

# **Evaluation of the Employment Journey Project:**

Final Report, September 2000

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## **1: Overview of the Employment Journey Project**

This Final Report examines the Employment Journey Project (EJP), a demonstration project testing an innovative new model of delivering employment and family support services that was implemented in three Northern California neighborhoods. This Report follows an Interim Report submitted to Family Support California, the lead agency in the demonstration, in January 2000. The Interim Report contained a detailed account of the first 18 months of EJP operations and a preliminary description of client characteristics and outcome. The Final Report focuses on EJP implementation issues overall, client outcomes, and the lessons learned from the demonstration. Chapter 1 begins with a description of the development of the EJP vision and provides a brief description of the partners involved, including Family Support California. Chapter Two discusses the EJP evaluation design, its implementation, and the limitations with the evaluation's design and subsequent data collected. Chapters Three, Four and Five describe the EJP implementation in each of the three EJP partnerships, and includes a description of client outcomes. The last chapter presents additional findings regarding service integration, and a summary of the lessons learned and recommendations to other entities interested in implementing a similar initiative. It is important to note that multiple sources were utilized to provide input into this report. These sources include the data collected by programs specifically for the evaluation, FSC reports submitted to the Irvine Foundation throughout the EJP, quarterly site reports submitted to FSC, multiple visits to each site, and participation in quarterly EJP meetings.

### **Employment Journey Project Background**

The concept of the Employment Journey Project was developed by staff at Family Support California (FSC, formerly known as the Greater Bay Area Family Resource Network), a technical assistance and training provider to family support programs and family resource centers throughout California. FSC staff envisioned a collaboration between employment programs and family support programs so that families could benefit from the combination of these services. As a result, families would get long-term support, not just one-time help with a family crisis (e.g., food or rental assistance) or immediate job placement with no follow-up. To effectively join these services and better meet family needs, a new kind of service model was needed.

The passage of welfare reform legislation (the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996) placed limits on the amount of time that families could receive cash welfare assistance, and gave a sense of urgency to this quest. The new welfare system strongly encouraged families to reduce their dependence on government assistance by requiring parents to participate in work activities. FSC staff believed that many families on welfare would need more than traditional short-term employment services in order to obtain, keep and advance in employment. Furthermore, they were concerned about the effects of the new welfare policies on the well-being of recipients and their children.

Employment was envisioned as a *journey* in which individuals and their families overcame barriers, adapted to the world of work, and progressed through numerous jobs. Further, each of these activities would improve family functioning and increase self-sufficiency. Traditional employment programs do not usually take this point of view. Rather, they tend to have a narrow, short-term focus on placing an individual in a job, without looking at personal or family issues such as a lack of housing, substance abuse or mental health needs. On the other hand, family resource centers and family support programs take a more holistic view of families and their needs, but tend not to have an emphasis on employment or to offer employment services. Developing a successful welfare-to-work strategy would therefore require an integration of these two approaches, while at the same time recognizing the effects that welfare reform was having on the traditional assistance families could receive from the government.

Realizing this need for a new vision of welfare-to-work strategies, FSC, with funding from the Irvine Foundation, conducted a feasibility study and awarded planning grants to four sets of organizational partners in Northern California in 1996-97. The four original partnerships were:

- Sacramento (Del Paso Heights neighborhood);
- San Francisco (Mission District and Western Addition Neighborhoods);
- Gilroy, a small city south of San Jose;

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- Hayward, a city south of Oakland in the East Bay region (the Harder-Tennyson neighborhood in South Hayward).

In each site, agencies that had experience in offering employment services worked with agencies offering family support services to develop a plan for offering a new kind of collaborative service, called the Employment Journey Project. At the end of 1997, three of the four projects had completed their planning and submitted implementation proposals to FSC, which in turn submitted a grant application to the Irvine Foundation. The fourth project, in Gilroy, fell behind in the planning phase and then chose not to move to the next step in the process. In March 1997, FSC approached Berkeley Policy Associates (formerly known as Berkeley Planning Associates (BPA)) about conducting an evaluation of the proposed projects, and an evaluation proposal was submitted with the implementation proposal in January 1998. Both the projects and the evaluation were funded soon after, with start dates varying from April to July 1998.

### **Overview of FSC Involvement**

FSC officially began the Employment Journey Project in January of 1997, and brought a strong vision of integrated services to the EJP demonstration. Over the years, it has successfully worked with numerous family resource centers and family support programs to heighten the level and effectiveness of services provided to families. During the EJP demonstration, FSC played two important roles: 1) technical assistance and training provider to EJP partners; and 2) funding entity. As a part of its involvement, FSC developed a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for sites, facilitated the application process, and was responsible for the disbursement of funding throughout the project's duration. In addition to these responsibilities, FSC provided strong leadership to EJP partners during the demonstration project, providing assistance in four primary arenas:

- overseeing and supporting EJP partners in integrating their employment and family support systems, including identifying obstacles to integration and providing recommendations to address those issues;

- encouraging peer-to-peer learning through the provision of opportunities for cross-site training and communication;
- implementing customized training and technical assistance to each EJP partnership;
- assisting each partnering agency involved in the EJP to negotiate the sometimes difficult process of integrating systems with other partnering agencies that often have divergent philosophies of service delivery or expectations about responsibilities.

FSC provided sites with a great deal of support during the design and implementation phases, and this support was seen as crucial in enabling sites to formulate realistic plans for changes in program infrastructure. It also helped EJP partners identify areas that were progressing according to the original plan, and develop new methods of operation. FSC staff met often with those responsible for developing the EJP implementation plan in each site. It continued this tradition throughout implementation, focusing on site-specific implementation challenges in order to help programs develop ways to overcome the inevitable obstacles of changing systems. FSC staff were always available by phone or email, and site staff report that this availability was essential in helping sites develop new modes of operation.

In addition to the ongoing support provided to sites, FSC offered several formal training opportunities during the demonstration. Table 1.1 highlights these opportunities. In addition to the formal training sessions held, FSC staff provided ongoing site-specific training at each of the three sites throughout implementation.

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**Table 1.1**  
**EJP Training Opportunities offered by FSC**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Year Offered</b>
<b>Family Assessment Tool</b>	1998–1999
Definition and scope of domains	
Interview styles	
Identifying key indicators	
Scoring practice	
Developing goals based on scores	
<b>Family Centered Case Management</b>	1998–1999
Principles of family support	
Structuring a family interview	
Working with a family to set goals/objectives	
Structuring case conferencing to include family	
Introduction to the Family Unity Model	
<b>Job Mediation Training</b>	1998–1999
Mechanism to be informed with hiring occurs	
Identifying processes unique to the employer	
Follow-up coaching and problem-solving techniques	
<b>Career Advancement Counseling</b>	1998–1999
Using a skills translation survey	
Developing a career path using survey	
Developing an Employability Plan	
<b>Introduction to Family Support Foundation</b>	1999–2000
Case Management Best Practices	
Approaches to Family Assessment	
Mapping Service Integration at each site	
<b>Enhancing Job Performance and Retention Strategies</b>	1999–2000
Coaching	
Retention Strategies	
<b>Partnering with Families</b>	1999–2000
Engaging and rapport building	
Developing cooperative relationships with families and agencies	
Interview techniques	
Learning about employment industry to create opportunities	
<b>Partnering with Families</b>	1999–2000
Family Assessment Tool	
Goal attainment	
<b>Partnering with Families</b>	1999–2000
Family Unity Model	
Welfare-to-Work opportunities	
Helping welfare recipients increase wages and advance	

According to FSC staff, the primary goal of the training sessions was to facilitate peer-to-peer learning around service integration. In fact, EJP staff indicated that meeting staff from other EJP sites was the most useful part of the training because it provided a chance to communicate about the issues they were facing with clients and brainstorm ideas to address the problems. They enjoyed the peer-to-peer contact, and expressed their wish that there had been more opportunity for direct sharing of information between staff. Unfortunately, some staff at all three sites expressed that the material presented at the sessions was too basic, and did not provide much new information. FSC staff note that it is always difficult to exactly match training material to each staff's need, particularly because EJP staff had varying levels of expertise. Furthermore, BPA might have only interviewed the more experienced training participants who thought the material was too elementary, and if we had interviewed new or less experienced staff, their feedback would have been more positive. In addition, implementation happened differently than planned, so the timing of the training schedule was thrown off. FSC staff note that the sessions offered in the third year of implementation might have been more helpful if it had occurred in the second year; by the time it was offered, EJP partners had already faced many of the situations covered during training sessions.

As noted earlier, FSC played a dual role as technical assistance provider and funder during the EJP demonstration, and this duality was often seen as a conflict of interest both by FSC and EJP staff. EJP staff did not always feel comfortable in fully disclosing implementation struggles out of a fear that it might somehow affect funding decisions. Yet in order for technical assistance to be effective, program staff must feel comfortable fully disclosing both its achievements and the obstacles it faces. This was the first time that FSC had been in a funding position, and it did not anticipate and plan for the conflict this role might bring in building relationships with EJP partnerships. Previously, FSC had always been able to provide technical assistance to programs without the burden of demanding accountability to an MOU. FSC made attempts to alleviate part of this conflict by separating staff roles, dividing the technical assistance and training role from the funding and accountability role, and this method saw some success.

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## 2: EJP Evaluation

Berkeley Policy Associates (BPA) was selected to conduct an evaluation of the Employment Journey Project in March 1998. The EJP evaluation was designed to capture information on two fronts: 1) implementation and process issues, including the structure of the EJP programs in each site, EJP staffing, client demographics, client flow through the program, and services provided to EJP families; and 2) client outcomes, including family functioning and employment. We worked directly with the Executive Directors of the various agencies involved in the evaluation planning process as well as FSC staff to finalize the evaluation plan. The evaluation remained highly participatory throughout the duration of the project, with input from sites and FSC continually incorporated into the evolving evaluation design.

### Process Study

The first evaluation component, the process study, was based primarily on three data collection activities: 1) site visits to the projects to investigate staffing, integration issues, and the evolution of project services; 2) attendance at regular quarterly meetings where project staff discussed common issues affecting their projects as implementation progressed; and 3) analysis of client demographic and service receipt data.

Baseline site visits were conducted to each of the projects, although not as early in the first year of program services as planned. Visits were conducted to the Sacramento project in October 1998, to the South Hayward project in November 1998, and to the San Francisco project in January 1999. During these site visits, open-ended discussions were held with a variety of respondents, including executive and program staff. The discussions focused on the planning and initial implementation of the Employment Journey Project at that site. Although data issues were the main focus of the second round of site visits conducted in May 1999, we also held discussions with program staff about ongoing program implementation issues in conjunction with a FSC staff person who was assessing each project's technical assistance needs. Additionally, in two of the three

programs we conducted a small number of case file reviews, in order to get examples of how different types of clients used EJP services.<sup>1</sup> The third round of site visits was held in May and June 2000 and focused on how the EJP had evolved in each of the EJP partnerships. Interviews were conducted with case managers, employment staff, and program coordinators. An example of the discussion guides used during site visits is included as Appendix A.

The evaluation design did not specifically evaluate FSC's role in the Employment Journey Project, and therefore did not include regular, formal interviews with FSC staff. We did not systematically track FSC's staffing changes, management issues, or training or technical assistance provision. FSC staff did provide input into both the Interim and Final Reports, but their perspectives were not systematically documented during the planning or implementation phases of the EJP.

## Outcomes Study

The evaluation also called for the analysis of outcome data. In collaboration with FSC and EJP staff, BPA developed a list of proposed outcome measures to assess employment outcomes and changes in family functioning during program participation. In order to measure these outcomes and to track service receipt, quantitative data was collected. In an effort to make data collection efficient, useful for program staff, and adequate for evaluation purposes, a consultant to FSC developed a user-friendly Microsoft Access database that recorded all the elements needed to measure the evaluation outcomes, as well as identification information needed by project staff.<sup>2</sup> The database elements were agreed upon by all three EJP partnerships and FSC staff.

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<sup>1</sup>In South Hayward, the program's concerns about client confidentiality prevented us from reviewing case files.

<sup>2</sup>A paper version of the database is included as Appendix B.



The installation of the project database proceeded as planned in San Francisco and originally in South Hayward, but the Sacramento project, which is housed at a county employment agency, determined that a new database was incompatible with the extensive county MIS system already in place. Furthermore, the South Hayward project encountered problems with coordinating case file extraction across the multiple sites in the Collaborative, and entered information for only a few cases into the database. This posed a significant problem for the evaluation. One of the primary purposes of having an identical database in all three sites was to provide consistent, comparable data across sites. Furthermore, utilization of the database would prevent the use of extra personnel for data entry from paper forms, either at the site or for the evaluation as a whole.

However, the fact that programs were unable to utilize the database highlighted a bigger issue facing the demonstration. The database was designed during the demonstration planning phase, before EJP partnerships began their attempt to change operations to integrate services. Once implementation began, it became clear that EJP partnerships did not yet have a complete understanding of what their services would look like once integration was operationalized. For example, some EJP partnerships did not have fully developed plans for how clients would enter the EJP. This lack of clarity, which is typical when extensive operational changes are undertaken, meant that data collection plans developed according to the initial program design were difficult to implement given the actual characteristics of program operation. These difficulties highlighted the fact that even though the database had been designed with participation and agreement from EJP and FSC staff, it lacked an extensive assessment of how clients would flow through the program, the case management system being implemented in each site, or the automation capabilities of each EJP.

#### **Alternative Data Collection Tools**

When it became clear that the database would not be utilized in two out of the three EJP programs, contingency plans were formulated for data collection so that the demonstration could meet its reporting obligations. Alternative data collection

tools were designed to closely reflect the tables being used in the EJP database in an attempt to retain the ability to collect similar data in the three EJP partnerships. These tools are described below and included as Appendix C.

### **Service Logs**

Case workers kept Service Logs tracking each client's service needs and whether or not those needs were met. There was much discussion about the efficacy of the Service Logs during the demonstration project. It has traditionally been difficult for organizations serving families to develop a service tracking system that provides an accurate view of client needs and the organization's response to those needs, particularly when outside referrals are frequently utilized. A common question has been how to track whether or not clients actually received services from an agency they were referred to without the case worker having to call each agency and ask about individual clients. Although this takes up a large amount of case worker time, all three EJP sites agreed to perform this tracking duty for evaluation purposes. Therefore, on each Service Log, if the site records that a particular service has been received, it indicates that the individual was not simply given a referral, but actually received assistance in that area.

