

Family Center Needs Assessment

St. Joseph Center
May 2000

**ECONOMIC
ROUNDTABLE**

A Nonprofit, Public Policy Research Organization

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Analysis, interpretations, conclusions, and recommendations in this report remain those of the authors.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Family Center Needs Assessment

The Family Center Needs Assessment identifies service priorities and needs of Family Center clients. The goal of the Needs Assessment is to provide information that will assist Family Center staff in improving and expanding programs that help families achieve economic self-sufficiency.

1.2 Background: Poverty in Los Angeles

Poverty in Los Angeles is growing despite the economic recovery that began in 1994.¹ The percent of persons in Los Angeles County living below the poverty level increased from 15 percent in 1990 to 22 percent in 1998, after peaking at 24 percent in 1995. Just over two in three of the county's poor are Latino, including many recent immigrants.² As well, a disproportionate number of poor families are Afro-American.

Poverty in Los Angeles is growing as a result of trends in migration and economic restructuring. First, Los Angeles is the premier gateway city for immigrants to the United States from Mexico, Central America, and Eastern Asia. Recent immigrants provide a low-wage workforce for employers in labor-intensive manufacturing, retail, and services. While these industry sectors provide an economic foothold for immigrants, the low wages most of them earn make it difficult to obtain economic self-sufficiency.

Second, the Los Angeles region has experienced a massive decline in mid-wage and high-wage manufacturing jobs since the 1970s as a result of industrial restructuring. In the manufacturing sector, the region has experienced the closure of plants in the automobile-metals-tires complex in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and the loss of close to 150,000 aerospace jobs between 1989 and 1994. Also, "white-collar" jobs have disappeared due to corporate mergers, buyouts, and closures in banking, insurance, and manufacturing. On the other hand, the fastest growing industries in the region are an eclectic mix of services, including motion pictures, multimedia, software development, temporary supply agencies, cleaning services, and personal services. The only manufacturing industries with significant employment growth in recent years have been the low-wage apparel and furniture industries.

¹ Southern California experienced a prolonged recession from 1989 to 1994 due largely to the restructuring of the aerospace industry. Close to 150,000 jobs were cut in the aerospace industry alone, plus an estimated 240,000 jobs in industries linked directly or indirectly to the aerospace industry, through production linkages or the consumer expenditures of aerospace workers.

² United Way of Greater Los Angeles, *1998-99 State of the County*.

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As a result, labor markets in Los Angeles are becoming increasingly polarized between high-wage professional, managerial, and technical jobs on the one hand, and low-wage manufacturing, retail, and service jobs on the other. Jobs “in the middle” providing livable wages and good benefits are shrinking. Ethnic minorities, including many recent immigrants, are over-represented in low-wage jobs.³

Welfare reform has imposed a five-year, lifetime time limit on receipt of welfare benefits for most eligible participants. The avowed purpose of welfare reform is to reduce welfare expenditures and increase economic self-sufficiency. It is clear that the former objective is being accomplished but not the latter. In a polarized economy, welfare recipients obtain work in the lower tier of the labor market where low wages, high turnover, and lack of benefits are the norm. Welfare-to-work programs, like low minimum wage standards and anti-union legislation, end up “regulating the poor” rather than ensuring their move to self-sufficiency.⁴

At the same time that wages for low-skilled jobs are stagnating, costs of housing and other necessities are rising. Pressures for rent increases come from several sources. The high demand for rental housing combined with the paltry construction of affordable rental units in Los Angeles in the 1990s has resulted in low vacancy rates for rental units.⁵ While workers in low-wage jobs and persons receiving public assistance struggle to make ends meet, high-wage professionals have created a demand for high-rent units. This augments the supply of high-rent units while limiting the supply of low rent units, thus increasing rent pressures for poor families.

All of these factors reinforce the urgency of assisting the working poor in attaining economic self-sufficiency. To accomplish this, most individuals and families require an array of services. Services directly related to their ability to obtain employment include education, training, job development and placement. Supportive services include childcare, housing assistance, transportation, health care, and counseling. Some individuals and families may require stabilization services, including food, shelter, and help dealing with substance abuse.

A main goal of this Needs Assessment is to determine the priorities of Family Center clients for these services, and to identify their unmet service needs.

³ The availability of large numbers of immigrant workers has itself contributed to the growth of low-wage industries such as apparel and furniture manufacturing.

⁴ See Piven and Cloward (1991) *Regulating the Poor*.

⁵ See Jennifer Wolch and Heidi Sommer (1997) *Los Angeles in an era of welfare reform: implications for poor people and community well-being*, The Southern California Inter-University Consortium on Homelessness and Poverty, p. 83.

2. THE FAMILY CENTER SERVICE AREA: POPULATION, INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, AND HOUSING

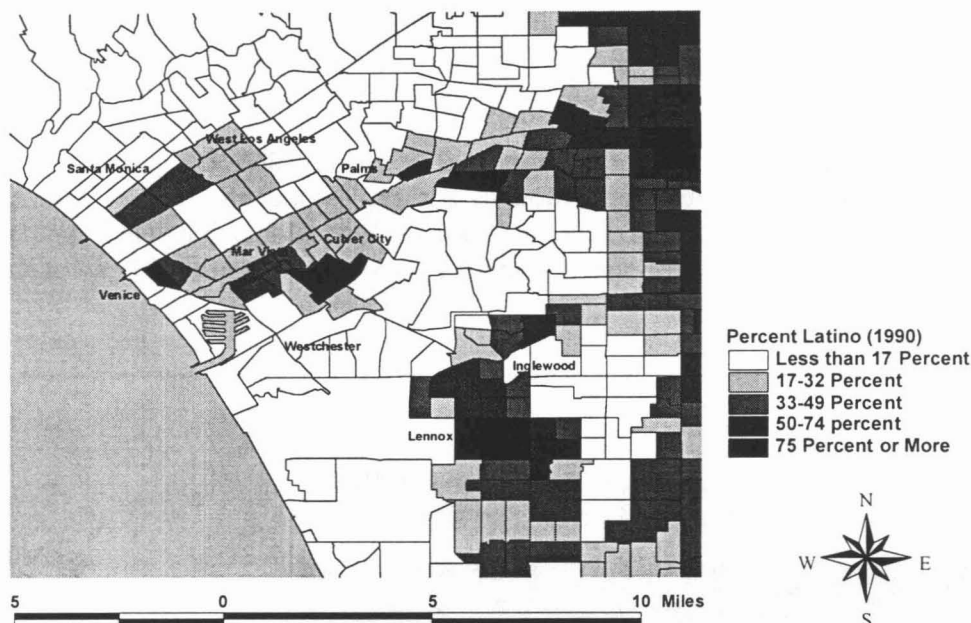
2.1. Population

The St. Joseph Family Center Service Area (hereafter called the "Service Area") includes the cities of Culver City, Santa Monica, and Inglewood; the City of Los Angeles neighborhoods of Mar Vista, Pacific Palisades, Palms, Playa del Rey, Sawtelle, Venice, West Los Angeles, and Westchester; and the County of Los Angeles districts of Lennox and Marina del Rey.

MAP 1
European-Americans in the
Family Center Service Area



MAP 2
Latinos in the Family Center Service Area



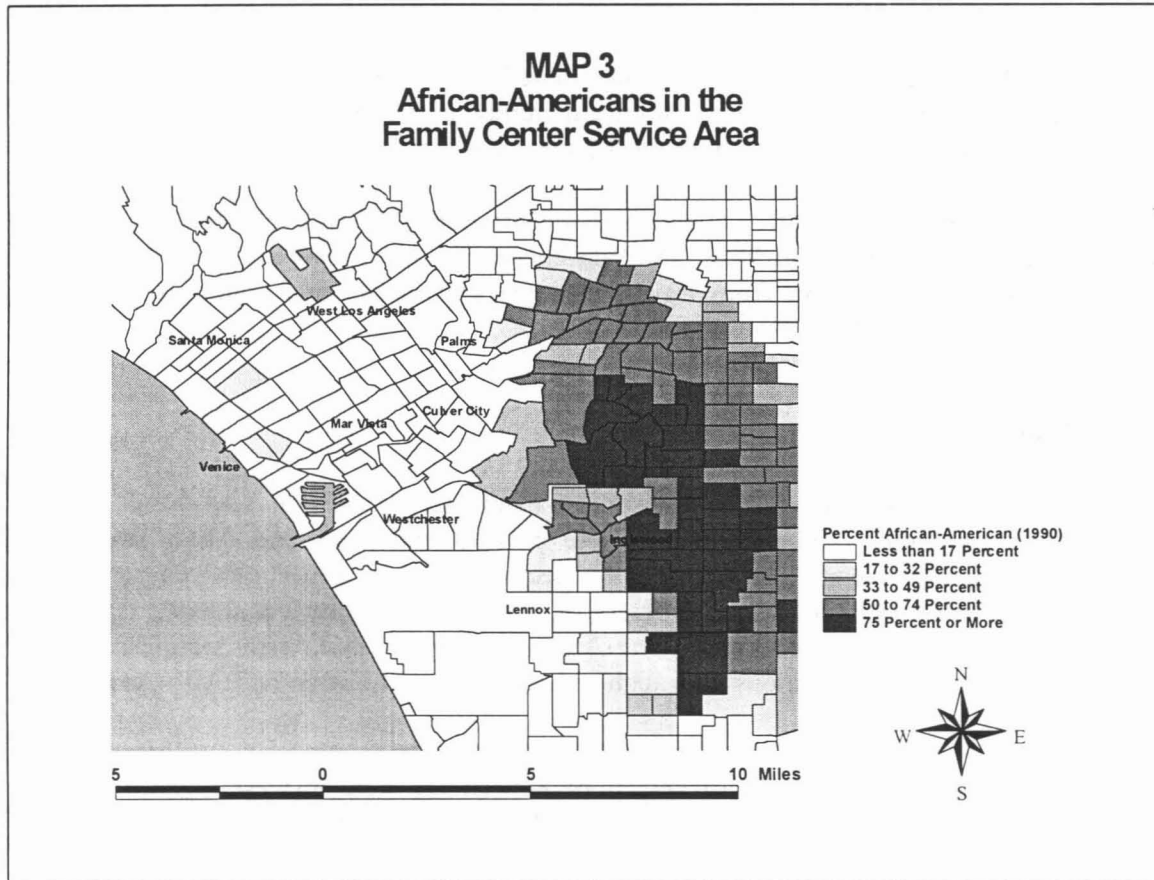
The population of the Service Area was 541,000 in 1990.⁶ The estimated population of the Service Area in 1998 was 563,500, a modest 4 percent increase. By comparison, the population of Los Angeles County grew 9 percent between 1990 and 1998.⁷

The Service Area's population is growing more slowly than the county's population because it has an older population, fewer immigrants, and little space for constructing new housing. Most new immigrants to Los Angeles County move into low-rent ethnic neighborhoods in the central part of the county. Latinos tend to have larger families than other ethnic groups in the county, reinforcing population growth in immigrant communities, and accounting for a significant proportion of recent population growth in the Service Area. In 1996, the Latino birth rate in Los Angeles County was 25.6 births per 1,000 persons, compared to 17.6 for Afro-Americans and 9.8 for Euro-Americans.⁸

⁶ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population and Housing*.

⁷ Population estimates for 1998: United Way of Greater Los Angeles, *1998-99 State of the County Report*.

⁸ United Way of Greater Los Angeles, *1998-99 State of the County Report*, Table 48.



While Euro-Americans remain the most populous ethnic group in the region, the percent of Latinos and Asian-Americans is increasing. The Euro-American population fell from 50 to 46 percent of the Service Area between 1990 and 1998. At the same time, the Latino population increased from 26 to 30 percent, and Asians increased from 8 to 9 percent. The Afro-American population of the Service Area declined from 16 to 15 percent.

Ethnic groups exhibit distinct geographic concentrations in the Service Area (see Maps 1 through 3). These maps are based on population data from the 1990 Census.⁹ Euro-Americans are most highly concentrated in the "oceanside" communities of Pacific Palisades (where they make up 88 percent of the population), north Santa Monica (84 percent), Marina del Rey (81 percent), Playa del Rey (80 percent), and south Santa Monica (74 percent).

Latinos are most highly concentrated in Lennox (89 percent) and adjacent neighborhoods in west Inglewood (64 percent) and south Inglewood (61 percent). The growing presence of Latinos in the Inglewood area represents a process of ethnic succession, in which Latino immigrants are replacing Afro-Americans. There are also growing Latino

⁹ US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population and Housing*.

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communities in Mar Vista and Venice, as well as the old Latino neighborhoods in Santa Monica.

Afro-Americans are most highly concentrated in east Inglewood (85 percent) and north Inglewood (53 percent). While significant numbers of Afro-Americans continue to reside in south and west Inglewood, both areas have a majority Latino population today.

Finally, communities with the highest concentration of Asians include Culver City, West Los Angeles, Sawtelle, Mar Vista, and Westchester.¹⁰ Also, there are small but growing communities of immigrants from Egypt, Ethiopia, India and other countries in South Asia and North Africa in the Service Area.

2.2. Household Income

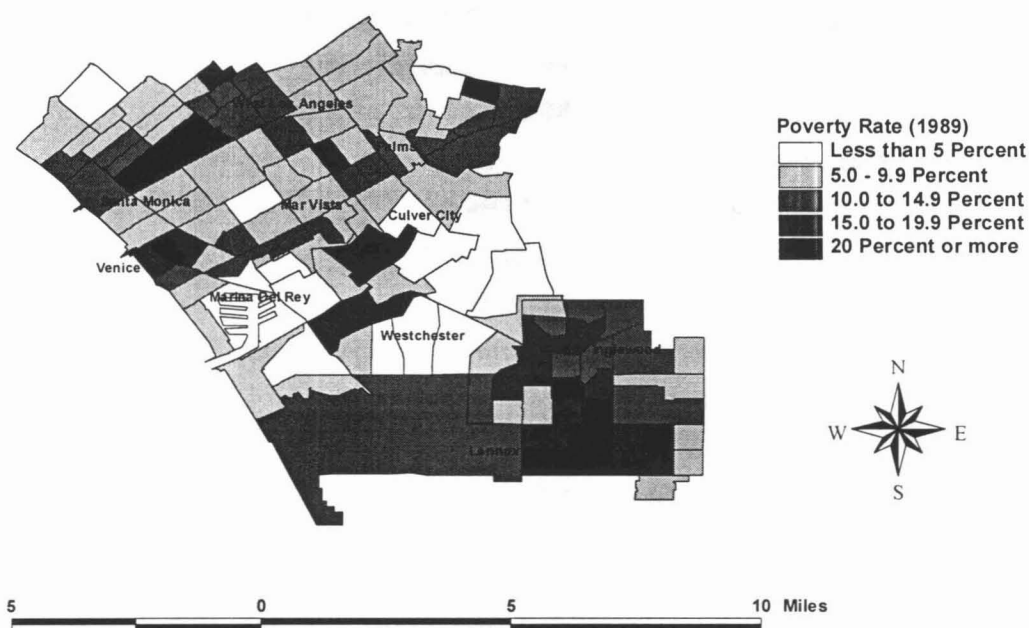
The geography of household income in the Family Center Service Area closely parallels its ethnic geography. The median income of Euro-American and Asian-American households is higher than that of Latino and African-American households, due to their greater representation in higher-wage professional, managerial, and technical jobs. As a result, neighborhoods with high concentrations of Euro-Americans and Asian-Americans tend to be wealthier than neighborhoods with high concentrations of Latino and Afro-American households.

The highest concentrations of very poor households were in west Inglewood (25 percent), Lennox (23 percent), downtown Santa Monica (23 percent), east Inglewood (21 percent), and the "Freeway Corridor" in Santa Monica (21 percent) (Map 4).¹¹ The lowest concentrations of very poor households were in Pacific Palisades (6 percent), Playa del Rey (6 percent), Marina del Rey (9 percent), and Santa Monica north of Montana Avenue (9 percent).

¹⁰ The communities with the highest concentrations of each ethnic group were: Pacific Palisades (88 percent European-American), Lennox (89 percent Latino), east Inglewood (85 percent African-American), and Culver City (17 percent Asian).

¹¹ US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population and Housing*.

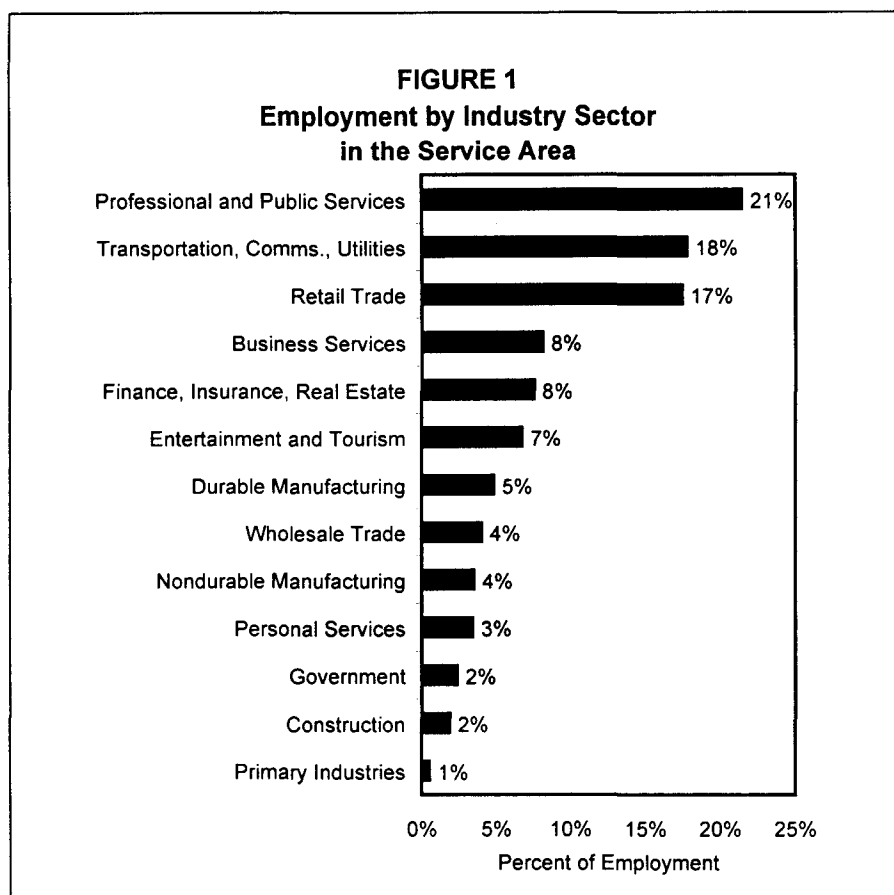
MAP 4
Poverty Rate in the Family Center Service Area



2.3. Industry Employment

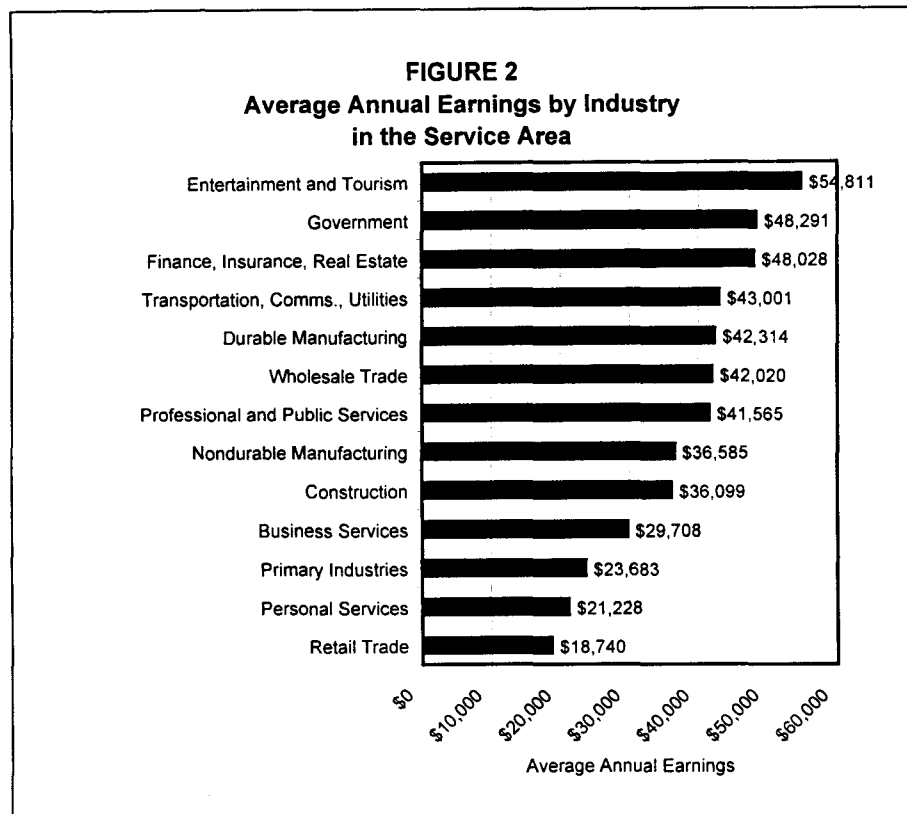
To determine the industry employment structure of the Service Area, we use micro-level data compiled the Employment Development Department. The base data used is from the Industrial and Commercial Employer (ICE) files, which provide employment and earnings for all establishments paying payroll taxes in the third quarter of 1992.

Employment in the Service Area is concentrated in retail, service, finance, and transportation industries (Figure 1). These industry sectors accounted for 82 percent of all jobs in the Service Area in 1992. The Professional and Public Services industry employed 21



percent of the 321,000 workers in the Service Area. This industry sector includes health care, education, social services, legal services, and engineering and management services. The Transportation, Communications, and Utilities industries employed 18 percent of the area's workforce. Most of this employment was based in and near Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), including airlines, airline and airport services, and freight transportation companies. Retail stores also employed 18 percent of the area's workers, including 27,000 workers in restaurants and bars. The Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate industries employed 8 percent of the workforce, as did Business Services. The Business Services include a diverse mix of industries, from advertising and software (which pay good wages) to temporary help supply, building services, and security services (which do not). Also, the Entertainment and Tourism industry group employs 7 percent of the area's workers. Santa Monica and Culver City are national centers for the multimedia industry, providing digital special effects and computer animation for motion picture and television production.

Compared to Los Angeles County, the percent of employment in the Transportation, Communications, and Utilities sector was 2.6 times greater than the county average. Employment concentration in Retail Trade was above average, while employment concentration in Professional and Public Services was below average. Other industry sectors with



above average employment concentrations in the Service Area included Entertainment and Tourism; Personal Services; Business Services; and Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate.

