



# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

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Afterschool Evaluation in Oakland &  
San Francisco

[public  
profit]

# Two Cities: Where did the idea come from?

- **Public Profit:** an evaluation firm specializing in youth development- and after school-focused projects
  - Evaluation of after school programs SF Bay Area-wide, over several years; similar projects, very different cities
    - **BUT:** we had never taken a look at trends on a regional level...



*What if we aggregated our data across years and across projects? What could it tell us about after school in our region, and about the experience of evaluating in this context?*



# Session Agenda

1. **THE CONTEXT:** Discuss the regional context and how it plays into the afterschool landscape.
2. **THE DATA:** Present aggregate, high-level evaluation methodology and findings for 4 after school projects in the San Francisco Bay Area.
3. **THE IMPLICATIONS:** Discuss how the regional context and afterschool landscape shape the evaluation design, implementation, and interpretation of findings.
4. **YOUR TURN:** Learn from your experience about how context can factor into and impact your evaluation projects.



# The Context: Understanding Oakland & San Francisco

The cities share a bay, but differ in very important ways...

## Population:

<b>SF</b>	805,235
<b>Oakland</b>	390,724

## Median Home Price:

\$1.1 m
\$555,000

## Median Household Income:

<b>SF</b>	\$71,304
<b>Oakland</b>	\$49,721

## Not + than HS Degree:

14.4%
18.5%

Sources: MLS; 2006-10 ACS; 2010 US Census



# The Context:

## Understanding Oakland & San Francisco , cont'd.

### Families w. Children Under 18:

<b>SF</b>	16%
<b>Oakland</b>	25%

### % 0-17 year olds:

13.4%
21.3%

### Race/Ethnicity:

	White	Hispanic/ Latino	Black/ African American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American /Alaskan Native	Other	Bi-/Multi- Racial
<b>SF</b>	41.9%	15.1%	5.8%	33.4%	0.2%	0.3%	3.2%
<b>Oakland</b>	25.9%	25.4%	27.3%	17.2%	0.3%	0.3%	3.6%

Sources: 2006-10 ACS; 2010 US Census



# The Context: the Afterschool Landscape

**Proposition 49** is the key to understanding after school programming in the Bay Area

- Passed in 2002; money (\$550m) distributed starting in 2007
- School principals were given greater control of program content and providers
- Sudden influx of money overwhelming to schools and districts



*Created significant policy and programming impacts to Oakland and SF*

*Funding increase in turn increased accountability*

*Expanded focus on program quality*

*Impacted power dynamics between key after school stakeholders*



# The Study: Methodology

To aggregate project data, we:

- **SELECTED A SAMPLE** – Used a criteria-based sampling method (in SF or Oakland; YOY intra-project data available; secondary-age student population; similar project design; similar client profile).
- **MATCHED SURVEY DATA** – Crosswalked existing project-level youth survey items, first within projects (between project years), and then across projects and years. Grouped these items thematically.
- **ANALYZED THE MATCHED DATA** – High level trends within projects, within cities, and between cities.
- **INTERPRETED THE RESULTS** – Took our findings and what we know about the context to make meaning from what we had found.



# The Study: Methodological Limitations

- **LOW DEGREE OF ALIGNMENT** – A small number of survey questions matched across projects, across years.
- **SURVEY DESIGN** – The survey items that did match were often asked with slight wording variations per year, per project.
- **SURVEY ADMINISTRATION** – Methods of surveying were different across sites (timing, format, instructional materials/collateral, survey conditions...).
- **LIMITED LONGITUDINAL REACH** – Data is available from 3 complete project cycles covering 4 calendar years (2011-14); not all matched survey items appeared in all project cycles; the project cycles may include different after school provider organizations and different youth each time.





# The Data: What Youth Think About Safety

3 of the 8 matched youth survey items related to **safety**. In a youth development context, 'safety' refers to a clean program space free of hazards; a physically and emotionally safe space for youth; and a program that provides youth with healthy foods. Some of these aspects were reflected in the matched items:

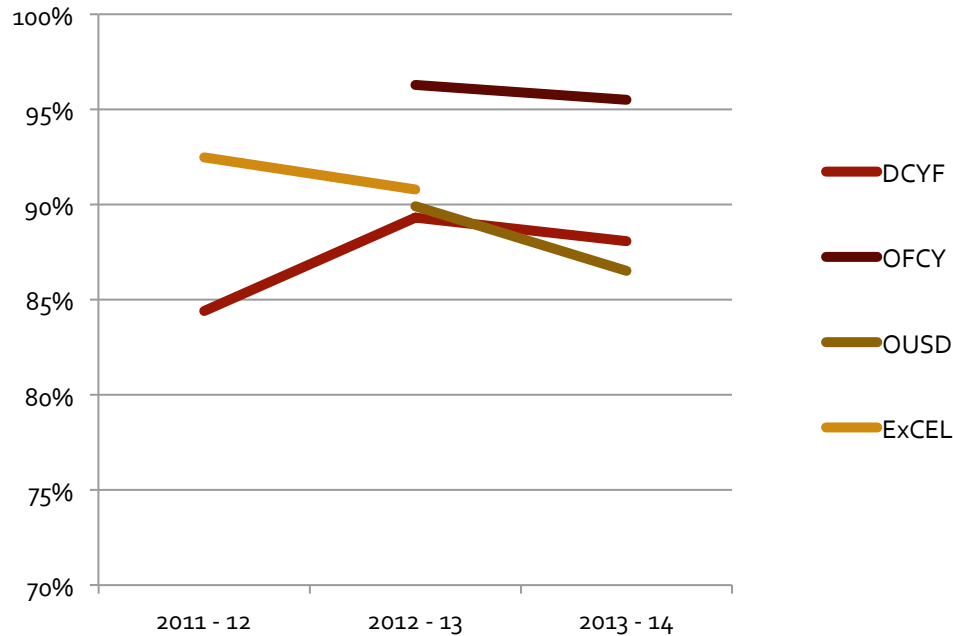
Youths' % agreement to: (* reverse coded)		I feel safe in this program.	Physical bullying.*	Verbal bullying.*	OVERALL AVERAGE, domain + city
<b>SF</b>	DCYF	87	--	--	<b>88</b>
	ExCEL	92	88	83	
<b>OAK</b>	OFCY	96	91	86	<b>88</b>
	OUSD	88	82	82	



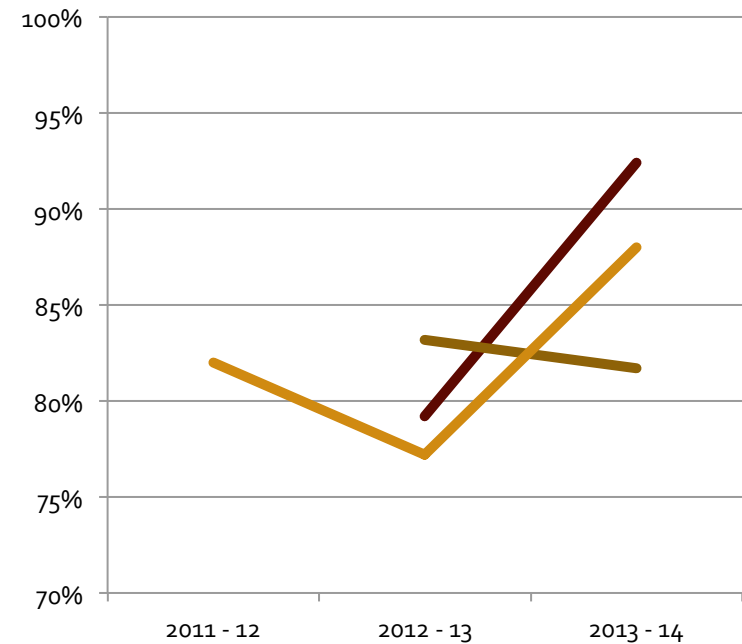
# The Data: What Youth Think About Safety, cont'd.

Seen another way, trends on safety over time generally look like this:

### I feel safe in this program:



### Verbal bullying\*:



# The Data: What Youth Think About Positive Program Environment

5 of the 8 matched youth survey items related to **positive program environment** (meaning youth encouragement, skill building, reframing conflict, relationships with peers and adults).