The Service Logs were developed in a collaborative manner during the evaluation planning phase (see Appendix C for an example of the Service Log). Its format was slightly changed during the first year of the demonstration project, adding a column that tracked the actual number of service contacts made and whether the goals were attained in each category. However, the new version was not thoroughly integrated into the data collection systems at each site, and was therefore not utilized consistently. Thus, we do not fully utilize all the Service Log information in our analysis<sup>3</sup>. Service data was collected at four intervals throughout the demonstration project.

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<sup>3</sup>For analysis purposes, if service contacts were made, they were defined as a service being received by the client.

### Family Assessments

To measure family functioning changes during clients' participation in the EJP, a Family Assessment was designed by EJP staff. It measured functioning in 15 domains at regular intervals, such as employment, food and clothing, family finances and child care. For each category, the case worker assigned a score stating whether the client was *in crisis*, *at risk*, *stable*, *safe and self-sufficient*, or *thriving* in each of the particular categories (see Appendix C for a Family Assessment example). Staff developed guidelines for applying the five possible scores in each domain, and FSC provided training on the Assessment's use.

The Family Assessments provide the best information regarding families' functioning progress during their participation in the demonstration. Staff conducted an assessment at program entry, then again roughly every three months after intake. Staff quickly learned that a complete assessment does not always occur at intake because it often takes much longer to develop a trusting relationship with a client. Another lesson was that family support staff need to feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues, such as substance abuse or domestic violence, with EJP clients in order to address the more serious barriers to positive functioning and self-sufficiency. Some EJP staff felt reluctance in assessing families in those domains. This might have been a by-product of the manner in which the agencies had traditionally provided family support services, with a focus primarily on short-term, concrete needs such as food or clothing. On the other hand, staff might have felt more comfortable with the Family Assessment had additional training been provided earlier in the demonstration.

### Employment Outcomes

Although it seemed as if tracking employment outcomes would be simple and straight-forward, in practice it is very difficult for programs of all types to accurately track clients' employment status. Many clients choose not to continue participation in services once they find a job until a crisis occurs and they need immediate assistance. At that point, an individual might return to the program

seeking assistance, but not be interested in or able to provide detailed information about their recent employment experiences (e.g., start date or starting wage). Unless programs have a specific plan for tracking clients after a job is found, much of the most useful data is often lost. The EJP did not originally plan for staff to contact clients once they stopped actively participating in services in order to track employment outcomes, and it was therefore difficult to gather accurate and complete data for this part of the evaluation. Furthermore, the form that was developed by BPA to track employment outcomes was not well-suited for use outside of an integrated database. The form closely mirrored the employment table in the Microsoft Access database; however, it was introduced halfway through implementation, and was confusing to many EJP staff members.

### **Data Collection Strategies**

When it became clear that the EJP database would not be suitable for use in all three sites, plans were made to utilize the alternative data collection tools described above. In Sacramento, during the first data collection round, a BPA staff member went to the MAN offices and manually entered data from case files. In the early rounds of data collection, the Sacramento EJP was unable to electronically produce employment information for its clients because that data was kept in the county MIS and individual extractions were not possible. Consequently, after the first data collection round, all data was submitted to BPA on paper forms and BPA entered the data, including employment information that Job Retention Specialists began tracking outside of the county MIS. In San Francisco, all data was entered into the Microsoft Access database by EJP staff except Service Log information, which was completed by Arriba Juntos and Good Samaritan staff and submitted to BPA for entry into the appropriate software. South Hayward started out by using a revised spreadsheet designed by EJP staff that contained client demographic data. They entered data into the spreadsheet, then submitted it to BPA; the Service Logs were submitted on paper and entered by BPA. During the early rounds of data collection, the South Hayward program declined to provide family assessment data because it felt it was too confidential to be used in the evaluation. Furthermore, EJP staff was not tracking employment outcomes for clients, and thus was unable

to provide job information. Toward the end of the demonstration period, the Hayward EJP made arrangements to enter all data from the beginning of the project, including employment outcomes, into a modified version of the previously designed database for use in the evaluation. This was submitted to BPA for inclusion in the Final Report.

### **Data Limitations**

The issues described above highlight some of the limitations of the evaluation. These limitations, along with others not previously described, are noted below.

- Data collection for the evaluation became a primary focus during the demonstration. This was due to several reasons, including a mismatch between the data collection design and the case management systems implemented in the EJP partnerships. When the database was being designed, not enough attention was paid to carefully assessing the case management piece of the EJP, and this resulted in the database being less useful in two of the three sites.
- The process study site visits were not adequate to capture the small but important steps taken during EJP implementation. Due to the large amount of time devoted to developing and implementing alternative data collection tools, BPA did not have as much time to devote to process study activities, such as spending time in each EJP partnership documenting program operations. Furthermore, FSC staff were not formally interviewed regarding FSC's perceptions of the operational changes taking place within EJP partnerships, the site-specific technical assistance being provided, and the cross-site training offered. BPA therefore had less information about EJP implementation successes and challenges.
- The evaluation did not include a comparison group, and therefore certain types of conclusions cannot be drawn from the data. The classic way to measure the true effect of a program on clients is to compare the outcomes

of participants to the outcomes they would have experienced in the absence of the program. In order to do this, there must be a means for isolating the changes in client outcomes that can be directly attributed to the EJP, as opposed to those outcomes that might be observed at random. The EJP evaluation does provide useful information that describes client characteristics, changes in family functioning during program participation, and employment outcomes. These are important indicators, particularly for a demonstration project, as it provides the first clue in determining how a program might be influencing clients' lives. Although it cannot conclusively determine whether or not outcomes are caused by the program, it can provide programs with important preliminary information.

- Employment data is not as complete as originally planned, and therefore may not accurately reflect the employment outcomes of clients. For example, job end dates are not recorded for many EJP clients. It is unknown whether this was because clients remained in their jobs past EJP participation, indicating successful employment, or because they simply did not report job end dates to EJP staff. We were therefore unable to determine whether the clients reporting this information are representative of the EJP clientele in general.
- There were differences in the manner in which each EJP site interpreted the scoring system on the Family Assessment, and that is reflected in the scores given to families. Sacramento had a tendency to score clients much higher than the other two EJP demonstration sites. However, in discussions with Sacramento staff, this was attributed to the manner in which staff interpreted the scoring guidelines rather than because they are serving a clientele with very few barriers to positive functioning.
- Sacramento had some problems accurately tracking clients throughout the demonstration project. However, Sacramento EJP staff worked diligently with BPA to resolve the issues. Problems were primarily with the accurate assignment of Identification Numbers which were used to protect

confidentiality in the evaluation. For example, many clients were assigned different Identification Numbers at various points in the project, and others were assigned duplicate ID Numbers. This caused confusion for the evaluation, but reportedly did not affect case management because EJP staff had all their client files with client names on them readily accessible.

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### **3: Mutual Assistance Network (MAN) - Sacramento**

#### **Neighborhood Background and Program Development**

The Employment Journey Project program in Sacramento serves the Del Paso Heights neighborhood in the northern part of the city. In 1990, Del Paso Heights had a population of about 10,000 residents highly challenged by unemployment and poverty, with approximately 40 percent of families having incomes below the poverty line. The population consists of diverse racial and ethnic groups, with 48 percent African-American, 23 percent Caucasian, 16 percent Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander, 11 percent Latino, and 2 percent American Indian residents. The Mutual Assistance Network (MAN) was founded in 1992 by neighborhood residents with help from the county-funded Neighborhood Service Agency. In 1994, it incorporated as a community development corporation. MAN is firmly grounded in the community, with 70 to 80 percent of staff and board members at any one time being comprised of individuals from the neighborhood.

In 1996, with the passage of federal welfare reform legislation, the agency's Executive Director decided that MAN should be proactive in responding to the changes that would occur. He had already hired two recent graduates of the California State University Sacramento Social Work program to assist in this effort, and one of these new staff members later became the Project Manager for the Employment Journey Project. In late 1996 through July 1997, MAN led the neighborhood in planning a "Neighborhood System" that would prepare residents to leave welfare and achieve self-sufficiency. In a series of neighborhood meetings held over a number of months, seven workgroups comprised of residents investigated existing community resources and the needs of residents, and developed a system to address those needs. During this process, 14 community agencies were brought together to form the Del Paso Heights/Strawberry Manor Neighborhood System. Although many resources existed in the community, the process pointed to a number of unmet needs, and MAN agreed to search for funding to provide those services.

Employment support services were identified as a particular need. Although the neighborhood housed one of the county's U.S. Department of Labor-funded one-stop employment centers, there was a need for additional services, such as job

development, expanded training opportunities, support services, and assistance for persons who had been out of the labor market for some time. Transportation was also a significant barrier in this isolated neighborhood, since most jobs existed outside the area.

As a result of the Neighborhood System initiative, MAN was already playing a leadership role in the neighborhood when FSC approached the agency about the Employment Journey Project. The kinds of services that FSC wanted to implement meshed well with the neighborhood's assessment of their needs, and would build on the existence of the Block Grandparent program that provided family support services, and the One-Stop Center, which provided employment services and which would administer newly-authorized Welfare-to-Work funds. The Employment Journey Project was thus viewed as an opportunity to bring the services together and to hire new staff that would explicitly link family support and employment services. MAN also continued to apply for funds to provide other services to address identified needs, such as transportation, economic development, youth mentoring and the Loan Contingency Program.

The EJP program brought together several partners and funding streams to serve Del Paso Heights families. The core partners in this endeavor were:

- C MAN, including a Project Manager, a community service job coordinator, and three Retention Specialists (two funded by FSC and one funded by the California Endowment);
- C Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) Sacramento Works! One-Stop Career Center provided MAN the welfare-to-work funding that allowed it to hire four Employment Specialists along with computers, Internet access and office equipment;
- C Grant Skills Center (Adult Education and Regional Occupational Program of the Grant Joint Union High School District), which offers basic skills and vocational training classes;

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- C Department of Human Assistance (county welfare agency), which provided funding to hire a Job Developer and provides direct referrals to the Job Club/Job Search program offered at the Grant Skills Center;
- C Neighborhood Service Agency, a program of the Department of Human Assistance, which provides family counseling and alcohol and drug counseling to welfare recipients; and
- C Child Action, Inc., which provides information about child care and provides training for child care providers.

These partners came together to form a unified system of delivering services to families in the Del Paso Heights neighborhood. EJP provided some of the funding needed to operationalize the philosophy of collaboration into an actual system of serving families.

### **EJP Services and Client Flow**

An EJP client was defined as any individual served by a Job Retention Specialist because he or she had barrier (e.g., substance abuse, child care needs, lack of self-confidence) to obtaining or keeping a job. Clients could enter EJP services through various entry points, including a referral for employment assistance from CalWORKS or by independently seeking assistance from the program. The most common entry point was through a meeting with an Employment Specialist as a requirement of CalWORKS. Most TANF clients are required to participate in some type of work related activity, so they were involved in job clubs and other services through the One-Stop Career Center and Grants Skills Center. The partners agreed to augment services to TANF clients by actively steering them to the Employment Journey Project because they believed the model used would result in a greater number of clients becoming self-sufficient. TANF participants were automatically enrolled in the One Stop's Job Club or Job Search program and assigned an Employment Specialist. If, during the two week Job Club/Job Search program, a client was identified as having any barriers, he or she was referred directly to a Job

Retention Specialist for assistance. Clients could also simply walk-in to the One-Stop and request assistance with family support issues; these clients were served first by a Job Retention Specialist.

Clients may meet with a Job Retention Specialist both as they search for employment and after finding a job. Specialists often assisted clients with immediate needs such as emergency food, bus passes or translating school notices sent home with a client's child. They also tried to address long-term issues with clients. One Retention Specialist mentioned that she frequently asks a participant, "What will make your life better?" and by asking that question, she initiates a conversation about long-term goals for barrier elimination. Furthermore, when a client was searching for a job, the Job Retention Specialist often had in-depth conversations with an individual about the type of job he or she would find ideal, regardless of the qualifications necessary for obtaining it. Staff used these conversations to work with clients in setting goals that improved their chances of finding employment that would both meet personal aspirations and provide a secure employment and income situation.

During the second year of implementation, a protocol was developed to provide post-employment follow-up services to clients. Employment Specialists no longer worked with clients after they obtained employment. Instead, every case was transferred to a Job Retention Specialist who made regular follow-up phone calls to clients to obtain information on job status and offer retention services. One challenge was that clients did not understand the reason they were being called, and efforts were made to ensure an adequate explanation of the follow-up protocol to the client before they left services with the Employment Specialist.

Although much of the work of the Employment Journey Project at MAN was focused on individual participants, this program also conducted activities to benefit the Del Paso Heights community as a whole. MAN held two job fairs, one in December 1998 and one in May 1999. The job fairs brought about 30 employers together under one roof and allowed residents to apply for jobs on the spot. In order to facilitate parents' participation in the fair, child care and translation services in 10 languages were provided to job seekers. A large proportion of attendees were given

appointments for interviews, and others were hired on the spot. Both employers and residents agreed that these job fairs were beneficial, and MAN plans to continue to hold them in the future.

### **Strengths and Challenges of Implementing the EJP**

MAN's Employment Journey Project began with several assets and developed additional strengths during the demonstration period. It has also faced some challenges and obstacles. We highlight these strengths and challenges in the following section.

- The infrastructure created by the Neighborhood System provided the Employment Journey Project with an excellent network of services that Del Paso Heights residents could access. Service integration was enhanced by the location of MAN's offices in the Los Palmas One-Stop Center on the Grant Skills Center campus. It placed the program in close proximity to other services so that clients could easily move from one service provider to another with minimal effort. This allowed the partners to present the Employment Journey Project as a seamless set of services.
- MAN's community-based planning process that involved many Del Paso Heights residents and took a proactive stance toward welfare reform resulted in a program that had strong community support and was responsive to the expressed needs of the community.
- The Project Manager was involved in the EJP process from the very beginning; he was an integral part of the planning phase of the demonstration and was one of the authors of MAN's proposal to FSC. As a result, he had a clear understanding of FSC's vision for integrated family support and employment services. He was then able to successfully translate that vision to the Job Retention Specialists and staff from partnering entities (e.g., Employment Specialists). Furthermore, two Job Retention Specialists were hired and trained during the initial stages of the Sacramento EJP. This

continuity of leadership throughout the planning and implementation phase of the EJP made a great difference in Sacramento's ability to successfully translate the philosophy of service integration into practice.

- An important accomplishment in the Sacramento EJP partnership was that all partners and staff shared a common vision of collaborative services to meet the needs of neighborhood residents. This provided a unified understanding of the importance of being open to changing the way services had been offered in the past and gave the partnership a good foundation when facing tough operational issues.
- Initially it was difficult for staff trained in various disciplines (e.g., employment services or family services) to understand and appreciate the points of view of others. For instance, Employment Specialists who worked under the JTPA system had historically not considered family issues when addressing employment barriers. Over time, Employment Specialists learned how to collaborate with the Job Retention Specialists to help participants address broader family concerns. Alternatively, the Job Retention Specialists may not have understood that Employment Specialists' efforts to remain responsive to employers might include quickly referring candidates to job interviews prior to addressing all outstanding family needs. Job Retention Specialists had to learn the importance of remaining responsive to employer needs, especially within the context of the new welfare to work environment. Furthermore, the provision of retention services was new to the Sacramento partnership, and it took some time for the case management model to fully develop before it could readily integrate with the existing employment services. In the early days of implementation, staff tended to "hand-off" a client to the other staff person after providing their respective services. Consequently, clients often received serial services. In this sense, the connection between employment and family support services was more cooperative than collaborative. By the end of the demonstration project, staff had a much deeper appreciation for the simultaneous need for both types of services, and had begun to collaborate

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on a regular basis. FSC was actively involved in assisting MAN in this transition. To facilitate service integration, FSC initiated a series of meetings with affected staff at the One-Stop Center focused on organizational capacity and team building activities.

- Early in implementation, clients entering the program were faced with multiple and often duplicate intake forms to fill out. Various funding streams needed particular information, and no one computer system existed throughout the agencies. The program was concerned that clients with low literacy skills would be especially discouraged by having to provide what is often sensitive information (e.g., income information) multiple times. As the demonstration continued, staff were able to coordinate intake data collection so that clients did not need to continually provide the same information to different staff members.
- Information that was collected in multiple parts of the system was not being integrated into a single case file during the first year of implementation, which made case management difficult. The Employment Specialists primarily utilized an Excel spreadsheet program to house the data they keep on clients, although some basic data was kept on paper. In contrast, Job Retention Specialists kept the majority of data on paper. By the second year of implementation, staff members were regularly sharing paper files, accessing each other's computer files, and frequently communicating about clients they had in common.
- The demonstration project was too short for the full implementation of a new model or to appropriately assess its effectiveness. It takes a long time to change a system, and this demonstration allowed only one year of planning and two years of implementation. The first year and a half of implementation were spent trying to work out the kinks in the system, and the remaining six months were inadequate to accurately test the feasibility and effectiveness of the EJP.

All of these issues indicate that even with a year of planning and excellent continuity in leadership, there were still challenges to anticipating and responding to the operational issues of running a collaborative set of services. Yet the partners serving the Del Paso Heights neighborhood continued to be committed to providing a broad array of family support and employment services to community residents in a spirit of real collaboration.

## Sacramento EJP Client Characteristics

In this section, we explain the characteristics of Sacramento EJP clients at entry into the program, highlighting demographic characteristics and client barriers present at intake. This information is useful because it can indicate the types of assets and challenges that clients bring to the EJP at entry into the program and provide a context for interpreting the client outcomes presented in later sections of this chapter.

### Demographic Characteristics of Sacramento EJP Clients

Intake data was provided for 236 Sacramento EJP clients<sup>1</sup>, and is summarized in Figure 3.1. The typical EJP client was female (71 percent) with an average of two children living in the home. Clients were an average of 34 years old and single<sup>2</sup> (60 percent), although a significant minority were married (29 percent). Family

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<sup>1</sup>The Sacramento EJP had some problems accurately tracking clients for the evaluation. The primary problem centered on the assignment of Identification Numbers, used to preserve client confidentiality. Some clients were given different ID numbers at different data collection points and some clients were given duplicate ID numbers. We were unable to sort out all of the problems with Sacramento's data, and therefore some of the numbers will not always match exactly with what is expected. However, we do not think the ID problems affected client service because EJP staff had access to every client's full record, with identifying information, and could therefore be certain they were using the correct file with each client.

<sup>2</sup>Sacramento does not differentiate between single, divorced, separated or widowed.

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composition can affect a person's ability to participate in services or maintain stable employment. Single parents may have a more difficult time finding the resources necessary to balance work and life issues, and this information can help program staff understand the family obligations of participants and the support systems available to them. Sacramento served an ethnically diverse group of clients, with almost equal proportions of African American clients (39 percent) and Latino clients (38 percent). Caucasian clients constituted 16 percent of the clientele. The remaining clients were either Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, or another ethnicity (including multi-ethnic clients). The majority of clients were fluent in English, although 20 percent reported a lack of proficiency in English and preferred using another language, usually Spanish. Lack of English proficiency can hinder a client's ability to seek and obtain employment. To address this issue, appropriate language services were incorporated into the program design and two EJP staff were fluent in Spanish.

Half of the Sacramento EJP clients had a high school diploma or GED. In addition, 57 percent of those with education data reported having some type of training certificate such as CNA or a computer course.

**Figure 3.1**  
**Sacramento**  
**EJP Intake Demographic Information**

	Sacramento	
	n	%
<b>Clients with Demographic Information</b>	236	
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	149	71%
Male	61	29%
Total	210	100%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
African American	82	39%
Asian/Pacific Islander	9	4%
Caucasian	34	16%
Latino	79	38%
Native American	3	1%
Other	3	1%
Multi-ethnic	NA	NA
Total	210	100%
<b>English Proficiency</b>		
Proficient	147	80%
Limited Proficiency	38	20%
Total	185	100%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	103	60%
Married	50	29%
Separated	NA	NA
Divorced	NA	NA
Living with Partner	15	9%
Widowed	NA	NA
Other	4	2%
Total	172	100%

	Sacramento	
	n	%
<b>Age</b>		
Mean	34	NA
Range	19-58	NA
14-20	5	4%
21-30	44	37%
31-40	41	34%
41-50	22	19%
51-60	7	6%
61-84	NA	NA
Total	119	100%
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Less than High School	NA	NA
GED/High School Diploma		
Some College		
College Degree		
Total		
<b>Number of Children Living with Client</b>		
Mean	2	NA
0 <sup>1</sup>	88	37%
1	43	18%
2	48	20%
3	28	12%
4	12	5%
5	8	3%
6	9	4%
Total	236	100%

Note: Data on particular clients may be lacking in one or more categories. The percentages shown are percent of those for whom there is data in the given category.

NA – Indicates that this data category was not available.

### **Barriers Facing Sacramento EJP Clients at Intake**

Many Sacramento EJP clients were participating in government assistance programs at entry into the demonstration. Information about participants' public assistance receipt can provide critical information on their economic status and history, available support services, and program requirements with which they must comply. This information allows case managers to develop case management plans that more comprehensively consider participants' circumstances, support systems, and unmet needs. Over half (53 percent) of those with data reported receiving TANF assistance at entry, 55 percent reported receiving Food Stamps, and 11 percent were receiving general assistance benefits. For those receiving TANF assistance and for whom data is available, the mean amount of time on welfare was 5 years. There were nine individuals receiving either SSI or SDI, potentially indicating additional disability-related barriers that could impact participants' ability to obtain and maintain employment.

There were 53 clients (27 percent) who reported being employed at the time of intake, and 143 who reported being unemployed (intake employment data was provided for 196 clients). Income data was not collected by the Sacramento EJP at intake.

### **Sacramento EJP Family Assessment Scores**

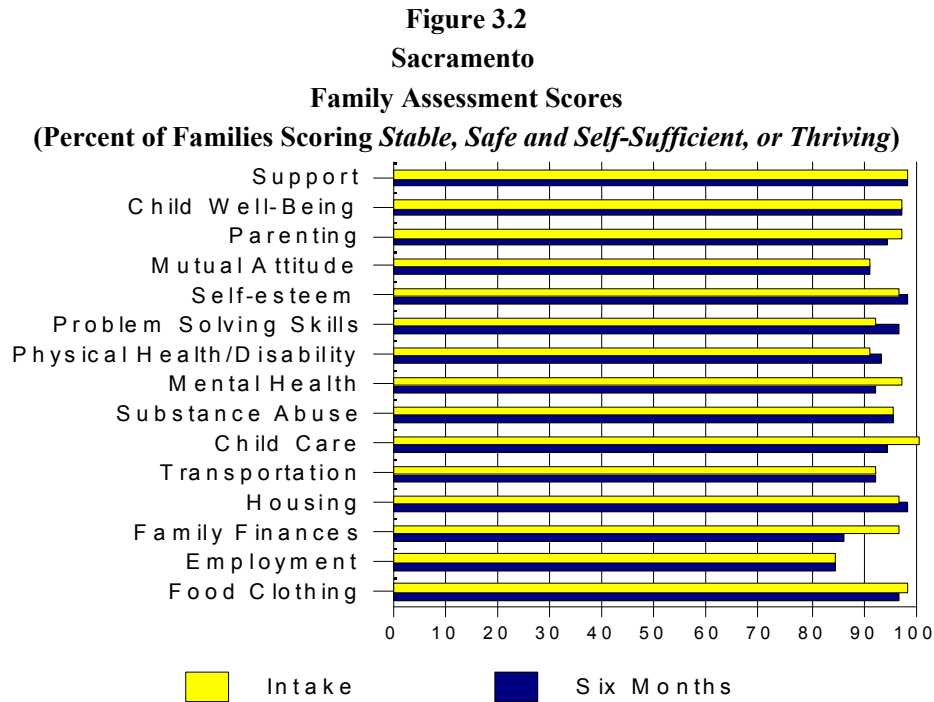
Job Retention Specialists completed a Family Assessment with each EJP client at entry and in three month intervals thereafter. There were a total of 114 Family Assessments, although not every client was assessed in every category at each interval, including intake. There were two categories in which families were infrequently assessed; these included substance abuse (53 clients at intake) and care givers' attitudes toward each other (39 clients at intake). There were various methods for analyzing Family Assessment data, and we examined the scores in three different ways. The first used all Family Assessment scores at intake to depict the most common barriers facing clients at entry to the EJP. We then examined the group of EJP clients with Family Assessment scores at both intake and six months,



and described the percentages of that group scoring *stable*, *safe and self-sufficient* or *thriving* at each point. It is important to note that not every client was assessed twice in every category, but we limited this analysis to only those with scores at intake and six months in order to provide a picture of how client functioning changed over time. This information helped explain how many EJP clients were functioning relatively well at program entry, and how many of those same clients were still functioning well at six months after entry. The last Family Assessment analysis we performed also looked at the group of clients with scores both at intake and six months. We examined how many clients experienced improving, declining, or unchanged scores in each domain. This analysis, although similar to the previous analysis, provided a good description of the changes in functioning, regardless of clients' intake scores.

At entry into the Sacramento EJP, the most common barriers clients faced were related to employment, housing and transportation. These all reflect the problems that many Del Paso Heights residents faced, particularly since many jobs (and therefore easy transportation and convenient housing) were located outside of the neighborhood.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the proportion of EJP clients who were assessed to be *stable*, *safe and self-sufficient*, or *thriving* in each domain at both intake and six months after intake. The majority of clients were at least as well-off or better after six months in the program in each of these domains, indicating progress in addressing family barriers. However, in some categories (e.g., parenting, mental health, and family finances), the proportion of clients scoring *stable* or better declined. Staff attributed most of this decline to assessing a family more accurately once a closer relationship has been established between the client and Job Retention Specialist, rather than an actual decline in family functioning.



Sacramento assessed at least 50 clients<sup>3</sup> at entry into the EJP and six months after entry (as seen in Figure 3.3 below). Most clients exhibited no change in their scores between the two time periods. This might be because Job Retention Specialists were scoring clients fairly high, leaving less room to depict positive functioning changes. Although the greatest proportion of families improved their child care and employment status across time, these categories also saw some of the greatest declines as well. This might be due to the unpredictable nature of finding and keeping employment, particularly for individuals who have been out of the labor force for some time, and the difficulty in finding quality, stable child care. It is

<sup>3</sup>Clients were not always assessed in every Family Assessment category each time an assessment was completed.

important to note, however, that a greater proportion of families showed improvement in their scores within these two areas than showed a decline.

