

Youth and Gang Violence in Tucson and Pima County:

An assessment of community resources and issues facing youth

Prepared for:
United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona

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Introduction

The families of Tucson and greater Pima County area are no strangers to crime and violence. For years Tucson has had one of the highest crime rates in the region. Unfortunately, too many of Tucson's youth are caught in the cycle of crime, and live in communities struggling to find the resources—financial and human—to help prevent youth violence and assist those youth already involved in gangs.

The United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona is host of the Youth Development Coalition, a diverse group of more than 50 social service providers, policy advocates, university professors, and state and local public agency representatives. The Youth Development Coalition (YDC) works to assure that every young person in Pima County is engaged in safe, productive activities during out-of-school time.

In 2006 and 2007, the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, with guidance from their partners on the YDC, undertook four research projects to help them better understand the issues faced by young people in the community and the perceptions of community resources. The projects included:

- ❖ Survey of parents of school-age youth to identify current out-of-school program use and needs.
- ❖ Focus groups with young people to gather their perceptions of out-of-school activities available in Tucson.
- ❖ Focus groups with youth not currently participating in after-school programs to learn more about barriers to program participation.
- ❖ Community assessment that describes the state of youth in Pima County and provides information on services (this report).

Community Assessment

The United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona contracted with Nagle & Associates to conduct the community assessment. The purpose of this project was to provide information to help assess our community's ability to engage youth in safe and productive activities.

This assessment was focused on youth ages 12 to 21 living in several zip codes in Tucson, Arizona (85701, 85705, 85706, 85710, 85711, 85712, 85713, 85714, 85719, 85730, 85745, 85746). The assessment's social service priority areas were gang involvement and youth violence. Because of both the interest of United Way and the Youth Development Coalition, and the lack of availability of data on youth, these definitions have been broadened to include additional ages of youth (focusing on ages eight to 21) and those living in the larger Tucson or Pima County community.

To gather this information Nagle & Associates drew on quantitative and qualitative information on the state of youth and the service structure that supports their development, including:

- *Quantitative*—Demographic, program participation and indicator data available from public and private sources.
- *Discussion Group*—Members of the YDC and Communities Empowering Youth (CEY) partners participated in a discussion group to provide their perspectives on youth and gang violence in Tucson—areas of strength and areas of need. More than 20 community representatives from a variety to public and private service arenas—recreation, gang prevention, mental/behavioral health, youth development, etc.—participated in this discussion group.
- *Key Informant Interviews*—One-on-one interviews with eight key informants—public and non-profit leaders in the youth field. These informants provided their perspectives on youth and gang violence in Tucson—areas of strength and areas of need. Key informants included:
 - Lynne Borden, Family & Consumer Sciences, University of Arizona
 - Bill Burnette, Community Partnership of Southern Arizona
 - Michael Burns, Act NOW! Truancy Program Pima County Attorney
 - Nic Clement, Superintendent, Flowing Wells School District
 - Richard Elias, Pima County Board of Supervisors
 - Patricia Escher, Presiding Pima County Juvenile Court Judge
 - Sr. Mary Ann McElmurry, Project YES at the Tucson Urban League
 - Rachel Schang, Naylor Middle School After-School Program

This report provides an overview of the findings of this community assessment and integrates findings from the youth focus groups. It is important to note that uniform, quantitative data on the youth population was very difficult to obtain. Thus this report uses a mix of age groups and a mix of geographic areas.

It should be noted that the lack of available data on youth gang activity was a great source of frustration. This report draws on some self-reported youth gang activity, but we were unable to collect any data from public entities. Given the charge of this community assessment, we were disappointed that this information was not available. It does, however, point to a greater problem in the community—fragmented service systems that have little formal or informal communication mechanisms, especially where youth gang prevention is concerned.

Demographics

Tucson and the communities in Pima County are some of the fastest growing places in the United States. While the growth is widely believed to be due to older adults retiring to Arizona, there is also a substantial growth in the number of youth in the community. In fact, the number of Pima County youth ages 5-19 increased 29% between 1990 and 2000. This growth has put tremendous pressure on the public and private services.

Key Fact:
1-in-5 Pima County residents is a school-age youth.

According to the 2000 Census, about 180,051 youth ages 5-19 live in Pima County—104,298 in Tucson alone. This accounts for 21.34% of all Pima County residents and 21.43% of all Tucson residents. The number of youth in the priority zip code areas can be found in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Number of Youth in Target Zip Code Areas, 2000

Zip Code Area	Number of Youth Ages 5-19
85701	637
85705	11,149
85706	18,575
85710	10,105
85711	8,947
85712	4,810
85713	11,281
85714	3,961
85716	5,191
85719	10,847
85730	8,970
85745	6,122
85746	12,361

Interestingly, there is great variation across the city in terms of the concentration of youth in different age ranges.

- For youth ages 5-9, zip code 85708 had the highest proportion of youth at 12.98% and zip code 85719 had the lowest proportion at 3.59%
- For youth ages 10-14, zip code 85736 had the highest proportion of this age group at 10.84% while zip code 85719 had the lowest proportion at 3.08%.
- For youth ages 15-19, zip code 85719 had the highest proportion of this age group at 19.95% while zip code 85712 had the lowest proportion 4.94%.
- For youth ages 20-24, zip code 85719 had the highest proportion of youth of this age at 23.61% while zip code 85737 had the lowest proportion at 2.85%.

Maps in Appendix A, provide a visual depiction of the age concentration across Tucson.

Youth and Gang Violence

Risk Factors

What predicts youth violence? This is a question criminologists, sociologists, psychologists, educators, community leaders, and parents have been trying to address for decades.

Some experts have adopted the Risk and Protective Factor model that indicates that to prevent youth violence the community needs to identify the factors that increase risk and find ways to reduce risk. Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano at the University of Washington have identified a basic set of risk factors that are associated with youth problem behaviors and violence. In addition, they have identified the protective factors that seem to act as a buffer against the negative behaviors.

To be sure, the presence of a risk factor (or the absence of a protective factor) is not solely determinative. Rather, they provide a strong indication of areas the community should examine. Further, current research indicates that the presence of a single risk factor does not cause violent behavior. Multiple factors come together to contribute to and shape a youth's behavior.¹

Issues Raised by Key Informants

Key informants were asked to identify the issues faced by young people in our community today. While their responses were wide ranging, several unifying categories emerged:

- **Parenting**—several key informants focused on the role of parents in enabling children to lead healthy, productive lives and avoid violence. These interviewees noted that too often the parents of the most troubled youth have few parenting and discipline skills, lead chaotic households, are themselves struggling with drugs or alcohol, or simply “do not care” what happens to their children. Some noted that often adults are struggling financially, working several jobs to make ends meet and are simply not able to provide their children with appropriate supervision nor expose them to enriching out-of-school experiences. Others noted that concern over citizenship status lead parents to take less active roles in their children's extra-curricular activities.
- **Disconnect with Community**—some key informants noted youth's disconnection from their community and the people around them. Turning to a “virtual world” of video games, cell phones, etc. as well as high mobility rates has increasingly led to disconnection to the places and people around them. This disconnection leads to a disinvestment in the community and a distrust of adults. This disconnection also leads some youth to seek out “community” in the form of gangs. It is important to note that some key informants also reported that community groups undervalue the proactive role of youth in their programs, leading to additional distance between program and participant.