The Service Area's labor markets are polarized between high-wage and low-wage jobs. Of the seven industry sectors with high employment levels or high employment concentration, or both, four can be classified as "high wage" industries with average annual earnings greater than \$40,000 (\$1998). This group includes Entertainment and Tourism (\$54,800); Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (\$48,000); Transportation, Communications, and Utilities (\$43,000), and Professional and Public Services (\$41,600). Two of the industry sectors are low-wage: Personal Services (\$21,200), and Retail Trade (\$18,700). As discussed above, the diverse Business Services, with average annual earnings of \$29,700, include both high-wage and low-wage industries (Figure 2).

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2.4. The Local Housing Market

In the Los Angeles region, the working poor confront rising rental and housing costs but have stagnant or declining wages. One in ten households in Los Angeles County have been classified as “precariously housed”, meaning that the household income is 50 percent or less than median county income, and housing costs are 50 percent or more of total income.¹²

The problem of finding affordable housing is especially acute in the Westside, where there is a growing disparity between the demand for affordable housing and its supply. Steady population growth is contributing to a rising demand for housing, while the shortage of affordable housing is caused by a lack of new construction and rising rents. Few apartment buildings with affordable units are being constructed due to “high construction costs, limited land, and reduced tax incentives”.¹³ Developers have a strong financial incentive to build condominiums or high-rent apartments, reinforcing the shortage of low-rent units.

As a result, apartment rents are rising in the Westside and throughout Los Angeles County.¹⁴ The average rent for an apartment in Los Angeles County rose 8 percent in 1998, to \$982.¹⁵ Many units are being priced out of the reach of the working poor and families with fixed incomes.

In Santa Monica, the implementation of the state Costa-Hawkins Act has resulted in the relaxing of rent control regulations that had been in effect since 1979, creating a bastion of low-rent apartments on the Westside (see Map 5)¹⁶. As of January 1, 1999, new vacancies were “decontrolled”, meaning that landlords could raise rent to market levels (this new rent would be controlled during the tenancy). Median rents of apartments rented between January and April 1999 increased 40 percent for singles and studios, 59 percent for one-bedroom units, 81 percent for two-bedroom units, and 91 percent for three-or-more bedroom units.¹⁷ The City of Santa Monica’s Rent Control Board warned that the city could lose over 2,300 low-rent units by the end of 1999.¹⁸ As well, the Ellis Act permits landlords to convert apartments to condominiums. One realtor told a reporter that there were “a lot of nursing home candidates among the Santa Monica apartment tenants”¹⁹, capturing the antipathy that some developers, realtors, and landlords hold against the city’s rent control laws and the poor.

¹² Wolch and Sommer, *op. cit.*, p. 103

¹³ Bob Howard, “Costs put a lid on new apartments”, *Los Angeles Times*, 11 August 1998

¹⁴ Daryl Strickland, “Rising rents squeeze area’s working poor”, *Los Angeles Times*, 10 September 1999

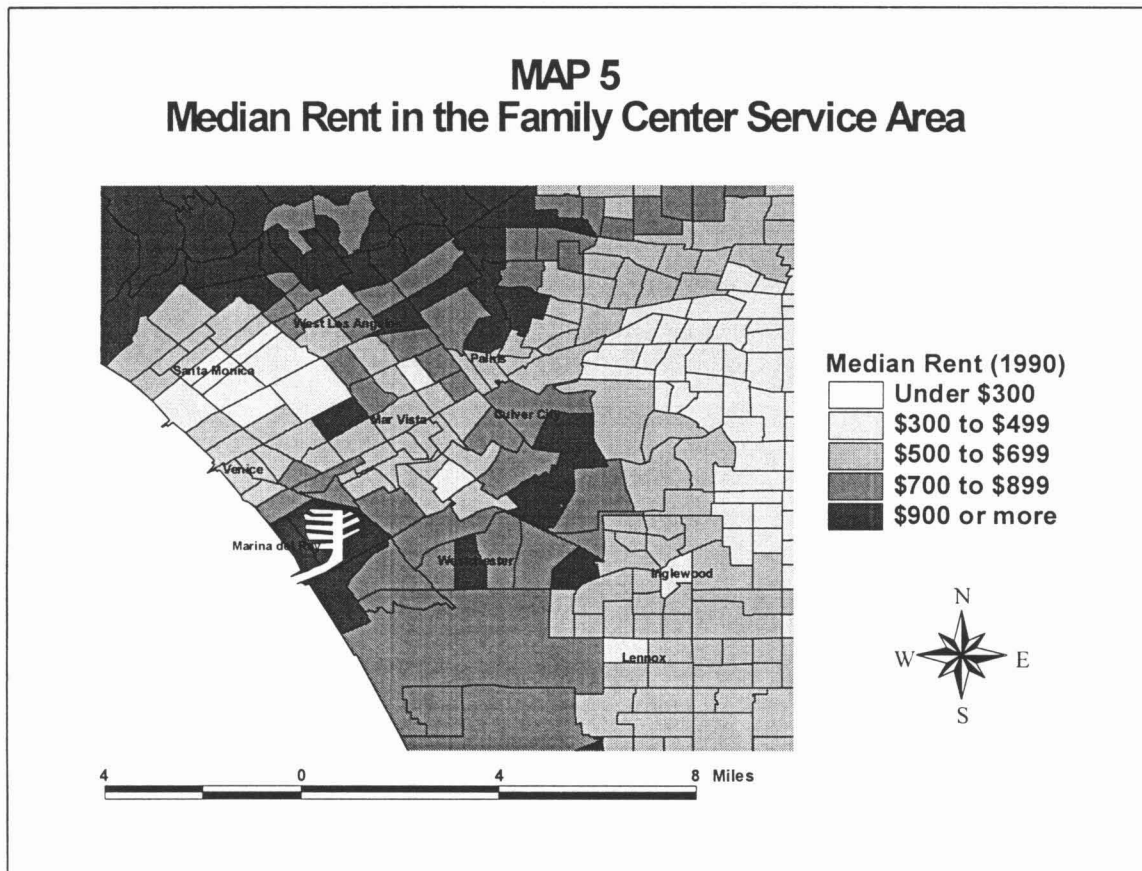
¹⁵ Martin Miller, “In a bind as rents go through the roof”, *Los Angeles Times*, 1 August 1999

¹⁶ Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population and Housing*.

¹⁷ *Westside Apartment Monthly*, May 1999, p. 21

¹⁸ Deanna Welch, “Report alarms rent control supporters”, *Our Times* (a supplement to the *Los Angeles Times*), 29 August 1999

¹⁹ Joyzelle Davis, “Apartment prices jump 18 percent in Santa Monica”, *Los Angeles Business Journal*, 12 January 1998. Davis reported that the increase in the median price of apartment buildings was attributable to investors purchasing buildings in anticipation of vacancy decontrol that would go into effect on 1 January 1999, allowing them to charge market rents for vacant units.



The problems of limited construction of apartments that low-income families can afford, and rising rents for existing units, will continue to pressure poor Westside families into the near future.

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3. CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILY CENTER CLIENTS

3.1. Introduction

Information about Family Center clients was compiled from two sources: the Family Center's client database, and the Economic Roundtable survey of Family Center clients. In this chapter we discuss personal characteristics of Family Center clients, including gender, age, ethnicity, educational attainment, English language ability, and immigrant status.

Family Center Client Database

The Family Center client database includes information on 1,107 clients and their families (4,094 individuals altogether). Not all clients in the database are currently active users of Family Center services. The database includes information on personal characteristics, address, and use of Family Center services.

Interviews

The Economic Roundtable conducted 49 in-depth interviews with Family Center clients. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain first-hand information about the needs of individuals served by the Family Center, including employment, housing, and supportive services. We used information provided in the interviews to identify service priorities and needs of Family Center clients (See Chapter 7).

Methodology for Selecting Interview Sample

To choose a representative sample of persons for interviewing, we stratified clients by ethnicity and community to determine the number of persons to be interviewed from each of four ethnic groups and six communities (see Appendix 1). The intent was not to develop a random sample of clients for statistical analysis, but to interview a cross-section of Family Center clients to develop a representative understanding of unmet needs.

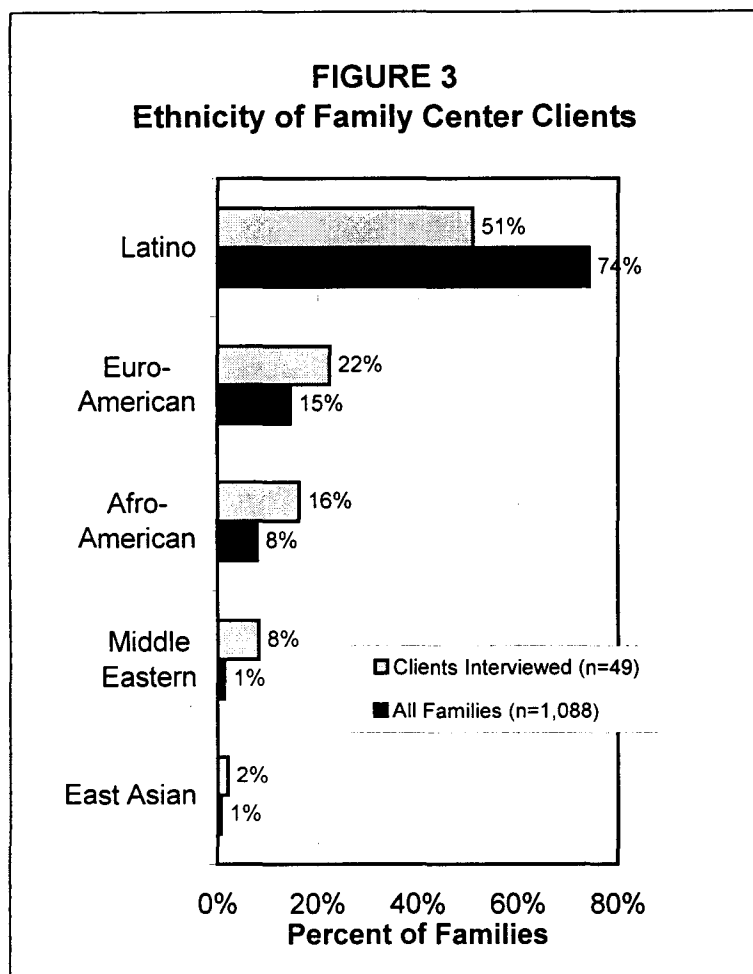
The Economic Roundtable prepared the interview questionnaire with valuable feedback from Family Center staff. Two interviewers were hired, one a native Spanish speaker who interviewed Latino clients. Interviews were conducted at the Family Center between August and October 1999. The interviewers were encouraged to develop rapport with the clients and write down information about family needs that supplemented information asked for in the questionnaire.

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3.2. Characteristics of Family Center Clients and Persons Interviewed

Gender

Just over half of persons served by the Family Center (54 percent) are female. A higher proportion of adult clients are female (58 percent) because female-headed single parent households are much more common than male-headed single parent households. All but two of the 49 persons interviewed are women.



Ethnicity

Latinos are predominant among Family Center clients. Seventy-four percent of client families are Latino, 15 percent are Euro-American, 8 percent are Afro-American, and 2 percent are Asian-American (see Figure 3).

The representation of Latino clients is greater when all individuals in client families are considered, due to the larger size of Latino families. Eighty-six percent of individual Family Center clients are Latino, while 7 percent are Euro-American, 5 percent are Afro-American, and 2 percent are Asian-American.

Just over half of the persons interviewed are Latinos (51 percent), followed by Euro-Americans (22 percent),

Afro-Americans (16 percent), and persons from the Middle East and North Africa (8 percent). We under-sampled Latino clients in order to schedule a sufficient number of interviews with non-Latinos.

Age Distribution

Family Center clients are clustered into two broad age groups: adults between ages 25 and 44 (29 percent of individual clients), and children ages 14 and under (43 percent of individual clients). Almost one in five clients (18 percent) is a child between ages 5 and 9, and 11 percent are children under age 5 (see Figure 4).

The age distribution of Latino and Euro-American clients is distinct. Latino families are young – 44 percent of Latino individuals are under age 15, compared to 24 percent of Euro-Americans. On the other hand, 20 percent of Euro-American clients are age 55 and over, versus only 4 percent of Latino clients. Compared to Latinos, Afro-American clients are more likely to be between ages 15-17, and age 35 and older.

FIGURE 4
Age Distribution of Family Center Clients

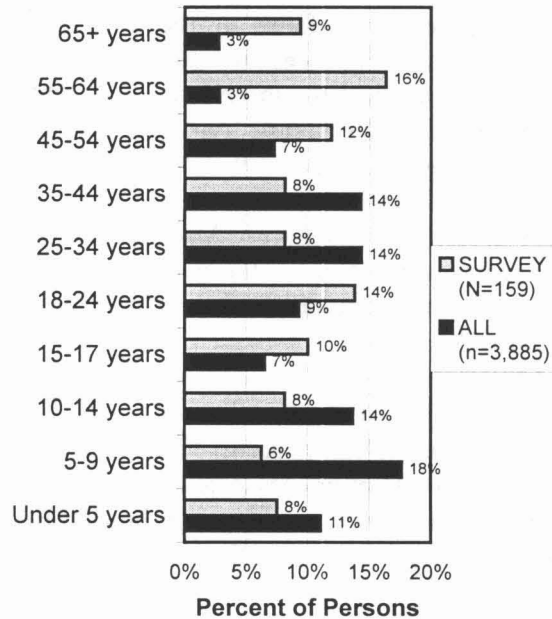
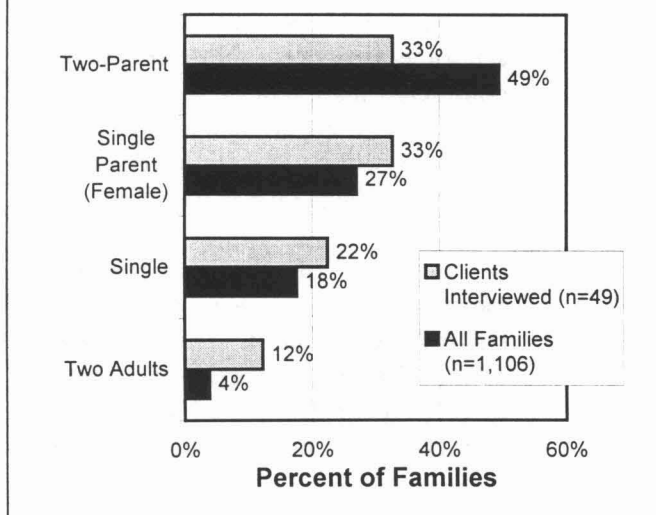


FIGURE 5
Family Type



Senior clients were oversampled for the interviews in order to understand their service needs compared to those of working-age clients, most of whom are parents with children living at home.

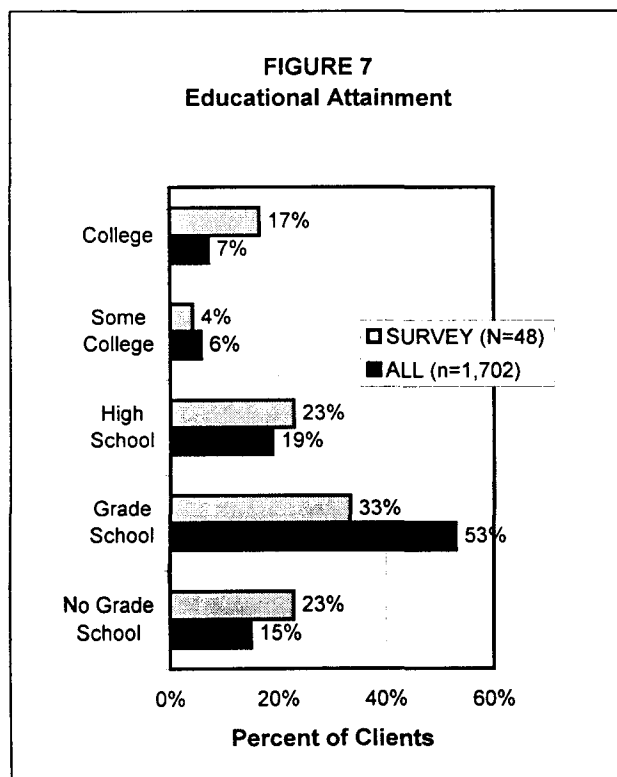
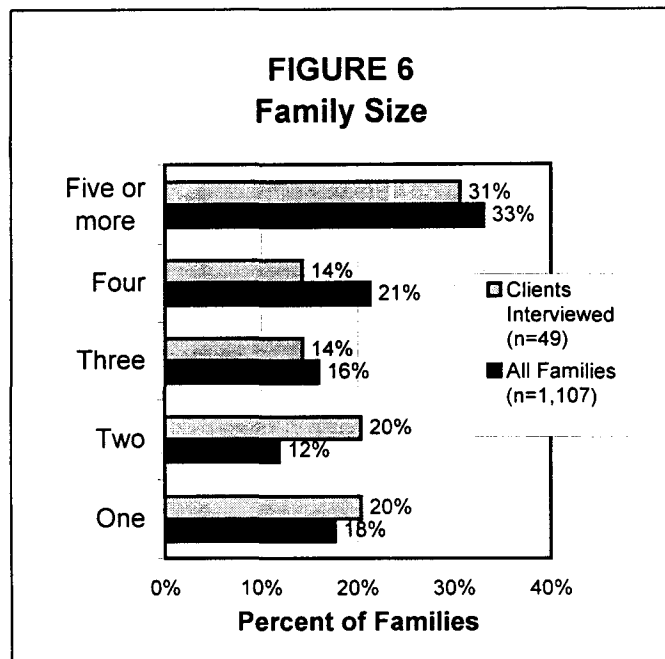
Family Type and Family Size

About half of all client families are two-parent households, 27 percent are female-headed single parent households, and 18 percent are single persons. Excluding single persons, 26 percent of client families included four persons, 20

percent included 5 persons, and 19 percent included three persons. Altogether, 41 percent of client families (excluding single persons) included five or more persons.

One third of the families of persons interviewed are two-parent families (Figure 5). Fifteen of the sixteen two-parent families are Latino. Another third of the interviewees' families are single parent households headed by a woman. Of these sixteen families, eight are led by a Latina and five are led by an Afro-American woman. Ten of the persons interviewed are single, including seven Euro-Americans.

One third of the families of persons interviewed (31 percent) had five or more family members (Figure 6). All of these families are Latino families (twelve are two-parent households, and four are headed by a single mother). Twenty-eight percent of families had three or four members.



Education and English Language Ability

Two-thirds of "working age" clients (ages 18-64) do not have a high school education. Grade school was the highest level of educational attainment for 53 percent of working age clients, and 15 percent have no grade school experience. Nineteen percent completed high school, 6 percent have some college experience but no degree, and 7 percent have completed at least a two-year college degree (see Figure 7).

Most of the persons interviewed (56 percent) have no education beyond grade school. This includes 21 of the 23 Latinas interviewed. Twenty-three percent completed high school, and 21 percent have a college degree or

have taken college courses. All of the Euro-Americans and five of the eight Afro-Americans interviewed have completed high school.

Thirty of the forty-nine persons interviewed (61 percent) are not native English speakers. This includes nineteen persons whose native language is Spanish, four persons whose native language is Zapoteco (an indigenous language spoken in Oaxaca, Mexico), and three persons whose native language is Arabic (Figure 8). Twenty-three of these persons stated that they do not speak English well, or not at all (Figure 9).

The limited education and English language ability of many Family Center clients has important implications for

FIGURE 8
Native Language of Clients
Interviewed (n=45)

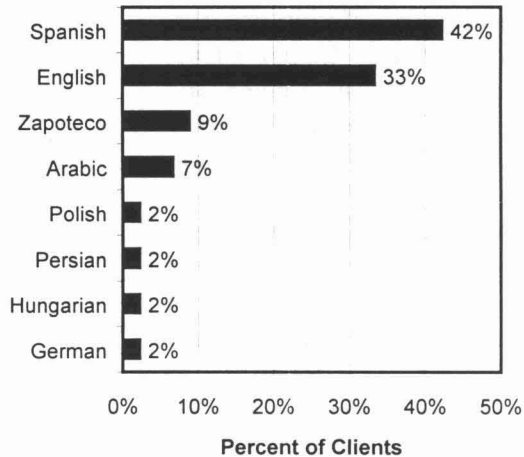
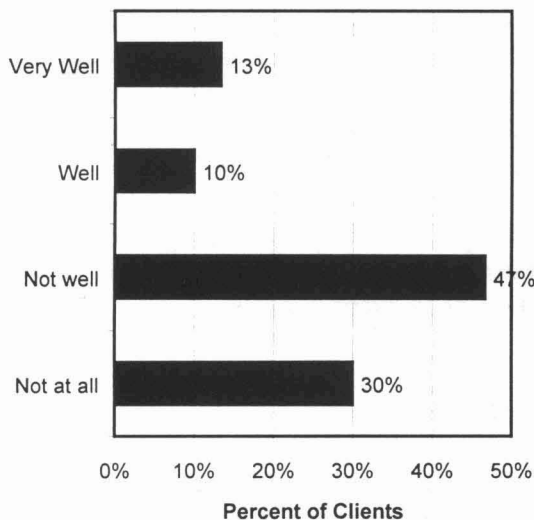


FIGURE 9
English-Speaking Ability of Clients
Interviewed (n=30)



career mobility and service needs.

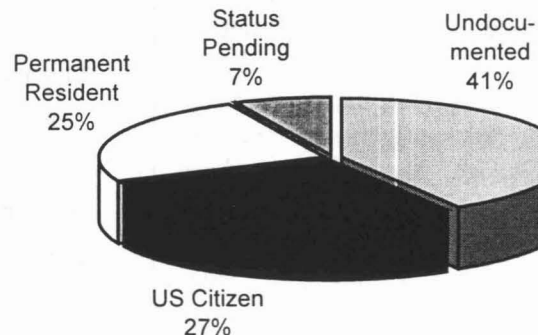
Immigrant Status

Of the 1,768 adult Family Center clients (age 18 and older), only 27 percent are US citizens. Forty-one percent are undocumented, 25 percent are legal permanent residents, and 7 percent have citizenship or permanent resident status pending (Figure 10).

Communities

Most Family Center clients live in pockets of poverty bounded by affluent Westside neighborhoods. Within the Service Area, Family Center clients are concentrated in Venice and Culver City/Mar Vista neighborhoods. Of the 1,075 client families living within the service area in 1999, 41 percent reside in Venice, 30 percent in Culver City and Mar Vista, and 16 percent in Santa Monica. Smaller concentrations are found in Palms/South Robertson (7 percent), West Los Angeles (4 percent), Inglewood (2 percent), and Westchester (1 percent) (see Map 6).

