

Increasing Access to Childcare and Economic Opportunities for Young Moms Ages 12-26 in Santa Clara County (SCC)

BACKGROUND

In 2019, Alliance for Girls (AFG), Young Women's Freedom Center (YWFC), Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley, and others advocated for county funding to support young moms, an effort that stemmed from the recommendations of AFG's [Together We Rise](#) report. This advocacy resulted in funding from the Santa Clara County (SCC) Government for YWFC and AFG to establish their When Young Moms Thrive, We All Do (WYMT) program. Through youth participatory action research (YPAR) and engagement with over 150 young mothers, this program aimed to effect systems change in policy and culture for young parents in SCC. By uplifting their experiences the program identified and proposed key recommendations, which, if implemented, will create multi-generational change in SCC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the WYMT research findings conducted by young moms, they recommend SCC government agencies do the following:

1. Expand the age of eligibility for child care subsidies to include parents under the age of 18.
 2. Increase funding for childcare assistance programs and infrastructure for young moms.
 3. Research, develop, and implement a Universal Basic Income pilot program that will allow young moms, ages 12 - 26, to access the childcare of their choice.
 4. Mandate annual paid training on stigma-free service delivery for all childcare providers serving young parents.
 5. Provide young moms with increased employment and vocational opportunities.
2. Push to increase federal funding for subsidized programs. Establish a standardized and transparent selection process to help ensure equitable access to childcare services for young parents across county agencies. Increase funding for county-provided childcare infrastructure to maintain facilities, make necessary repairs and address unsafe conditions for children.
 3. Research and identify a structure for a Universal Basic Income (UBI) pilot program in SCC to provide monthly payments of \$1,728 - \$2,200 for at least 100 young moms. Push for State or Federal ask, and commitment to support this UBI program.
 4. Mandate stigma-free paid training led by young parents for childcare providers administered by the County Office of Education and First 5 Santa Clara County. Allocate an initial \$50,000, through the County Board of Supervisors to develop a standard training for facilitators to use and an annual recurring \$30,000 in the county budget for at least 5 consultants (current/former young moms) to provide culturally responsive training.
 5. Incentivize nonprofits currently providing young moms with economic and educational opportunities to deliver subsidized child care as part of their programming. Partner with nonprofits in SCC to incorporate job opportunities and vocational training at their job centers and increase the visibility of existing workforce and employment opportunities for young moms via a website and/or social media. Develop a countywide workforce program that is attuned to the needs of system-impacted young moms, and modeled off the WYMT initiative and the YWCA paid training program.

For more information about any of these recommendations and their implementation, please refer to the [WYMT Policy Memo for Santa Clara County](#).

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Update guidelines to offer additional eligibility and broader timeframes for renewal that are stigma-free, culturally-responsive, and easily understood across diverse audiences. Provide alternate avenues for parents under 18 to use their financial information for eligibility and advocate to expand age requirements to include young parents under 18 for state and federal-funded social services.

CONTACT

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Input for this policy memo was provided by the organizations displayed below: