

## Discussion Guide with Families

Both DFCS and the Probation Department are focused on addressing the over-representation of children of color compared to their percentage in the general population at point of first contact. DFCS wants to target General Neglect Referrals and Probation wants to target Misdemeanors and Infractions. This is what we found when we looked at the data:

Most referrals for general neglect referrals, misdemeanor law violations, and infractions come from 6 zip codes. Together, they account for about a 33 percent of all referrals and offenses. These zip codes are:

95112 – East San Jose  
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95122 – East San Jose  
95127 – East San Jose  
95116 – East San Jose  
95020 – Gilroy

In addition, the top three mandated reporters for general neglect referrals are:

School – 17%  
Law Enforcement – 17%  
Therapists – 14%

In terms of referrals that are investigated and found to be true, the largest percentage come from law enforcement – 33%

These are the data that we are presently reviewing and trying to understand. We would like to get your ideas on what this data means to families. We would also like to start identifying the specific needs of families to keep children and youth with their families.

### **General Questions about the Role of Child Protective Services (Child Welfare) in the Community**

1. What are the perceptions that community members have about child welfare services?
  - a. Why do you feel this way?
2. What are some ideas for the role that child welfare services should play in the community?

## **Specific Questions on how Families Enter the Child Welfare System**

### Child Welfare Questions:

3. What supports do families need when stressors begin to affect parenting and child safety?
4. If a family gets referred, what strategies or supports would be useful to keep children with their families?

## **General Questions about the Role of Law Enforcement in the Community**

5. What are your thoughts about the role of law enforcement in your community?
  - a. Why do you feel this way?
6. Is the relationship at its best, or could it be improved?
  - b. If so, how?
  - c. What could law enforcement do to improve community relations?
  - d. What could members from the community do to contribute to improving the relationship with law enforcement?

## **Specific Questions on how Youths Enter Probation**

7. Obstruction and resisting arrest is a type of misdemeanor offense. How familiar are you with this type of law violation? If familiar, what is needed to reduce the number of arrests due to obstruction and resisting arrest?
8. Tobacco smoking and possession of less than one ounce of marijuana are two types of infractions. How familiar are you with these type of offenses? If familiar what is needed to reduce the number of infractions due to tobacco smoking and possession of less than one ounce of marijuana?

## **Questions Parents wished had been asked:** *(This suggestion came from the first family group. These questions may presented in a second discussion or in other group discussions.)*

- How has the system impacted families?
- What has changed since completing [DFCS/Probation] services?