FIGURE 10
US Citizenship Status of
Adult Clients (n=1,768)



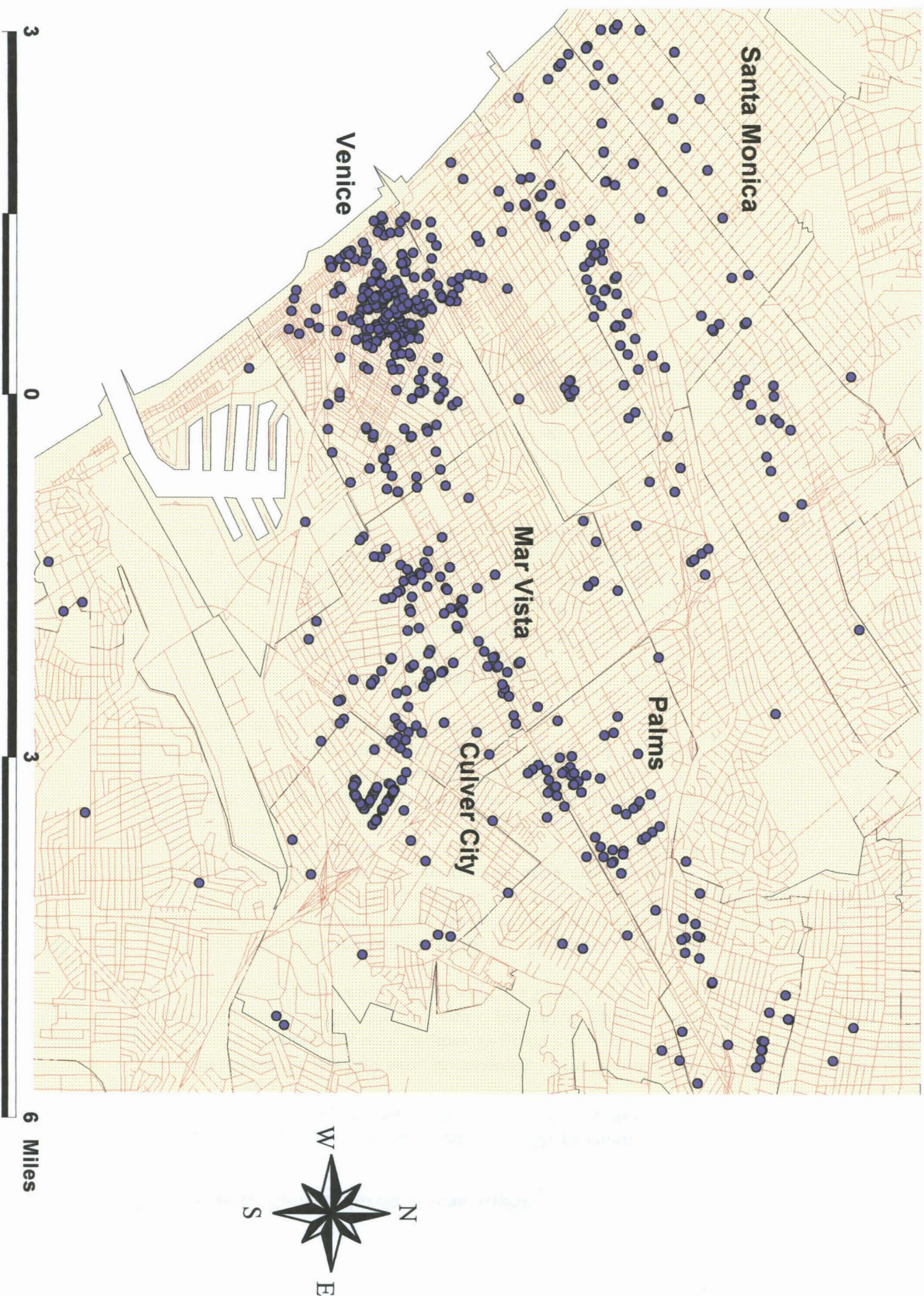
Within Venice, most clients live in the Oakwood area in the vicinity of the Center. Santa Monica clients are clustered in Ocean Park neighborhoods adjacent to Oakwood, and low-income neighborhoods straddling the Santa Monica Freeway. In Culver City and Mar Vista, most families live in Mar Vista Gardens and the immediate vicinity, especially along Slauson Avenue. Neighborhoods along and between Venice and Washington Boulevards are home to about ten percent of all client families. Other low-income neighborhoods with clusters of Family Center clients are found alongside Venice Boulevard in the Palms/Culver City area, along Cadillac Avenue and National Boulevard near South Robertson Boulevard, and southeast of Santa Monica Boulevard and Bundy Drive in West Los Angeles.

Forty-one percent of the persons interviewed live in Venice, followed by 24 percent in Santa Monica, 20 percent in Culver City and Mar Vista, and 8 percent in Palms. This corresponds fairly closely with geographic distribution of all client families.

Ethnic and Geographic Representation of Family Center Clients

How does the ethnic composition of Family Center clients compare with that of poor persons in the Family Center Service Area? The Economic Roundtable has compiled a database of welfare recipients in Los Angeles County based on records provided by the county's Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and the California Employment Development Department (EDD). This database includes information on just over 100,000 aid

Map 6 Family Center Clients



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recipients who went through the County's GAIN program and worked at least one quarter between 1990 and 1998, of whom 3,440 persons lived in the Family Center Service Area.

Based on the this database, the majority of the working poor in the Service Area live in Inglewood (55 percent), with another 14 percent in Culver City and Mar Vista, 10 percent in Palms, 7 percent in Westchester, and 6 percent in Santa Monica. Most of these persons (55 percent) are Afro-American, 31 percent are Latino, and 12 percent are Euro-American.

Compared with this sample of the working poor, then, Latinos are over-represented among Family Center clients, as are residents of Venice, Santa Monica, and Culver City and Mar Vista. Differences in the geographic and ethnic distribution of low-income individuals and Family Center clients in the Service Area are a result of the location of the Family Center in Venice, and the reliance of individuals on social networks for discovering Family Center services. First, most clients live in close proximity to the Family Center. Neighborhoods in he Service Area that are several miles away from the Family Center, such as Inglewood and Lennox, have few Family Clients. Poor families in these areas are less likely to know about the Family Center, and if they do, the effort of taking public transportation into Venice is a deterrent to using Family Center services.

The ethnic distribution of Family Center clients is not explained only by the lack of a client base in Afro-American neighborhoods in Inglewood. Most clients find out about Family Center services through social networks. For example, 22 of 25 Latino clients surveyed (88 percent) first found out about Family Center services through friends or family members. It is possible that Latinos are better connected in social networks than are Afro-American families. In Venice, 31 percent of welfare recipients in the Economic Roundtable database are Afro-American, compared to only 9 percent of Family Center clients living in Venice.

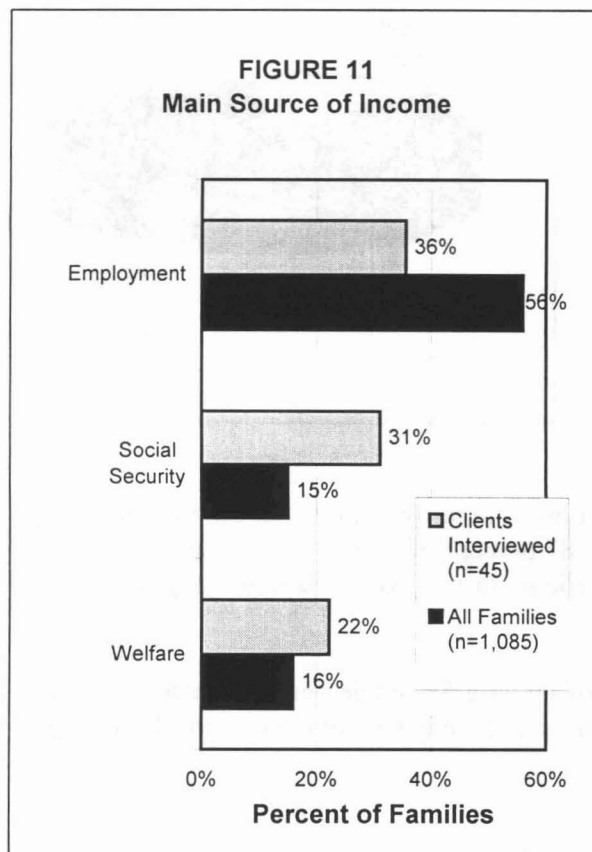
This suggests that there may well be an opportunity to nurture new mechanisms of client referral (e.g. churches, schools) to encourage use of Family Center services by underserved communities and population groups. Efforts could be made to target underserved communities with high concentrations of poor residents, including not only Inglewood and Lennox, but the Cadillac/South Robertson neighborhood which has a high concentration of Afro-American residents.

4. FAMILY INCOME AND EXPENSES

4.1. Monthly Income and Income Sources

Clients were asked to state the average monthly income that they received from different sources, and their average monthly expenses on different items. Almost all persons interviewed provided information on income and expenses. Based on the interviews, average monthly income for client families was \$968, corresponding with an annual income of \$11,616. The major sources of family income are employment, social security, and welfare.

- **EMPLOYMENT:** Of the 45 families for whom income sources were itemized, 42 percent (n=19) receive income from employment. Families that reported employment income receive an average of \$1,338 per month from employment. Employment is the *main source* of family income for 36 percent of families (compared to 55 percent of all client families). Of the 16 families receiving most of their income from employment, 15 are Latino families with children. Of these 15 families, 13 are two-parent families and 2 are single-parent families. In almost all of the two-parent families, the husband is working and his spouse (the interviewee) is taking care of their children at home.

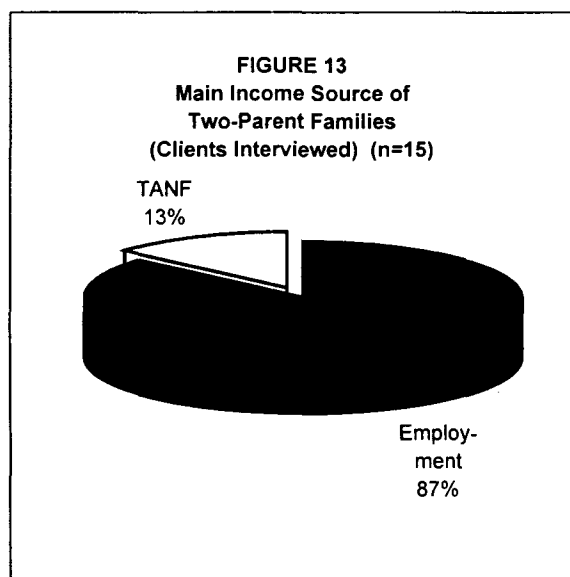
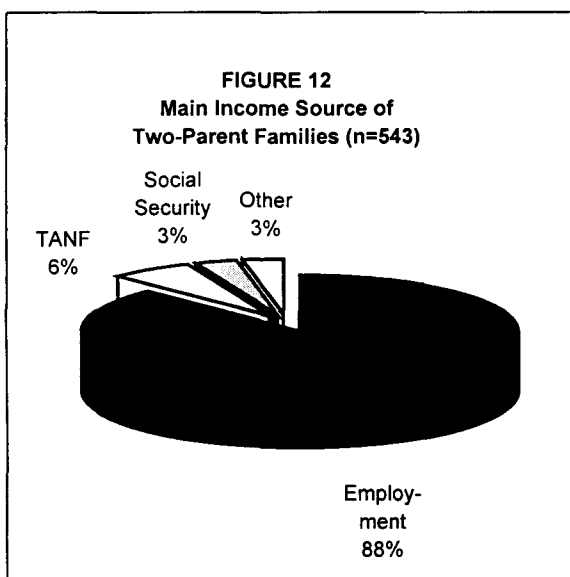


- **SOCIAL SECURITY:** Thirty-three percent of families receive social security benefits. Social security recipients received an average of \$664 in social security benefits per month. Social security is the *main source* of income for 31 percent of families interviewed (compared to 15 percent of all client families). Most social security recipients interviewed are elderly Euro-Americans living alone or with their spouse.
- **WELFARE:** Twenty-seven percent of families received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, 29 percent received income from the

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Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, and 33 percent received Food Stamp benefits. Families receiving TANF funds reported an average benefit of \$504. Families receiving food stamps and WIC benefits obtained an average of \$170 and \$74 per month from these sources, respectively. Welfare assistance is the *main source* of income for 22 percent of families interviewed (compared to 16 percent of all client families).²⁰ Nine of the 12 families receiving TANF funds are single parent families headed by a working-age mother (including 7 Latinas, one Afro-American, and one Euro-American).

The main income source of clients interviewed is compared with that of all client families in Figure 11. Since senior clients are over-represented in the survey group and Latino clients are under-represented, a higher percent of persons interviewed are social security recipients than is the case for all client families, and the percent of persons interviewed whose families obtain most of their income through employment is lower than is the case for all client families.



There are significant differences in income sources by type of family and age group. Employment is the main source of income for 87 percent of two-parent families, among clients interviewed as well as all Family Center clients in two-parent families (Figures 12 and 13).

Welfare benefits are the main source of income for single-parent families, including 54 percent of those interviewed and 45 percent of all Family Center clients who head single-parent families (Figures 14 and 15).

²⁰ This is based on a total of 45 families; 4 persons interviewed did not indicate income sources.

FIGURE 14
Main Income Source of
Single Parent Families (Female)
(n=296)

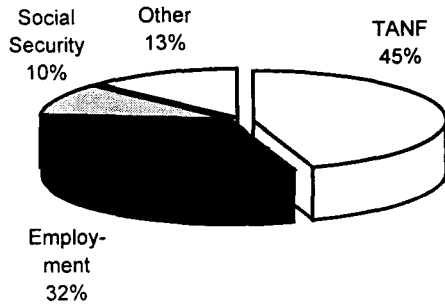
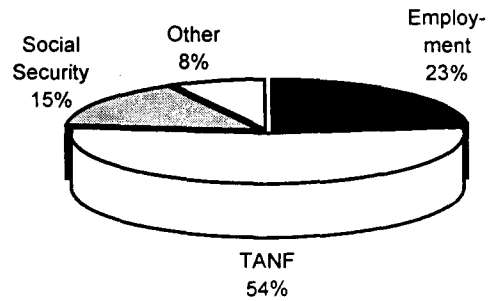


FIGURE 15
Main Income Source of
Single-Parent Families (Female)
(Clients Interviewed) (n=13)



Social security benefits are the main source of income for single persons, including all of those interviewed and 50 percent of all single Family Center clients (Figure 16).

Working-age clients obtain most of their income from employment and welfare, while clients age 60 and older receive most of their income from social security. Among all working-age Family Center clients, 59 percent receive most of their income from employment and 17 percent from welfare. Of the working age clients interviewed, 57 percent receive most of their income from employment and 36 percent from welfare (Figures 17 and

FIGURE 16
Main Income Source
of Single Adults (n=189)

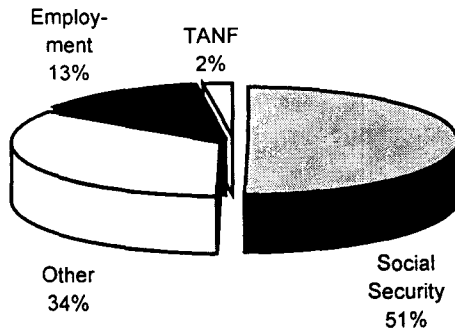
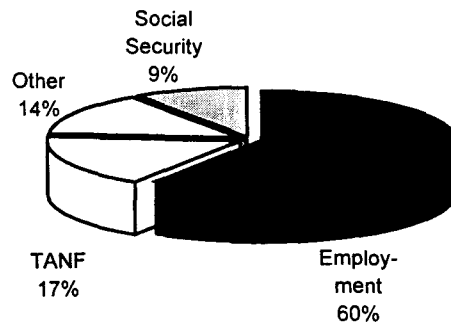
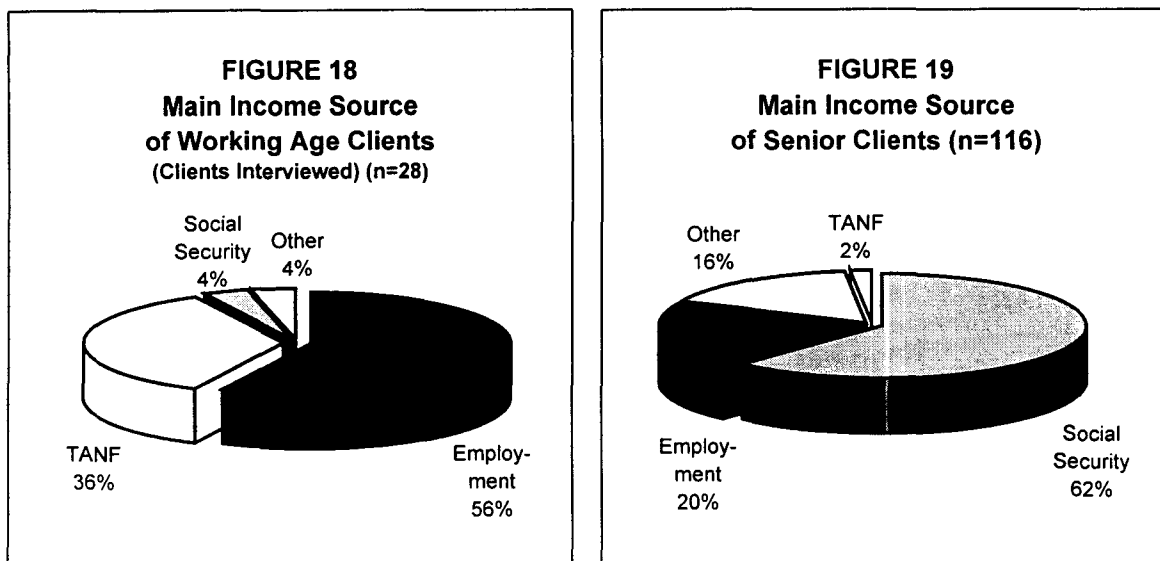


FIGURE 17
Main Income Source
of Working-Age Clients (n=991)





18). Thirteen of fourteen senior clients interviewed (93 percent) receive all or most of their income from social security, compared to 62 percent of senior Family Center clients (Figure 19).

Several clients interviewed stated that they had borrowed money from family or friends in the past year. Total amounts borrowed ranged from \$20 to \$1,500. In most cases, the amount borrowed has been paid back.

The service needs and priorities of families receiving employment income (or attempting to find jobs) differ from the needs of elderly social security recipients. The service needs and priorities of these two groups of Family Center clients are discussed Section 5.

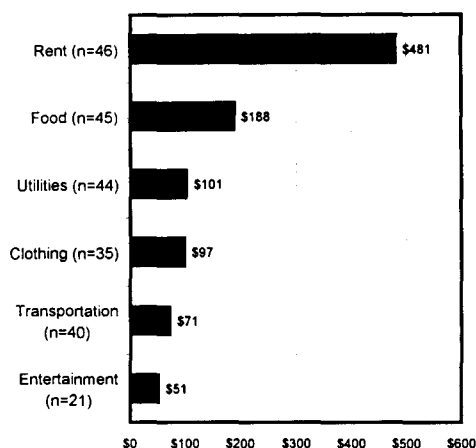
Given the importance of earned income for most families, a key to improving their life circumstances is to help parents obtain skills and services needed for career mobility and higher earnings.

4.2. Monthly Expenses

Clients were asked to state their family's average monthly expenses for rent, utilities, food, clothing, transportation, school, entertainment, medical services, other expenses (Figure 20).

- **RENT:** Forty-six of the 49 persons interviewed live in rented housing. Six of these families shared an apartment with family members to save money. The average monthly rent was \$481 (the average rent per unit was \$552). Twenty-one of the 43 families (49 percent) providing information on monthly rent and total

FIGURE 20
Average Monthly Expenses of
Clients Interviewed



income can be classified as "precariously-housed"²¹, paying 50 percent or more of total monthly income for rent.

- **UTILITIES:** Forty-four of the 49 persons interviewed reported monthly utilities expenses. The average amount spent on utilities was \$101. For the 39 families for which the utility share of total income could be calculated, utilities accounted for an average of 12 percent of monthly income. Two-thirds of these families reported a utility share between 5 and 15 percent of total monthly income.

- **FOOD:** Forty-five of the 49 persons interviewed reported monthly food ex-

penses. The average amount spent on food each month was \$188. For the 42 families providing information on food expenses and total monthly income, food accounted for an average of 19 percent of total income. Two-thirds of these families paid between 10 and 30 percent of their monthly income for food.

- **CLOTHING:** Thirty-five of the 49 persons interviewed reported monthly clothing expenses. The average amount spent on clothing each month was \$97. For the 29 persons providing information on clothing expenses and total monthly income, clothing accounted for an average of 7 percent of total income (this excludes one outlier, a person reporting \$300 in monthly clothing expenses).
- **TRANSPORTATION:** Forty of the 49 persons interviewed reported monthly transportation expenses. The average amount spent on transportation each month was \$71. For the 37 persons providing information on transportation expenses and total monthly income, transportation accounted for an average of 7 percent of total income.

²¹ Wolch and Sommer, *op. cit.*, p. 83: "The precariously housed population consists of renter households with incomes 50 percent or less of median county income (adjusted for household size), and whose housing payment burdens were 50 percent or more". Based in this definition, 10 percent of renter households in Los Angeles County were precariously housed in 1990.

- *ENTERTAINMENT:* Twenty-one of the 49 persons interviewed reported monthly entertainment expenses. The average amount spent on entertainment each month was \$51. For the 19 persons providing information on entertainment expenses and total monthly income, entertainment accounted for an average of 4 percent of total income.
- *MONEY SENT OVERSEAS (REMITTANCES):* Thirteen persons interviewed said that they had sent money overseas (remittances) to relatives. This a common practice among immigrant families. Most families sending money abroad were helping relatives in Mexico, especially in Jalisco, Mexico City, and Oaxaca.

In summary, the high cost of housing relative to family income is a primary problem for many Family Center clients. These families are five times more likely to be “precariously-housed” than all renters in the county (based on 1990 Census data). Food expenses are the next most costly item in family budgets. Clearly, the Family Center’s Food Pantry and Food Stamp benefits play an important role in enabling families to put food on the table.