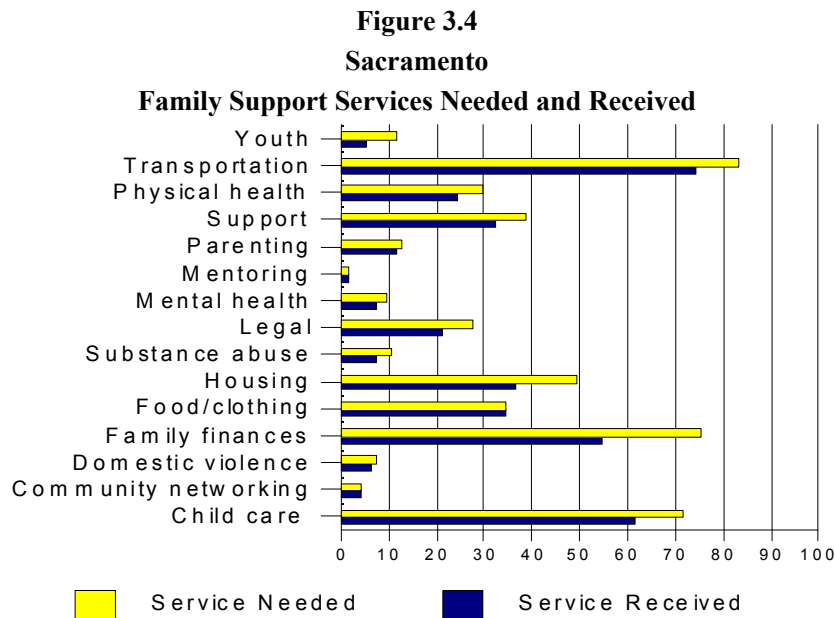
**Figure 3.3**  
**Sacramento EJP Clients**  
**Changes in Family Assessment Scores**

<b>Family Assessment Category</b>	<b>Number of clients with Intake and 6 Month Assessments</b>	<b>Improving Scores</b>	<b>Declining Scores</b>	<b>Unchanged Scores</b>
Food and Clothing	46	26%	15%	59%
Family Finances	48	29%	25%	46%
Housing	48	17%	10%	73%
Mobility/Transportation	48	27%	15%	58%
Child Care	31	42%	26%	32%
Substance Abuse	22	9%	14%	77%
Mental Health	36	17%	14%	69%
Physical Health/Disability	45	16%	13%	71%
Problem Solving Skills	50	22%	22%	56%
Self-Esteem	49	22%	10%	67%
Care giver Attitudes	11	18%	0%	82%
Parenting	36	22%	22%	56%
Child Well-Being	29	10%	10%	79%
Support from Community and Family	46	11%	2%	87%

Note: Percentages are of clients who received more than one Family Assessment score in the given category. The change in score is measured as the difference between the latest assessment score received by the client in the given category minus the earliest score received by the client in that category. The period of time between scores differs by client, and for some clients differs by category.

## Sacramento Family Support Services

Service information was provided for 228 EJP clients, and 68 percent of these clients received some type of family support service<sup>4</sup> during their participation in the EJP. As seen in Figure 3.4, the most commonly needed family support services were transportation, help with family finances, and child care. Most of the clients who needed assistance were provided with the appropriate service, indicating that the Job Retention Specialists were able to access internal or community resources to meet EJP client needs. For instance, transportation was one of the most common barriers clients faced at program intake as measured by the Family Assessment, and more than 70 percent of families received transportation services through the program.



<sup>4</sup>Family support services in Sacramento and San Francisco were defined as assistance with any of the following issues: child care, community networking, domestic violence, family finances, food/clothing, housing, substance abuse, legal, mental health, mentoring, parenting, support, physical health, transportation, or youth.

## Interaction between Family Assessment Scores and Services Received

Figure 3.5 shows the number of clients receiving scores of *in crisis* or *at risk* at entry into the EJP, and then shows the proportion of those clients who received a service addressing that issue. In half of the categories, at least 50 percent of the clients scoring low on the Family Assessment were provided services in that arena, including employment, transportation, child care, and family finances. Employment services were provided to almost every client (94 percent) who received *in crisis* or *at risk* scores. On the other hand, low-scoring clients did not receive services in particular arenas, such as substance abuse, child well-being and mental health. This could be due to several factors, including a lack of community resources to address those issues, lack of program funding, client refusal to participate in services, or the EJP staff not offering the service to the client. Furthermore, the client may have improved functioning in the domain assessed before EJP staff had an opportunity to offer the appropriate assistance. It is important to examine why this situation is occurring for future program planning, as substance abuse, child well-being and mental health often require clinical interventions. If no services were provided because clients refused to participate in a needed intervention, programs may need to focus more on developing ways to establish even more trust between clients and case workers in order to try to break down this barrier to obtaining services. On the other hand, if community resources were not available to meet client needs or there was insufficient funding, programs may have to spend more time advocating for additional services in the community.

**Figure 3.5**  
**Sacramento**  
**Interaction Between Family Assessments and Services**  
**for Families Scoring In Crisis or At Risk on Family Assessment**

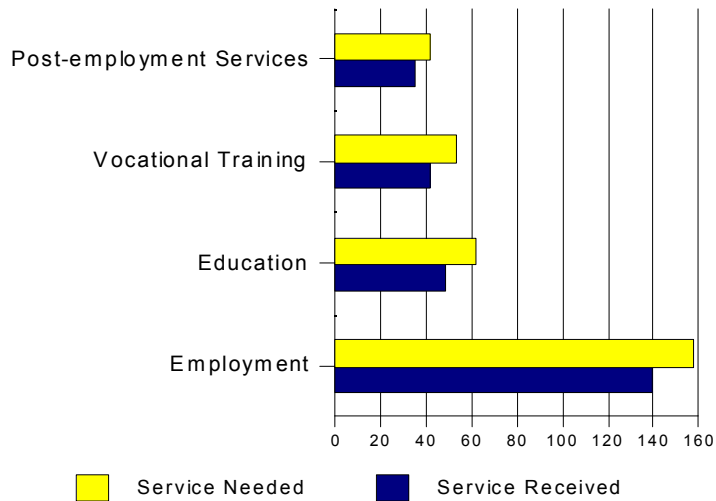
<b>Family Assessment Category</b>	<b>Related Service Log Category</b>	<b>Clients Scoring In Crisis or At Risk</b>	<b>Clients Receiving Service</b>	<b>Clients Receiving Service</b>
Food&Clothing	Food/Clothing/Furniture Assistance	7	3	43%
Family Finances	Family Finances Assistance	9	5	56%
Housing	Housing Assistance	12	6	50%
Mobility/Transportation	Transportation Assistance	12	8	67%
Child Care	Child Care Assistance	3	2	67%
Mental Health	Individual Mental Health Services	6	0	0%
Physical Health/Disability	Physical Health Services	10	4	40%
Employment	Employment	17	16	94%
Substance Abuse	Substance Abuse	4	0	0%
Parenting	Parenting	4	2	50%
Child Well-Being	Youth Services	4	0	0%
Support from Community and Family	Community Networking Assistance	4	0	0%

## Sacramento EJP Employment Results

### Sacramento Employment Services

Seventy percent of all Sacramento EJP clients received some type of assistance with employment issues. Figure 3.6 shows the number of EJP clients who needed and subsequently received services in four areas: employment, education, vocational training and post-employment assistance. "Employment services" refers to activities such as resume preparation, interest inventories, job search assistance, mock interviews, and job readiness classes. One-hundred and thirty-nine clients received services in this area. Forty-eight clients received educational services, which usually indicated that a client participated in some type of basic skills instruction such as

**Figure 3.6**  
**Sacramento**  
**Employment Services Needed and Received**



GED or ESL classes. It may also refer to clients who enrolled in college courses.

Vocational training was provided to 41 individuals, and post-employment services were provided to 34 EJP clients. Post-employment services were offered to clients to assist them with issues once employment was found, such as job coaching and employer mediation. These services provided a critical bridge to employment in the welfare to work model, and programs should continue to seek to provide services that address participants' identified employment needs. Effective and comprehensive delivery of such services can improve families' ability to retain employment and achieve self-sufficiency.

### **Employment Outcomes of Sacramento EJP Clients**

There were 100 EJP clients with a job start date recorded on the employment form, indicating that these clients found new employment. Of these 100 individuals, 14 were employed prior to entry into the EJP. For the remaining 86, it took an average of three months to find employment from the date of EJP intake. There were 12 individuals who reported starting a second job while participating in the EJP.

#### **Job Separation Outcomes: Job Length and Reasons for Leaving a Job**

There were 26 clients with both start and end dates for jobs, and these clients remained in the same job for an average of six months. Although this is not as long as the Sacramento EJP had hoped that clients would remain employed, for many individuals who had either been out of the labor force for several years or who had other barriers to successful employment, remaining in the same position with the same employer for six months was a significant step toward self-sufficiency.

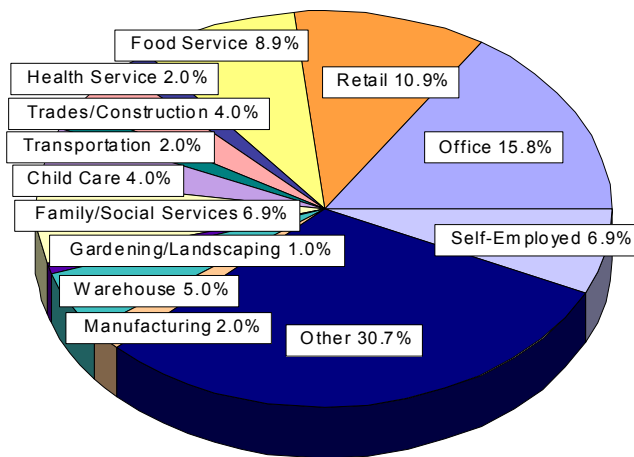
There were 27 clients with data explaining why they left a job. Most of these clients (74 percent) quit their jobs due to pregnancy, transportation barriers, not getting enough hours, or looking for a better job. Four EJP clients were fired, two were laid-off, and one left after locating a better job. Program should consider an increased focus on retention services to provide families with the services needed to ensure long-term employment success.

#### **Types of Employment**

EJP clients were employed in a variety of jobs, as illustrated in Figure 3.7 below. The most common employment category reported among the 129 jobs held by EJP clients was “other,” representing jobs such as library assistance, janitorial services, housekeeping and handyman/odd jobs. Sixteen percent of employed EJP clients found office work. Additionally, retail work and food service jobs were both common types of jobs found. Most jobs were full-time (65 percent). Twenty-four

percent of the jobs found were for 21 to 39 hours per week, and the remaining 11 percent were for less than 20 hours a week.

**Figure 3.7**  
**Sacramento**  
**Types of Jobs Found by EJP Clients**



**Wage and Benefits**

The mean wage reported by employed Sacramento EJP clients was \$7.35, with a range from \$3.13<sup>5</sup> to \$15.00 per hour. There were 11 individuals who reported a wage change during participation in the EJP, ranging from a wage decrease of \$.75 per hour to an increase of \$2.00 per hour. The average wage change was \$.81 per hour.

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<sup>5</sup>The person reporting the \$3.13 per hour was self-employed and reported only a weekly income for full time work; we then used this to estimate the hourly wage.

Benefits were scarce among the jobs EJP clients found. The most common benefits, received by 21 individuals were health and dental insurance for the employee (not dependents). Nineteen EJP participants held jobs with paid vacation or sick leave. Only four individuals had health insurance benefits for dependents, two received a training or education subsidy, and one participated in the company's retirement plan. The scarcity of entry-level positions that offer benefits suggests a need for increased focused on helping clients access supportive services such as low-income health care for themselves or their children both during and after their transition to employment.

#### **Employment Functioning as Measured by Family Assessments**

At intake in the EJP, the majority of clients scored *stable* (48 percent), *safe and self-sufficient* (23 percent), or *thriving* (12 percent) in the employment domain. Employment scores on the Family Assessment were provided for 50 clients at both intake and six months after intake. These scores improved for 26 percent of these individuals, declined for 15 percent, and remained the same for the remaining 59 percent. Given the significant proportion of individuals with fairly high Family Assessment scores at intake, the stability and additional improvement noted in these scored is particularly encouraging.

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## 4: San Francisco Collaborative

### Neighborhood Background and Program Development

The Mission District of San Francisco, named for historic Mission Dolores in its midst, is a vibrant neighborhood with a largely Latino population. The Mission is densely populated, and its residents are more likely than other city residents to be poor and lacking access to education. The large immigrant population has numerous language barriers and often lacks work authorization. Additionally, staff noted that EJP clients in the Mission District commonly face an extreme lack of affordable and stable housing due to the increasingly tight San Francisco housing market.

Originally, the SF Collaborative consisted of three agencies: Arriba Juntos, an employment and training center located in the northern part of the Mission District, Good Samaritan Family Resource Center, a community center located on the southern edge of the Mission District, and the Family School, an organization offering training services and family support in the Western Addition neighborhood outside of the Mission. The goal of the Collaborative was to serve the population of the eastern half of San Francisco. The Executive Directors of the agencies participated in the planning process during 1997, and submitted a proposal to FSC in January 1998.

The original plan called for hiring seven new staff, including a Project Manager, who would be housed across the three organizations. These seven staff would form the core Employment Journey Project team while drawing on the extensive services already offered by the various organizations. The plan was structured very much like a traditional employment program, including a requirement that participants had to address certain barriers, such as substance abuse or getting a work permit, prior to entry, and a mandate that all participants take a three-week job readiness course.

When it was time to implement the project in 1998 (the Project Manager was hired in May 1998, although no other staff had been hired at that point), all of the original planners had left their positions with the participating agencies. As a consequence, there was some confusion about the original goals and intentions of the program. Additionally, the new Interim Executive Director at Good Samaritan discovered that

the Board of Directors had never given formal approval to participating in the project, and the agency considered pulling out. Then, in October, the Family School left the Collaborative because it felt that it was already offering integrated services and because it determined that the geographic spread of the partners was too great to realistically serve the same clients. This left Arriba Juntos and Good Samaritan to completely re-think the project based on their respective strengths.

Arriba Juntos is a 33-year-old community-based employment and training center. It has an employment and training staff of about 25, whose funding is derived from extensive contracts with the local Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) program, as well as other federal, state, city, and foundation funded programs, including federal Welfare-to-Work funds funneled through the local welfare agency to provide retention services to TANF recipients. It provides training in health careers (certified nursing assistant and home health aide) and automated office skills (computers), and has two Employment Development Department staff co-located on site. It has traditionally served a population of unemployed and underemployed citizens and legal residents, often those receiving welfare.

Good Samaritan Family Resource Center is a 104 year-old non-profit agency serving the needs of low-income immigrant families, often in the country without work authorization and ineligible for federally-funded social services, including welfare. It recently created a Family Resource Center within the agency, and its programs now include a child development center serving 3-5 year olds, family support groups, adult education and family literacy classes, English classes, parent education, dental and health screening, mental health counseling, a family day care licensing and enterprise development program, and recreational activities.

These two organizations realized that the original Employment Journey Project plan was too ambitious and expensive; although they would receive about \$2000 per person served, the plan called for services that would cost around \$7000 per person. Also, they realized that it was unlikely that they would serve the same clients, both because their facilities were located at different ends of the neighborhood, and because their traditional populations differed so much. This led them to consider the

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Employment Journey Project as an opportunity to develop integrated services within each agency, rather than across agencies, and to learn from each other's experiences. Arriba Juntos would add family support services, with help from Good Samaritan, and Good Samaritan would add employment services, with help from Arriba Juntos. This plan was considered more feasible, both financially and logistically.