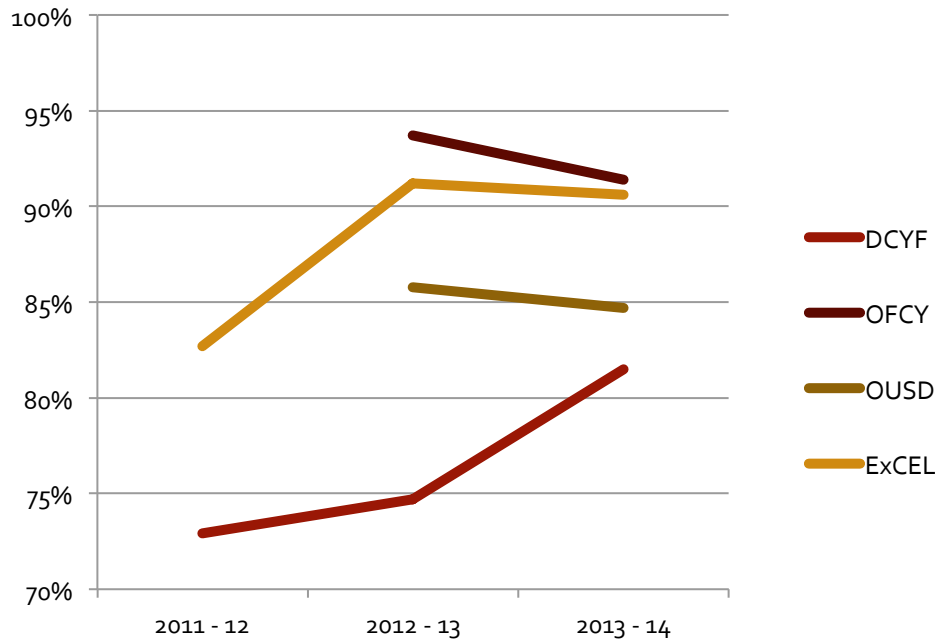
Youths' % agreement to:		I feel like I belong at this program.	In this program I get to help other people.	There is an adult at this program who really cares about me.	In this program, I get to decide things like activities and group agreements.	The staff here tells me when I do a good job.	OVERALL AVERAGE domain + city
<b>SF</b>	DCYF	--	--	76	--	83	<b>83</b>
	ExCEL	88	79	88	76	88	
<b>OAK</b>	OFCY	91	87	92	83	92	<b>85</b>
	OUSD	84	80	85	74	85	



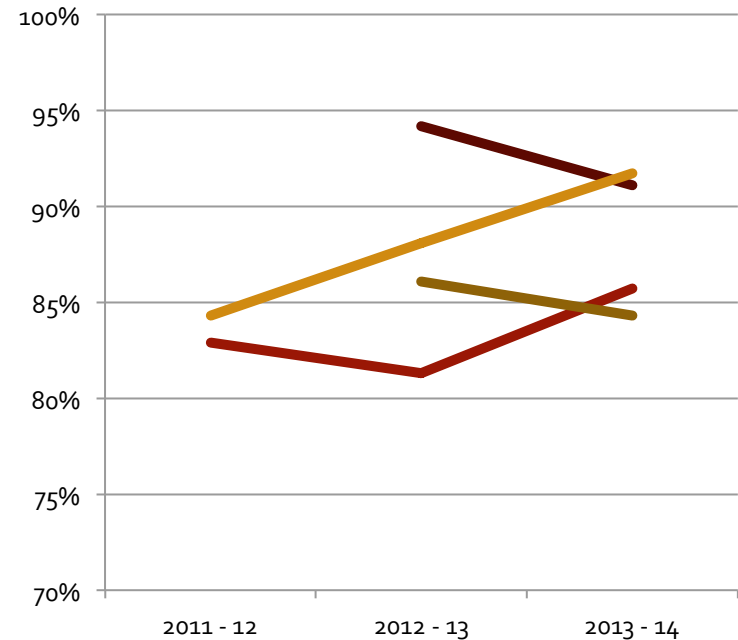
# The Data: What Youth Think About Positive Program Environment, *cont'd.*

The trends on program environment over time are similar to those for safety:

### Adult here who cares about me:



### Staff tells me if I do a good job:



# The Implications: So what?

What did we learn about evaluation from the exercise of aggregating our data?

- **Organizational structures and processes can be at odds.** An increased focus on program quality, in a system set up to monitor grant compliance.
- **Funding cycles impact how much we know.** 1-year funding cycles limit how much change over time can be measured.
- **Agencies plan and act in self-interest.** City agencies and school districts embrace youth development- and quality-focused program goals, but maintain different organizational foci and strategic orientations. Can/should there be a single, centralized quality framework that applies across cities, across regions, and across the state?



# The Implications: So what?, cont'd.

- **Newness, malleability of program quality frameworks.** Continuous quality improvement frameworks (malleable), funding mechanisms (fixed), and grant compliance (fixed) operate on somewhat separate planes and have yet to reach a point of alignment. This impacts how effective and comprehensive both quality improvement and evaluation can be.
- **Utilization- and client-focused evaluation can place immediate utility above long-term understanding.** Short-term client needs and goals may trump more complex and future-focused knowledge.



# Your turn: Learning from *your* evaluations

Now tell us about your experiences! Brainstorm first by...



**Pro/Con Continuum:** Are you for or against having centralized measures of program quality across projects, across regions, across fields...? Line up according to how strongly you feel, and share out!

...and next by:



**Small group chat:** Based on your experiences and the context in which you work, share with your group members about:

The challenges or tensions of evaluating program quality in compliance-focused contexts.



QUESTIONS?

COMMENTS?

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

**BE IN TOUCH!**

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