5. EMPLOYMENT OF FAMILY CENTER CLIENTS

5.1. Labor Force Status

Eighteen of the 49 persons interviewed are in the labor force, which includes persons currently employed (8 persons) or looking for work (10 persons). Eight of these persons are in women in two-parent families, one is a man living with his wife, eight are women in single parent households, and one woman is taking care of an adult child at home.

Of the persons interviewed who are not in the labor force, 15 are age 60 and older and 15 are between ages 18 and 59. Of those age 60 and older, eight are Euro-American and nine are living alone. For working-age clients not in the labor force, the demands of raising children and disability are the main reasons these women are not looking for work (one woman interviewed was pregnant). Seven of these women stated that their husbands are working. Two women stated that they weren't looking for work due to lack of transportation.

5.2. Current Employment

In each of the two-parent families with children living at home, the interviewee's husband is currently working. Each of these families is a Latino family. Three of the nine persons in two-parent families are working, while the other six are looking for a job. One of the women takes care of an elderly person in a private household. She earns \$8.00 per hour and works 20 hours per week on average, resulting in average monthly earnings of \$640. Her husband works full-time as a painter, bringing home an average of \$1,400 per month. Another woman is employed about 24 hours per week as an assistant at her husband's machine shop, where car parts are reconstructed. Her husband works in the shop full-time as a mechanic, earning \$1,200 each month. A third woman is employed as a housekeeper. Her husband earns \$1,350 per month working full-time as a painter.

In six of the two-parent families, the wife interviewed is currently unemployed and looking for a job, while the husband is working. One woman's husband works as a tile setter, with variable hours and earnings. Another woman's husband works full-time as a cook, earning \$1,200 per month. In one family, the husband is employed as an electrician, earning \$1,200 per month. One husband is employed full-time as a retail stock clerk, earning \$800 per month. Another does marble restoration for about \$1,250 per month. Finally, one woman's husband has a seasonal job as an operating engineer at a quarry. When he works, he earns about \$2,500 per month.

Five of the eight women heading single-parent households are working. One woman is paid \$630 each month by the State of California to take care of her disabled adult

child at home. One woman works part time at a dry cleaning shop, ironing clothes for about \$10.40 per hour. Just one week before her interview, her boss "cut back on my hours because there wasn't as much business going on". What was a full-time job is now a job in which she works 20 to 25 hours per week. Another woman works part-time as a school crossing guard, earning \$7.00 per hour. One of the women works part-time taking care of an elderly person in a private household, earning \$6.25 per hour.

Finally, seven women are not in the labor force but have husbands working. Six of these women are Latino, and one is Egyptian. Three of their husbands are working as cooks: two are working full-time for \$800 and \$1,150 per month respectively, and one is working part-time for \$800 per month. Two husbands are gardeners, bringing in \$350 and \$1,050 per month respectively. One husband works full-time as a security guard for \$800 per month, and another works full-time as a busboy and dishwasher for \$1,400 per month.

One of the men interviewed is looking for a job. He is aggressively seeking maintenance or janitorial work at a hotel; in the month before the interview he said he had applied for 57 jobs! Currently, he and his wife are supporting themselves with TANF benefits and food stamps.

The most important way in which people find jobs in the lower tier of the labor market is through their social networks, especially friends and family. This is true of Family Center clients as well as the working poor in general. In particular, recent immigrants rely heavily on social networks for employment. Of the six clients currently working for an employer, five indicated that they found their job through friends or family members (one person did not respond to this question).

5.3. Duration of Unemployment, Job Search, and Work Experience

Finally, we asked current job seekers to indicate how long they had been without work, why they left their last job, how they were looking for a job, whether they were using job search services, and whether they considered these services a high or low priority. We were also interested in learning about their work experience.

Of the ten persons looking for work, four have been unemployed for less than a year. Two have been unemployed for between one and three years, and three have been unemployed for more than three years. Persons may not have been actively seeking work at all times while they were unemployed.

Eight women told us why they left their last job. Two women were laid off. One woman left her job at a textile factory because she "felt pressured by colleagues and the supervisor, and didn't feel like she wanted to continue working in that environment". Another left because she was having a child, and one woman quit her job because she needed surgery. One woman said that her factory relocated to Riverside, a two-hour commute each way. This last example highlights a problem noted by many researchers: jobs are growing

faster in the suburbs and "edge cities" of metropolitan areas, leaving behind workers in central city areas.²² One woman quit work because her job paid inadequate wages.

Nine of the ten job seekers provided information on previous work experience. Women who were interviewed stated an average of two occupations in which they had job experience. Five of the nine women had experience in childcare, three had experience doing housecleaning work, and two women each had experience as cashiers, janitors, sewing machine operators, and office workers.

All of the job seekers are looking for work in the same occupations in which they already have experience. Three are seeking childcare jobs, and three are looking for housecleaning jobs. Two women are looking for work as a cashier, and two are looking for work as a sewing machine operator. This cycling in and out of low-wage retail, service, and manufacturing jobs is a typical labor market pattern of the working poor in Los Angeles today.

The women are relying on their social networks as well as contacting employers directly in search of work (it is possible that they are contacting employers for whom they have already worked, rather than making a cold call). Three women were using newspaper classified ads. Only two women were using the Employment Development Department (EDD) to find work (the EDD requires evidence that individuals can be employed legally). Six of the ten job seekers had applied for jobs in the month prior to their interview.

Four of the ten job seekers were currently using job search services, and eight women gave these services a high priority. On the other hand, only two women stated that vocational education was a high priority, while the remaining eight gave it a low priority. It appears that job seekers are taking advantage of services that will help them in finding a job quickly, rather than finding a way to invest the resources and time needed to take classes and

TABLE 1
Occupations Reported
By Clients Interviewed (n=23)
(includes spouses)

OCCUPATION	Number
Cook	4
Elder Care Provider	3
Housekeeper	2
Painter	2
Gardener	2
Dry Cleaner	1
Crossing Guard	1
Mechanic	1
Security Guard	1
Stock Clerk	1
Electrician	1
Dishwasher	1
Mason	1
Marble Restorer	1
Quarry Machine Operator	1

²² For example, see William Julius Wilson (1996). *When Work Disappears: The New World of the Urban Poor*. New York: Basic Books.

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learn new skills. This is considered below in our discussion of education and English language services.

5.4. Summary: The Labor Market Experience of Family Center Clients

Altogether, 24 adults are currently working in the families of clients who were interviewed, including eight women interviewed, and sixteen husbands of women interviewed. Another ten persons interviewed, including nine women and one man, are currently looking for work.

Information on occupations and earnings was provided for 23 workers (Table 1). Each of the women who work has a part-time job. Almost all of their jobs are personal services, including housecleaning, elder care, and drycleaning (Table 2). Their hourly earnings range between \$6.25 and \$10.40. Most of the working husbands (12 of 16) are employed full-time. Five men are employed in restaurants as cooks and dishwashers. Five men work in jobs related to building maintenance and construction, including electrical work, marble restoration, masonry, and painting. Two men are gardeners. Other men are employed as a mechanic, a security guard, a stock clerk, and a machine operator at a quarry. Their hourly earnings range from \$5.00 to \$13.90.²³

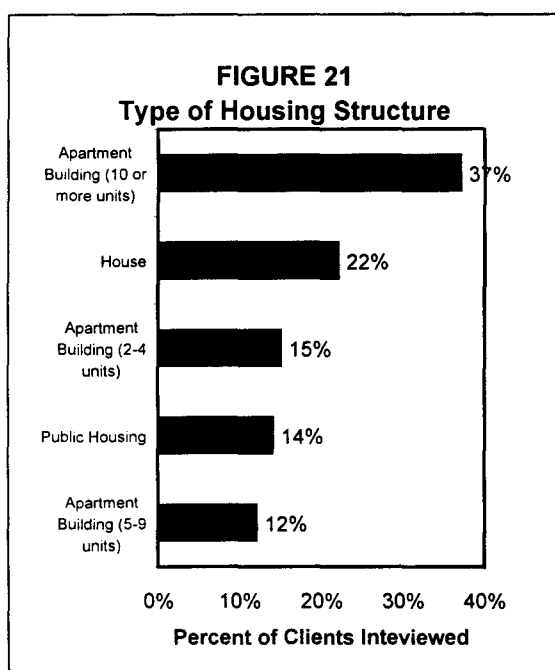
Among all Family Center clients, a total of 600 working adult clients reported an occupation. Ninety-three percent of these working adult clients were Latino. The most common occupation was restaurant worker (25 percent), followed by housekeeper (17 percent), day laborer (16 percent), and gardener (8 percent). Each of these are low-wage occupational niches with high concentrations of immigrant workers.

Working adults who are Family Center clients tend to be employed in low-wage jobs in retail, personal services, and construction and building maintenance. The women currently seeking work are cycling in and out of low-wage jobs, mainly childcare and housecleaning.

²³ Eleven of the twelve male workers earns between \$5.00 and \$8.75. The machine operator has seasonal employment at a quarry, and earns an average of \$13.90 when he works.

6. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

Persons interviewed were asked to provide information about their current housing situation, residential mobility, and neighborhood conditions. This provides information that is useful in assessing the housing needs of Family Center clients, and their thoughts about the quality of their living environments.



6.1. Housing Characteristics

All but one of the clients interviewed are renters. Ten families rent houses, and one family owns their house. Sixty-four percent rent apartments, including 37 percent in a building with ten or more units, and 27 percent in a building with fewer than ten units. Seven families (14 percent) live in public housing (Figure 21). Five families are currently receiving Section 8 certificates.

The average rent of the 48 families renting an apartment or house was \$524 per month. The frequency distribution of families by monthly rent is shown in Figure 22. Almost half of persons interviewed pay \$600 or more in monthly rent, while 26 percent pay less than \$400 for rent each month.

Rents increased last year for 27 families (56 percent). The average annual increase was \$38 dollars. However, for 21 families their rent increase amounted to \$25 or less. One family had to absorb a \$350 increase because the person interviewed found a job last year and the government increased her rent.

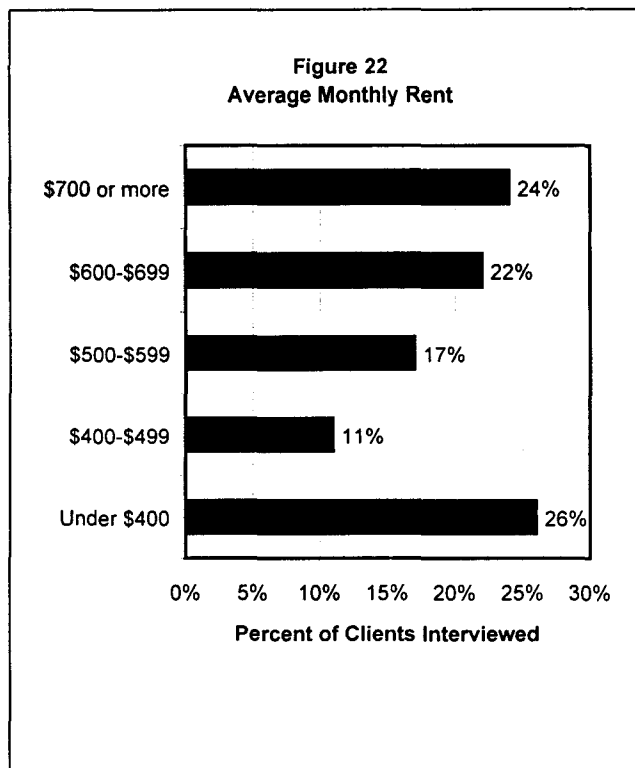
One of the major concerns expressed by clients was the need for more space. On average, there are two persons for each bedroom.²⁴ It is apparent that overcrowding is a necessary strategy to limit housing costs. In eight cases, apartments are being shared with family members who have migrated recently into the country. One woman said that her husband and three children were sharing a three-bedroom apartment with eleven relatives who had just moved to Los Angeles from abroad. Sharing apartments with family or friends

²⁴ The ratio of occupants to bedrooms was 2.25.

is a common immigrant survival strategy. Despite its adverse effect on families, overcrowding reduces housing costs for each family and provides a shelter for recent arrivals.

Residential Mobility

Concern has been expressed that clients living in Venice and Santa Monica will be forced to move due to rising rents. Based on the interviews, there is little mobility of Family Center clients at present. Three of the forty-nine families (6 percent) had moved in the past year; the main reason they gave for moving was to find a lower rent apartment. Eleven families (22 percent) are thinking of moving, to find an apartment with a lower rent and better quality than their current apartment.



Problems Finding Housing

Almost one-third of the families have had problems finding and keeping housing. The major problems were finding good quality, affordable housing; being forced to move because of rising rents; and being unable to afford security deposits.

Also, one-third of the persons interviewed have faced discrimination in looking for housing, usually because of the family's ethnicity and children.

6.2. Satisfaction with Current Housing Situation and Neighborhood Quality

Despite the frequent overcrowding of client families' housing units, most clients were satisfied with their current housing situation. Sixty-nine percent said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current housing situation, and only eighteen percent said that they were dissatisfied with their current housing situation.

Overall, the problem of rising rents and the benefits of living in relatively nice neighborhoods are two sides of the same coin for Family Center clients. While several cli-

ents have moved or are planning to move, most of these families have found or are looking for housing in Venice, Santa Monica, or other Westside neighborhoods.

It is likely that the general satisfaction that clients feel with their current housing situation is related to their positive feelings about their neighborhoods. Eighty-two percent of clients interviewed stated that their neighborhoods were safe. Based on responses to open-ended questions asking about neighborhood quality, clients focused on two factors: neighborhood amenities and a sense of community (See Appendix). A majority of clients interviewed stated that what they liked most about their neighborhoods was access to neighborhood amenities, including the beach, hospitals, parks, schools, stores, and transportation. One client living in Venice liked being near "supermarkets, her children's schools, her part-time job, and the beach". Another client in Venice said that her apartment was "very close to everything: markets, pharmacy, transportation, laundromat". Several people commented on the tranquility of their neighborhoods.

A second major reason why clients liked their neighborhoods was that they knew their neighbors and had a sense of community. Clients in Venice said that "neighbors know each other and are friendly", and "neighbors look out for each other". Another woman whose family lives in Culver City said that she "likes the neighborhood because neighbors have been there for a long time and she knows them well".

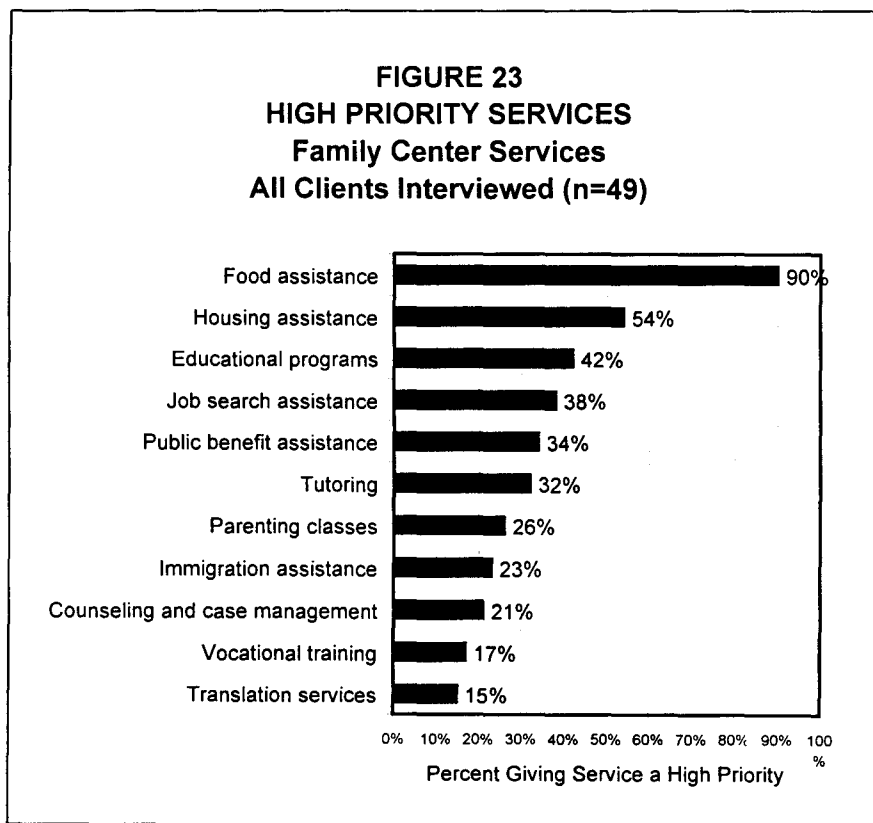
While all but one client gave reasons why they liked their neighborhoods, just half of those interviewed mentioned things that they don't like about their neighborhoods. The number one problem mentioned was violence, partly a product of intermittent turf battles between gangs based in Venice and Culver City. There is evidence that some African-American clients don't feel at home in their neighborhoods. One African-American woman living in Venice said that she feels she "doesn't belong there"; another in Santa Monica expressed concern that "not enough African-American families stay". Other problems mentioned included noisy neighbors and heavy traffic. One person living in Venice mentioned the problem of rising rents due to the increase in property values in the neighborhood.

Despite these problems, Family Center clients generally like their neighborhoods and are satisfied with their housing situations. For recent immigrants, this satisfaction may be based on comparisons to their housing situations prior to migrating, as well as optimism that they will be able to continue improving their living conditions. They also enjoy access to neighborhood amenities and the sense of community that comes from knowing their neighbors. However, the benefits of living in a Westside neighborhood come with the costs of rising property values and rent pressures (see Chapter 2.4). In the near future, these pressures may compel families to move to less desirable neighborhoods with more affordable housing.

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7. SERVICE PRIORITIES AND NEEDS

A main purpose of the interviews was to determine the service priorities and needs of Family Center clients. Clients were asked to provide this information for 22 services, including 11 Family Center services and 11 services provided by other organizations. For each service, clients were asked to indicate whether the service was of high, medium, or low importance to their family. They were also asked whether or not they had needed the service in the past year, and whether they had ever used each Family Center service. These responses were used to rank services based on priority as well as recent need.

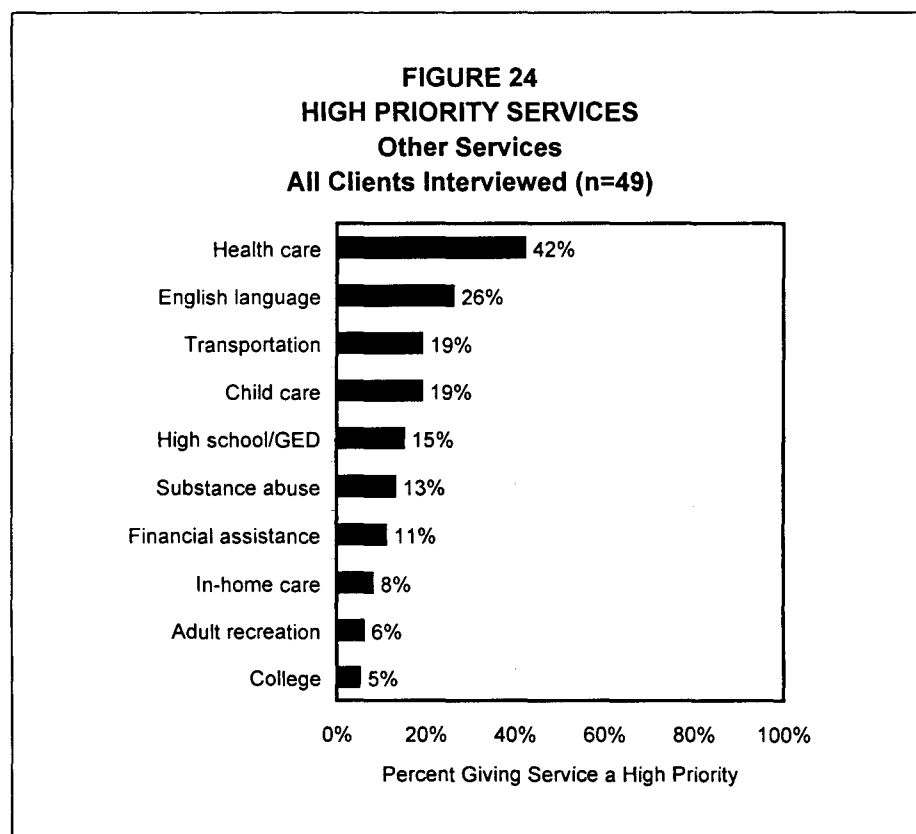


Rankings of service importance and service need were determined for all Family Center clients, and two distinct groups of clients. One group is families headed by working-age Latino adults. This includes 23 of the 49 families interviewed (47 percent), and 68 percent of all Family Center clients. The second group is Family Center clients who are age 60 or older, which includes 15 of the 49 families interviewed (31 percent), and 10 percent of all Family Center clients.

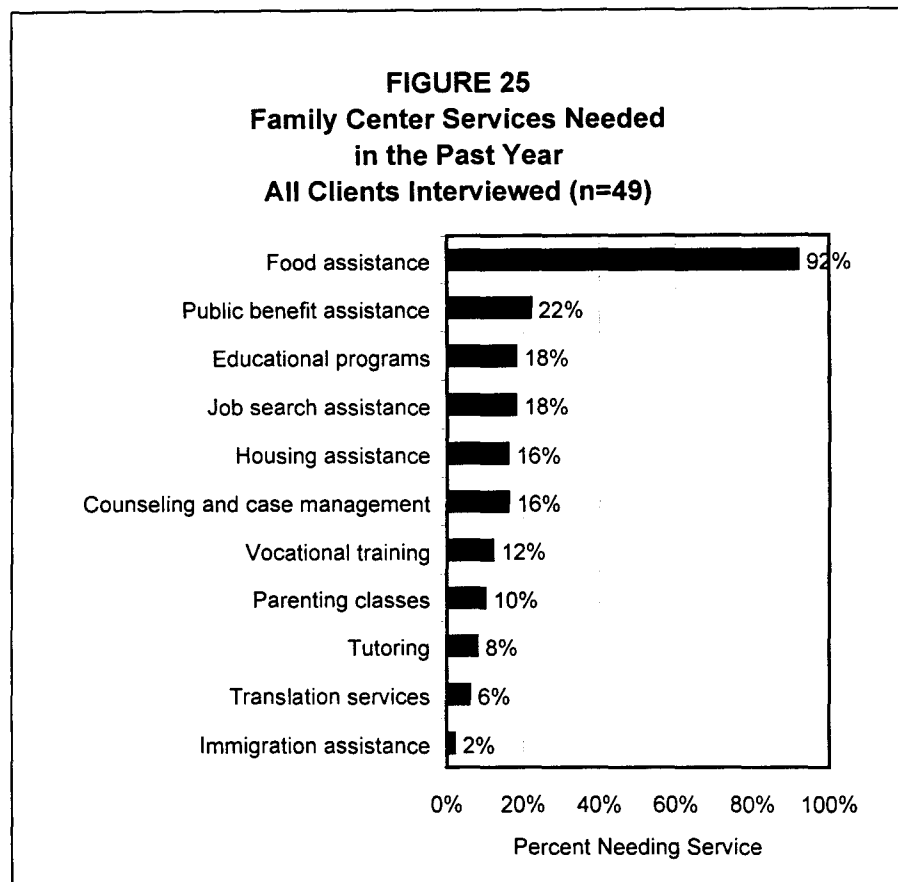
7.1. Overview of Service Importance and Need

Service Importance

A limited number of services are considered a high priority by most of the clients interviewed. Among Family Center services, these include the Food Pantry (90 percent) and housing assistance (54 percent). Other Family Center services considered a high priority by at least one quarter of the clients interviewed include educational programs (42 percent), job search assistance (38 percent), assistance with obtaining public benefits (34 percent), tutoring for children (32 percent), and parenting classes (26 percent). Family Center services considered to be of limited importance to families include immigration assistance, counseling and case management, vocational education, and translation services (Figure 23).



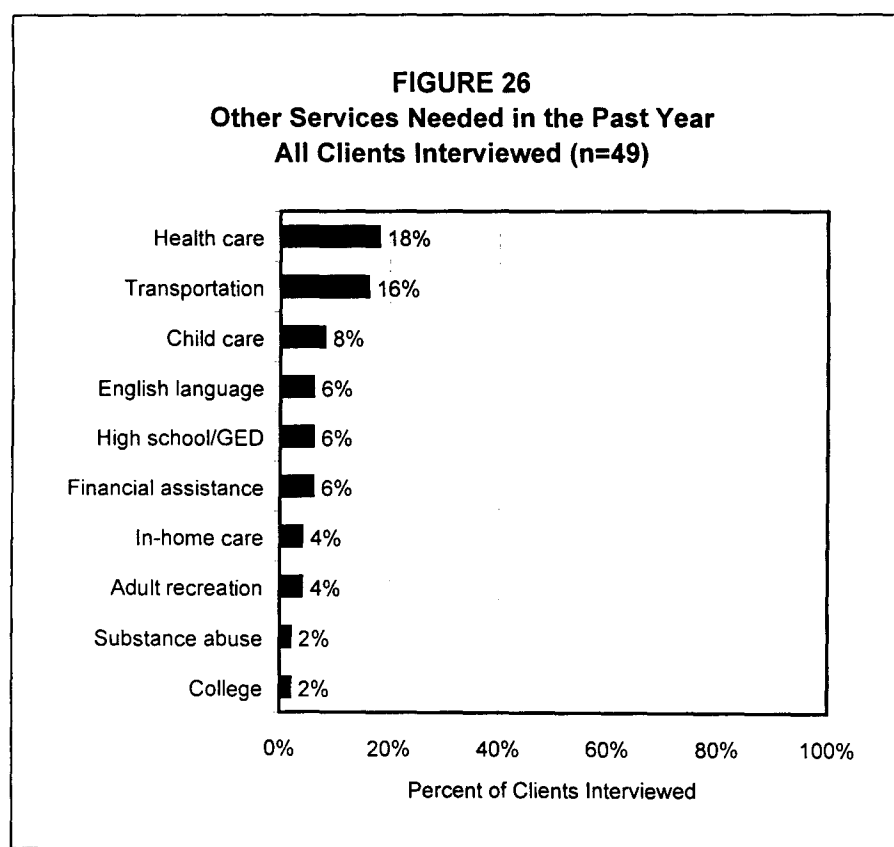
Among the eleven other services prioritized by clients, none were considered to be of high importance for at least half of the clients interviewed. Other services that are a high priority for at least one in four clients are health care (42 percent) and English-language classes (26 percent). The least important other services included financial assistance, in-home care, adult recreation, and college classes (Figure 24).



Service Need

Food Pantry services were needed last year by 92 percent of clients interviewed. This was the only Family Center service needed by more than one in four persons interviewed. In order of need, other services needed the most included public benefit assistance, educational programs, and job search assistance. In each case, about one in five persons interviewed said that their families needed these services in the past year (Figure 25).

Relatively few clients interviewed reported that they needed other services in the past year. The other services that were needed the most were health care (18 percent) and transportation (16 percent) (Figure 26).



7.2. Family Center Services

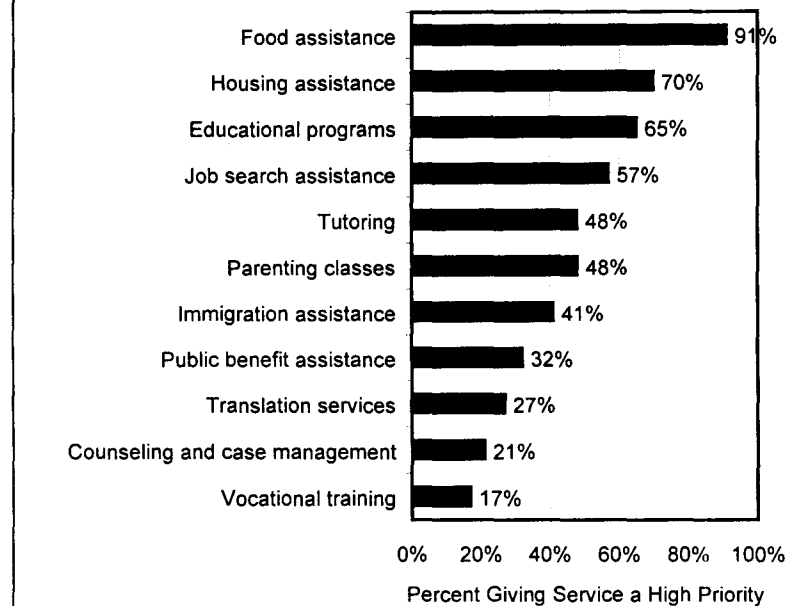
Service priorities and needs of working-age Latino clients are shown in Figures 27 and 28, those of senior clients are shown in Figures 29 and 30. It is important to recognize that families have more frequent and diverse service needs than senior clients. Latino families place high priority on a broad range of services related to basic survival, employment, and career mobility.

STABILIZATION SERVICES

Food Assistance

Food services are the number one priority of Family Center clients. The Food Pantry provides an essential supplement for the food needs of Family Center clients, especially the recent immigrants and elderly persons who comprise the majority of clients. The typical immigrant family served by the Family Center has three children with the father working in a job bringing in less than \$1,000 per month. As a result, they rely on the Food Pantry to

FIGURE 27
HIGH PRIORITY SERVICES
Family Center Services
Working-Age Latinos (n=23)



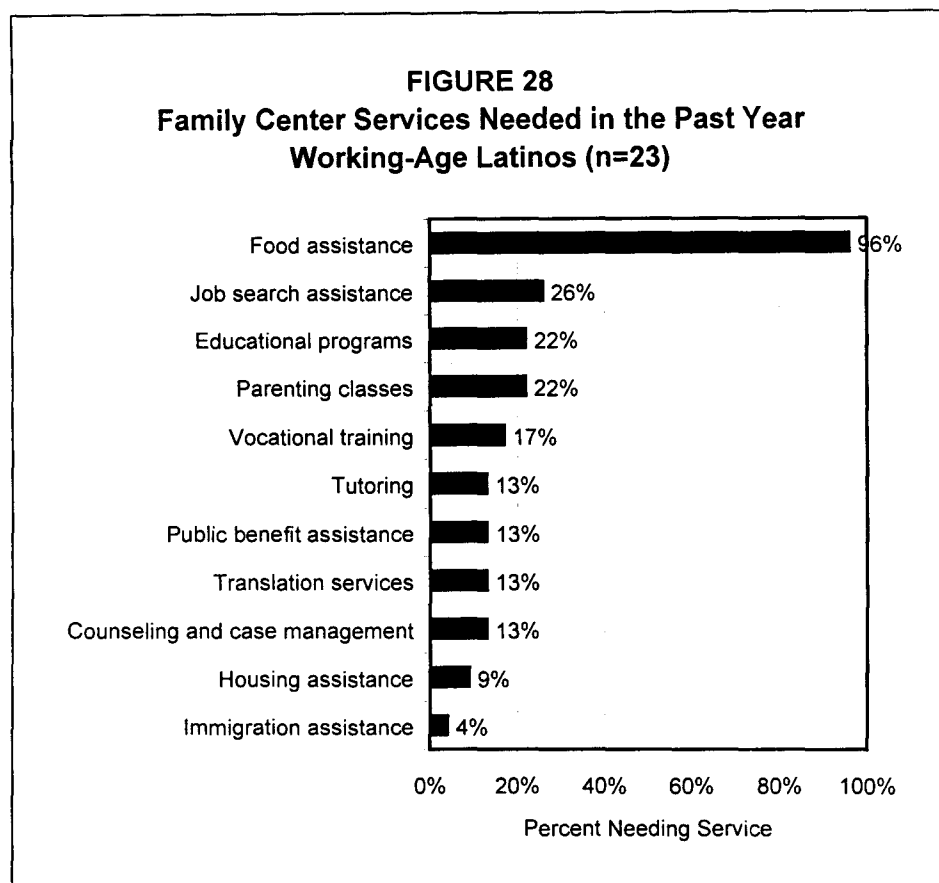
supplement food purchased with cash, food stamps, or WIC coupons. Also, elderly persons living on fixed Social Security incomes use the Food Pantry to supplement their monthly food purchases.

Ninety percent of clients interviewed gave the Food Pantry a high priority, including 91 percent of working-age Latino families and 87 percent of senior clients. Ninety-two percent of clients interviewed needed food assistance last year, including 96 percent of working-age Latino families and 80 percent of senior clients. Several persons interviewed commented on the importance of the Food Pantry in meeting their family's food needs.

EMPLOYMENT-RELATED SERVICES

Job Search Assistance and Referrals

Fifty-seven percent of working-age Latinos interviewed considered job search assistance and referrals to be a high priority. About one in four needed these services in the past year. Senior clients did not need this service, and as a result 38 percent of all clients gave job



search assistance a high priority. Overall, 14 percent of clients interviewed have used the Family Center's job assistance services.

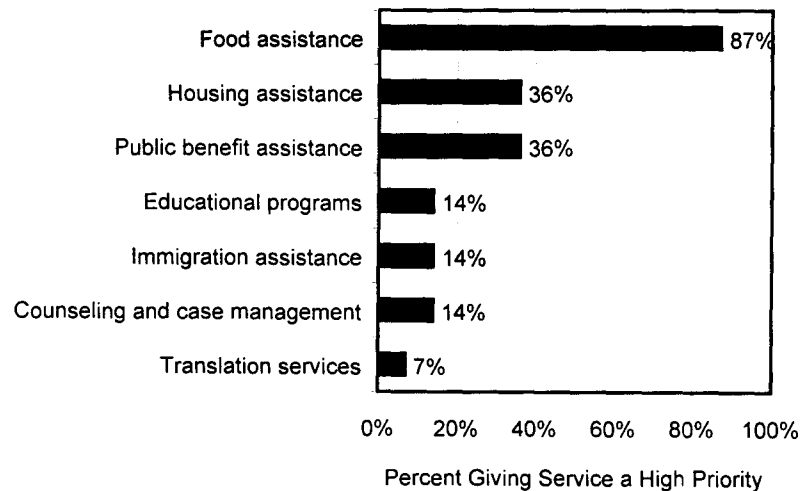
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Educational Programs for Children and Teens

Sixty-five percent of working-age Latinos stated that educational programs for children and teens were a high priority, behind only food and housing assistance. At the same time, only 22 percent said that they needed educational services in the past year.

Like job assistance, educational programs are not a high priority for senior clients who are not in the labor force and do not have young children living with them. Altogether, 42 percent of all clients interviewed give educational programs a high priority, and 18 percent said that they needed these programs last year, but only eight percent have taken advantage of this Family Center service.

FIGURE 29
HIGH PRIORITY SERVICES
Family Center Services
Senior Clients (n=15)



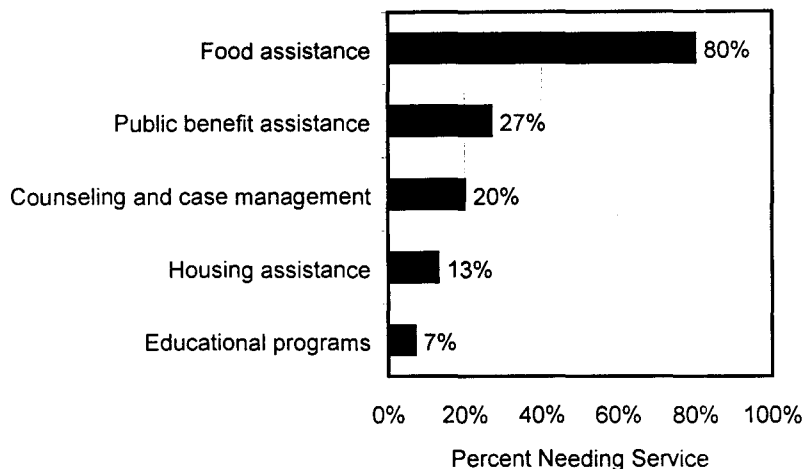
Tutoring for Children

About half of working-age Latino families consider tutoring for children to be a high priority, and 13 percent needed this service in the past year. Senior clients did not report needing this service, and altogether 32 percent of clients considered tutoring for children a high priority. Only 4 percent of clients interviewed have used the Family Center's tutoring services.

Vocational Education

Relatively few families consider vocational education to be a high priority (only 17 percent of working-age Latino families, and 17 percent of all families). Seventeen percent of working-age Latino families and 12 percent of all families needed vocational education in the past year. Six percent of clients interviewed have used this service.

FIGURE 30
Family Center Services Needed in the Past Year
Senior Clients (n=15)



It is reasonable to assume that the limited interest in vocational education is related to the short-term survival mode in which many Family Center clients find themselves. Much greater importance was attached to job search services that could assist clients in finding a job immediately. Enrolling in vocational education to build skills that would enable people to apply for better jobs is a longer-term career development strategy that seems to be "out of reach" for many Family Center clients, who are concerned with providing food and paying rent and bills each month.

Some insight into this issue can be gained from clients' responses to an open-ended question that asked them what job they would like to have in the future. Almost all clients responding to this question identified jobs that they could have now, without investing in further education or training. Exceptions included one woman who would like to become proficient with computers and run her own business, one who was interested in working as a cosmetologist, and another woman who wants to work for the airlines. The typical jobs desired by persons interviewed were routine retail and office jobs, sewing, and housecleaning.

OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Counseling and Case Management

There is limited interest in counseling and case management services, which were given a high priority by 21 percent of working-age Latinos, 14 percent of senior clients, and 21 percent of all client families. Similar percentages of families needed these services in the past year. Six percent of clients interviewed have used this service.

Housing Assistance

Housing assistance is second only to food assistance in importance to Family Center clients. Although only 16 percent of client families needed housing assistance last year, 54 percent stated that housing assistance is a high priority. This includes 70 percent of working-age Latino families, who face pressures in paying their rent paid while also providing enough space for their families. Twelve percent of clients interviewed have used this service. As housing pressures grow in Santa Monica and Venice and more families are forced to move, helping families find affordable housing with enough room is likely to become even more important (see Chapter 2.4). Three clients stated that they would like more assistance in finding cheaper housing.

Immigration Assistance

Forty percent of working-age Latinos interviewed considered immigration assistance a high priority, compared to 14 percent of senior clients and 23 percent of all client families. At the same time, almost no one interviewed needed immigration assistance in the past year, despite the fact that a majority of Latino clients and recent immigrants from Asia and North Africa do not have US citizenship. Four percent of clients have used immigration assistance.

Parenting Classes

This is another service of considerable interest to working-age Latino families who are raising children, and of little interest to senior clients, who are either living alone or with their spouse. Forty-eight percent of working-age Latino families give a high level of importance to parenting classes, and 22 percent needed this service in the past year. Ten percent of clients interviewed have taken parenting classes.

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Assistance Obtaining Public Benefits

Public benefits (including TANF, WIC, and Food Stamps) are the main source of family income for one in five clients interviewed. One-third of all client families gave a high priority to assistance in obtaining public benefits, including 32 percent of working-age Latinos and 36 percent of senior clients. This service was needed by 22 percent of all client families in the past year, including 13 percent of working-age Latino families and 27 percent of senior clients. Six percent of clients interviewed have used assistance in obtaining public benefits.

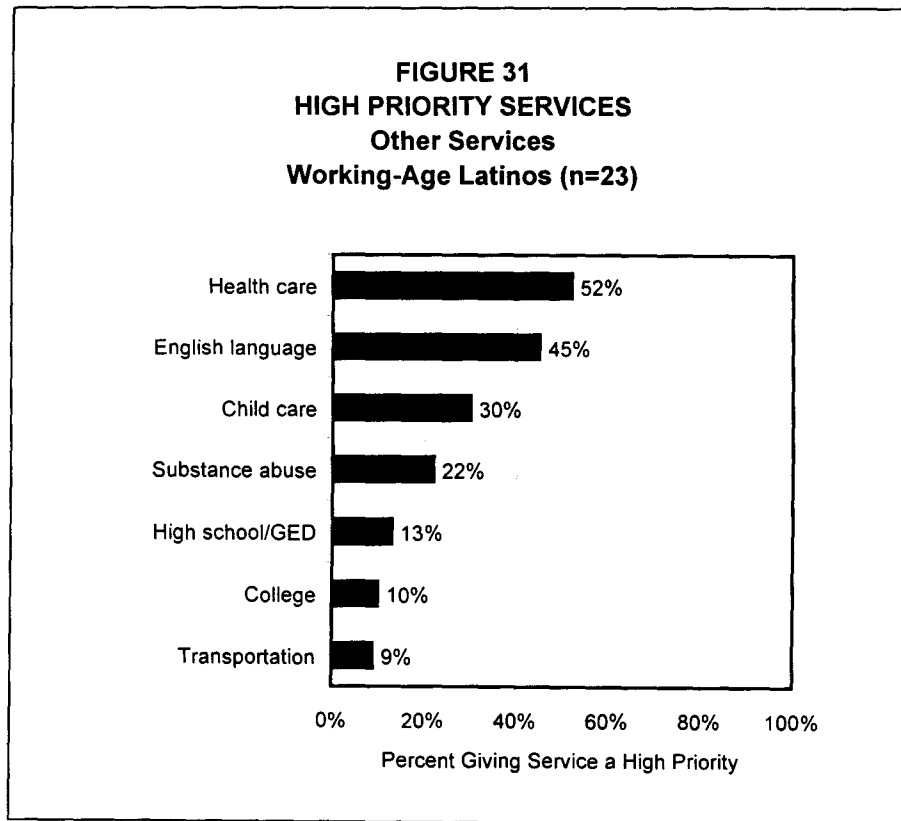
Of the twelve persons receiving TANF benefits, only four are enrolled in the Department of Public Social Service's GAIN program, which provides assistance in finding a job. Of special concern is the fact that only one of the TANF recipients was aware that there was a lifetime five-year limit on receipt of TANF funds.

Translation Services

Twenty-three of the 49 persons interviewed have limited English language ability, or none at all. Translation services were considered a high priority by 27 percent of working-age Latino clients and 7 percent of senior clients, most of whom are native English speakers. Altogether, 15 percent of all clients gave translation services a high priority. Thirteen percent of working-age Latino clients and six percent of all clients needed translation services in the past year. Only two percent of clients interviewed have used this service.

7.3. Other Services

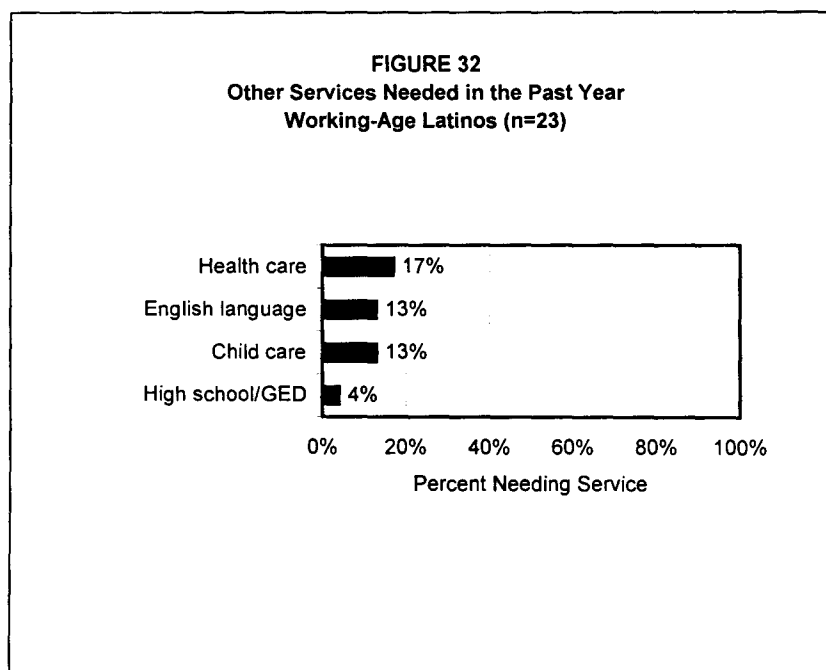
Priorities and needs for other services by working-age Latino clients and senior clients are shown in Figures 31 through 34.



STABILIZATION SERVICES

Financial Assistance

Despite the low income of all Family Center clients, very few expressed interest in financial assistance. None of the working-age Latinos and only 14 percent of senior clients gave financial assistance a high priority. Eleven percent of all clients gave financial assistance a high priority. In the past year, only three clients said that they needed financial assistance. At the same time, about half of the clients interviewed (49 percent) borrowed money last year from family or friends, or both.



