depression and anger. Staff note that the number of families experiencing economic hardships has increased significantly in the past two years. More families are being evicted, more

children living with single parents or other relatives, and more children with stress related depression and/or anxiety. The number of uncompensated clients (without insurance, Medicaid or private funding) increased by 20% in 2010, and 7% more in 2011. The requests for counseling on-site in the schools are increasing as many children are not able to function successfully in school due to their mental health issues.⁶⁰

- Bullying has been defined as physical or psychological aggression which is intended to harm or disturb, occurs repeatedly, and has a powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one. In 2002, Washington State passed an Anti-Bullying Law that requires schools have a policy in place, notify staff and students of the policy, and that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction must establish policies, training and resources.⁶¹ The academic consequences of bullying are severe, as are the mental and physical well-being of targeted students and bystanders. School-wide anti-bullying projects, involving parents and non-teaching staff along with teachers and student leaders have been shown to reduce harassment by as much as fifty percent.⁶² The increase in bullying was mentioned several times by youth and parents during Community Conversations. Latino parents from Mamas Unitas and students from Latino HEAT, ACRS TPAP, and Bellevue High School students at the Bellevue Boys and Girls Club Teen Excel Center all suggested that the school district provide more training for teachers and parents on how to intervene early with bullying and how to prevent it.⁶³ Twenty-eight percent of sixth graders in King County reported on the 2010 HYS that they'd been bullied in the past 30 days. By twelfth grade, this rate had dropped to 17.8%.⁶⁴ In Bellevue, 30% of sixth graders were bullied, compared to 27% in 2008; almost 17% of twelfth graders reported being bullied compared to 14% in 2008.⁶⁵
- Friends of Youth staff report that demand for services has increased among home-

less youth and young adults in all categories of services including housing, employment support, mental health counseling and emergency shelter.⁶⁶

- Staff from Asian Counseling and Referral Service reported that more of their clients are experiencing stress due to the economic downturn, including job loss, substance abuse, homelessness and domestic violence. They see increased numbers of referrals for counseling services from Bellevue residents this year.⁶⁷
- Because almost two-thirds of youth depression goes undetected and untreated, public awareness and youth education is critical. Washington's Youth Suicide Prevention Program (YSPP) works to increase public awareness of depression and suicide, provides public awareness, training to teachers, parents and students and promotes community-based suicide prevention plans.⁶⁸ The Crisis Clinic's Teen Link provides a youth-answered help line open evenings to respond to calls from youth on a wide variety of topics, including crisis intervention. Teen Link also offers suicide prevention training in junior, middle and high schools, and youth serving organizations. Teen Link handles about 1,000 calls annually, with about one quarter of those typically from North and East King County.⁶⁹

Refugee and Immigrant Youth

- Disparities in student academic achievement, called the "achievement gap", mean that students of color and students in poverty have fewer opportunities to access academic programs and supports, and therefore have less success in school. For example, fourth grade reading test scores in Washington clearly show that Asian and White students consistently do better than Black, American Indian, and Hispanic students. To address this issue, in 2008, the Washington State Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee was created, developing recommendations and providing training and community educa-

tion. One of the findings from this group is that to measure student achievement in broad racial categories does not accurately portray the incredible diversity in the schools. More distinct categories are needed to better pinpoint how to address diverse student needs.⁷⁰

- Washington State’s Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance received a two-year Refugee School Impact Grant from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement in 2010. The grant works to support local school systems impacted by significant numbers of refugee children. In Washington State, the grant is focused on these outcomes: (1) To ensure refugee students’ high academic performance and successful school integration; and (2) To strengthen the skills, knowledge, and competence of parents, schools and community-based organizations for the benefit of refugee students. In King County, during the 2010-2011 school year, these six districts served over 600 refugee students: Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, Seattle and Tukwila. During the 2011-2012 school year, increased outreach efforts will be made to East King County to participate in the program.⁷¹
- Some students who are Bellevue residents attend schools in the Issaquah School District: Sunset and Cougar Ridge Elementary Schools and Issaquah Middle School. Issaquah staff reports that in particular, Sunset has an increasing ELL population: 18 different languages are spoken, with the largest growing group Urdu speaking, followed by Chinese, Korean, and Spanish. ESL classes for parents and caregivers of the students are very much needed, with two currently provided by Hopelink and a local church.⁷²
- Since 2004, the Bellevue School District has sponsored a program called Parent Action and Advisory Council (PAAC) serving families of students of color and English