- **Drugs and Alcohol Use**—many key informants pointed to the easy availability of drugs and alcohol, even to very young children. Some indicated that drugs and alcohol use by older youth and adults in the home contributes to a culture of acceptability and encouragement that is difficult for youth to resist.
- **Inability to Connect to Future**—several key informants noted that youth have difficulty understanding the connection between their behavior today and future outcomes. For example, several key informants noted that younger youth are not being adequately prepared or encouraged to go on to post-secondary education. For these youth, broader cultural messages as well as some families are telling them that working is the way to get ahead and that pursuit of higher education is not a good use of time.
- **Lack of Positive Options**—most key informants noted that there are simply not enough positive programs, institutions, activities, and adults for youth to connect to who are focused on helping them through these difficult years.
- **Anger Management/Mental Health**—some key informants stressed the untreated mental health issues faced by youth. These interviewees noted that these mental health issues often go untreated because of a substantial lack of mental health services available in the community.

It is important to note that key informants stressed that these are issues faced by youth regardless of income level. Youth from higher income households were just as susceptible to drug and alcohol abuse, community disengagement, etc. as youth from low-income neighborhoods.

While this report cannot examine all of the risk factors outlined by Drs. Hawkins and Catalano and our key informants, the report does provide information on key factors including:

- Poverty
- Education
- Family Dysfunction
- Homelessness
- Health

Caveat: While this section of the report focuses on risk factors and the many Tucson youth who are at risk of violence and gang activity, it is important to remember that many more Tucson youth do not exhibit these risk factors nor engage in violent behaviors. Our intent here is to call attention to those most at risk.

Poverty

Research indicates that poverty is among the strongest risk factors of a youth engaging in or being a victim of violence.ⁱⁱ Depressed economic conditions and limited economic opportunity contribute to violence in communities.

Poverty is a substantial problem for youth in Pima County. As can be seen in Table 2 poverty among school-age children ranges from a low of 3.7% in the Tanque Verde School District to a high of 56.3% in the Indian-Oasis Baboquivari School District. In Tucson's largest school district—Tucson Unified School District—more than 18,000 children are in poverty, or more than 1-in-5 youth. In the Sunnyside School District a strikingly high 40% of youth live in poverty.

Key Fact:
More than 1-in-5 school-age children in Pima County live in poverty.

Table 2. Poverty Among School-Age Children, Pima County 2004

Youth ages 5-17

District	School-Age Population	School Age Children in Poverty	% in Poverty
Ajo	613	217	35.4%
Altar Valley	1,726	566	32.8%
Amphi	20,537	3,315	16.1%
Catalina Foothills	6,223	303	4.9%
Continental	436	50	11.5%
Empire	55	13	23.6%
Flowing Wells	6,243	1,333	21.4%
Indian-Oasis	2,272	1,280	56.3%
Marana	14,426	946	6.6%
Sahurita	2,144	423	19.7%
San Fernando	15	5	33.3%
Sunnyside	17,654	7,075	40.1%
Tanque Verde	2,432	91	3.7%
Tucson Unified	81,466	18,147	22.3%
Vail	4,993	251	5.0%
TOTAL	161,235	34,015	21.1%

Source: U.S. Census, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

Education

There are various aspects of school-related experiences that have been linked to youth violence. Educational failure has been found to be related to youth aggressiveness, antisocial behavior, and violence. Interestingly, the relationship between poor academic achievement and later violence is stronger among males than females.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, leaving school before age 15 is also a predictor of youth and adult violence.^{iv}

Key Fact:
More than 2-in-5 Pima County 8th-12th graders report having a low commitment to school.

According to the 2006 Pima County Youth Profile^v:

- **Academic Failure:** According to youth’s own perceptions, 55% of 8th graders, 55.7% of 10th graders, and 45.3% of 12th graders reported that they were “failing” in school.
- **Low Commitment to School:** 41.1% of 8th graders, 40.1% of 10th graders, and 48% of 12th graders had a low commitment to school.

Dropping Out: According to the Arizona Department of Education, the dropout rate for Pima County was 5.2%, with 3,929 known student dropouts. This is 0.5% higher than the statewide rate of 4.7%. Below is a table of select Tucson school districts and their calculated dropout rates for the 2005-2006 school year.

Table 3: Dropout Rates, Select Tucson Schools, 2005-2006

School District	Rate
Amphitheater Unified District	4.2%
Calli Ollin Academy	28.7%
Toltecalli Academy	21.5%
Flowing Wells Unified District	3.2%
Ha:san Educational Services	13.9%
The Pima Partnership School	23.2%
Sunnyside Unified District	6.0%
Tucson Accelerated Public Charter High School	9.9%
Tucson Preparatory School	28.9%
Tucson Small School Project	6.2%
Tucson Unified School District	2.0%
Tucson Urban League, Inc.	25.7%
Tucson Youth Development/ACE Charter High School	19.6%

Source: Arizona Department of Education

As can be seen in Table 3, Tucson school districts vary in their dropout rates—from a low of 2% in the Tucson Unified School District to a high of nearly 30% in the Tucson Preparatory School (charter school). There are many explanations for the disparity in dropout rates. However, given the wealth of knowledge on the economic and social problems faced by dropouts it is clear that these rates are too high.

Family Dysfunction

Family disruption can be a powerful negative influence on youth—providing negative role models, and creating unstable emotional and physical environments. Family dysfunction, disruption, and conflict can happen in families of all income levels and from all ethnic groups. In fact, 52.2% of Pima County 8th graders reported that there was “conflict” in their family in 2004.^{vi}

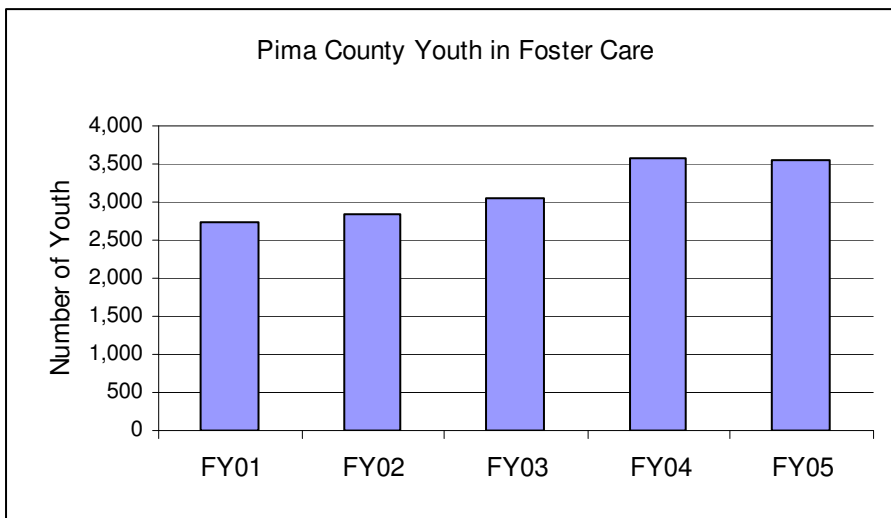
Key Fact:
There were 3,459 children in Foster Care in Pima County in FY2005.