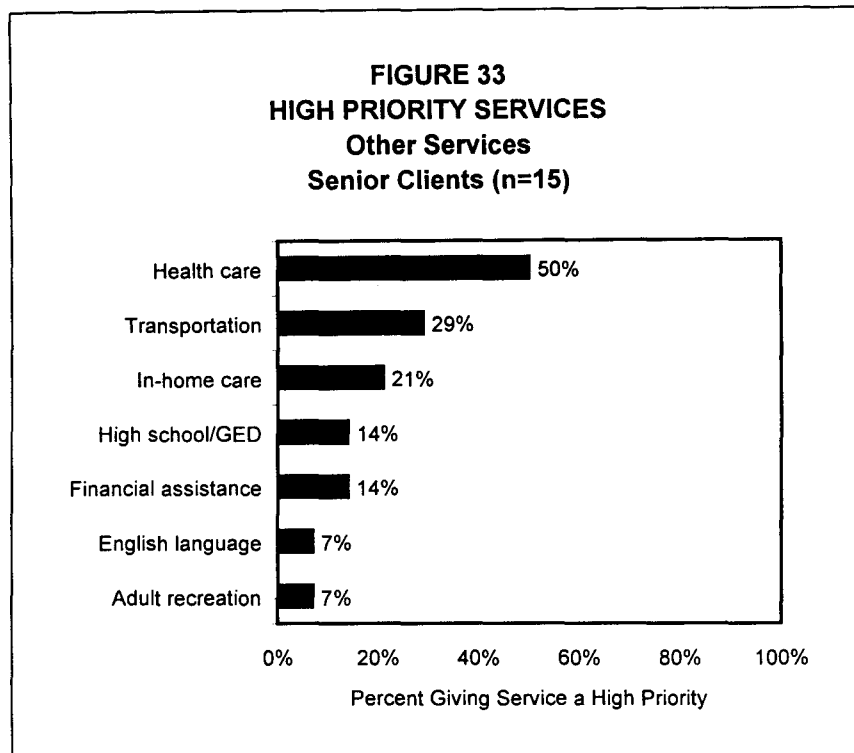
Substance Abuse Counseling and Treatment

One in five working-age Latino families and none of the senior clients consider this service to be a high priority. Overall, thirteen percent of families consider substance abuse counseling and treatment a high priority. Only one client interviewed reported that their family needed this service in the past year.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

College Education

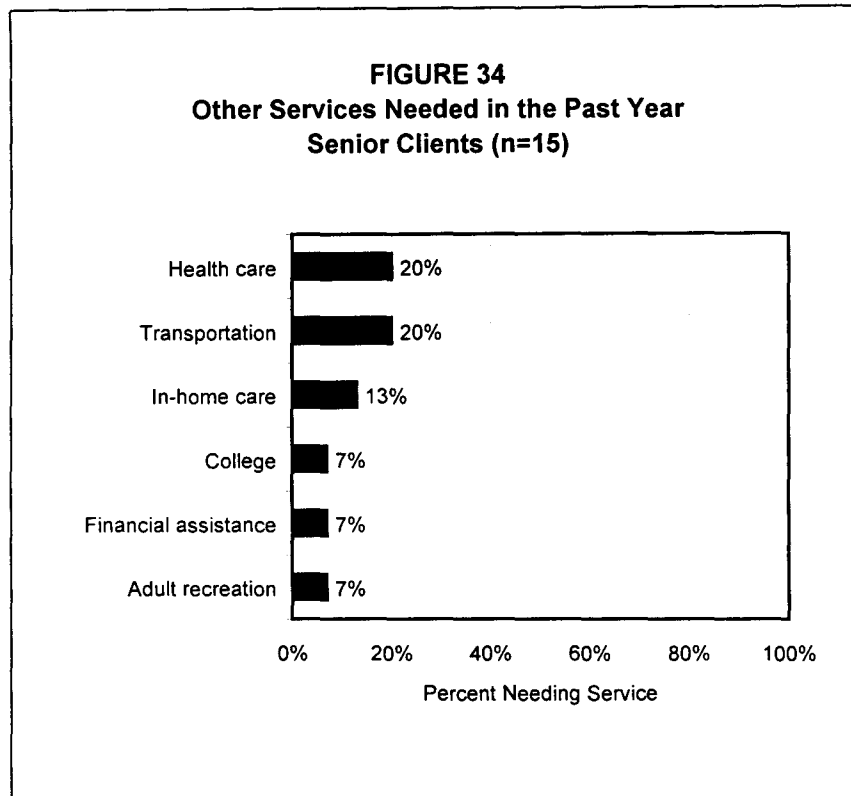
College education is considered a high priority by 10 percent of working-age Latino families, and 5 percent of all families. Only one person interviewed said that they had needed college education in the past year.



At the same time, 20 persons are interested in taking college courses, including several without a high school education. Besides needing a high school degree (only 45 percent of persons interviewed have a high school degree), the main barriers to taking college courses indicated by clients were lack of money, the need to take care of children, and limited English language ability.

English Language Classes

As stated above, 23 of 49 persons interviewed (47 percent) have limited English language ability, or none at all. Most of these persons are working-age Latino immigrants. As a result, English language classes are considered a high priority by 45 percent of working-age Latino clients, and 26 percent of all clients. However, only 13 percent of working-age Latino clients and 6 percent of all clients stated that they needed English language classes last year.



Despite limited enrollment in classes, almost all clients with limited English language proficiency (19 of 23, or 83 percent) would like to take English language classes, and two clients are already taking English classes. Twelve clients interested in taking English classes expressed a preference for daytime classes. The need to care for children is the major factor making it difficult to take English classes.

High School Education or GED

Twenty-seven of the 49 persons interviewed (55 percent) have not completed high school, including several recent immigrants who didn't complete grade school. About one in seven clients give a high priority to high school education. At the same time, 16 of the 27 persons without a high school degree would like to have one.

The main reasons why clients find it difficult to take high school classes are the need to take care of children and limited English ability.

OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Child Care

One in three working-age Latino families stated that childcare services are a high priority for their families. At the same time, only 13 percent of these families said that they needed childcare services in the past year. As discussed above, most Latino client families are two-parent families in which the husband is working and the wife is taking care of children at home.

Of the 23 working-age Latino families, 19 have children under age 18 living at home. Ten families have three children, five families have between four and six children, and four families have one or two children. Eleven families have pre-school children under age 5. All but two of the women interviewed in these families have limited English ability, and only three have a high school education. As discussed above, most of these women would like to take English language classes, and many of them are interested in earning a high school degree. The major difficulty in attaining these goals is the need to take care of children. Therefore, although only a few of the working-age Latino women interviewed said that they needed childcare services in the past year, it appears that many if not most would benefit from these services.

Transportation

The Westside is well-served by public transportation, with overlapping bus routes run by the cities of Culver City, Los Angeles, and Santa Monica. Many persons interviewed commented on easy access to public transportation as one of the characteristics they liked the most about their neighborhood.

Senior clients place a greater premium on transportation services than do working-age clients. Twenty-nine percent of senior clients gave transportation services a high priority, compared to only 9 percent of working-age Latino clients. Overall, 19 percent of clients interviewed consider transportation services a high priority.

Health Care

Based on the interview results, health care is the most important service provided outside of the Family Center. One half of working-age Latino and senior clients alike consider health care a high priority. Overall, 42 percent of persons interviewed gave health care a high priority. About one in five families needed to use health care services in the past year. One woman mentioned that she would like to St. Joseph's "to develop some sort of medical program for undocumented immigrants, because it costs a lot for her to go to doctors and hospitals".

We asked clients whether they needed health services last year, and whether they used them. We were trying to ascertain whether there were factors preventing clients from seeking medical attention. All 26 persons who said that their families needed medical attention in the past year obtained it. (About half of the persons interviewed said someone in their family needed and obtained medical attention last year, while 18 percent stated that they themselves needed medical or dental care last year in their response to Question 4).

Clients were also asked to state the importance of in-home care. One in five senior clients said that this was a high priority, compared to none of the working-age Latino families. Overall, eight percent of clients gave this a high priority.

Recreation

Recreation services are a low priority for Family Center clients. None of the working-age Latino families and only one of the senior age clients considered this to be a high priority. Overall, six percent of clients gave this service a high priority and four percent said they needed recreation services last year.

7.4. Basic Needs

The persons interviewed were asked several questions about basic needs. First, we wanted to find out the percent of families that had access to basic household durables. Second, we wanted to know how many families had been unable to pay rent or utilities in the past year, and whether or not utility or phone service had been disconnected at any time in the past year (see Figure 35).

All households of clients interviewed are connected to basic utilities: energy, hot water, and water. All but two households have phones, and every family has at least one cooking appliance (stove, microwave, and oven). While few families have a washer and dryer in their house or apartment, many have access to washers and dryers in their apartment buildings. Only 13 percent of families have a dishwasher.

Family Center clients are among those who are missing out on the information age: only four families have a computer, and only one family has Internet access.

Twenty-seven percent of families were unable to pay their rent at some time in the past year, for between one and four months. This was a major reason why families borrowed money from friends or relatives. Twenty-nine percent of families were unable to pay utilities at some time last year, from between one and six months. Most families were able pay their bill in full the next month, in some cases by borrowing money. Fourteen percent of clients had their phone disconnected, and twelve percent had their utilities disconnected in the past year.

7.5. Importance of the Family Center and Other Service Providers

Clients were asked to rate the Family Center and other service providers in terms of their importance to their families. Almost all of the clients interviewed (96 percent) said that the Family Center was an important source of assistance to their family. In descending order of importance, other sources of assistance were churches (82 percent), family (65 percent), government programs (63 percent), friends (59 percent), and schools (59 percent). The only service providers that a majority of clients consider not to be important are social service agencies (55 percent consider this source unimportant) (Figure 36).

Working-age Latino families and senior clients give a varying degrees of importance to the Family Center, churches, friends, and government programs. Schools are more important to Latino families than senior clients, while social service agencies and friends are more important to senior clients.

7.6. Summary of Service Priorities and Needs

The service priorities of Family Center clients are summarized in Table 2 for all clients interviewed, working-age Latino clients, and senior clients.

For all clients, the most important services are food assistance and housing assistance. Other services given a high priority by 25 to 50 percent of clients interviewed are job search assistance, educational programs for children and teens, tutoring for children, English-language classes, health care, public benefit assistance, and parenting classes.

Working-age Latino clients need a wider range of services than seniors. They gave a very high priority to food assistance, job search assistance, educational programs for children and teens, housing assistance, and health care. Services given a high priority by 25 to 50 percent of working-age Latino clients interviewed include tutoring for children, English-language classes, public benefit assistance, parenting classes, immigration assistance, child care, and translation services. The service needs of working-age Latino families are related to the demands of raising a family and integrating into a new society as immigrants. For seniors, the most important services are food assistance and health care, followed by housing assistance, public benefit assistance, and transportation.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF SERVICE PRIORITIES

SERVICE	High Priority Services*		
	<i>All Clients</i>	<i>Working-Age Latinos</i>	<i>Seniors</i>
STABILIZATION SERVICES			
<i>Food assistance</i>			
Drug counseling and treatment			
Emergency shelter			
Financial assistance			
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES			
<i>Job search assistance</i>			
<i>Vocational education</i>			
EDUCATION SERVICES			
<i>Educational programs for children/teens</i>			
<i>Tutoring for children</i>			
English-language classes			
High school/GED classes			
College classes			
OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES			
<i>Housing assistance</i>			
Health care			
<i>Public benefit assistance</i>			
<i>Parenting classes</i>			
<i>Immigration assistance</i>			
<i>Counseling and case management</i>			
<i>Child care</i>			
Transportation			
<i>Translation services</i>			
In-home care			
Recreation			

*DARK SHADING: Service is a high priority to more than 50 percent of clients

LIGHT SHADING: Service is a high priority to 25-50 percent of clients

SERVICES IN *ITALICS* are Family Center Services

8. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Major Findings

Ten major findings about Family Center clients are summarized below. These findings are followed by a discussion of program initiatives to address unmet needs.

Poverty

1. Most clients subsist on incomes below the poverty level despite being part of the workforce.
2. Most clients have only a grade school education and lack English proficiency. These skill deficits prevent most workers from significantly increasing their earnings.
3. Despite the economic hardships in their lives, most clients accept their living conditions and are hopeful about the future.

Immigration

4. Forty-one percent of clients are undocumented, preventing them from accessing most public services.

Housing

5. Housing costs consume nearly half the income of the average client, yet most live in overcrowded conditions with more than two persons per room.
6. Long-term housing trends on the Westside may make affordable housing even scarcer for clients in the future.

Unmet Needs of Families

7. There are distinctly different patterns of service need and use among different segments of the client population, with Latino families and senior citizens making up the two largest client groups.
8. Latino families place a high priority on services related to basic survival, education, employment, and immigration, yet find themselves in a survival mode and mainly make use of food assistance. Absence of childcare services appears to be an obstacle to utilizing services related to education and career advancement.
9. Seniors place highest priority on food assistance and health care services and, like all other families, make greatest use of the Family Center's food assistance program.

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Under-Served Areas and Populations

10. Residents of the City of Inglewood and Lennox, and African-American families are underrepresented among Family Center clients. This may indicate that there are unmet service needs that should be addressed through new outreach efforts and possibly a satellite facility in the Inglewood/Lennox area.

8.2. Poverty and Food Needs

Many Family Center clients are in a survival mode. For all Family Center clients, having enough food on the table and paying rent and utilities are primary family needs. The Family Center's Food Pantry plays a critical role in supplementing the food supply for poor families on the Westside. Based on the interviews, it is hard to overstate the importance of the Food Pantry for Family Center clients. This service has been used by almost all clients interviewed, and is a high priority for nine in ten clients interviewed. The Food Pantry is a "port of entry" for families to use other Family Center services.

RECOMMENDATION: *Continue placing high priority on providing Food Pantry services, and focus ongoing attention on increasing referrals from food services to other Family Center programs.*

8.3. Immigration and Language Assistance

Four in ten adult Family Center clients are undocumented, and immigration assistance is a high priority for four in ten working-age Latino clients interviewed (and 23 percent of all clients interviewed). However, only four percent of those interviewed have used this service.

Translation services are a high priority to one in four Latino clients interviewed, and one in three clients who have limited (or no) English ability. At the same time, only one person (2 percent of those interviewed) used this service.

RECOMMENDATION: *The disparity between the level of need for immigration services and the actual level of utilization suggests that the manner in which this service is delivered should be re-examined. An alternative service delivery model might be to hold an evening workshop once a month with a Spanish-speaking immigration attorney to provide information about current immigration regulations and answer questions from clients. Any changes in service delivery format should be reviewed with clients prior to implementation.*

8.4. Housing

Housing assistance is emerging as an important need for Family Center clients. Over half of all clients interviewed, and three in four working-age Latinos interviewed, give housing assistance a high priority. While only a few families have used housing assistance from the Family Center, it is clear that many families are likely to need housing assistance in the near future. Based on the interviews, about half of Family Center clients can be considered “precariously housed”, with at least half of their monthly income going to rent. Furthermore, the quality of housing obtained through this outlay leaves most families in overcrowded conditions that reduce privacy and make it difficult to study.

There is a strong incentive for owners of affordable apartments to raise rents or convert apartments to condominiums, thus placing more pressure on low-income tenants. Families with children need a combination of space and affordability that is increasingly difficult to find in Westside neighborhoods. To make ends meet, several clients borrowed money from friends or family members to pay overdue rent or utility bills last year. Also, several clients are sharing their apartments with family or friends in order to reduce rent burdens.²⁵

RECOMMENDATION: *Continue working with clients to help them find affordable housing. Keep track of indicators of “housing stress” (see Section 8.7 below) and inform clients of available assistance. The Family Center should continue providing case management services for transitional housing programs and collaborate with other agencies providing these programs in the Service Area.*

8.5. Unmet Needs of Families

Unmet needs of Family Center clients were determined in two ways. First, we compared the prioritization and use of Family Center services and selected other services (including education, child care, and health care). We identified services that are a high priority to at least one in four clients interviewed, but have been used by relatively few clients. This may indicate lack of information about service availability, barriers to accessing a service that is considered a high priority (such as education), or a service that clients feel is important but they have not yet needed to use (such as housing assistance).

Second, we asked clients in the interviews to respond to two open-ended questions regarding service needs. One question asked clients whether there were any other services that are a priority for their family (Question 4.a), and the final question (Question 56) asked

²⁵ This is a common cost-cutting strategy among immigrant families; also, apartments are often shared with recent arrivals before they find their own housing.

clients if there was anything they wanted to add to the interview responses. Responses to these questions are found in Appendix 2.

Of the twenty-two services covered in the interviews, seven Family Center services and three other services are a high priority to at least one in four clients interviewed, but have been used by relatively few clients. One service – high school education – is a low priority for most clients, but a majority of those without a high school education stated that they would like to obtain a diploma.

The seven under-used Family Center services include housing assistance, educational programs for children and teens, tutoring for children, job search assistance, immigration assistance, translation services, and public benefit assistance.

Educational programs for children and teens are considered a high priority by 65 percent of working-age Latino clients, and 42 percent of all clients (this is not a high priority for seniors). However, only 13 percent of working-age Latinos and 8 percent of all clients interviewed said that they had used this service.

Tutoring for children is a high priority for 48 percent of working-age Latinos and 32 percent of all clients interviewed (like educational programs for children and teens, this is not an important service for seniors). However, only 2 of the 49 client families interviewed had used this service.

Nineteen of the 23 clients interviewed with limited English proficiency would like to take English language classes. Most of them stated that they couldn't take classes due to the need to take care of their children. For workers interested in finding a job, learning English is important in expanding the types of jobs they can apply for and increasing their earnings.

Of the 28 clients interviewed who do not have a high school education or GED certificate, 16 would like to obtain one. This is despite the fact that only one in seven clients considers a high school education to be a high priority, including only three of the 16 persons interested in obtaining a high school education. This is plausible because high school is probably considered a luxury, or infeasible, by many adult Family Center clients. At the same time, persons with a high school degree find better jobs with higher earnings than persons without a high school degree. For example, welfare workers with a high school degree earned an average of 20 percent more than those with some high school experience, and 35 percent more than those with no high school experience.²⁶

Job search assistance is a high priority for more than half of the working-age clients interviewed. At the same time, only one in five working-age clients have used this service.

²⁶ Flaming, Daniel; Drayse, Mark; and Peter Force (1999). *On the Edge: A Progress Report on Welfare to Work in Los Angeles*. Los Angeles: Economic Roundtable; p.70.

Public benefit assistance is a high priority to one in three clients, but only three people (6 percent of those interviewed) have used Family Center services to help them obtain public assistance benefits. Clients without immigration documents may well know that public assistance benefits are not available to them, but even so, this service appears underused.

One in three individuals in client families are under the age of ten. The absence of adequate childcare is a critical barrier to parents in utilizing services such as education or English-language classes that would contribute to long-term economic advancement. Family Center clients demonstrate a fundamental commitment to the well being of their children. Lacking adequate childcare the mother is typically precluded from improving her skills or seeking employment, and the pressure on the father to provide a steady income precludes him from entering education or vocational training programs that would increase his earnings.

RECOMMENDATIONS: *Recommendations for strengthening services for family self-sufficiency to address unmet needs are:*

1. *Expand the provision of childcare in connection with other services, such as job assistance, English-language classes, high school classes, and vocational training. Consider working with other agencies to provide short-term "drop-in" childcare services to help parents take advantage of other supportive services (such as high school classes, English language classes, and vocational training programs).*
2. *Continue offering English language classes at the Family Center in the daytime. For clients who need to take classes at night or on weekends, assist them in finding English-language classes offered at local high schools or colleges.*
3. *Explore the feasibility of working with clients and local high schools to increase participation in high school classes or GED programs, and provide childcare while parents are enrolled.*
4. *Assist Family Center clients in becoming child care service providers for other client who are employed, and provide technical assistance to improve the quality of family child care services.*
6. *Continue to use the Food Pantry as a gateway for other programs, including education and tutoring programs, immigration assistance, translation services, job search assistance, and assistance in obtaining public benefit.*

8.6. Under-Served Areas and Populations

While 41 percent of Family Center clients live in Venice, close to one-third (30 percent) live in Culver City and Mar Vista (refer to Map 6). It is likely that more clients are likely to move to these areas as a result of rising rents in Santa Monica and Venice. Therefore it is important the Family Center continues to reaches out to reach out to clients in Mar Vista and Culver City.

Family Center services are under-used by African-American families, and persons living in Inglewood and Lennox.²⁷ For example, 55 percent of welfare recipients who are working in the Service Area are African-American, compared to 8 percent of Family Center clients. Also, 55 percent of working welfare recipients live in Inglewood, compared to only 2 percent of clients.

This is in large part an outgrowth of the Family Center's location in Venice. It is also reinforced by the heavy reliance of Latino families on social networks for access to services as well as jobs and housing. Twenty-two of the 25 Latinos interviewed (88 percent) found out about the Family Center through social networks, compared to 14 of the 24 other clients (58 percent).

RECOMMENDATION: Increase access Family Center services by establishing a satellite center in the Mar Vista area (e.g. along Washington Blvd). Also, collaborate with churches, schools, and public agencies in the Inglewood/Lennox area to provide services to people living in these under-served communities.

8.7. Information Collection

Collecting and updating information about client characteristics and service needs is an integral part of service delivery.

The interview questionnaire provides a template of questions that can be modified for purposes of information collection and evaluation. Table 3 shows information to be collected about clients' demographic, economic, and housing characteristics. This information can be used to gauge the success of clients in moving towards self-sufficiency, as well as indicate barriers that clients face in improving their living and working situations.

Table 4 lists the 22 services for which information was requested in the interviews. For each service, information should collected regarding service priority, service use, and barriers service use.

²⁷ According to the United Way's 1999 *State of the County* report, the combined population of Inglewood city and Lennox was 58 percent Latino and 39 percent African-American in 1998.

The information could be collected in the following way. Clients could be asked to complete a questionnaire once a year. Questionnaires could be distributed to clients when they pick up food, or mailed to clients, or both. Information regarding individuals (e.g. employment information) should be collected for all adults in the family. The data can be entered into a spreadsheet or relational database, and analyzed to evaluate service needs and service barriers for all clients, and for different groups of clients (based on ethnicity, age, or other characteristics). In this Needs Assessment we isolated two groups of clients -- working-age Latinos and seniors -- who together make up four in five client families. As shown, each group had a different set of service priorities.

RECOMMENDATION: *The Family Center should collect and update information on client characteristics, economic and housing situations, and indicators of service use and need on an annual basis. This information can be stored in an Access file and linked with intake information.*

8.8 Needs of Youth

Finally, it is appropriate to conclude the Family Center Needs Assessment by considering the needs of the children of Family Center clients. Of the 4,094 individual clients in the Family Center database, 1,905 are children under age 18. This represents 47 percent of all individuals in families using Family Center services. Nine in ten children (88 percent) are Latino.

To gain a personal understanding of their needs, the Family Center convened an informal focus group with several children between the ages of 10 and 15. We were especially interested in understanding their academic experience, to ascertain whether they face any barriers to success. The ability of these young people to finish high school and enter college or appropriate vocational training programs will be of fundamental importance for the future quality of their lives.

