



In this issue

Healthy City in the Community

AN EVEN PLAYING FIELD: Support for Foster and Probation Youth

We all know that youth in foster care or on probation are in high need of resources and assistance within their communities. Without adequate support they do poorly in school, with around one third performing below their grade level and only around half actually graduating. But knowing how and where to best reach them has not been easy -- until now. The Education Coordinating Council (ECC) recently joined forces with Healthy City to gather this information and help better serve these youth in LA County.

Currently chaired by LA Councilmember Jose Huizar, ECC is a partnership between various city, county, school district, and non-profit organizations. Recently, ECC combined data from the City of LA, LA County, and LAUSD to locate concentrations of youth in foster care and probation systems throughout LAUSD. Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey, a First 5 LA Commissioner and the John Milner Professor of Child Welfare at USC School of Social Work shared her insights on this project, "...for the first time, the ECC was able to work with the courts, LAUSD, DCFS and Probation to match data across systems to identify the schools where [these] children are clustered, in order to provide supports and services ... My first thought was that I needed to get Healthy City involved in our data team." ECC turned to Healthy City for the best way to present and analyze the information.

With data in hand, Healthy City developed maps showing concentrations of foster and probation youth along with area-specific resources. These maps clearly displayed where services are available and where they are needed. "Healthy City's maps are a key resource in the effort to better serve children in the foster and probation systems," noted Amy Cooper, the Senior Policy Deputy for Councilmember Huizar.

With maps, we can readily inform and assist City decision-makers in determining where services and resources are most needed. By having access to needed resources these youth have a greater chance of success. Healthy City and ECC continue their collaboration, finding more ways to improve our communities by supporting our youth.