Research demonstrates that family dynamics and parental/caregiver involvement are significantly correlated with a youth propensity toward violence.^{vii} Child abuse and neglect are additional risk factors. Research indicates that children or youth who have been physically abused or neglected are more likely than others to commit violent crimes later in life.^{viii}

When a child is at imminent risk or harm from abuse or neglect or when the parent is unwilling or unable to care for them, he or she is placed in substitute care by the Department of Economic Security. Children in substitute care may live in shelters, homes with foster parents or relatives, group homes, residential treatment centers, and other locations.

In Fiscal Year 2005, there were 3,549 children in out-of-home care in Pima County, or 15.8% of the total child population. These figures include dependent children in out-of-home care through DES Administration for Children, Youth and Families and the DES Division of Developmental Disabilities, and other dependent children assigned by the court to the Foster Care Review Board (FCRB). As demonstrated by the chart below, the number of children in Foster Care is growing rapidly in Pima County, leading to increased concern for potential risk of violence.

Chart 1. Pima County Youth in Foster Care, FY01-FY05



Source: Foster Care

Review Board

Homelessness

Closely related to economic distress, educational failure, family dysfunction, and foster care is homelessness among youth. According to a study by the National Association of Social Workers, 53% of runaway and homeless youth reported educational problems, 45% had an absent father, 41% had long-term economic problems, and 38% had at least one foster care placement.^{ix}

Key Fact:
In 2005, 3,340 school-age youth participated in school-based homeless youth programs.

As of January 2006, the “street count” of homeless people on the street noted that there were 26 homeless youth on the street. However, homeless advocates note that this is a substantial undercount as many homeless youth are living in other people’s homes as opposed to living in city parks and washes.

Because the population is so elusive, not only is it difficult to identify the number of homeless youth, but it can be difficult to know anything about them. However, according to *Homeless in Tucson, 2005: Youth and Young Adults on their Own*^x:

- The average age that a youth became homeless in Tucson was 14.
- Over 60% of homeless youth have been homeless at least twice during the year.
- 17% of the youth were receiving treatment/services for drug/alcohol use.

McKinney-Vento Program: McKinney-Vento is the primary piece of federal legislation addressing the education of homeless children. With these funds, schools can provide transportation, food assistance, school supplies, clothes, tutoring, medical screenings, and other supporting services to homeless youth.

Across all the schools in Pima County, there were 3,340 children in grades pre-K-12 participating in McKinney-Vento programs. The school districts with the largest homeless youth population are Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) and Sunnyside Unified School District—accounting for 72% of all homeless youth served through this program county wide. Additional detail for these districts include:

- TUSD—As of April 20, 2007, TUSD had 1,100 youth participating in McKinney-Vento—582 (52.9%) were children in grades K-5 and 518 (47.1%) were in grades 6-12. Of these homeless youth, 606 were “doubled up” or living in temporary, multiple-family housing.
- Sunnyside—As of April 24, 2007, SUSD has 1,328 youth participating in McKinney-Vento—669 (50.37%) were children in grades K-5 and 646 (48.6%) were in grades 6-12. Of these homeless youth, 1,193 were “doubled up” or living in temporary, multiple-family housing.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Research has found that the prevalence of drugs and alcohol in a community predicts a greater likelihood of violent behavior.^{xi} Interestingly research indicates that substance abuse is among the best predictors of future violence for children ages 6-11 but a less reliable predictor of violence for children ages 12-14.^{xii}

According to the Pima County Youth Survey^{xiii}:

- **Alcohol:** Half of 8th graders, 73% of 10th graders, and 78.5% of 12th graders have used alcohol.
- **Drugs:** 20.7% of 8th graders, 52% of 10th graders, and 54.8% of 12th graders have ever used drugs.

<p>Key Fact: 1-in-4 Pima County 12th graders report being drunk or high at school in the last year.</p>

Drug and alcohol use has been stable if not declining among Pima County youth. For example, 30% of 12th graders reported engaging in binge drinking in 2004—about the same percentage as 2002. Just over 1-in-5 (21.1%) of 12th graders reported being drunk or high at school. This is a slightly lower percentage than in 2002 when 23.9% of 12th graders reported being drunk or high in school.

Youth Violence and Gang Activity

As described above, a numbers of factors contribute to a youth’s likelihood of being exposed to and involved in violence or gang activity—poverty, community disorganization, family dysfunction, drug and alcohol use, etc.

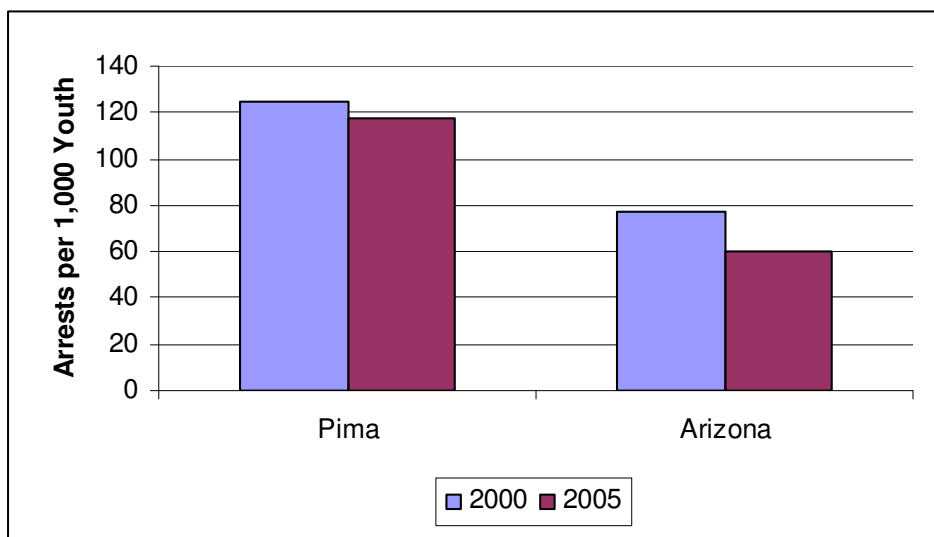
Community violence can impede a young person’s ability to meet their responsibilities and better their own lives. For example, over a 30 day period, 10.7% of Pima County 8th graders, 8.8% of 10th graders, and 5% of 12th graders did not feel safe going to school because of violence in the neighborhood or at school. If you do not feel safe in your neighborhood or school it can negatively impact your ability to achieve in school.