The students we talked to do not have many “upwardly-mobile” role models in the world of work. Their parents are working hard to make ends meet, in jobs that pay low wages and are generally unrewarding. When asked what jobs would be fun to have, most of the students mentions careers in the arts, including painting, acting, and singing. This interest in the arts could be related to their general exposure to cultural media (movies, television, music), as well as practical experiences in school. A few students stated that the Family Center should develop art and drama programs.

One high school student was very interested in computer animation. His comments illustrate the disconnect that often exists between students’ interests and career planning. The guidance counselors at his high school “only talk to students about what classes they have to take next year” – they don’t ask what students are interested in. As a result, this student has no idea where to go to college to take classes in computer animation, which is a fast-growing occupation.

Several students mentioned that they had been unable to attend elective classes they wanted because they had not submitted the appropriate paperwork to their school.

Finally, it was clear that access to computers at the Family Center was important to these students. Only one in seven families represented by the students had a computer at home.

We offer the following recommendations as ways in which the Family Center can improve the chances of students succeeding in their education and developing and realizing career goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *The Family Center should act as an educational advocate for students. Family Center staff should consult with students, parents, and guidance counselors to help students*
 - (a) *gain admission to desired and appropriate elementary, middle, and high school classes;*
 - (b) *take college-preparatory classes in high school (e.g. Advanced Placement (AP) classes);*
 - (c) *develop carefully considered class schedule plans;*
 - (d) *obtain the full range of available services from high school counselors and college advisors; and*
 - (e) *directly provide, or facilitate referrals to, coaching programs for college entrance examinations (e.g. the SAT).*
2. *High school students should be made aware of career opportunities. The Family Center should expand its mentoring program to expose more students to people working in a variety of interesting jobs.*
3. *The Family Center should make sure that high school students are aware of opportunities in higher education. Western Los Angeles is home to three four-year universities (UCLA, Loyola Marymount, and Pepperdine), and a highly-regarded community college (Santa Monica College). The Family Center could coordinate campus visits by students and their parents to expose them to these institutions and the world of career opportunities. These campus visits should start at the beginning of high school to help students gain an early familiarity with higher education.*

TABLE 3
Information Collection –
Individual and Family Characteristics and
Employment and Housing Situation

A	CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS
1	Name
2	Status (Active/Inactive)
3	Ethnicity (Latino, Euro-American, African-American, Asian-American)
4	US Citizenship Status (US Citizen, Permanent Resident, Status Pending,
5	Family Type (Two Parents, Single Parent, Two Adults, Single)
6	Family Size
7	Number of Children Living at Home (plus ages)
8	Residence (Address and Zip Code)
B	EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITY
1	Educational Attainment
2	Native Language
3	English Reading Ability
4	English Speaking Ability
C	INCOME AND EXPENSES
1	Average Monthly Income (Employment, Welfare, Social Security, Other)
2	Average Monthly Expenses (Rent, Utilities, Food, Clothing, Transportation, Entertainment, Other)
D	EMPLOYMENT
1	Labor Force Status (in labor force if employed or actively looking for work)
	<i>Employed Workers:</i>
2	Occupation
3	Industry
4	Average Monthly Earnings
5	Average Hours Worked per Month
	<i>Unemployed Workers:</i>
6	Number of Jobs Applied for in Past Month
7	Job Assistance Services Used
8	Barriers to Finding and Keeping a Job (including: taking care of children or an elderly family member, transportation, low wages)
E	HOUSING
1	Moved in Past Year (include reason)
2	Planning to Move in Next Year (include reason)
3	Rent Increase in Past Year
4	Number of Bedrooms
5	Number of Persons Living in Apartment or House
6	Number of Persons Not in Immediate Family Living in Apartment or House

TABLE 4
Information Collection
Service Priorities and Needs

SERVICE	Priority (H, M, L)	Needed in Past Year		Barriers to Use*
		Used	Unable to Obtain	
STABILIZATION SERVICES				
Food assistance				
Drug counseling and treatment				
Emergency shelter				
Financial assistance				
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES				
Job search assistance				
Vocational education				
EDUCATION SERVICES				
Educational programs for children/teens				
Tutoring for children				
English-language classes				
High school/GED classes				
College classes				
OTHER SUPPORTIVE SERVICES				
Housing assistance				
Health care				
Public benefit assistance				
Parenting classes				
Immigration assistance				
Counseling and case management				
Child care				
Transportation				
Translation services				
In-home care				
Recreation				

*Barriers may include need to take care of children, money, transportation, limited English ability, etc.

APPENDIX 1

Family Center Needs Assessment Interview Questions

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**Economic Roundtable
Family Center Needs Assessment
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**
(Includes number of responses in bold type)

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____

Family Center ID: _____

SERVICES

1. How did you hear about the Family Center? (**n=48**)

- ☐ Church (**2**)
- ☐ Family or friends (**36**)
- ☐ Other Social Service agency (**0**)
- ☐ Other St. Joseph Center program (**0**)
- ☐ Infoline (**0**)
- ☐ School (**1**)
- ☐ Other (**9**)

2. What was the **first** reason that you sought Family Center services? (**n=48**)*(check one only):*

- ☐ Food needs (**44**)
- ☐ Housing needs (**1**)
- ☐ Educational and enrichment programs for children/teens (**0**)
- ☐ Tutoring for children (**0**)
- ☐ Counseling/case management (**0**)
- ☐ Immigration concerns (**1**)
- ☐ Translation services (**0**)
- ☐ Public Benefit assistance (GR, SSI, TANF) (**0**)
- ☐ Parenting classes (**0**)
- ☐ Job search assistance and referrals (**1**)
- ☐ Vocational training information and referrals (**0**)
- ☐ Other (please state): (**1**)

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3. Please tell me which of the following Family Center services you have used since enrolling in the Family Center: (n=49)

- ☐ Housing assistance (6)
- ☐ Food assistance (49)
- ☐ Educational and enrichment programs for children/teens (4)
- ☐ Tutoring for children (2)
- ☐ Counseling/case management (3)
- ☐ Immigration assistance (2)
- ☐ Translation services (1)
- ☐ Public Benefit assistance (GR, SSI, TANF) (3)
- ☐ Parenting classes (5)
- ☐ Job search assistance and referrals (7)
- ☐ Vocational training information and referrals (3)
- ☐ Other (please state): (4)

4. Please tell me whether each of the following services is of high, medium, or low importance for your family.

(Circle **H** for **HIGH** level of importance, **M** for **MEDIUM** level of importance, and circle **L** for **LOW** level of importance.)

	H	M	L	Have you have needed this service in the past 12 months?: Yes
• Housing assistance (n=48)	26	3	19	8
• Food assistance (49)	44	4	1	45
• Educational and enrichment programs for children/teens (48)	20	1	27	9
• Tutoring for children (34)	11	0	23	4
• Counseling/case management (43)	9	3	31	8
• Immigration assistance (47)	11	0	36	1
• Translation services (46)	7	1	38	3
• Public Benefit assistance (GR, SSI, TANF) (47)	16	0	31	11
• Parenting classes (47)	12	2	33	5
• Job search assistance and referrals (48)	18	1	29	9
• Vocational training information and referrals (48)	8	1	39	6
• Child care (48)	9	1	38	4
• Drug/alcohol abuse counseling/treatment (47)	6	0	41	1
• Financial assistance (47)	5	1	41	3
• High School education/GED (48)	7	1	40	3
• College education (43)	2	3	38	1
• English language classes (46)	12	0	34	3
• Medical or dental care (48)	20	2	26	9
• Adult recreation/socializing (48)	3	2	43	2
• In-home care (48)	4	1	43	2
• Shelter or housing (47)	5	2	40	4
• Transportation (48)	9	3	36	8

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- 4.a. Are there any **other** social service needs that I have not mentioned that are a **high priority** for your family?:

5. Do you have children living with you?

- ☐ Yes (34)
☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 6) (15)

- 5.a. Please tell me the ages of all children in your household:

- 5.b. What schools do they attend?

IF YOU HAVE CHILDREN UNDER AGE 6, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

(IF NOT, **SKIP** TO QUESTION 6).

- 5.c. Are you currently using child day care services? (n=17)

- ☐ Yes (4)
☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 5.f.)

- 5.d. Who is providing child care? (n=4)

- ☐ Family (2)
☐ Friend
☐ Non-profit center (2)
☐ For-profit center

5.e. How much do you pay per month on child care? \$_____

(**SKIP** to Question 6)

5.f. Why aren't you using child day care services? (*please describe*):

6. Are you receiving free bus tokens or taxi vouchers? (**n=49**)

☐ Yes (**2**)

☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 7) (**47**)

6.a. What agency provides you with this assistance?:

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SOURCE OF INCOME

7. Please tell me whether you receive income from the following sources: (n=49)

(check all that apply):

- ☐ Your own business (2)
- ☐ Working as a day laborer (1)
- ☐ Regular job (8)

- ☐ TANF (Welfare) (12) (Amount per month? \$ _____)
- ☐ Food Stamps (15) (Amount per month? \$ _____)
- ☐ WIC (13) (Amount per month? \$ _____)
- ☐ Social Security (15) (Amount per month? \$ _____)
- ☐ Family (1) (Amount per month? \$ _____)
- ☐ Other (please state): (9)
_____ (Amount per month? \$ _____)

(IF THE PERSON RECEIVES TANF FUNDS, PLEASE ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS):

- 7.a. What is your TANF time limit? _____
- 7.b. Are you currently enrolled in the GAIN program? (n=12)
 - ☐ Yes (4)
 - ☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 7.d.)
- 7.c. What services are you receiving through GAIN? (n=12)
 - Job Club (0)
 - Job search assistance (2)
 - Job referrals (1)
 - Preparing for interviews (1)
 - Other (please state): (1)
- 7.d. Why aren't you enrolled in GAIN? (please describe):

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

8. Are you working now? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (**SKIP** to Question 9) (8)
☐ No (41)

IF NO, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

8.a. How long have you been without work? _____

8.b. Are you currently looking for work? (n=41)

- ☐ Yes (**SKIP** to Question 8.d) (10)
☐ No (31)

8.c. Why aren't you looking for work? (n=31)

(check all that apply):

- ☐ Spouse or other family member is working (2)
☐ Need to take care of children (7)
☐ Need to take care of elderly relative (1)
☐ Available jobs don't pay high enough wages (1)
☐ Don't have transportation (2)
☐ Other (please state): (19)

(SKIP to Question 9)

8.d. What type of work are you looking for? (n=10)

(check all that apply):

- ☐ Cooking (0)
☐ Waiting tables (0)
☐ Sales clerk (0)
☐ Cashier (2)
☐ Child care (3)
☐ Computer/data entry (0)
☐ Other office work (2)
☐ Housekeeping (4)
☐ Construction work (0)
☐ Other (please describe): (5)

8.e. How many jobs have you applied for in the last month? **(n=10)**

- ☐ Five or more **(2)**
- ☐ Two to four **(2)**
- ☐ One **(2)**
- ☐ None **(4)**

8.f. How are you looking for jobs? **(n=10)**

(Check all that apply):

- ☐ Contacting friends and family **(6)**
- ☐ Contacting employers **(5)**
- ☐ EDD (Unemployment office) **(2)**
- ☐ Private agency **(1)**
- ☐ Social service agencies **(0)**
- ☐ Skills Center **(1)**
- ☐ Adult schools/community colleges **(1)**
- ☐ Newspapers/job advertisements **(3)**
- ☐ Other (please describe): **(4)**

(SKIP to Question 12)

EMPLOYMENT – Self-Employed Workers

9. Do you earn money by running your own business? (n=49)

☐ Yes (2)

☐ No (*SKIP to Question 10*) (47)

9.a. What type of work do you do?

Food Service:

☐ Vending/selling food

Sales:

☐ Sales clerk

☐ Cashier

Home/Building Maintenance:

☐ Housekeeping

☐ Gardening

☐ Janitorial work

Personal and Health Care:

☐ Child care

☐ Elder care

☐ Health care

Trucking/Transportation:

☐ Driving

☐ Moving

Automotive Services:

☐ Auto body repair (1)

☐ Mechanic

Office Work from Home:

☐ Administrative assistance

☐ Clerical/computing

Construction and related trades:

- ☐ Carpentry/woodworking
- ☐ Electrical work
- ☐ Masonry/tile work
- ☐ Painting
- ☐ Plumbing

Other work:

- ☐ Cosmetology
- ☐ Sewing
- ☐ Translation
- ☐ Other (please describe): **(1)**

9.b. What is your typical earnings per hour?: \$_____

9.c. What is your usual number of hours of work per week? _____

EMPLOYMENT – Day Laborers

10. Have you earned money in the past year working as a day laborer? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 11) (48)

10.a. What type of work do you do?

- ☐ Construction
☐ Gardening
☐ Maintenance (1)
☐ Painting
☐ Moving
☐ Other (please describe):

10.b. What is your typical hourly wage? \$_____

10.c. What is your usual number of hours of work per week? _____

10.d. Is your work seasonal?

☐ Yes

Average hours per week in:

Spring_____

Summer_____

Fall_____

Winter_____

☐ No

EMPLOYMENT – Regular Job with an Employer

11. Do you work for an employer on a regular basis? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (7)
☐ No (*SKIP to Question 12*) (42)

11.a. Do you have more than one job? (n=7)

- ☐ Yes (*If YES, Answer the following questions for your MAIN JOB*) (2)
☐ No

11.b. What type of employer do you work for? (industry) (n=7)

- ☐ Restaurant/Food Service
☐ Private Household (3)
☐ Retail store
☐ Manufacturing
☐ Health Care (1)
☐ School/Day Care (1)
☐ Construction
☐ Government
☐ Trucking/Transportation
☐ Auto Service
☐ Cosmetology
☐ Other (please describe): (1)

11.c. What type of work do you do? (occupation) (n=7)

Food Service:

- ☐ Cooking
☐ Waiting tables
☐ Busing tables/washing dishes
☐ Vending/selling food

Sales:

- ☐ Sales clerk
☐ Cashier (1)

Home/Building Maintenance:

- ☐ Housekeeping
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Janitorial work

Personal and Health Care:

- ☐ Child care (2)
- ☐ Elder care
- ☐ Health care

Trucking/Transportation:

- ☐ Driving
- ☐ Moving

Automotive Services:

- ☐ Auto body repair
- ☐ Mechanic

Office Work:

- ☐ Administrative assistance
- ☐ Clerical/computing
- ☐ Receptionist

Construction and related trades:

- ☐ Carpentry/woodworking
- ☐ Electrical work
- ☐ Masonry/tile work
- ☐ Painting
- ☐ Plumbing

Other work:

- ☐ Cosmetology
- ☐ Sewing
- ☐ Translation
- ☐ Other (please describe): (3)

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11.d. How long have you worked for this employer? _____

11.e. How did you find this job? (n=7)

- ☐ Contacted friends and family (5)
- ☐ Contacted employers
- ☐ EDD (Unemployment office)
- ☐ Private agency (name: _____)
- ☐ Social service agencies (1)
- ☐ Skills Center
- ☐ Adult schools/community colleges
- ☐ Newspapers/job advertisements
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____

11.f. Did your employer ask you for documentation of US citizenship or legal residence status? (n=6)

- ☐ Yes (2)
- ☐ No (4)

11.g. Where is your place of employment?

City: _____

Zip Code (if known): _____

11.h. How do you travel to work each day? (n=7)

- ☐ Own car (2)
- ☐ Borrow a friend or family member's car
- ☐ Carpool
- ☐ Bus (2)
- ☐ Bike
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ Other (please describe): (1) _____

11.i. About how long does it take to travel to work? _____

11.j. What is your hourly wage? \$_____

- 11.k. About how many hours do you work each week? _____
(IF 40 OR MORE, **SKIP** to Question 11.n.)
- 11.l. (If you work less than 40 hours): Would you like to work more hours each week? (n=5)
- ☐ Yes (4)
☐ No
- 11.m. Which of the following factors prevent you from working more hours each week? (n=5)
- ☐ Employer won't increase hours
☐ Can't find a full-time job (1)
☐ Need to take care of children (2)
☐ Need to take care of parent or other relative
☐ Enrolled in school or training program
☐ Other (please describe): (2)
- 11.n. Do you receive any of the following job benefits? (check any that apply): (n=7)
- ☐ Medical (0)
☐ Dental (0)
☐ Retirement (0)
☐ Vacation (0)
☐ Paid sick days (0)
☐ No benefits (6)
☐ Other (please describe): (0)
- 11.o. Do you receive training at your job? (n=7)
- ☐ Yes (1)
☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 12)

11.p. What kind of training do you receive? (n=1)

- ☐ Learning from shadowing co-workers (1)
- ☐ Employer training
- ☐ Unstructured help from co-workers
- ☐ Formal training programs at work
(e.g. classes, videos, demonstrations)
- ☐ Other (please describe):

EMPLOYMENT – Spouse and Other Family Members

12. Is your spouse working now? (n=44)

- ☐ Yes (16)
- ☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 13) (28)
- ☐ Not applicable (**SKIP** to Question 13) (5)

12.a. What type of work does your spouse do? (occupation) (n=16)

Food Service:

- ☐ Cooking (4)
- ☐ Waiting tables
- ☐ Busing tables/washing dishes (1)
- ☐ Vending/selling food

Sales:

- ☐ Sales clerk
- ☐ Cashier

Home/Building Maintenance:

- ☐ Housekeeping
- ☐ Gardening (2)
- ☐ Janitorial work

Personal and Health Care:

- ☐ Child care
- ☐ Elder care
- ☐ Health care

Trucking/Transportation:

- ☐ Driving
- ☐ Moving

Automotive Services:

- ☐ Auto body repair
- ☐ Mechanic (1)

Office Work:

- ☐ Administrative assistance

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☐ Clerical/computing

☐ Receptionist

Construction and related trades:

☐ Carpentry/woodworking

☐ Electrical work (1)

☐ Masonry/tile work (1)

☐ Painting (2)

☐ Plumbing

Other work:

☐ Cosmetology

☐ Sewing

☐ Translation

☐ Other (please describe): (4)

12.b. About how much money does your spouse earn each month?
\$ _____

12.c. About how many hours does your spouse work each month? _____

13. Are any other members of your household working now, NOT INCLUDING your spouse?
(n=45)

☐ Yes (4)

☐ No (*SKIP to Question 14*) (41)

13.a. Who else is working in your household? (n=4)

☐ Child (4)

☐ Other relative (relationship to you?: _____)

☐ Other person (please explain):

EMPLOYMENT – Previous work experience and skills

14. What type of work did you do in your **last job** (include jobs outside of the US)? (n=41)

(IF PERSON HAS HAD NO PREVIOUS JOB, **SKIP** TO QUESTION 15)

Food Service:

- ☐ Cooking (2)
- ☐ Waiting tables (2)
- ☐ Busing tables/washing dishes
- ☐ Vending/selling food

Sales:

- ☐ Sales clerk (1)
- ☐ Cashier (5)

Home/Building Maintenance:

- ☐ Housekeeping (7)
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Janitorial work (2)

Personal and Health Care:

- ☐ Child care (3)
- ☐ Elder care (4)
- ☐ Health care

Trucking/Transportation:

- ☐ Driving
- ☐ Moving

Automotive Services:

- ☐ Auto body repair
- ☐ Mechanic

Office Work:

- ☐ Administrative assistance (1)
- ☐ Clerical/computing (1)
- ☐ Receptionist

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Construction and related trades:

- ☐ Carpentry/woodworking
- ☐ Electrical work (2)
- ☐ Masonry/tile work
- ☐ Painting
- ☐ Plumbing

Other work:

- ☐ Cosmetology
- ☐ Sewing (2)
- ☐ Translation
- ☐ Other (please describe): (11)

14.a. When did your previous job end? _____

14.b. Why did your previous job end? (n=41)

- ☐ Layoff (3)
- ☐ Workplace closed down (2)
- ☐ Disciplinary reasons
- ☐ Excessive absenteeism
- ☐ Child care (2)
- ☐ Family/personal reasons other than child care (2)
- ☐ Inadequate wages or income (1)
- ☐ Job phased out (1)
- ☐ Found a better job
- ☐ Moved out of the area (2)
- ☐ Other (please describe): (24)

15. What kind of help in finding a job are you receiving? (n=7)

- ☐ None (**SKIP** to Question 16)
- ☐ Resume Writing (2)
- ☐ Preparing for Interviews (3)
- ☐ Job Training (2)
- ☐ Job Placement (0)
- ☐ Other (please describe): (3)

15.a. What organization is providing these services? (n=7)

- ☐ Adult School (1)
- ☐ Career Planning Center (1)
- ☐ Chrysalis
- ☐ Community College
(name: _____)
- ☐ One Stop
- ☐ PATH
- ☐ Skill Center
- ☐ Venice Family Clinic
- ☐ Venice Skills Center (1)
- ☐ Virginia Park
- ☐ West Area Opportunity Center
- ☐ Other (4)

16. Do you ever earn extra cash doing any of the following? (n=49)

Food Service:

- ☐ Cooking (1)
- ☐ Waiting tables
- ☐ Busing tables/washing dishes
- ☐ Vending/selling food

Sales:

- ☐ Sales clerk
- ☐ Cashier

Home/Building Maintenance:

- ☐ Housekeeping (2)
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Janitorial work

Personal and Health Care:

- ☐ Child care (6)
- ☐ Elder care (1)
- ☐ Health care

Trucking/Transportation:

- ☐ Driving
- ☐ Moving

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Automotive Services:

- ☐ Auto body repair
- ☐ Mechanic

Office Work:

- ☐ Administrative assistance
- ☐ Clerical/computing
- ☐ Receptionist

Construction and related trades:

- ☐ Carpentry/woodworking
- ☐ Electrical work (1)
- ☐ Masonry/tile work
- ☐ Painting
- ☐ Plumbing

Other work:

- ☐ Cosmetology
- ☐ Translation
- ☐ Other (1)

16.a. What are your estimated "extra cash" earnings per month?
\$ _____

17. Do you have any of the following work-related skills and experience? (check any that apply): (n=49)

Food Service:

- ☐ Cooking (3)
- ☐ Waiting tables (2)
- ☐ Busing tables/washing dishes
- ☐ Vending/selling food

Sales:

- ☐ Sales clerk (3)
- ☐ Cashier (4)

Home/Building Maintenance:

- ☐ Housekeeping (9)
- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Janitorial work (3)

Construction and Related Trades:

- ☐ Carpentry
- ☐ Painting (1)
- ☐ Plumbing

Personal and Health Care:

- ☐ Child care (16)
- ☐ Elder care (7)
- ☐ Health care

Trucking/Transportation:

- ☐ Driving
- ☐ Moving

Automotive Services:

- ☐ Auto body repair
- ☐ Mechanic

Office Work:

- ☐ Administrative assistance (1)
- ☐ Clerical/computing (6)
- ☐ Receptionist (2)

Professional Skills:

- ☐ Arts/Architecture
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Law
- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Social Work (1)
- ☐ Teaching

Other work:

- ☐ Cosmetology
- ☐ Sewing (3)
- ☐ Translation
- ☐ Other (13)

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18. Please describe your main employment abilities:

19. What type of job would you like to have ***in the future?*** *(please describe):*

EDUCATION AND ENGLISH LITERACY

20. What is your native language? (n=45) Spanish (19), English (15), Zapoteco (4), Arabic (3), German (1), Hungarian (1), Persian (1), Polish (1)

21. Are you able to read and write in: (n=49)

English

☐ Yes (31)

☐ No (18)

Native Language (IF NOT ENGLISH) (n=29)

☐ Yes (24)

☐ No (5)

22. How well do you speak English? (n=30)

☐ Very well (4)

☐ Well (3)

☐ Not well (14)

☐ Not at all (9)

23. Are you currently enrolled in English-language classes? (n=31)

☐ Yes (**SKIP** to Question 24) (4)

☐ No (27)

23.a. Would you like to take English-language classes? (n=26)

☐ Yes (19)

☐ No (7)

23.b. When would you be able to take a class? (check any that apply): (n=19)

☐ During the day (12)

☐ At night (4)

☐ On weekends (3)

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23.c. Do any of the following factors make it difficult for you to take English-language classes now? (*check any that apply*): (n=19)

- ☐ Work (2)
- ☐ Caring for children (11)
- ☐ Caring for parent(s) or other relative (1)
- ☐ Transportation (3)
- ☐ Not enough money (2)
- ☐ Other (please describe): (5)

24. What was the highest level of education that you completed? (n=48)
(Some College: 10; High School: 11; Grades 9-11: 11; Grade 8 or below: 16)

25. Where did you complete your highest level of education? State: _____
Country: _____

26. Have you completed high school? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (*SKIP to Question 27*) (21)
- ☐ No (28)

26.a. Would you like to have a high school degree? (n=21)

- ☐ Yes (16)
- ☐ No (*SKIP to Question 27*) (5)

26.b. Are you currently enrolled in a GED class? (n=16)

- ☐ Yes (1)
(*SKIP to Question 27*)
- ☐ No (15)

26.c. Do any of the following factors make it difficult for you to take high school or GED classes now? (check any that apply): (n=15)

- ☐ Work (2)
- ☐ Caring for children (11)
- ☐ Caring for parent(s) or other relative (0)
- ☐ Transportation (3)
- ☐ Not enough money (4)
- ☐ Limited English proficiency (8)
- ☐ Other (please describe): (2)

27. Are you currently enrolled in college classes? (n=49)

☐ Yes (1)
(SKIP to Question 28)

☐ No (48)

27.a. Would you like to take college classes? (n=48)

- ☐ Yes (20)
- ☐ No (SKIP to Question 28) (28)

27.b. Do any of the following factors make it difficult for you to take college classes now? (check any that apply): (n=20)

- ☐ Work (3)
- ☐ Caring for children (12)
- ☐ Caring for parent(s) or other relative (1)
- ☐ Not enough money (14)
- ☐ Transportation (4)
- ☐ Limited English language ability (8)
- ☐ Other (please describe): (3)

HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOOD

28. Which best describes the building you live in? (n=49)
- ☐ House (11)
 - ☐ Garage (0)
 - ☐ Guest house (0)
 - ☐ Building with 2-4 apartments (7)
 - ☐ Building with 5-9 apartments (6)
 - ☐ Building with 10 or more apartments (18)
 - ☐ Public housing unit (*number of units in building*: _____) (7)
 - ☐ Mobile home in a mobile home park (0)
 - ☐ Other (please explain): (0)
29. How much is your total rent? \$_____
30. Do you receive a Section 8 certificate or voucher, or Shelter Plus Care assistance for your apartment? (n=49)
- ☐ Yes (5)
 - ☐ No (44)
31. How many bedrooms are in your apartment or house? (n=49) (average = 1.8)
32. How many persons live in your apartment or house? (n=49) 2.0 adults (average)
- 2.1 children (average)
33. Are you sharing your apartment or house with friends or other relatives? (n=49)
- ☐ Yes (8) 33.a How many?: _____
 - 33.b. Describe their relationship to you:
 - 33.c. What part of the apartment or house does *your* immediate family occupy? (*please describe*):
 - 33.d. How much does your immediate family pay in rent? \$_____
- ☐ No (41)

34. Has your rent increased in the last year?

☐ Yes (27)

34.a. By how much? (average = \$38)

☐ No (22)

35. Have you moved in the last year? (n=49)

☐ Yes (3) (how many times? _____)

☐ No (*SKIP to Question 36*) (46)

35.a. Where did you live previously?

35.b. Why did you move? (check any that apply): (n=3)

☐ To move into better housing (1)

☐ To find an apartment with a lower rent (3)

☐ To move to a safer neighborhood

☐ To move to a neighborhood with better schools

☐ To move closer to work

☐ To move from an apartment into a rented house

☐ Purchased a home

☐ Other (please state):

35.c. Were you asked to pay a deposit? (n=3)

☐ Yes (3) (how much?: \$_____)

☐ No (0)

36. Do you plan to move in the next year? (n=49)

☐ Yes (11)

☐ No (*SKIP to Question 37*) (38)

36.a. Where do you plan to move?

(Venice: 3; Santa Monica: 2; Inglewood: 1)

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36.b. Why do you plan to move? (*check any that apply*): (n=11)

- ☐ To move into better housing (3)
- ☐ To find an apartment with a lower rent (4)
- ☐ To move to a safer neighborhood
- ☐ To move to a neighborhood with better schools
- ☐ To move closer to work
- ☐ To move from an apartment into a rented house
- ☐ Purchased a home (1)
- ☐ Other (please state): (5)

37. Have any friends or family living in your neighborhood moved recently?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (**SKIP** to Question 38)

37.a. Where did they move to?: _____

37.b. Why did they move? (*check any that apply*):

- ☐ To move into better housing
- ☐ To find an apartment with a lower rent
- ☐ To move to a safer neighborhood
- ☐ To move to a neighborhood with better schools
- ☐ To move closer to work
- ☐ To move from an apartment into a rented house
- ☐ Purchased a home
- ☐ Other (please state):

38. Have you experienced any of the following difficulties in finding rental housing for yourself or your family? (*check any that apply*): (n=49)

- ☐ Forced to move because rents were raised (4)
- ☐ Shortage of affordable rental housing (5)
- ☐ Couldn't afford the security deposit (3)
- ☐ Problems with landlord (1)
- ☐ Eviction (0)
- ☐ Poor credit history (1)
- ☐ Available, affordable housing is poor quality or too small (8)
- ☐ Other (please explain): (1)

39. Have you ever owned a home? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (10)
- ☐ No (*SKIP to Question 40*)

39.a. Have you experienced any of the following difficulties in purchasing a home? (*check all that apply*):

- ☐ Lack of affordable housing for sale
- ☐ Poor credit history
- ☐ Unable to make downpayment
- ☐ Other (please describe):

40. In looking for a place to live, do you think you may have been discriminated against for any reason? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (16)
- ☐ No (*SKIP to Question 41*) (33)

40.a. Why do you think you may have been discriminated against? (*check all that apply*): (n=16)

- ☐ Race or ethnic status (7)
- ☐ Income level (3)
- ☐ Children were not welcome (8)
- ☐ Receiving public assistance (1)
- ☐ Family member is disabled (0)
- ☐ Other (please explain): (2)

41. Overall, how do you feel about your present housing situation? (n=49)

- ☐ Very satisfied (12)
- ☐ Satisfied (22)
- ☐ Neutral (6)
- ☐ Dissatisfied (9)
- ☐ Very dissatisfied (0)

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42. Do you consider your neighborhood safe? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (**SKIP** to Question 43) (40)
☐ No (9)

42.b. Why isn't your neighborhood safe? (*please describe*):

43. What do you like **MOST** about living in your neighborhood?

44. What do you like **LEAST** about living in your neighborhood?

ACCESS TO CONSUMER DURABLES/COMMUNICATIONS/UTILITIES

45. Does your household have the following items? (n=49)

(check all that apply):

- ☐ Clothes dryer (8)
- ☐ Dishwasher (6)
- ☐ Personal computer (4)
- ☐ Telephone (47)
- ☐ Internet access (1)
- ☐ Television (49)
- ☐ Washing machine (12)
- ☐ Oven (35)
- ☐ Stove (42)
- ☐ Microwave (36)
- ☐ Running water (44)
- ☐ Hot water (44)
- ☐ Gas and/or Electricity (44)
- ☐ Furniture (43)

Please state any other needs your family has for durable goods:

ABILITY TO MEET BASIC NEEDS

46. Were you unable to pay your rent or mortgage on time in the last year? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (13)
- ☐ No (*SKIP to Question 47*) (36)

46.a. How often (number of months)? _____

46.b. What did you do? *(check any that apply):* (n=13)

- ☐ Borrowed money from a family member (9)
- ☐ Borrowed money from a friend (4)
- ☐ Moved (0)
- ☐ Paid in full the next month (0)
- ☐ Other (please explain): (1)

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47. Were you unable to pay your full utility bill at any time in the last year? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (14)
☐ No (*SKIP to Question 48*) (35)

47.a. How often (number of months)? _____

47.b. What did you do? (*check any that apply*): (n=14)

- ☐ Borrowed money from a family member (6)
☐ Borrowed money from a friend (2)
☐ Moved (0)
☐ Paid in full the next month (5)
☐ Other (please explain): (2)

48. How many times in the past year did you have your gas or electric service turned off?
(n=49) Once: (7)

49. How many times in the past year did you have your telephone disconnected? (n=49)
Once: (4) Twice: (2)

50. Did any members of your household need medical attention in the past year? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (26)
☐ No (*SKIP to Question 51*) (23)

50.a. Did they seek medical attention? (n=26)

- ☐ Yes (*SKIP to Question 51*) (26)
☐ No

50.b. Why not? (please explain):

51. Has your household had enough food in the last month? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (40)
☐ No (9)

51.a. How do you get food? (check all that apply): (n=49)

- ☐ Bought with cash (45)
- ☐ School meal program (2)
- ☐ Senior nutrition program (1)
- ☐ Served meal program (0)
- ☐ Food stamps (16)
- ☐ WIC (13)
- ☐ Family assistance (1)
- ☐ Food pantry (45)
- ☐ Home grown (0)

52. Did you have to borrow money at any time in the past year? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (25)
- ☐ No (*SKIP to Question 53*) (24)

52.a. How much? \$_____

52.b. Source of money? (check all that apply): (n=25)

- ☐ Family (18)
- ☐ Friends (10)
- ☐ Check cashing/payday loans (0)
- ☐ Credit cards (0)
- ☐ Loan sharks (0)
- ☐ Pawn shops (1)
- ☐ Other (0)

52.c. How much have you repaid? \$_____

53. Have you sent money to family or friends in the past year? (n=49)

- ☐ Yes (14)
- ☐ No (*SKIP to Question 54*) (35)

53.a. Why did you send money? (n=14)

- ☐ To help pay for food and shelter (9)
- ☐ Child support (0)
- ☐ Gift (2)
- ☐ Other (2)

53.b. Where did you send the money? (n=14)

Mexico: (10)
El Salvador: (1)
Ecuador: (1)
United States: (1)

54. Please estimate your *immediate family's* monthly expenses for each of the following items:

Rent or mortgage: Total for unit: (n=44, average= \$518)

 Your share: (n=16, average= \$390)

Utilities: (n=44, average= \$95)

Food: (n= 45, average= \$182)

Clothing: (n=42, average= \$79)

Transportation: (n=45, average= \$63)

School: (n=23, average= \$25)

Entertainment: (n=30, average= \$36)

Medical: (n=22, average= \$28)

Other (please state): (n=19, average= \$15)

55. Please indicate the importance of each of the following sources of assistance for helping to meet the needs of your family, where 1 = VERY IMPORTANT and 5 = NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL: (n=49)

	Very Important				Not Important
Church	1 (38)	2 (2)	3 (1)	4 (0)	5 (8)
Social Services agencies	1 (19)	2 (3)	3 (0)	4 (0)	5 (27)
Government Programs	1 (29)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (0)	5 (15)
Family	1 (31)	2 (1)	3 (3)	4 (0)	5 (14)
Friends	1 (19)	2 (10)	3 (2)	4 (0)	5 (18)
Schools	1 (26)	2 (3)	3 (2)	4 (0)	5 (18)
St. Joseph Center	1 (47)	2 (0)	3 (1)	4 (1)	5 (0)

56. Is there anything you would like to say about your family's needs that I haven't asked you about?

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS!

APPENDIX 2

Responses to Open-Ended Questions

1999 FAMILY CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT
OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES
Other High Priority Needs (Q 4a)

Response
Would like a few pieces of furniture and would like assistance in paying off two credit cards which caused the need for food assistance.
Would like to have groceries delivered. Does not have transportation.
Gasoline voucher.
More food assistance.
It would be good to have clothes (free clothes) available.
Help finding a permanent job or setting up her own business.
Would like to see more vocational classes on a regular schedule and not necessarily at night because of her lack of transportation. She'd like having this offered at St. Joseph's (ESL classes, job search training, etc.)
Help finding cheaper housing.
Getting a job is of high importance to the client right now. And he's doing a lot to get one: job training, acquiring interviewing skills, etc.
More help finding jobs. It's hard for her to find part-time childcare jobs.
She thinks it's important for St. Joseph's to develop some sort of medical program for undocumented immigrants, because it costs a lot for her to go to doctors and hospitals.
Medical care.

1999 FAMILY CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT
 OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES
 Desired Job (Q 20)

Response
Working with computers – would like to become more proficient so that some day [she could] own her own business.
Working with children.
Due to injury, unable to sit for long periods, which hinders job performance.
Has difficulty sitting for long periods. Job would have to be mobile.
Would like to work for the airlines.
Go back to working with teens and adults in alcohol rehabilitation.
Seamstress, electronics, upholstery.
She would like to start her own business as a seamstress and do alterations.
Electrical repair.
Administrative assistant; office work; translator; helping: social work, like what St. Joseph's does for the people it serves.
Seamstress, ironing, agriculture.
Childcare.
Cosmetology.
Take care of children with special needs.
Cashier, waitress, childcare, receptionist, housecleaning.
Waitressing, babysitting.

In the hotel industry.
Childcare.
Childcare at a Child Care Center.
Housecleaning.
Nurse's aide.
Childcare; housecleaning in the hotel industry and private houses.
Housecleaning.
Housecleaning and child care.
Factories, housecleaning, child care.
HIV prevention – community outreach work.
Babysitter.
Housekeeping, childcare.
Housekeeping, elder care.

1999 FAMILY CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT
OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES
What Interviewees Like Most About Their Neighborhood (Q43)

Response
VENICE
Very close to everything: markets, pharmacy, transportation, laundromat.
The beach.
The area in general.
Near transportation; near the beach; peaceful.
Love being by the ocean – soothing.
Neighbors know each other and are friendly.
Safe neighborhood; located near the beach; neighbors look out for each other.
Have lived there a long time, have ties to family, friends, and neighbors; close to transportation.
Security.
Neighbors look out for him and are always willing to help in some way.
Near the beach; peaceful.
Familiarity with neighbors. Everyone speaks.
There's St. Joseph's nearby, the supermarkets are near, and the schools too. Buses are also nearby.
It's tranquil and it's near buses and transportation.
There's a lot of Latinos living there and she likes the sense of community.
It's near her mom's house and it's near where she grew up.

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She's near the supermarkets, her children's schools and her part-time job; near the beach.
It's near the bus, near the supermarkets.
It's peaceful and tranquil.
It's near the beach, and she likes the neighborhood.
It's a safe place. It's near a big hospital.
SANTA MONICA
Quiet; lots of parks; private.
Multicultural neighborhood. Crime has decreased dramatically.
The ocean; nice neighbors.
Schools; good neighborhood.
Transportation is near and the supermarkets are near to where client lives.
Schools are near and there's no problem with gangs.
She likes the market, church, and park being nearby. Has been living there for 29 years and knows her neighbors and feels very comfortable there.
No violence, near tranquil area and near markets and shops.
It's quiet, decent.
Client has been there 34 years so it's home to her. She really likes it.
It's quiet. It's near shops, supermarkets, and transportation. She really likes her neighborhood.
It's quiet and the people are friendly.

CULVER CITY, MAR VISTA, PALMS
Doesn't change much.
Near the grocery store and can walk there. Some people living there for many years.
Likes neighborhood because neighbors have been there for a long time and she knows them well.
It's near schools.
It's calm, no violence, you can walk around.
There are no problems. That's what she likes.
There's no violence.
Family lives in the same building.
It's very quiet. Near transportation (buses).
It's quiet.
The low rent.
INGLEWOOD
Likes the neighborhood, it's clean and calm.
Supermarkets are nearby as well as the schools for her children.
WEST LOS ANGELES
It's quiet, peaceful. It's near the park, near the supermarkets, near the schools too. Really likes the neighborhood.

1999 FAMILY CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT
OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES
What Interviewees Like Least About Their Neighborhood (Q44)

Response
VENICE
Gang violence.
Lack of unity amongst people in the neighborhood.
Children in the neighborhood causing problems in the neighborhood.
Don't like the noisy weekends but most times, it's nice.
Gang war – police didn't seem like they could resolve it. Much better now – tapered off.
Increase in rent due to increase in property value.
Feeling like she doesn't belong there.
Recent crime – client experienced a robbery by two patients who knew his schedule. Graffiti found on three buildings.
Drugs.
Occasional violence.
The violence and the difficulty of finding jobs nearby.
The violence; the guns.
The violence and the drugs.
The violence.
Many homeless people.
There's too much noise, many kids playing and running around without adult supervision.

SANTA MONICA
Not enough African-American families stay.
Getting a little noisy and there is a field across the street containing junk – eyesore.
There's discrimination against Latino children in the school system. She was a volunteer for a while and realized this. She doesn't feel the educational system is very good for her children. Doesn't feel they're learning much.
Lack of parking because people who work in the area park there and it's becoming more and more crowded.
Too many Mexicans.
CULVER CITY, MAR VISTA, AND PALMS
Heavy traffic. Speeding cars in a residential area.
Some areas aren't safe, but where she lives is very nice.
Client has problems with some neighbors who are very intolerant of her kids and who are racist and insult her kids.
She has some neighbors who drink and smoke and do drugs and she feels somewhat uncomfortable with this, but other than that she likes where she lives.

1999 FAMILY CENTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT
OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES
Family Needs (Q55)

Response
Would like to own a computer for the family. Is there any way she could be referred to a discount outlet where she could get a computer at a reduced rate?
Tutoring services for granddaughter or referrals.
49 year old son needs disability and medical – needs surgery. Would like to have someone familiar with these issues to work with him and encourage him to seek out these much needed services.
Has a difficult time walking and would like to have groceries delivered. No means of transportation – has to walk everywhere. Has had double hip replacement and aortic valve replacement.
Would like to stretch food and have additional toiletries.
Delphi is a wonderful person and deserves high praises. She's wonderful!
Needs for accurate information and not feeling like you're pulling teeth. Needless stress placed upon her to get information. Feels like the assistance that could be provided has not been provided. Individuals were not accommodating and told her "I don't have time..." More time and attention is given to Hispanic applicants than to her.
Doctor suggested that client got to a nursing home but client wants to maintain his independence and individuality – feels this would be lost in a nursing home environment. Case manager is working on getting client changed to disability status so that he would be eligible to receive additional services, e.g. food stamps and in-home care.
Has handicapped adult daughter living at home.
Has suggested to her son that he come to St. Joseph's for assistance – he is a single parent raising two children, 13 and 16 years of age.
Client feels that Hispanic clients seem to get preference over other clients. It appears that Family Center employees are more accommodating to the Hispanic client

population. Client recommended that more African Americans should take advantage of the services offered by the Family Center and wanted to know why there seems to be so few [African-American clients], and so many Hispanic clients.

Client thinks some foods, especially MILK needs to be included as part of St. Joseph's Food Pantry services. Also juice, eggs, rice. It would be nice, she feels, to be able to pick and choose some of the food. Leticia and Lucy have been very kind to her and she wanted to include that as an important reason for coming to St. Joseph's.

Transportation might become a problem as client gets older, because she doesn't drive and she takes the bus.

Because of the present living situation at home (she has 10 people living with her, and only 2 are her own children), the client is hoping to receive more food assistance from St. Joseph's. Her brother and sister (and their respective families) recently [emigrated] from Egypt and they're living with the client in her apartment.

She would like to know how to go about finding employment as a seamstress, either permanent or "per job" (freelance). It's hard for her to find this type of specific job opening.

Client seemed frustrated by "the system" and the main issue was the bureaucratic process and how time consuming it was.

St. Joseph's really helps with the food program. Client feels the Food Pantry is of maximum importance in helping her family meet their food needs.

St. Joseph's has been very important in helping her meet all her food needs.

She'd be interested om receiving help with housing because her family is now very cramped in a one-bedroom apartment with five people.

Really commends the St. Joseph Center for the work they do here. She feels she's treated well here, with respect.

She feels that the staff at the front desk at the Center need to attend to clients in a more timely manner, because sometimes she's waited up to a half hour because they forgot she was there or they didn't bother to ask a case manager the questions she had. Client feels that they should still give out diapers for free. Nevertheless, when she gives St. Joseph staff a dollar they do say they have diapers. So she feels it's confusing: either it's a dollar or it's not, but the staff doesn't make it clear whether she has to pay or not. Client thinks that the services here are good, but the staff is always on the phone and lets her wait and wait for a long time to be attended.

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She likes how St. Joseph's works and how much they help people in need.
Trying to get financed so he and his wife can purchase a home, so getting help finding a job is of maximum importance. Marshall is helping him a lot.
Wants to be able to receive food stamps but is afraid her husband's eligibility to obtain residency papers might be jeopardized.
She'd like to receive more help finding a job in childcare. Also, she really needs clothes for her oldest child, and she'd like to know places to buy cheap clothes or places where they give clothes away for free.
She really appreciates the help of St. Joseph's. It really helps her family with their food.
Client would like to have more assistance with medical referrals and information.
Really has a need for housing assistance because even though she has a Section 8 certificate she seems to be having problems finding (obtaining) affordable housing.