By January 1999, the two agencies had a revised implementation plan. Thus, the San Francisco project experienced a delay in initiating service delivery. However, because both agencies already served so many neighborhood residents, identifying those who could benefit from the additional retention or job development services offered under the Employment Journey Project was greatly facilitated. The two agencies committed to incorporating new thinking and services into their existing programs so that the Employment Journey Project philosophy would become institutionalized, with participants receiving integrated services long after the initial funding stream expired.

### **EJP Services and Client Flow**

At Arriba Juntos, the vast majority of EJP clients were either participating in a training program or had recently completed training and were employed. When an individual was in a training program, and the instructor or case manager realized the person had multiple barriers, he or she referred the individual to an EJP case manager for assistance. However, most EJP clients had already completed training and were employed, and according to Arriba Juntos staff, had begun to face the "real" issues affecting retention, such as self-esteem, substance abuse, or balancing personal life and work. When clients were in a training program, the primary barriers were child care and transportation. It was not until clients begin a job that they begin to realize they had other types of barriers that were not as easily identifiable and did not have easy solutions. This was often the point when many clients requested assistance from EJP.

Similar to Arriba Juntos, Good Samaritan clients often started with employment services. During the first year of implementation, EJP staff at Good Samaritan

started a weekly job club for clients that provided support, networking opportunities, and work readiness workshops. In addition, when a new job developer was hired during the second year of the demonstration, she greatly enhanced the Job Resource Room with weekly job listings from the Chronicle and brochures and listings on training opportunities. She also started English for Employment classes which combined conversational English, peer support, networking, and job search/retention strategies. There was an average of five to seven students in each weekly two hour drop-in class. EJP staff introduced EJP to English for Employment participants. Although many Good Samaritan clients only wanted assistance with employment, and did not want or need case management, several others were recruited into the EJP via the employment services that Good Samaritan began offering.

The San Francisco EJP employment staff spent a great deal of time with participants discussing their work history, skills and employment goals. Staff expressed a desire to assist clients with not only finding a job, but finding one that paid a livable wage, held some interest for the client and had potential for growth. The EJP case managers worked with clients on issues such as self-confidence, domestic violence, family relationships, child care and transportation. For example, a major issue cited for clients was isolation and the lack of a support system in their lives.

At Arriba Junto, the dedication to integrated services meant that the staff running the training programs and the existing case managers were more attuned to family issues, and more willing to take the time to help participants address broader family issues that might keep them from becoming employed. Likewise, at Good Samaritan, the addition of an employment-oriented case manager meant that the families served by the project had a resource for helping them address employment barriers, such as lack of proper documentation, by developing alternative avenues such as self-employment. This within-agency collaboration ensured that participants did not have to face a “hand-off” from one staff person to another or one physical location to another. Instead, staff within the agencies worked together to effectively serve clients, and participants maintained a primary contact throughout their participation in the program.

## Strengths and Challenges of Implementing the EJP

The San Francisco Collaborative started the Employment Journey Project facing a number of challenges. However, over the course of the demonstration, it developed strategies to overcome those challenges and apply its unique assets to the implementation of the EJP. In the following section, we highlight these strengths and challenges.

- The two agencies involved in the San Francisco Collaborative quickly developed a strong supportive relationship. There was significant communication between staff at the two agencies, and each felt comfortable approaching the other for problem-solving or technical assistance. The agencies shared responsibility for data collection and entry, and shared resources to better serve their respective clients. This collaboration was crucial in allowing the agencies to move forward in implementing the EJP vision.
- Early in the implementation phase, the San Francisco partnership was given the opportunity to rethink the project and develop new strategies to serve clients via the integration of family support and employment services. This opportunity came when one of the original three partners withdrew from the demonstration. Although this was a major obstacle, it provided the opportunity for the agencies to critically reflect on and plan for the most appropriate, efficient and effective way to provide services to community residents. This up-front rethinking ultimately resulted in a program that was more stable in the long run. For instance, the practical obstacles of the distance between the two agencies and the differences in their traditional service populations led to a plan of service integration within agencies rather than across agencies as originally intended.
- Regular case conferences were occurring at both agencies midway through EJP implementation. This practice was seen as a very important contributing factor to the successful integration of services. The question of

how to organize case files and share information about clients both within and across agencies was an initial problem affecting integration. At Arriba Juntos, all of the non-EJP staff kept their own paper files; some staff were willing to share these files with EJP staff and others were not. By the end of the demonstration period, most Arriba Juntos staff were willing to share files and insight for EJP clients. Good Samaritan EJP clients were served primarily by EJP staff, so file sharing was not as much of an issue.

- A unique service was developed at the San Francisco EJP in response to the language and cultural barriers faced by many Good Samaritan clients. EJP employment staff created classes that came to be known as “English for Employment” classes. These weekly meetings provided an opportunity for non-English speaking clients to learn new language skills, and more importantly, according to EJP staff, network with other clients. Individuals spent time discussing employment opportunities in the city and sharing tips on finding and keeping good jobs.
- According to EJP staff, the housing market in San Francisco presented a significant barrier to family self-sufficiency. Although affordable housing is rapidly becoming an issue for the entire Bay Area, San Francisco is a particularly difficult place for families to find stable and affordable housing. EJP staff spoke of the difficulty in reaching self-sufficiency, or even stability, when housing cannot be located. Furthermore, there are few services that staff can provide to alter the housing situation for clients. Staff assisted clients in getting on waiting lists for affordable housing resources, wrote letters of introduction/recommendation for housing, and helped clients identify potential sources of housing assistance such as family members, friends, or former neighbors.
- To fully implement the EJP, more funding was needed. San Francisco did access funding sources in addition to the Irvine Foundation, but the low level of funding was still a problem in San Francisco, particularly because implementing the EJP not only meant a change in the organization’s

philosophy of serving clients (which requires money and time for training), but also required hiring new staff to provide services that had not historically been provided. For example, at Good Samaritan, an employment position had to be created to provide employment services to clients. It became clear early on that having only one full-time EJP staff was insufficient to meet the needs of clients for integrated employment and family support services.

- As with Sacramento and South Hayward, the length of the demonstration was too short. More time was needed to adequately plan and implement such a major shift in the way in which agencies provide services. Furthermore, it is very difficult to measure effectiveness when the programs were not up to full implementation until well into the second (and last) year of funding.

The San Francisco Employment Journey Project had a tenuous start, but the two organizations quickly developed a clear vision of how they would implement the program, based on the strengths of each agency involved. There was regular sharing of information and expertise between the two partner agencies, and this provided much of the operational force necessary to move into service integration. San Francisco clients were facing barriers due to immigration and language barriers, and the EJP partnership developed strategies to address these issues. The EJP partnership in San Francisco took important steps toward integrating the vision of the EJP through concrete changes in each agency's way of doing business.

### **San Francisco EJP Client Characteristics**

In order to better understand the EJP demonstration, it was useful to examine the characteristics of clients served by the program, including the barriers they were facing at program entrance. This information can provide a context for interpreting the family support and employment outcomes data, presented later in this chapter.

### **Demographic Characteristics of San Francisco EJP Clients**

Intake data exists for 121 San Francisco clients. Figure 4.1 shows the demographic characteristics of these clients at the time of intake. The San Francisco agencies' caseload was 83 percent Latino, and 50 percent of participants reported having limited English proficiency. This implies a strong need for ESL services and staff that can readily communicate with clients. As with the other sites, most of the clients (88 percent) were women, and 67 percent were single or living without a spouse or partner in the home. More than three-quarters of clients have children, and 87 percent of those with children have between one and three children. This indicates that the EJP was serving a large number of individuals who were primarily responsible for providing the financial and emotional support for their children without assistance from another adult in the home. This may make it difficult for clients to take full advantage of service opportunities offered through the EJP, and highlights the need for integrated services. The age of clients at intake ranged from 17 to 57 years old, with an average age of 33 years. More than half the clients had at least a high school education: 62 percent have a high school diploma, GED, some college, or a college degree.

**Figure 4.1**  
**San Francisco**  
**EJP Intake Demographic Information**

	San Francisco	
	n	%
<b>Clients with Demographic Information</b>	121	
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	107	88%
Male	14	12%
Total	NA	NA
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
African American	17	14%
Asian/Pacific Islander	3	2%
Caucasian	0	0%
Latino	100	83%
Native American	0	0%
Other	1	1%
Multi-ethnic	NA	NA
Total	NA	NA
<b>English Proficiency</b>		
Proficient	59	49%
Limited Proficiency	62	51%
Total	NA	NA
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	60	50%
Married	32	27%
Separated	12	10%
Divorced	6	5%
Living with Partner	8	7%
Widowed	2	2%
Other	NA	NA
Total	NA	NA

	San Francisco	
	n	%
<b>Age</b>		
Mean	33	
Range	17-57	
14-20	13	11%
21-30	36	30%
31-40	45	37%
41-50	20	16%
51-60	7	5%
61-84	NA	NA
Total	NA	NA
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Less than High School	42	38%
GED/High School Diploma	31	28%
Some College	29	26%
College Degree	9	8%
Total	NA	NA
<b>Number of Children Living with Client</b>		
Mean	1.4	NA
0 <sup>1</sup>	34	28%
1	35	29%
2	29	24%
3	16	13%
4	3	2%
5	4	3%
6	NA	NA
Total	NA	NA

Note: Data on particular clients may be lacking in one or more categories. The percentages shown are percent of those for whom there is data in the given category.

NA – Indicates that this data category was not available.

### **Barriers Facing San Francisco EJP Clients at Intake**

Twenty-four percent of San Francisco clients reported employment at the time of intake. Of the 39 who reported wage income during the month of intake, the average level of wages was \$934 per month.<sup>1</sup>

Many EJP clients were participants in CalWORKS or other public assistance programs. Twenty-eight percent of San Francisco clients reported receiving TANF benefits at the time of intake, and 27 percent reported receiving Food Stamps. These proportions were significantly lower than Sacramento's, potentially because the immigration status of many EJP clients in San Francisco prevented their participation in many public assistance programs.

Twenty-five percent of clients were homeless at intake, which is a relatively high proportion. Homeless families may face additional needs and require different services than their housed counterparts. In particular, it is often more difficult for homeless families to address employment or education barriers without stable housing. One client reported owning a home, and the majority of the remaining participants reported renting their living units.

### **San Francisco EJP Family Assessment Scores**

As with Sacramento, we conducted three sets of analyses with Family Assessment scores. The first analysis utilized all Family Assessment scores at intake to depict the most common barriers facing clients at entry to the EJP. We then examined the group of EJP clients with Family Assessment scores at both intake and six months,

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<sup>1</sup>The set of people reporting employment at intake does not exactly match the set of people reporting wage income. Several clients who reported that they were not working reported wage income, which may have come from other household members. Furthermore, clients who did not reveal employment status may also have reported wage income. A small number of clients reported working but not receiving wage income. This could be due to an unwillingness to report wage income or data entry error.

and described the percentages of that group scoring *stable, safe and self-sufficient* or *thriving* at each point. This information helped explain how many EJP clients were functioning relatively well at program entry, and how many of those same clients were still functioning well at six months after entry. The last Family Assessment analysis we performed also looked at the group of clients with scores both at intake and six months. We examined how many clients experienced improving, declining, or unchanged scores in each domain. This analysis, although similar to the previous analysis, provided a good description of the changes in functioning, regardless of clients' intake scores.

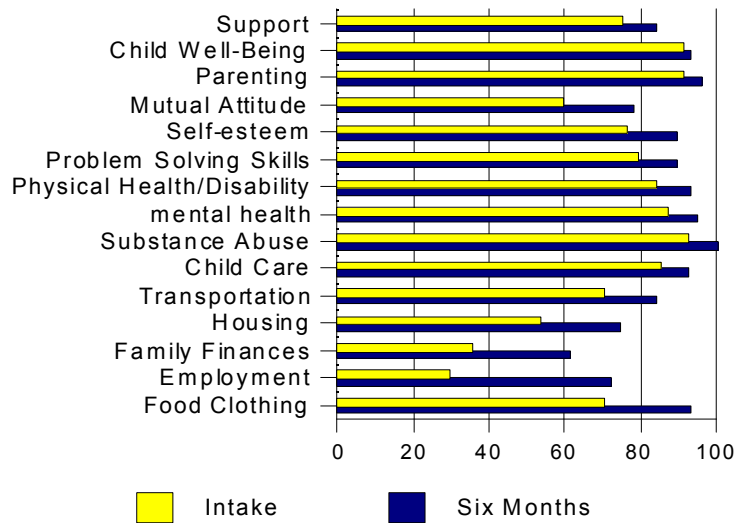
At the time of program entry, most San Francisco EJP participants are considered at risk or in crisis in at least one of the categories. The categories where the highest percentage of clients were in crisis or at risk were employment, family finances, and housing. This implies that the San Francisco EJP was serving a clientele with significant barriers in at least one employment or family functioning domain.

Figure 4.2 shows the proportion of San Francisco clients with both intake and six month assessments who scored *stable, safe and self-sufficient, or thriving* in each of the assessment categories both at intake and six months after intake. Clearly, there was an increase in the proportion of EJP clients who scored *stable* or better, indicating that family functioning improved for many participants after six months in the program.

Among those for whom there was more than one Family Assessment score in a given category, more clients exhibited an improvement in Family Assessment scores than did a decline. However, in most dimensions, roughly 50 to 75 percent of clients showed neither an improvement nor a decline in scores. The dimensions in which the highest percentage of clients showed an improvement were family finances, food and clothing, and self-esteem. The categories in which the highest percentage of families exhibited a decline were substance abuse, mutual attitude between care givers, and physical health. Figure 4.3 summarizes these findings. This decline could be caused by several factors, including a lack of community resources to address the issues, particularly for clients without health insurance, or a reluctance on

the part of clients to access services. Additionally, clients may not have experienced an actual decline in functioning, but due to the establishment of trust between case managers and clients, functioning problems may be more fully divulged later in a client's EJP participation.

**Figure 4.2**  
**San Francisco**  
**Family Assessment Scores**  
**(Percent of Families Scoring *Stable, Safe and Self-Sufficient, or Thriving*)**



**Figure 4.3**  
**San Francisco**  
**Changes in Family Assessment Scores**

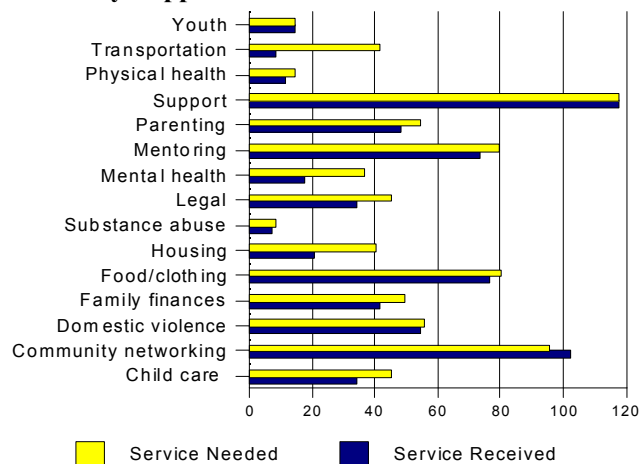
<b>Family Assessment Category</b>	<b>Clients with more than one assessment in the category</b>	<b>Improving Scores</b>	<b>Declining Scores</b>	<b>Unchanged Scores</b>
Food&Clothing	79	48%	3%	49%
Family Finances	79	53%	9%	38%
Housing	79	41%	11%	48%
Mobility/Transportation	79	37%	6%	57%
Child Care	52	42%	4%	54%
Substance Abuse	46	24%	2%	74%
Mental Health	53	38%	9%	53%
Physical Health/Disability	57	30%	11%	60%
Functioning/Problem Solving Skills	79	38%	8%	54%
Self-Esteem	79	48%	6%	46%
Care giver Attitude Toward Each Other	44	30%	7%	64%
Parenting	63	32%	8%	60%
Child Well-Being	63	44%	5%	51%
Support from Community and Family	79	39%	9%	52%

Note: Percentages are of clients who received more than one Family Assessment score in the given category. The change in score is measured as the difference between the latest assessment score received by the client in the given category minus the earliest score received by the client in that category. The period of time between scores differs by client, and for some clients differs by category.

### San Francisco Family Support Services

All San Francisco EJP clients received some type of family support service during their participation. Figure 4.4 shows the number of clients needing and receiving each of the different family support services. The most common types of services delivered to clients included supportive counseling, community networking assistance, mentoring, and assistance with food, clothing or furniture. The vast majority of San Francisco EJP clients exhibiting a need for assistance were provided services in that domain, indicating that EJP staff were able to access necessary resources. It is interesting to note that service receipt was low for housing at entrance. This could be largely due to the nature of the San Francisco housing market. It is not clear why many clients did not receive transportation assistance. It could be due to the lack of a well-coordinated public transit system, because many clients must travel far distances to employment sites, or because EJP staff were

**Figure 4.4**  
**San Francisco**  
**Family Support Services Needed and Received**



unable, due to a lack of sufficient resources, to provide monetary assistance with transportation barriers.

### Interaction between Family Assessment Scores and Services Received

Figure 4.5 shows the proportion of clients who received scores of in crisis or at risk in a particular Family Assessment category at the time of intake who also received related services at any time during their EJP participation. In four categories, over half of the EJP clients with low intake scores were provided appropriate services, including community networking assistance, food/clothing, parenting and child care. Note, however, that for many categories only a very small number of clients were determined to be in crisis or at risk, and therefore the results may not be generalizable.

**Figure 4.5**  
**San Francisco**  
**Interaction Between Family Assessments and Services**  
**for Families Scoring In Crisis or At Risk on Family Assessment**

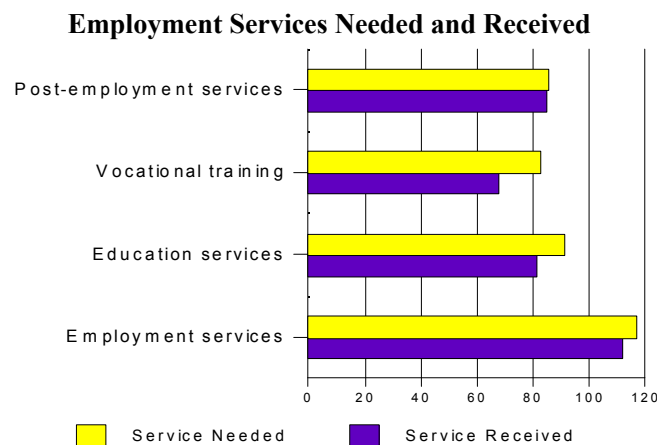
<b>Family Assessment Category</b>	<b>Related Service Log Category</b>	<b>Clients Scoring In Crisis or At Risk</b>	<b>Clients Receiving Service</b>	<b>Clients Receiving Service</b>
Food & Clothing	Food/Clothing Assistance	32	22	69%
Family Finances	Family Finances Assistance	72	22	31%
Housing	Housing Assistance	47	12	26%
Mobility/Transportation	Transportation Assistance	31	12	39%
Child Care	Child Care Assistance	13	7	54%
Substance Abuse	Substance Abuse Assistance	5	2	40%
Mental Health	Individual Mental Health Services	10	4	40%
Physical Health/Disability	Physical Health Services	9	1	11%
Parenting	Parenting Services	5	3	60%
Child Well-Being	Youth Services	5	0	0%
Support	Community Networking Assistance	27	25	93%

## San Francisco EJP Employment Results

### Employment Services Provided

San Francisco’s EJP was able to provide employment services to almost every client who needed assistance in a particular domain. All San Francisco EJP clients received some type of employment service during their participation. Figure 4.6 illustrates the types of employment services that EJP clients needed and received. There were only 10 people who did not receive employment services during their EJP participation, and five of these reportedly did not need employment assistance. Several clients (81) also received assistance with educational needs. Vocational training includes instruction for a specific career. For instance, at Arriba Juntos, vocational training is offered for computers and health care professions (e.g., CNA). Such training can often help participants access positions for which they may not have otherwise qualified.

**Figure 4.6**  
**San Francisco**



### **Employment Outcomes of San Francisco EJP Clients**

According to intake records, 28 out of the 117 San Francisco clients with employment data were employed at the time they began participating in the EJP, while 89 did not have jobs.<sup>2</sup> Of the 89 not initially employed, 53 (60 percent) found work at least temporarily during their participation in the program. Nineteen of the 28 clients who initially had jobs also found new jobs while participating in the EJP. The data do not show the reasons they needed new jobs despite their initial employment.

Among the 53 clients who started jobs during their participation, 63 percent started one job, 23 percent started two, 8 percent started three, 4 percent started four, and 1 percent started five jobs, for a total of 115 jobs. Of these, 50 involved referrals through the EJP.

### **Job Separation Outcomes: Job Length and Reasons for Leaving a Job**

For jobs where there are start and end dates, the length of time in a single job ranged from eight days to one year and nine months. The average duration of these jobs was 133 days, or a little over four months.

Data concerning separation from jobs were available for 41 jobs held by 27 clients. More than half (56 percent) of the job separations occurred because the client found a better job, indicating that participants are not only obtaining initial employment, but also achieving progressive positions. Lay-offs accounted for 15 percent of the separations. In 15 percent of the cases the clients quit their positions and in only one case was a client fired. Other reasons, including disability and the employee moving, accounted for 12 percent of the job separation cases.

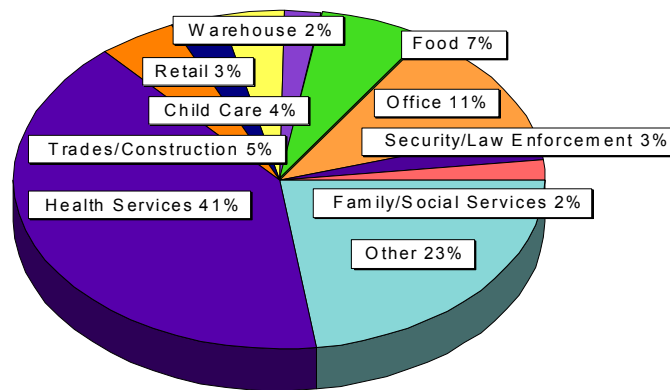
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<sup>2</sup>Intake data on employment status are unavailable for four clients.

**Types of Employment**

San Francisco EJP clients found a variety of employment positions. Data were provided for 115 jobs started by 73 clients. Figure 4.7 shows the breakdown of job types, with health services and office jobs being common types of jobs found.

**Figure 4.7**  
**San Francisco**  
**Types of Jobs Found by EJP Clients**



Housekeeping, janitorial, and cleaning jobs, which fall under the “other” category were also common. Very few of the jobs – only two out of the 115 – were community service jobs. Just over half the jobs (53 percent) were full-time, 40 hour a week jobs; 28 percent involved 21 to 39 hours of work, and 19 percent involved 20 or fewer hours.

### **Wages and Benefits**

Wage data were also available for the 115 jobs. Starting hourly wages were as high as \$18.75, and averaged \$9.13. Although this wage is well above minimum wage, it does not provide the necessary income for clients facing the high cost of living in San Francisco. Benefit information is available for 55 out of the 115 jobs. The most common benefit was health insurance for the employee, which was provided by 38 employers. Additional benefits included dental benefits, paid leave and health insurance for dependents. Given the inconsistency in benefits offered for entry-level positions, it is important to ensure that participants are aware of and have access to any post-employment supportive services, including low-income health care, for which they are eligible.

### **Employment Functioning as Measured by Family Assessments**

Finally, Family Assessment scores on employment suggest that the employment characteristics of most San Francisco EJP clients improved over the course of their participation in the program. Seventy-five percent of clients who received more than one Family Assessment experienced an increase in their Family Assessment scores, six percent showed a decline, and the remainder (19 percent) saw no change. This indicates that for the majority of EJP clients, their employment situations improved during EJP participation.

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## 5: South Hayward Neighborhood Collaborative

### Neighborhood Background and Program Development

The South Hayward Neighborhood Collaborative consists of more than 30 agencies that have come together over the past two decades to offer a range of social services to the residents of the Harder-Tennyson neighborhood of Hayward, a city located about 25 miles southeast of San Francisco on the east side of San Francisco Bay. This one-square-mile, high-density neighborhood of about 22,000 people is known as a gateway neighborhood where many new immigrants settle when they first come to this country. As a result, about 40% of the households do not speak English as their first language, and transiency rates are high. The most common primary languages in the neighborhood are Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Farsi. There is a high incidence of poverty, and over 1,000 households in the area received welfare payments in 1997, the largest caseload in Alameda County outside of Oakland. Over half of the children live below the poverty level, and the vast majority (80%) are eligible for free or reduced cost school lunches. The adults in the area have lower than average educational levels as well as language barriers.

Although the neighborhood is challenged by poverty, it also has tremendous resources in the form of churches and social agencies that have worked together for years to improve conditions. After more than a decade of informal collaboration, the first official act of the South Hayward Neighborhood Collaborative was to apply for a Healthy Start planning grant in 1993, which eventually led to a Healthy Start program housed at three neighborhood elementary schools. Another planning effort led to the formation of the Interagency Children's Policy Council (ICPC) to direct the use of Family Support and Family Preservation funds in the neighborhood. This effort resulted in the establishment of a Family Support Network. With the advent of welfare reform, the neighborhood next mobilized to develop an Educational and Job Opportunity Community Campus, to be located on the grounds of Glad Tidings Church, in partnership with the Hayward Adult School, the local Community College, and the county welfare agency. All of these activities were designed to be part of one neighborhood service system, easily accessible to all within walking distance of their homes, with no "wrong door" for residents. The planning for the Employment Journey Project fit well with these existing activities.

Five primary agencies in the South Hayward Neighborhood Collaborative participated directly in the Employment Journey Project.

- Eden Youth Center, the fiscal/lead agency. This organization houses a wide variety of family support services on its campus, including day care, respite care, a health clinic, an alternative school, and child care referrals.
- La Familia Counseling Service, which is the lead agency for the Family Support Network that provides the Family Advocates to Employment Journey Project participants.
- Westminster Hills Presbyterian Church, which houses one of the neighborhood's Family Resource Centers (the others are housed at three elementary schools that are part of the Healthy Start project, another church, and a stand-alone site).
- Glad Tidings Church, where the educational and training services are located; this church is also the leader of the economic development efforts for the Collaborative.
- The Institute for Success, a part of the Northern California Community Development agency, became the employment partner for the EJP in South Hayward.

These agencies envisioned a system where a neighborhood resident could enter through any of the agencies in the area and be informed about the employment services available through the Employment Journey Project as part of the information and referral services provided by all of the collaborating agencies.

### **Services and Client Flow**

In the first year of implementation, EJP funding allowed the Neighborhood Collaborative to develop employment services to assist residents, especially those



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who were not welfare recipients (and thus eligible for CalWORKS services), in getting and keeping a job. The Collaborative hired two new EJP employees, a Project Manager and a Project Assistant, and housed the employment services in a unit in a small duplex owned by Glad Tidings Church near their Community Campus. It was envisioned that these two newly-hired Employment Journey Project staff would work with the existing group of eight Family Advocates stationed at the various Family Resource Centers. The Family Advocates are specially trained neighborhood residents who provide crisis intervention for families in need of food, clothing, housing, and respite care. In the early days of implementation, clients met with a Family Advocate, and if they expressed a need for employment assistance, they were referred to the EJP employment staff. However, the Family Advocates did not share any client information with the employment staff, and there was little communication between the two services. In fact, Family Advocates and the EJP employment staff collected separate intake information, and there was no protocol for sharing this information. At this point in the demonstration, an individual was defined as an EJP client if they were served by the EJP employment staff. As a result, there was little coordination or communication between the family support and employment services.

During the second year, the EJP Project Manager decided to leave the Collaborative. When he left, there was minimal time remaining in the demonstration, and the Collaborative had to decide how to continue with EJP implementation. It decided to continue utilizing the Family Advocates, and add the Institute for Success as the employment provider. The Institute for Success is part of the Northern California Community Development agency, and has a county contract to provide employment assistance to CalWORKS participants. It had five employees: an Executive Director, a Job Developer, two Family Support Counselors who provided case management and family support services only to the CalWORKS recipients, and a Recruitment Specialist who recruited clients into the program. The Institute for Success has been providing employment services to clients for five years, and easily incorporated EJP clients into its services.