Youth are not only the victims of crime, but the perpetrators. According to the Pima County Youth Survey^{xiv}:

- Of 8th graders, 19.9%—almost 1-in-5 students—attacked another person with the intent of harming them.
- Of 8th graders, 9% had carried a gun.

Unfortunately, too many youth are engaged in criminal, violent, and/or gang activity. In 2005, the good news was that fewer youth were engaging in violence than in previous years. As can be seen in Chart 2, Pima County’s 2005 juvenile arrest rate was 117.7 arrests per 1,000 youth—higher than the state’s rate^{xv} of 59.9 arrests per 1,000 youth. Between 2000 and 2005, the juvenile arrest rate declined 5.4% in Pima County and 22.7% statewide.

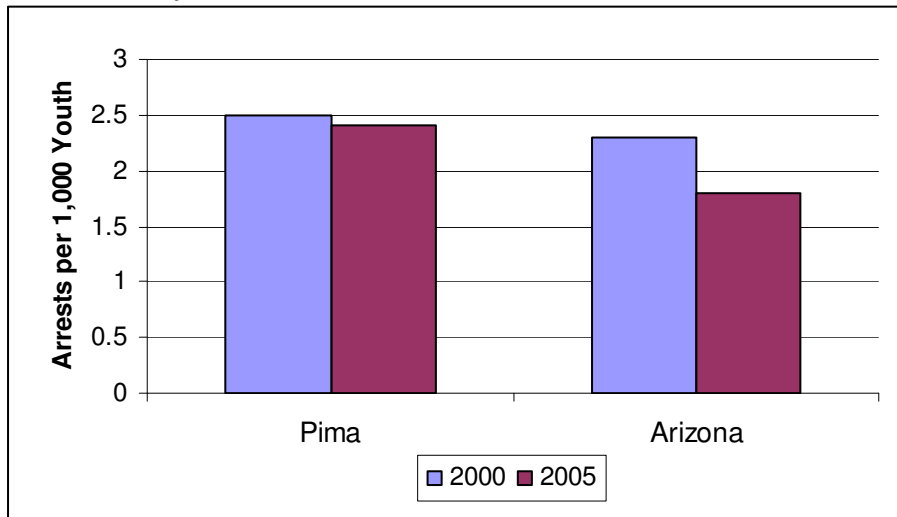
Chart 2. Juvenile Arrests in Pima County and Arizona, 2000 and 2005



Source: Arizona Department of Public Safety. Youth ages 8-17.

Fortunately, the occurrence of violent crimes (aggravated assault, robbery, forcible rape and murder) is much lower than general arrests. In Pima County in 2005, there were 2.4 arrests for violent crimes for every 1,000 youth. However, Pima County’s juvenile violent crime rates are still higher than the state’s rate (1.8 arrests per 1,000 youth in 2005).

Chart 3. Juvenile Arrests for Violent Crimes in Pima County and Arizona, 2000 and 2005



Source: Arizona Department of Public Safety. Youth ages 8-17.

Note: Violent crime is classified as aggravated assault, robbery, forcible rape or murder.

Gang Activity: Gang violence is a serious problem in Pima County, and no one is immune from the impact that gangs and youth violence can have on a community. While once thought of as a problem exclusively in low-income neighborhoods, today gangs and violence draw young people from all walks of life, socio-economic backgrounds, races, and ethnic groups.

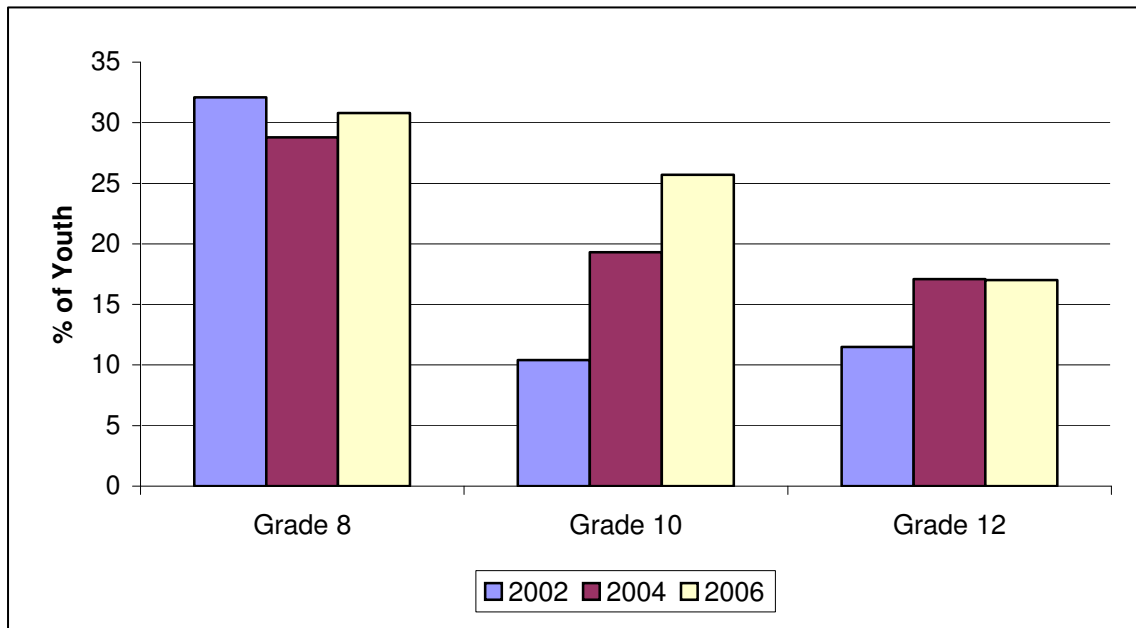
According to the Tucson Police Department^{xvi}, “youth gangs [have] existed in certain parts of the city for decades.” The neighborhoods of Las Vistas, South Park and Barrio Hollywood (all in the United Way’s target area) are home to three main gang clusters—the Bloods, CRIPS and Hispanic “Brown Pride”, all of which are racially and ethnically mixed.

Key Fact:
One-in-three Pima County 8th grade students report being involved in a gang.

While the average age of gang members in Tucson is estimated to be 21, younger youth are increasingly involved in gangs. Involvement by older siblings, relatives, and neighbors, as well as an overall need to feel “protected” contribute to younger children affiliating with gangs.

