

**Measure O CHOICE 2009-10**  
**Community Forum Overview**

Three community forums were conducted for the FY 2009-2010 for the Measure O needs assessment process to assist in identifying funding for Cycle IV (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011). The information received will also be utilized for the upcoming Request for Qualification process which will establish the next round of qualified agencies to provide gang prevention and intervention services through June 2014.

The first forum took place at the Steele Lane Community Center with several providers from our partnering community based organizations. The second forum took place at Piner High School with the multi-grade leadership class, and the third forum took place at Community Action Partnership with parents from our community.

The youth and parent forum participants were asked very similar questions about their perception of gang violence in the community. Basic questions were asked about HOW, WHAT, WHERE and WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT:

1. How does gang violence present itself and affect the community and individual families?
2. Where does the violence predominately take place?
3. What kind of programs would be beneficial in the community?

The following is a compilation of the groups' rankings of their top concerns with respect to each question:

1. How does gang violence present itself and affect the community and individual families?

**Parents (top 5):**

1. Violence
2. Use of weapons
3. The use of Drugs and Alcohol
4. Truancy
5. Mass medias (music and movies) glorified portrayal of gang lifestyle

**Youth (top 3):**

1. Violence
2. Use of Drugs and Alcohol
3. Lack of Lights

\*Violence and the use of drugs and alcohol overlapped with both youth and parents

*Noteworthy- both parents and youth also mentioned that intimidation, stress and fear were some of the ways gang violence impacts them.*

2. Where does the violence predominately take place?

**Parents and youth identified the following areas as "Hotspots" around Santa Rosa:**

1. West 9<sup>th</sup>
2. South Park
3. Apple Valley
4. North Dutton
5. Piner Road and surrounding areas

*Noteworthy—Piner as an area/street and as a school came up in both the parent and youth forums. Youth who attend Piner said they mostly feel safe at school, however, they identified the park across the street as dangerous with a lot of violence and general bad behavior takes place there. Parents also mentioned this park as a problem.*

3. What kind of programs would be beneficial in the community?

The parents and youth came up with a lot of great ideas for programs.

**The parents ranked the following programs as their top 3 they would like implemented**

1. A more structure security program (bring back truancy officers or have guards at school),
2. Uniforms at all public schools
3. More programs that are parent based—and involve parents

**The Youth ranked the following programs as their top 3 they would like implemented**

1. Challenge Days
2. Sports
3. Community Service with graffiti abatement as the focus

*It is noteworthy to mention that both youth and parents talked about the lack of free/or VERY reduced cost sports programs for teens. Lack of transportation and cost were factors that both parents and youth agreed upon as barriers to programs*

It is very evident that many parents and teens DO NOT know what programs are available to them. A mainstreamed resource guide would be beneficial.

**501 C 3 Forum-**

Due to the fact that we interact with the same CBO's and hosted the forum last year with the above questions, in an attempt for in-depth dialogue we asked the following questions:

1. What is really working out there?
2. How do we measure success?
3. How do we recruit more young people?
4. What do agencies need to become more successful?

5. What type of program could be designed and successful with a 25-50K budget?

1. *What is really working out there?*

- Many specific programs were referenced, including probation's new RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL, Chamber Algebra Academy, Wheel (early intervention) Program, and parent outreach and involvement programs.
- Collaboration with Agencies.
- Specific training programs—Green Jobs, YouthBuild etc.

2. How do we measure success?

- Less Crime
- Feedback from clients
- Community response to incidence
- More quantitative vs. qualitative data

3. How do we recruit more young people?

- Incentive based programs
- Location
- Positive feedback from other peers – history of program
- Through parents, schools and faith-based organizations, juvenile hall, law enforcement, other youth

4. What do agencies need to become more successful?

- More money
- More collaborations
- Staff education opportunities
- Transportation

5. What type of program could be designed and successful with a 25-50K budget?

- Low income sports program that collaborates with city and schools
- 4 agency collaboration – parents, case management, mentoring, tutoring
- Field trips- collaboration with other agencies for youth pool- youth-leadership
- Apprentice Program-includes GED attainment, community service, collaboration with other agencies for other services