According to the South Hayward staff interviewed by BPA, even with the addition of the Institute for Success as the employment partner, the definition of who an EJP client was remained essentially the same. An EJP client was defined as an individual who was being served by both a Family Advocate and the Job Developer at the Institute for Success. From the Family Advocates's view, the only difference was where they were referring a person for employment services. For the Institute for Success staff, the only difference between an EJP and non-EJP client was that EJP clients receive family support services from a Family Advocate (outside the Institute for Success) instead of an internal Family Support Counselor. The majority of EJP clients were CalWORKS participants, although a few were not involved in the county welfare system, in which case EJP provided the funding for them to be served. In addition, the vast majority of EJP clients were brought into the system via a Family Advocate and then referred to the Institute for Success. Clients rarely flowed the other way: from the Institute for Success to the Family Advocates. In fact, once the client is being served by the Institute for Success, they were rarely served again by the Family Advocates unless they had a need for emergency services such as food or housing assistance. When a Family Advocate identified a family as needing employment services, she referred them to the Institute for Success and faxed the universal intake form and a referral form to the Institute.

An important developmental step was taken by the Collaborative during the EJP implementation. It came together and designed a universal intake form, accepted for use by all collaborating partners. A universal intake form that could be shared by all partners serving a family had been a long-term goal of the Collaborative, and EJP provided the impetus for final design and implementation. This allowed agencies to more readily share information and prevented the need for clients to provide duplicate information when accessing different service providers. It was also an important step toward system integration.

### **Strengths and Challenges of Implementing the EJP**

As with the other two projects, the South Hayward EJP faced many challenges during the demonstration project. However, it entered the demonstration with



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numerous assets and was able to apply these to the obstacles faced throughout EJP implementation. These strengths and challenges are discussed in the following section.

- One of the primary strengths of the South Hayward Employment Journey Project was its role in an existing matrix of service providers. The strategy of linking three major initiatives (Healthy Start, Family Support Network, and Economic and Employment Development) to provide a number of social, economic, and educational services enhanced the Employment Journey Project's ability to provide holistic services to its clients. Furthermore, service integration had been a consistent goal of the Collaborative and this meant that South Hayward partners already had some initial agreement about the concept of integration and its necessity for successfully serving clients.
- Easy access to services is another asset the Collaborative brings to the EJP. Clients benefitted from having Family Advocates located in neighborhood sites that families interact with on a daily basis, not just in times of crisis or when families are in need of specific social services. Family Resource Centers are located in three local schools and several local churches, as well as a freestanding Family Resource Center. The placement of these services ensures that family support services are woven into the fabric of everyday life in the Harder-Tennyson community. On the other hand, this physical separation of service providers posed a challenge at times during the project, particularly in regards to sharing client information and promoting a feeling of teamwork across service providers.
- The universal intake form developed was a crucial step toward changing the Collaborative's way of operating. It showed an important commitment by agencies to share information in order to provide more continuity between service providers.

- South Hayward had consistent leadership in the EJP from the beginning. This meant that there was a clear understanding of the EJP vision of integrated family support and employment services throughout the demonstration, and allowed EJP partners to focus directly on overcoming the challenges of changing operational systems.
- There was initial difficulty reconciling the Family Advocates' short-term service perspectives with the long-term approach of the Employment Journey model. Before EJP implementation, Family Advocates were geared more toward providing immediate assistance, primarily with concrete needs such as food and clothing, rather a sustained effort to help families achieve long-term self-sufficiency. In the early days of implementation, Family Advocates were uncomfortable talking with clients about sensitive issues such as substance abuse or domestic violence. However, through the training offered by FSC and conversations with their peers in other sites, Family Advocates become more comfortable discussing these issues and assisting clients access necessary services.
- At any given point during the demonstration, if a Family Advocate's client identified employment as a goal, they would refer that person to EJP employment staff. However, there was no specific protocol designed to coordinate the efforts of the Family Advocates with those of the EJP employment staff, and therefore real collaboration was lacking as clients were provided serial services. This situation changed once the universal intake and referral form was developed and accepted for use by all Collaborative members, and information sharing increased.
- Information sharing was a consistent problem throughout the demonstration, although the intake form improved this situation somewhat. Staff was not able to share case file information, and therefore partner service providers did not have complete information for clients. It was not until the very end of the demonstration that case file information was entered into a centralized

database, and this database is now being used as a base for a Collaborative-wide, centralized data system.

- Again, as with the other two EJP partnerships, the demonstration did not allow enough time for program infrastructure to adequately develop. Furthermore, there was not enough funding to actually make the structural and operational changes necessary to integrate two traditionally separate types of services. Collaborative members noted that it is sometimes a real risk for community based agencies to become involved with new initiatives, particularly when they are short in duration and minimally funded, because they run a high risk of losing community support and trust when services are offered for only a short time.

## **South Hayward EJP Client Characteristics**

In this section, we explain the characteristics of South Hayward EJP clients at entry into the program. This information is useful because it can indicate the assets and challenges that clients bring to the EJP and provide a context for interpreting client outcomes.

### **Demographic Characteristics of South Hayward EJP Clients**

Demographic information was provided for 194 South Hayward EJP clients and is illustrated in Table 5.1. Participants were predominantly female (79 percent), living without a spouse or partner (70 percent), and were raising, on average, two children. This indicates that many EJP clients might have been shouldering a great deal of family responsibility, such as finding appropriate child care and providing financial support, without the assistance of another adult. The South Hayward EJP served an ethnically diverse set of clients, where African American clients made up 32 percent of the caseload, Latino/Hispanic clients made up 31 percent, and Caucasian clients 27 percent. However, only 5 percent of EJP clients reported having limitations using English, implying that language skills were not a major barrier for most EJP participants. The mean age for EJP clients was 35 years, with

a range from 14 to 84 years old. Education data was not available for South Hayward.

**Figure 5.1**  
**South Hayward**  
**EJP Intake Demographic Information**

	South Hayward	
	n	%
<b>Clients with Demographic Information</b>	194	
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	153	81%
Male	35	19%
Total	188	100%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
African American	59	32%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7	4%
Caucasian	50	27%
Latino	55	30%
Native American	NA	NA
Other	10	5%
Multi-ethnic	4	2%
Total	185	100%
<b>English Proficiency</b>		
Proficient	184	95%
Limited Proficiency	10	5%
Total	194	100%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	86	48%
Married	40	22%
Separated	25	14%
Divorced	14	8%
Living with Partner	10	6%
Widowed	NA	NA
Other	4	4%
Total	179	100%

	South Hayward	
	n	%
<b>Age</b>		
Mean	35	
Range	14-84	
14-20	15	8%
21-30	64	33%
31-40	62	32%
41-50	42	22%
51-60	7	4%
61-84	4	2%
Total	NA	NA
<b>Number of Children Living with Client</b>		
Mean	2	
0 <sup>1</sup>	45	23%
1	41	21%
2	44	23%
3	31	16%
4	24	17%
5	13	4%
6	2	.5%
Total	3	.5%

Note: Data on particular clients may be lacking in one or more categories. The percentages shown are percent of those for whom there is data in the given category.

NA – Indicates that this data category was not available.

**Barriers Facing South Hayward EJP Clients at Intake**

Housing seemed a particular problem among South Hayward EJP clients, with 46 families (33 percent) reporting homelessness at intake into the EJP. Of the 154 families with housing data, 88 families (63 percent) rented their housing and five owned their own living space. Housing needs may impact participants ability to regularly pursue service options or participate in employment-oriented activities, particularly when coupled with family responsibilities. In addition to housing barriers, several clients were participating in government assistance programs. This information can help service providers better gauge both the economic



circumstances of participants and the degree of support services available to them. Sixty-four families (33 percent) were receiving an average of \$538 in monthly TANF cash assistance and 58 families (30 percent) were receiving an average of \$199 in monthly Food Stamps benefits. The overlap of TANF and EJP participants might have been due to the Institute for Success' contract with Alameda County to provide services to CalWORKS clients. Additionally, EJP in South Hayward served a relatively high proportion of clients who received monthly SSI or SDI payments. Eighteen participants reported receiving an average of \$716 from these programs, indicating that they had some sort of disability or were receiving survivor's benefits. Seven individuals were receiving unemployment benefits with an average monthly amount of \$490, and only one EJP client was receiving a child care subsidy at intake.

The South Hayward database did not directly indicate whether or not an individual was employed at the time of intake. In order to get some idea of what proportion of families might have had an employed member at intake into EJP, we used wage income reported as one proxy. Forty-five participants (23 percent) reported wage income at intake, with an average monthly amount of \$1262. Monthly wages ranged from \$150 to \$5000. Wage income does not necessarily mean that the primary client was employed at intake to EJP, but it indicates that at least one person in the family was employed. Clients were asked to report their total monthly income, and for the 122 reporting any income, the monthly average was \$991 with a range from \$93 to \$5000. In the Bay area, where housing prices are extremely high, an average monthly income of \$991 for a family of three is insufficient to meet family needs.

### **South Hayward EJP Family Assessment Scores**

As with the other two EJP programs, we analyzed Family Assessment scores in three ways. The first used all Family Assessment scores at program entry to highlight the most common barriers facing clients at entry to the EJP. We then examined the group of EJP clients with Family Assessment scores at both intake and six months, and described the percentages of that group scoring *stable*, *safe* and *self-sufficient* or



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*thriving* at each point. This information helped explain how many EJP clients were functioning relatively well at program entry versus those who had participated in the program for six months. The last Family Assessment analysis we performed also looked at the group of clients with scores both at intake and six months. For this analysis, we examined how many clients experienced improving, declining, or unchanged scores in each domain. This analysis, although similar to the previous analysis, provided a good description of the changes in functioning, regardless of clients' intake scores.

Family Assessment data were available for 177 clients at Month Six, and for 34 clients at Month 12. No Family Assessments were categorized as being conducted at intake into the EJP<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, we have tracked the change in scores from Time 1 (the scores categorized as "Six Month" scores) and Time 2 ("12 Month" scores). Since only 34 families were assessed more than once during their EJP tenure, and most of these were not assessed in every category both times, the results may not be generalizable to the entire EJP clientele. Nonetheless, the analysis still provided some indication of the trend in client functioning throughout participation in the program.

Family Assessment scores indicated that the South Hayward EJP was serving a clientele with significant barriers to functioning well as a family. The categories with the highest percentage of clients scoring *in crisis* or *at risk* at Time 1 were food/clothing, employment, and family finances, reflecting the low incomes clients reported at intake. It is important to note that in every category except two (mental health and physical health), over half of those with scores were assessed to be *in crisis* or *at risk*.

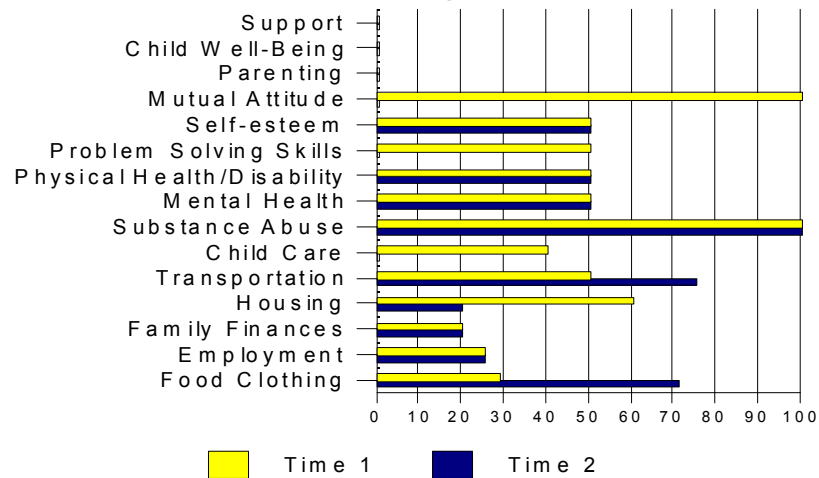
Figure 5.2 shows the proportion of South Hayward clients assessed to be *stable*, *safe* or *self-sufficient*, or *thriving* in each of the assessment categories both at Time 1 and Time 2. This analysis includes only those clients assessed at both times.

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<sup>1</sup>It is unknown whether or not the "Six Month" scores are actually intake scores and the database field is just mislabeled.

There was little change for most clients, although improvement was seen in food/clothing and transportation. This may be a reflection of the traditional services provided to clients accessing the Family Resource Centers where Family Advocates are located, where assistance with items such as food, clothing or bus passes was common. However, the actual number of people assessed twice in each category was very low, and as a result, a change in one person's score can drastically alter the pattern shown for that category.

**Figure 5.2**  
**South Hayward**  
**Family Assessment Scores**  
**(Percent of Families scoring *Stable, Safe and Self-Sufficient, or Thriving*)**

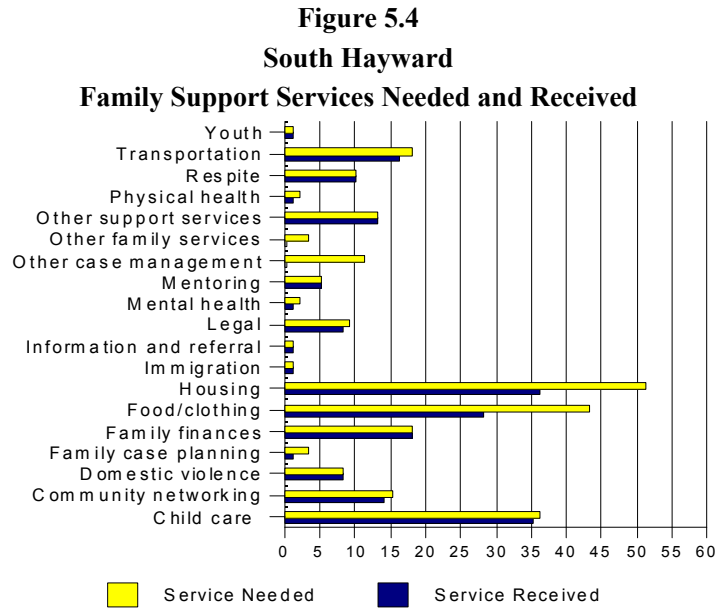


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The third analysis conducted on Family Assessment scores was an examination of the change in individual’s scores during program participation. Table 5.3 provides the results of this analysis. In the one category with a significant number of clients (Food/clothing), 68 percent saw an improvement in their Family Assessment score, indicating that families became better able to meet their own needs for food, clothing, and other concrete assistance.