A shocking one-in-three Pima County 8th grade students report being involved in a gang. As can be seen in Chart 4, while the percentages fall in the 10th and 12th grades, gang involvement figures remain high.

Chart 4. Percent of Pima County Youth Reporting Involvement in a Gang



Source: 2006 Arizona Youth Survey: Pima County

Protective Factors and Community Support for Youth

While many risk factors facing youth are outlined above, research also indicates that there are “protective” factors which help all youth succeed. Key protective factors include:

- Family attachment
- Social skills
- Opportunity for prosocial involvement
- Rewards for prosocial involvement
- Interaction with prosocial peers
- Prosocial norms
- Belief in the moral order
- Religiosity

While this report cannot examine all of these protective factors, it does highlight some of the opportunities that youth have in the after-school hours for prosocial involvement, social skill building, support of prosocial norms, and other factors.

Assessment of After-School Programming Needs

Key informants were asked to discuss current activities and programs for youth—their strengths and areas that need strengthening. There was broad consensus on a few topics, including:

- **Robust Youth Serving Network**—some informants noted that there are a lot of different kinds of programs and opportunities for youth in Tucson and Pima County. Some of these groups have started to come together as part of the Youth Development Coalition.
- **Lack of Resources**—key informants noted that programs serving youth lack the resources necessary to hire/secure trained staff, fully engage youth, work comprehensively, provide transportation, and truly run high-quality, youth-directed programs.
- **Lack of Coordination/Information**—while there are a variety of programs in the community, they are often isolated from each other and not able to link youth to other community resources. Many informants complained “there is no one source of information on youth programs.”
- **Too Few Programs Engage Parents**—as noted above, key informants commented on the role of parents in helping youth stay safe and healthy and succeed in school. Unfortunately, key informants also noted that too few youth programs integrate parents. This leads to inconsistencies in messages to youth and miscommunication between home and programs.

- **Too Few Programs Offer Comprehensive Services to Youth**—related to lack of resources and lack of connections among programs key informants lamented that there are too few programs for youth that provide a range of services—from health, mental health, education, social skills building, etc.

Participation in After-School Opportunities: While some youth are engaged in after-school activities, some are not. According to the 2005 Pima County After-School Activity Survey Results^{xvii}:

- 58% of youth ages 8-14 stay home in the after-school hours—9% have no adult supervision
- 34% of youth participated in a structured after-school program

The data reported above may substantially underestimate the number of youth not engaged in activities in the after-school hours because of a survey error, parents' reluctance to admit their children are home alone, and the fact that older youth (over age 14) were not included in these results and, according to national data, tend not to participate in formal programs.

Overview of Programs in the After-School Hours

Unfortunately, there is no uniform database that contains information on all after-school opportunities in Tucson or Pima County. However, it is clear that a variety of institutions offer programs and activities in the after-school hours for youth. Sometimes these programs work in tandem—a school offers space to a non-profit provider, for example. Alternatively, programs are operated individually—a free-standing program that provides transportation to and from its activities, for example.

Given the complexity of the array of program and services in the after-school hours, the list below is not comprehensive. There are many programs that do not appear in this report which probably help meet the after-school needs of youth. And, to be certain, there is duplication in the programs listed below.

Programs in Public Schools: Public schools are one of the first places parents look for after-school opportunities. However, there is currently no uniform approach to programming at schools in the after-school hours. Some districts have programs; others do not. Some of the programs are operated by the school; others are operated by non-profit or for-profit entities. For example, according to the TUSD website, 67 of their schools (largely elementary and middle schools) report offering after-school programming. Of these, 26 (or, 38.8%) are provided through city or county parks and recreation services, 23 (or, 34%) are provided by non-profit agencies, and at least eight (or, 11.9%) are provided through federal or state programs.

21st Century Community Learning Centers: In 2002 the first 21st Century Community Learning Center (21CCLC) grants were awarded through the Department of Education as part of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. The purpose of the program is "to

provide expanded academic enrichment opportunities for children attending low performing schools.”^{xviii} Through tutoring, entrepreneurial education, technology programs, health/nutrition activities, and cultural activities, the program seeks to accomplish this goal.

In Tucson during the 2006-2007 school year, there were ten (10) 21CCLC grantees. Each grantee operated one to three centers, working with a variety of community partners to deliver various enrichment opportunities. The centers are estimated to serve 3,500 students in Tucson, ranging in age from 3 to 18. Since grantees list grade ranges, it is impossible to discern how many participants are ages 8 and older.

Table 4: 21CCLC Grantees in Tucson, 2006-2007

Grantee	Grade Levels Served	Estimated Number of Students Served	Number of Community Partners
Amphitheater Unified District	Pre-K through 5	214	7
Flowing Wells Unified District	1 through 6	300	8
Flowing Wells Unified District	7 and 8	500	4
Flowing Wells Unified District	K through 8	248	2
Ha’san Educational Services	9 through 12	NA	4
Pima Prevention Partnership	9 through 12	80	7
Tucson Unified School District	6 through 8	400	7
Tucson Unified School District	K through 8	800	15
Tucson Unified School District	K through 5	299	24
Tucson Urban League	4 through 12	700	8

Note: some organizations have multiple grants, and thus are listed as separate grantees

Licensed Child Care Centers: Some youth—especially younger youth—spend their after-school hours in child care centers that run special after-school care programs. According to Child and Family Resources’ Child Care Resource and Referral, there were 180 child care centers licensed to care for school-age children (ages 5 through 12) in the following areas, as of March 2007.

Table 5: Child Care Centers Licensed for School-Age Children in Select Tucson Zip Codes, March 2007

	85701	85705	85706	85710	85711	85712	85713	85714	85716	85719	85730	85745	85746	TOTAL
Number of Centers	3	28	12	16	27	19	13	4	12	19	9	9	9	180

Source: Child & Family Resources. Data for actual number of spaces available for school-age care is not available.

Tucson Parks and Recreation: Across the nation Parks and Recreation Departments are a primary source of activities for youth in the after-school hours. Tucson Parks and Recreation Department reported serving at least 3,009 children during the school year with 52 programs, and 6,084 children with 67 summer programs.^{xix}

YMCA: YMCA serves thousands of Tucson youth annually. The YMCAs provide affordable, quality care to school-age children through summer camps, after-school programs, and sports. The YMCA has pledged to make their services available to any family who needs them, regardless of their ability to pay. Unfortunately, uniform data on the participation of youth in YMCA programs in the after-school hours is not available at this time.

Boys and Girls Club of Tucson: According to a 2005 survey by Boys and Girls Club Arizona Alliance, 5,245 children were served annually in Tucson. These programs are offered in the after-school hours as well as during the summer. Programs range from sports, to tutoring, to social skill building.