“It is harder to get jobs especially if you don’t have a GED. There needs to be more GED classes. Employers won’t look at you if don’t have at least a GED.”
The Landing Youth Leadership Council, Community Conversation

Language Learners by improving cross cultural communication skills, hiring interpreters when needed, and offering more parent education tailored to the needs of these families. Examples of activities include monthly Japanese coffee talks for parents district-wide, Korean Moms’ group, and telephone language lines in Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Spanish, Chinese, and Russian.⁷³

- Latino students in the Bellevue School District who are members of Latino HEAT, a youth leadership program, described the difficulty they have getting jobs which often help support their families’ basic needs. On the positive side, they also described receiving assistance from their schools when they needed scholarships for sports, help with homework, or enrolling for the free and reduced price lunch program. However, often, their parents, many of whom speak limited English, do not know about these programs and need more information about them in their native languages.⁷⁴

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth

- B-GLAD, sponsored by Youth Eastside Services, is a drop-in support group open to kids ages 12 to 19 who may identify themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or who may be questioning their sexuality. Co-facilitated by trained professionals, B-GLAD is a safe environment for youth to meet their peers, share common concerns, ask questions, and receive information and support in a professional setting that encourages responsible decision-making. The group was involved in the 2009 film called “PUT THIS ON THE MAP” about LGBTQ youth residing in East King County.⁷⁵ This film is now an international training tool.

Emergency Shelter, Transitional and Long-Term Permanent Housing Options for Homeless Youth

- Friends of Youth (FOY) provides emergency shelter, transitional housing, counseling, case management and foster care to homeless teens. The agency runs two

"Homeless young adults who cannot stay in our overnight shelter ride the bus to sleep at night, couch surf, accept unsafe relationships to have a place to sleep."

Friends of Youth, Provider Survey

emergency shelters in East King County (one in Bellevue, one in Kenmore) for youth ages 11-17, serving 83 youth annually. New Ground Kirkland is the newest addition to FOY's Transitional Living Program, beneficial to single young adults ages 18-21 for up to 18 months. Participants receive supportive case management services, life skills training and educational guidance to help them move towards permanent housing. New Ground facilities in total served 233 youth in 2010. (Note: For more information about this topic, see Goal 1 in this report.)

- FOY, in partnership with the Bellevue YMCA, provides a shelter for young adults ages 18-24 years old in Bellevue called The Landing five days a week. In 2010, they served 60 unduplicated young adults from Bellevue. In 2011, Lake Washington United Methodist Church and St. Peter's United Methodist Church joined the partnership by providing space for the shelter on the weekends. FOY staff provides case management and work to engage participants in services such as housing, employment, mental health and education. During a Community Conversation with participants in the Landing Leadership Council and staff, several issues were identified that act as barriers to obtaining permanent housing. These include lack of "low barrier" housing, places to go during

the day when the shelters are closed, appropriate clothing for job interviews, and job training.⁷⁶ The majority of youth who come to the Landing have experienced significant trauma due to physical and/or sexual abuse. Many have aged out of the foster care system or run away from dangerous situations and have little or no personal support. Many of these young adults experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, mood disorders (depression and bipolar) and conduct disorders. The drugs of choice of current Landing guests are primarily alcohol and marijuana, with some prescription drug abuse, methamphetamine, heroine, and crack cocaine usage. Seventy-eight percent of the guests are male and twenty-two percent are female. The majority is currently using some kind of substance; many homeless young adults are abusing substances as a coping mechanism due to lack of stable housing; some young people have developed serious drug addictions.⁷⁷

Youth Violence

- Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) provides a youth prevention and early intervention program, as well as a skills group for young women. The Teen Peer Advocate Program (TPAP), trains and

"One in four high school girls experience dating violence by graduation; adults are shocked to hear that statistic."

Community Conversation, Asian Counseling and Referral Service, TPAP Program

recruits girls from Interlake and Sammamish High Schools to educate their peers and the broader community on teen dating violence, sexual assault prevention and community resources. This program addresses the need for a culturally relevant program for Asian Pacific American young women but all races are welcome to join. During a Community Conversation, teen advocates reported an increase in youth drug use in the community, as

well as the need for more sex education in the schools, particularly starting early with middle school students.⁷⁸