**Figure 5.3**  
**South Hayward**  
**EJP Clients’ Changes in Family Assessment Scores**

Family Assessment Category	Number of Clients			
	With More than One Assessment	Improving Scores	Declining Scores	Unchanged Scores
Food&Clothing	34	68%	27%	5%
Employment	4	25%	25%	50%
Family Finances	5	20%	60%	20%
Housing	5	0%	60%	40%
Mobility/Transportation	4	50%	25%	25%
Child Care	5	0%	60%	40%
Substance Abuse	1	0%	100%	0%
Mental Health	2	50%	50%	0%
Physical Health/Disability	2	50%	50%	0%
Problem Solving Skills	2	50%	0%	50%
Self-Esteem	2	50%	50%	0%
Care giver Attitudes	1	0%	100%	0%
Parenting	2	0%	50%	50%
Child Well-Being	2	0%	50%	50%
Support from Community and Family	2	0%	50%	50%



### South Hayward Family Services

Over half (55 percent) of South Hayward EJP clients received some type of family support service during their tenure with the program.<sup>2</sup> Figure 5.4 illustrates the family support service patterns among EJP clients. The most commonly needed family support service was housing, with 27 percent of clients needing housing assistance. This finding is not surprising, given the relatively high rate of housing barriers noted at entrance to the program. Of those needing assistance with housing, 71 percent were provided with housing assistance while in the program.

<sup>2</sup>In South Hayward, family support services were defined as assistance with any of the following services: child care, community networking, domestic violence, family case planning, family finances, food/clothing, housing, immigration, legal needs, mental health, mentoring, other case management, other family services, other support services, physical health services, respite services, transportation or youth services.

Food/clothing (23 percent) and child care assistance (19 percent) were also fairly common family support needs among EJP clients. Most of those needing services in any given domain were provided those services either in-house or via an outside referral.

### **Interaction between Family Assessment Scores and Services Received**

As can be seen in Figure 5.5 below, a fairly high proportion of South Hayward EJP clients received Family Assessment scores at Time 1 that indicated they were *in crisis* or *at risk* in particular domains. We isolated those individuals, and examined their service receipt patterns during participation in the EJP. As illustrated in the figure, few clients scoring *in crisis* or *at risk* were provided with services in related arenas. It is important to remember that the categories in the Family Assessment and Service Logs do not necessarily match up exactly, and this might account for some of the numbers being low. Other explanations might include a lack of community resources, client refusal to accept services, or EJP staff not offering services. As mentioned earlier, it is important to examine this trend further for future program planning. If no services were provided because clients refused to participate, programs may need to focus more on developing ways to establish more trust between clients and case workers in order to break down this barrier to obtaining services. On the other hand, if resources are not available to meet client needs, programs may need to more proactively assist in developing community resources to address identified service gaps.

**Figure 5.5**  
**South Hayward**  
**Interaction Between Family Assessments and Services**  
**for Families Scoring *In Crisis or At Risk* on Family Assessment**

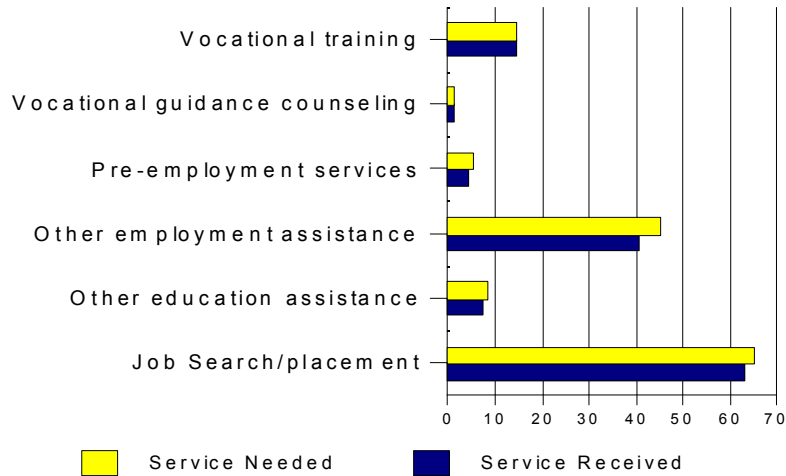
<b>Family Assessment Category</b>	<b>Related Service Log Category</b>	<b>Clients Scoring <i>In Crisis or At Risk</i></b>	<b>Clients Receiving Service</b>	<b>Clients Receiving Service</b>
Food&Clothing	Food/Clothing/Furniture Assistance	139	18	13%
Family Finances	Family Finances Assistance	140	13	9%
Housing	Housing Assistance	119	27	23%
Mobility/Transportation	Transportation Assistance	114	8	7%
Child Care	Child Care Assistance	117	23	20%
Mental Health	Individual Mental Health Services	16	0	0%
Physical Health/Disability	Physical Health Services	17	0	0%
Child Well-Being	Youth Services	47	1	2%
Support from Community and Family	Community Networking Assistance	53	7	13%

## South Hayward EJP Employment Results

### South Hayward Employment Services

South Hayward offered clients the following employment services: job search/placement, other education assistance, other employment assistance, pre-employment skills building services, vocational guidance counseling and vocational training. South Hayward provided some type of employment service to over half of its clientele (53 percent). As clearly seen in Figure 5.6, the majority of clients who needed a particular employment service were provided with that service (or given a referral to an outside provider). Job search/placement assistance was the most common employment service provided to EJP clients, followed by other employment assistance.

**Figure 5.6**  
**South Hayward**  
**Employment Services Needed and Received**  
**(N=190)**



**Employment Outcomes of South Hayward EJP Clients**

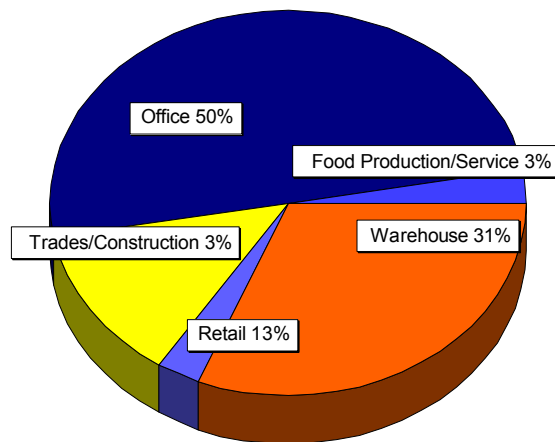
We used two measures to indicate whether or not clients were employed at program entry: 1) wage income reported at intake; and 2) 32 job start dates given to the EJP employment staff by clients. There were 45 clients (23 percent) who reported having some sort of monthly income from wages. This figure can serve as a proxy indicator that many of those individuals were either employed when they began participating in the EJP, or had a wage earner in the household. According to the job start dates in the database, 23 EJP clients (72 percent) were unemployed at program entry, and nine (28 percent) were already employed.

It took EJP clients who were unemployed at intake an average of 3.4 months to find a job, with a range from two weeks to ten months. All were provided job referrals from the EJP.

### Types of Jobs

South Hayward EJP clients primarily found jobs in offices (e.g., administrative assistant, data entry, receptionist) and warehouse work. Figure 5.7 illustrates the proportion of clients in each of the job types reported. None of the jobs were community service jobs, indicating employment in the private sector. Most clients (75 percent) were in full-time positions.

**Figure 5.7**  
**South Hayward**  
**Type of Jobs Found by EJP Clients**



### **Wages and Benefits**

Wage data were available for the 32 individuals with tracking data, and wages ranged from \$5.75 per hour to \$15.07. The average wage was \$8.99 per hour. Although this is above minimum wage, it does not provide enough income for a single wage earner, especially an individual with children, to be self-sufficient in the Bay Area.

### **Employment Functioning as Measured by Family Assessments**

Only four clients were assessed for employment functioning at two times during their participation; two had unchanged Family Assessment scores, one showed improvement and one's scores declined.

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## 6: Service Integration and Lessons Learned

The EJP demonstration project began with the vision of integrating employment and family support services in order to provide a more practical, accessible and holistic set of services to families, particularly those affected by welfare reform. FSC and site staff were beginning to recognize that families needed assistance in both arenas, often at the same time, to become economically self-sufficient and functioning well as a family.

FSC and EJP staff learned a great deal during the demonstration project. The primary lesson learned was that families benefitted from having access to integrated family support and employment services. Families are not usually grappling with only one life issue or the other but instead simultaneously face family functioning issues and employment and economic concerns. As a result, offering clients a blended set of services increases their chances of moving successfully toward positive functioning and self-sufficiency.

In addition to testing the idea of service integration, those involved in the EJP learned several other useful lessons. The demonstration project was an opportunity to test an idea, see what worked, and provide others hoping to implement similar strategies with some helpful guidance. Therefore, we have summarized some of the more pervasive lessons learned below.

- A number of families received an integrated set of employment and family support services, as evidenced by the numbers presented below. These numbers indicate a positive step toward comprehensively addressing families' diverse needs. Prior to the demonstration project, integrated services had not been offered to any client.

In Sacramento, family support services were provided to 154 clients and employment services to 160 clients. There were 117 EJP clients who received both employment and family support services, representing 51 percent of the total EJP clientele.

In San Francisco, 120 of the 121 EJP clients received some type of family support service. In addition, 116 San Francisco EJP participants received an employment service. All of these clients received family support services, which is a full 96 percent of all San Francisco EJP clients.

South Hayward provided some type of family support service to 107 clients, and some type of employment service to 102 clients. There were 58 EJP clients who received a combination of employment and family support services, representing 30 percent of the total number of South Hayward EJP clients served.

- Human service agency personnel are willing and able to learn new ways of providing services to clients. This is particularly true when staff member are included in discussing the vision from the beginning. Staff were capable of modifying existing practices when given the appropriate training, time and tools necessary for the job. EJP staff, throughout the demonstration project, showed an enormous commitment to implementing the vision of integrated services and it is this commitment that made changes happen.
- One of the key lessons from this demonstration project is that community characteristics (e.g., neighborhood population, social service history, community assets) and the agencies involved have a significant impact on EJP design. Agencies' historical manner of providing services heavily influenced how they designed and implemented the EJP demonstration. Each demonstration site experienced success in different ways, and overcame obstacles in ways that made sense for its community and its system of providing assistance to those in need. While this variation makes it more difficult to develop a single program model for dissemination to interested communities, it indicates that the successful integration of family support and employment services is related more to a vision of service delivery than to a specific staffing model. Furthermore, the variation in program success and design suggests the importance of remaining

responsive to the characteristics of local neighborhoods and community agencies.

- Overall, EJP clients who needed service in a particular arena were provided with assistance. For example, in South Hayward, 97 percent of the clients needing help with child care were given assistance. In Sacramento, 86 percent of clients needing child care help received services, and in San Francisco, 76 percent were given assistance. This indicates that EJP staff were successful in accessing appropriate community resources for the majority of families.
- Employment data showed a positive trend toward successful employment outcomes for EJP clients. For instance, for those Sacramento clients with employment data, the average length of time with the same employer was six months, and the average wage earned was \$7.35. In San Francisco, the average wage was \$9.13, and in South Hayward it was \$8.99. Although this represents the employment outcomes for a fairly small number of EJP clients, it indicates that clients did indeed access employment services and obtain employment during their participation in the program.
- Integrating services, either within a single agency or across a collaborating set of agencies, takes a great deal of time, money and energy. Three years is not enough time to adequately plan and implement a new strategy within a community. Agencies must consider the effect their participation in a demonstration project will have on the community at large, and pay special attention to how residents will feel once the demonstration has ended. Agencies must balance the need to try new, innovative service strategies with the need to maintain a consistent and dependable presence in the community. When a pilot project receives funding for only a short period of time, agencies must look closely at whether the potential benefits of participating are worth the possible costs to the agency's reputation in the community if the new strategy fails to produce positive results.

- The policy context in which a demonstration project takes place is very important. The EJP demonstration began soon after federal welfare reform legislation was passed, and therefore gave EJP agencies a head start in developing systems to meet the needs of clients who would now be facing time limits. As states move more toward recognizing that families cannot simply “work first” without having the support services necessary to overcome functioning issues, community agencies can strategically place themselves in a position to effectively serve families in their communities.
- Attention must be paid to the manner in which information will be shared among staff members, collaborating agencies, and evaluators. Developing a strong plan for case management, including how records will be kept and client progress tracked, is crucial in successfully serving clients. Each staff member needs access to client information in both employment and family support domains in order to truly blend the services offered to clients. Furthermore, when a strong system is developed to track client progress for the purposes of case management, it becomes much simpler and less burdensome to collect data for an outside evaluation. In the EJP demonstration, there was not enough planning for how information would be tracked and utilized within each EJP site. Data collection for the evaluation therefore became the motivating force behind the development of tracking systems, causing EJP staff to feel like they had to spend more time on the evaluation than originally agreed upon.
- It is important to note that all EJP staff agreed that evaluation serves a very useful purpose, particularly for a demonstration project. An evaluation can provide project management with useful information during the course of a demonstration so that necessary programmatic changes might be made if it becomes clear that the project has moved off-course. It can also provide crucial information about the effectiveness of a new approach, and assist other communities in planning and implementing similar service models. However, everyone involved expressed the hope that the demonstration would not become driven primarily by the evaluation. FSC

and site staff did not want to see data collection happen only for evaluation purposes unless it was also useful to program staff. BPA has a strong commitment to providing collaborative evaluation services that meet both the needs of the current program staff and the needs of funders interested in learning about the efficacy of a particular program model. Due to several factors explained in Chapter 2, the EJP evaluation became more than a normal burden on all involved. To most effectively meet all project stakeholders' needs, the role of evaluation in interim program assessment and improvement, as well outcome measurement, should be further explored, refined, and developed in future program demonstration models.