Programs Addressing Specific Needs: Tucson and Pima County are home to several programs designed to meet specific kinds of youth or address specific concerns. Unfortunately, at this time there is no readily available data on the number of youth served by these programs. A list of these programs and their basic services can be found in Appendix A.

Youth Assessment of Afterschool Programs

In April and May of 2006, the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona conducted 19 focus groups with a total of 161 youth ages 6 to 18. The purpose of these focus groups was to gather information on how youth spend their out-of-school time, their perceptions of after-school programs, and their perceptions of why youth do not participate in after-school programs. While the full report is available from the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona^{xx}, a summary appears below.

Perceptions of Current After-School Opportunities:

- Some youth rated their after-school programs positively, crediting them with

providing a safe place, educational opportunities, entertainment, and a place to develop new skills.

- Other youth were less positive about their current after-school activities, indicating that they were not interested in staying on school grounds at the end of the school day, the programs were not socially acceptable, the activities offered were not interesting, the programs were difficult to get to, or too expensive.
- Some youth noted that they did not participate in after-school activities because they were not aware of programs in the community.

Elements of Attractive After-School Opportunities:

- Youth valued a learning environment, but emphasized that they wanted after-school activities to present a different learning environment and format than school.
- Youth expressed interest to become engaged in productive activities, but they asked for direction and encouragement from the adults around them in finding these activities.
- Youth indicated they wanted to be part of program creation, involved in decision-making, and have the ability to choose from a wide selection of activities in the after-school hours.
- Youth valued opportunities for creative expression and skill building as well as physical activity.
- Some youth called on programs to offer healthier snacks.

Perceptions of Youth Not Engaged in After-School Programs

In May of 2007, the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona conducted focus groups and interviews with youth ages 10 to 21 years old not currently engaged in out-of-school programs. The purpose of these focus groups and interviews was to gather information on the perceptions of less engaged youth of after-school opportunities and barriers to involvement. While the full report is available from the United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, key findings appear below.

- The majority of youth interviewed had never participated in an after-school program.
- Most preferred to “hang out” with friends, drink/do drugs, watch TV, relax, get on the internet, or play video games after-school.
- Some noted that they did not feel safe at some community activities/centers. They noted that they felt more safe at school and wanted more programs. Others also indicated that school was a preferable location due to transportation constraints.
- Some youth parents indicated that they are interested in a multi-generational program—something they and their infants could do together in the after-school hours.
- There was a deep interest in being involved in designing the program to ensure that it met their needs and desires.

Most youth noted feeling disconnected from program options or were unaware of available opportunities.

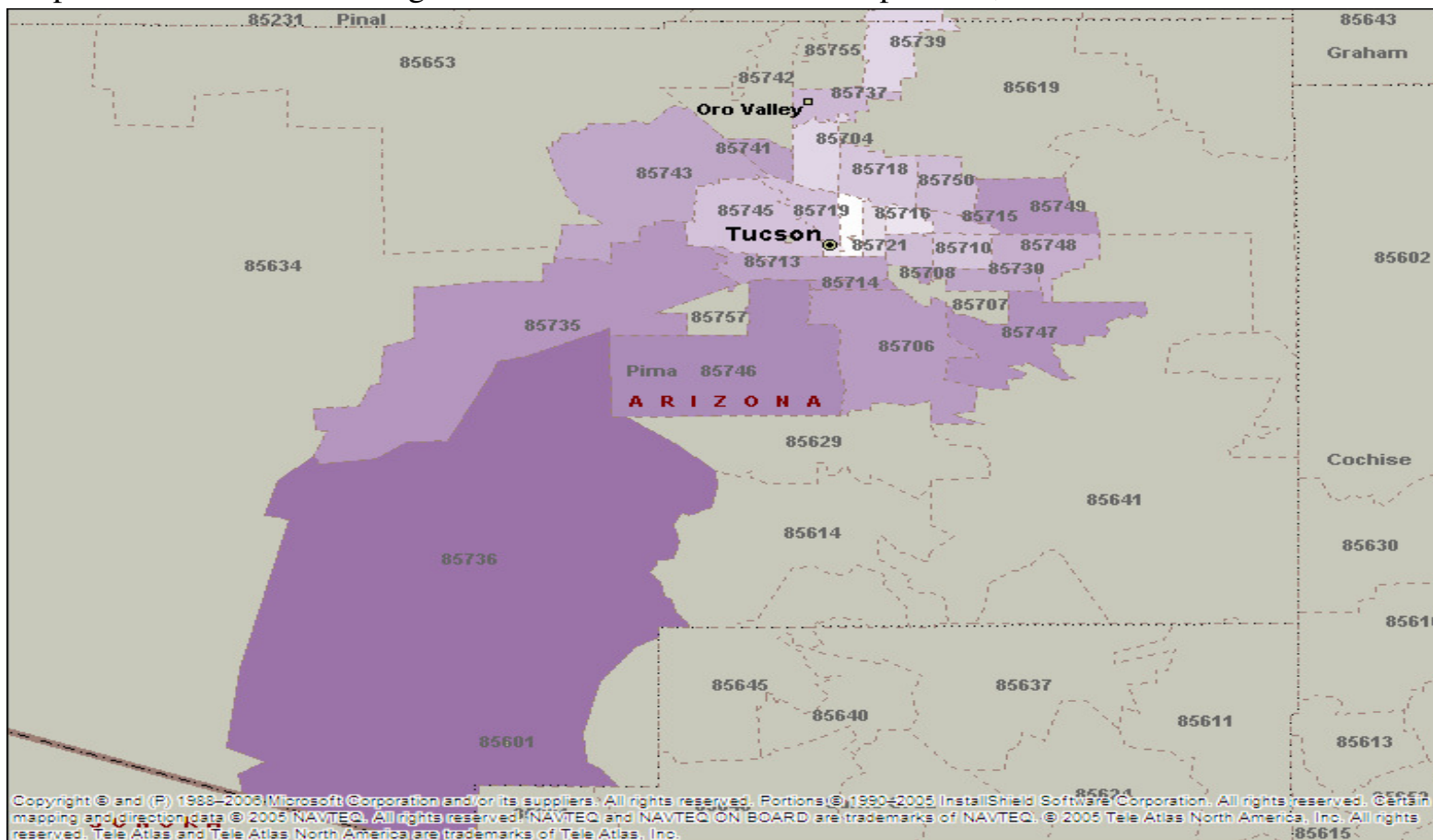
Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the quantitative data and discussions with community leaders several areas emerge as requiring additional attention from community leaders and present potential capacity building opportunities.