- Human Trafficking, which includes labor and sex trafficking, is a modern day form of slavery. Approximately 600,000 to 800,000 victims annually are trafficked across international borders and include women, men and children. Some victims are native born U.S. citizens, as well. Children and youth under the age of eighteen are part of forced sex trafficking which subjects them to physical and psychological abuse, such as severe beatings, rape, drug addiction and other forms of violence.⁷⁹ In Washington State, which is one of the top human trafficking destinations in the U.S. due to the easily accessed public ports and proximity to Asia, the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network (WARN) provides a 24-hour urgent response hotline, access to safe housing and immigration advocacy and legal assistance.⁸⁰ In King County over the past year, King County Juvenile Detention caseworkers identified 185 females younger than 18 who admitted involvement with prostitution. Of those, 119 were receiving services at YouthCare, a Seattle-based program for youth on the street. Of the 119, half were exploited through ads placed on the Internet.⁸¹ Bellevue Police Department staff report that sex trafficking of minors does occur to some extent on the Eastside and in Bellevue. Investigations have occurred in both private residences and in hotels in Bellevue.⁸²

Community Perceptions

- Only five percent of 2011 phone/online survey respondents reported that *not having quality K-12 education for children in the household* was a major/moderate problem, identical to that reported in 2007 and 2009.
- Twenty percent of phone/online survey respondents ranked *teens dropping out of school* as a major/moderate community problem. This continues to be fairly con-

sistent with ratings from previous phone surveys from 2005, 2007 and 2009.

- Slightly more people (23 %) ranked *lack of services for children and youth/teens* as a major/moderate community issue in the 2011 phone/online survey than in 2009.
- Thirteen percent of phone/online survey respondents rated *teen pregnancy* as a major/moderate community problem, somewhat lower than in 2009.
- Eighteen percent of phone/online survey respondents rated *effects of gang activities* as a major/moderate community problem, similar to the last survey in 2009.
- A common theme that emerged during several Community Conversations with middle school and high school youth in Bellevue was increased substance abuse among their peers. Students reported drugs such as marijuana and cocaine used on and off school premises. Youth suggested that consequences for offenders should be stronger and enforcement more consistent than it is currently; they also think there should be more help available for kids who want to get off drugs.
- Staff from the Bellevue Boys and Girls Club commented that they are referring more families to human services agencies since the start of the recession, including Hopelink, Ground Zero for counseling, and YES. Many of the families reside in public housing or have Section 8 vouchers.
- Key informant interviews with health care providers indicated that obesity is a grow-

"I get embarrassed because my parents use the EBT (e.g. food stamps) card at the grocery store. My friends come to the store in a big car, and I have to come in a car that is leaking gas."

Odle Middle School, Community Conversation

ing health issue for children and youth. Eastgate Public Health staff suggests that lower rates of activity and consumption of foods that are high in sugar are two contributing issues. They suggest more parent education on reading food labels to help them select healthier foods and mak-

ing more scholarships available for low-income families for recreation activities.

- In the consumer survey, low numbers of respondents reported that youth related

“Some of the parents who don't qualify for DSHS or free or reduced price lunch are struggling to pay for daycare, prescriptions and counseling.”
Bellevue School District Wrap Around Services Coordinator, Key Informant Interview

issues were a major problem, such as children or youth with emotional problems or getting after school care.

Implications for Action

- Access to programs for school-aged children and youth to ensure their health and well-being is even more important in a weak economy. As more families face prolonged unemployment and loss of income, many struggle to provide the basics for their children. Lack of these resources can put children and youth at risk for poor outcomes, and eventually take an economic toll on the community. According to a recent report on child poverty in the U.S., public agencies and private charities can expect to see continued increases in the number of children and families seeking assistance in meeting basic needs.⁸⁵
- With the growing diversity in Bellevue, there is a need for more culturally sensitive programs and activities for school-aged children and youth and their families who may be coping with adjusting to a new country or to gender-based differences. Involving the families is needed to ensure school success. Efforts such as Eastside Pathways are critical to ensure that all children reach their full potential.

“There are a number of young men in their late teens, early 20's in the library during the day. They don't seem to have a place to be. I think they are homeless.”
King County Library System, Downtown Bellevue Branch, Community Conversation

- As families experience more stress due to the economic downturn, many children are internalizing this stress, exhibiting problems in school, and depression, as evidenced by comments from school staff and mental health agencies. Prevention oriented services, including those that promote health, such as recreation activities, are needed to help minimize more serious problems, such as substance abuse and involvement in gangs.
- There is a gap in the “safety net” for homeless youth and young adults, up to age 24. More housing with services and outreach to this at-risk population is needed to help them move on to productive lives. Some have “aged out” of the foster care system; others are employed or going to school, but lack family or community support.

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