- ❖ Programs are disconnected from youth and parents they serve—youth and key informants noted a lack of connection between the youth and programs and parents and programs. This lack of connection leads to programs not fully understanding the needs and desires of youth and not fully engaging parents in working toward common goals.
- ❖ There is a lack of knowledge about or connection among programs in Pima County—youth-serving programs too often operate in isolation, unaware of the resources in the community. This prevents them from operating strategically and effectively. In addition, lack of connection prevents them from being able to act as an information resource to the youth and families they serve.
- ❖ There is a lack of comprehensive training available to staff of youth programs in Tucson and Pima County—too often programs are trying to meet the varied needs of youth with insufficient training and connection to community resources. In addition, key informants noted that there was a general lack of positive development opportunities widely available for youth. Rather, many programs were narrowly focused on ameliorating specific problems among a select number of troubled or “failing” youth.
- ❖ Not enough services for youth—while on one hand key informants and quantitative research uncovered a number of programs serving youth, too many youth are not getting needed services. Mental health service appears to be of particular concern.
- ❖ Programs cannot address the needs of youth in isolation from community needs—key informants and quantitative research notes that it is short-sighted to attempt to segment the core issues facing youth absent from the needs of the larger community. To really build protective factors for youth community programs should be looking at family-strengthening and community-strengthening more broadly.

Appendix A: Maps of Age Concentration in Tucson

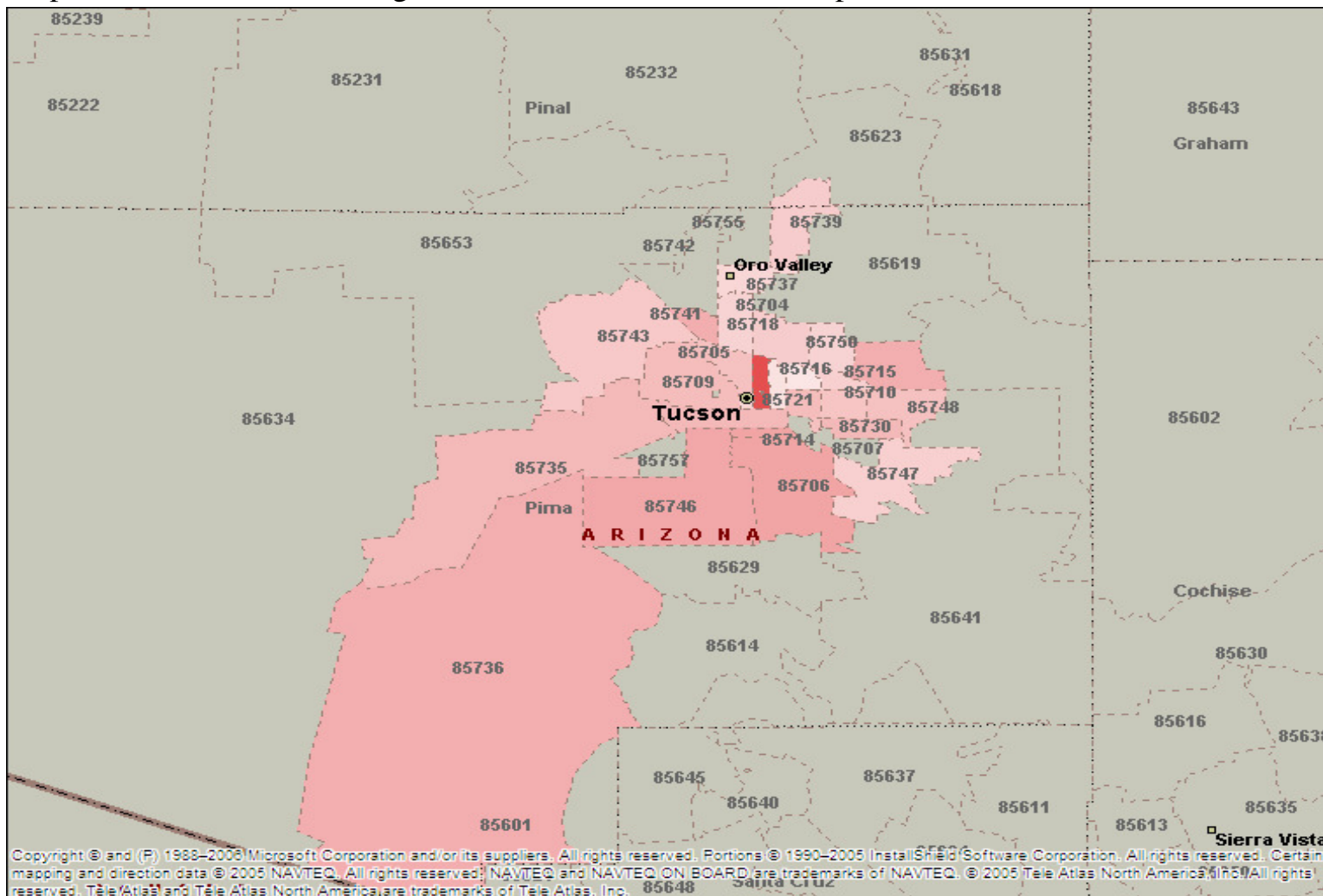
Map 1. Tucson area Youth Ages 10-14 as a Percent of Total Population, 2000



Notes: Darker color indicates higher concentration of age group. Grey areas indicate missing data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

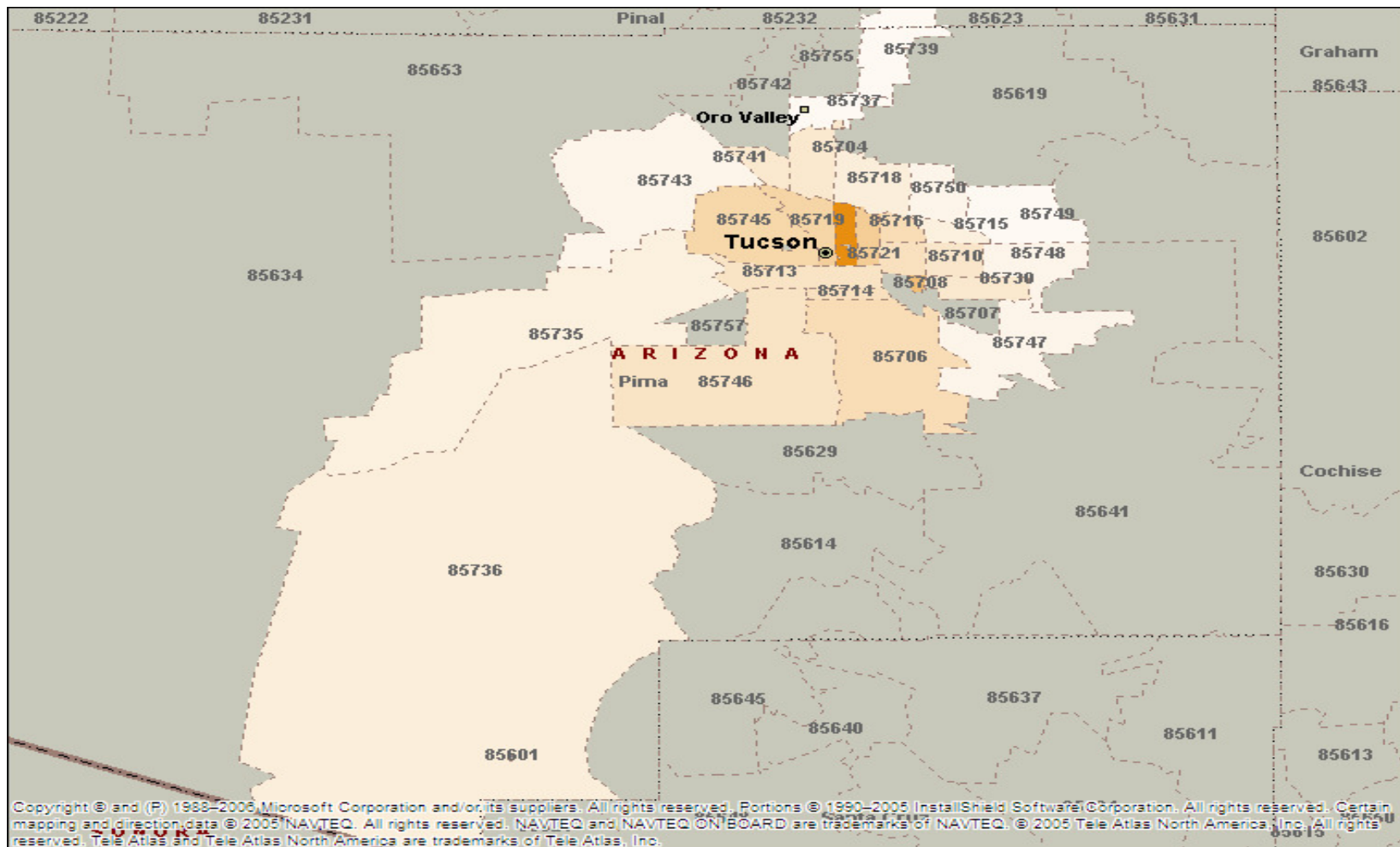
Map 2. Tucson Area Youth Ages 15-19 as a Percent of Total Population, 2000



Notes: Darker color indicates higher concentration of age group. Grey areas indicate missing data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Map 3. Tucson Area Youth Ages 20-24 as a Percent of Total Population, 2000



Notes: Darker color indicates higher concentration of age group. Grey areas indicate missing data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census

Appendix B: Programs Serving Youth

This is a partial list of programs serving youth in Pima County. Some of these programs were identified as part of our statistical research and others were mentioned during the key informant interviews. As noted above, there are a number of programs serving youth in Tucson and Pima County. Too often community leaders and youth do not know what these programs are, what they can do, or how to access them. This lack of coordination potentially leads to duplication of services, isolation of service providers, and lack of services for youth.

Sample of Programs Serving Youth

- ❖ Always Thinking Communities (community revitalization/reorganization)
- ❖ Boys & Girls Clubs (after-school programs, youth development, skill building)
- ❖ Casey Family Youth Transitions (foster youth transitioning to independence)
- ❖ CODAC Regional Behavioral Health
- ❖ Community Partners of Southern Arizona (behavioral health)
- ❖ DES-Independent Living Program
- ❖ El Rio's Health Center on Broadway-Homeless Program
- ❖ El Rio's Sunnyside Teenage Parent Program
- ❖ Happy Hours (after-school program offered in schools)
- ❖ Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless
- ❖ Joint Technical Education District (vocational education)
- ❖ Parent-to-Parent Program (parenting skills)
- ❖ Parks & Recreation
- ❖ Pima Community College (formal education and training programs)
- ❖ Primavera
- ❖ Pio Decimo Center (youth programs)
- ❖ RAFT (Renewing AZ Family Traditions) (services to juveniles on probation)
- ❖ Salvation Army (afterschool programs)
- ❖ School Plus Jobs (education and workplace training)
- ❖ Skrappy's (youth "safe place" and entertainment venue)
- ❖ Teen Court (peer based, restorative justice court)
- ❖ Tucson Urban League-Urban Youth Empowerment Program (services to youth who have not completed high school or GED, especially formerly incarcerated youth)
- ❖ Wingspan/EON Youth Center (services to GLBTQ youth)
- ❖ Youth Empowered for Success (leadership development)
- ❖ Youth on Their Own (shelter)

Endnotes

ⁱ National Institutes of Mental Health, 2000.

ⁱⁱ Sampson, R. and Lauritsen, J. 1994. Violent victimization and offending: Individual-, situational-, and community-level risk factors. In *Understanding and Preventing Violence: Vol. 3, Social Influences*, edited by A.J. Reiss and J.A. Roth. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, pp. 1-114.

ⁱⁱⁱ Hawkins, J.D., Farrington, D.P., and Catalano, R.F. 1998. *Reducing violence through schools. In Violence in American Schools: A New Perspective*, edited by D.S. Elliott, B.A. Hamburg, and K.R. Williams. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, pp.188-216.

^{iv} Farrington, D.P. 1989. Early Predictors of adolescent aggression and adult violence. *Violence and Victims* 4:79-100.

^v Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. 2006. Arizona Youth Survey: Pima County.

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^{vii} Hawkins, J.D., Herrenkohl, T., Farrington, D.P., Brewer, D., Catalano, R.F., Harachi, T.W., Cothorn, L. 2000. Predictors of Youth Violence, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

^{viii} Smith, C., Thornberry, T.P. 1995. The Relationship between Childhood Maltreatment and Adolescent Involvement in Delinquency, *Criminology*, Volume 33.

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^{xii} Lipsey, M.W. and Derzon, J.H. 1998. Predictors of Violent or Serious Delinquency in Adolescence and Early Adulthood, in *Serious and Violent Juvenile Offenders: Risk Factors and Successful Interventions*, Leober and Farrington, eds.

^{xiii} Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. 2006. Arizona Youth Survey: Pima County.

^{xiv} Arizona Criminal Justice Commission. 2006. Arizona Youth Survey: Pima County.

^{xv} Crime and arrest data are available at the sub-county level. Tucson Policy Department did not respond to repeated request for data.

^{xvi} Spergel, Irving A., Wa, K, and Sosa, R. Evaluation of the Tucson Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention, Intervention and Suppression Program. May, 2005.

^{xvii} United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, 2005. Pima County After-School Activity Survey Results.

^{xviii} Retrieved August 7, 2006 from <http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stcclc/index.html>

^{xix} Survey of Parks and Recreation Departments in Arizona for A Snapshot of Out-of-School Time in Arizona, 2006.

^{xx} United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, 2006. Youth Focus Group Study Results, July 2006.