REPORT

Evaluation of Oakland Unite: Year 1 Strategy Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview. Funded by the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2014 (Measure Z), Oakland Unite invests in community-based violence prevention programs throughout the city with the goal of interrupting and preventing violence. The four-year evaluation of Oakland Unite includes annual agency-level snapshots, annual strategy-level reports, and a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of participation in Oakland Unite-funded programs on individual outcomes over a four-year period.

This annual strategy-level report provides in-depth preliminary analyses of two sub-strategies: (1) adult life coaching, and (2) adult employment and education support services (EESS). The report also includes an analysis of the network of Oakland Unite grantees and considerations for practice and future research.

Data collection and analysis. The research team collected and analyzed qualitative and quantitative information about the adult life coaching and adult EESS agencies and participants.

| Interviews with Oakland Unite project officers | Grant document review | Site visits to adult life coaching and EESS grantees | Oakland Unite's Cityspan records, Oakland Police Department arrest records, and Oakland Unified School District enrollment records |

The analysis sought to (1) describe the implementation of the Oakland Unite grant and services provided by agencies and (2) assess the impact of participation in adult life coaching and adult EESS on short-term arrest outcomes relative to a matched comparison group of Oakland residents who did not participate in Oakland Unite. Future strategy-level reports will include additional participant outcomes such as victimization, conviction, and educational attainment.

Results: Adult life coaching

- **High-risk clients.** Adult life coaching agencies consistently target the population recommended by Oakland Unite. Almost two-thirds of the participants had an arrest prior to enrollment, with 23 percent arrested for a violent offense and over one-third arrested for a gun offense (Figure ES.1). Additionally, the vast majority of participants (86 percent) report direct exposure to violence (such as losing a loved one to violence) and nearly half report being victims of violence.

- **Service model.** Staff's descriptions of their work were highly consistent with the life coaching model presented in the Oakland Unite trainings and best practices for intensive case management. Best practices include building strong relationships through frequent interactions and identifying actionable goals and meaningful incentive structures.

- **Trust.** To build strong relationships, agencies often must overcome initial distrust among clients referred from law enforcement (such as Ceasefire).

- **Service intensity.** Participants average 2.5 contacts per week and 39 hours of individual case management. Oakland Unite recommends service periods of 12 to 18 months, but agencies reported longer service periods of 18 months to two years as ideal. In practice, the average participant receives services for 7 months.

Figure ES.1. Adult life coaching participant arrest rates prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite
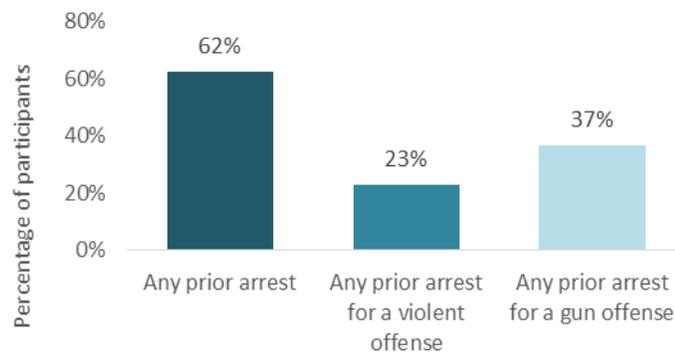
Source: Oakland Unite and OPD administrative data.
Note: These rates are based on 333 adult life coaching participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 and consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult life coaching consent rate was 86 percent.

- **Incentives.** Financial incentives are essential tools for engaging and supporting clients, but agencies report that they can also present challenges.

- **Staffing.** Although finding life coaches with both the requisite personal experience and professional training is difficult, program staff did not report high levels of staff turnover.

- **Impact.** Participating in adult life coaching decreases the likelihood of arrest for a violent offense in the six months after enrollment by 1 percentage point, relative to a comparison group. There are no differences in the likelihood of arrest for any offense or a gun offense between the adult life coaching group and the comparison group. Agencies report that 27 percent of participants reach employment training milestones and 32 percent are placed in jobs following participation in the program.

Results: Adult employment and education support services (EESS)

- **High-risk clients.** Thirty-nine percent of adult EESS participants had an arrest before enrolling, 16 percent were arrested for a violent offense, and 19 percent were arrested for a gun offense (Figure ES.2). In addition, two-thirds of clients report direct exposure to violence and over 30 percent report being victims of violence.

- **Challenges.** All agencies provide structured supports to participants to address the largest challenges to employment stability—housing and personal barriers such as anger management. Approaches include crisis intervention, mediation, and support for immediate needs such as meals, transportation, clothing, and temporary housing.

- **Services.** All agencies provide job readiness, transitional employment, and job placement services, although service delivery, dosage, and length vary.

- **Client engagement.** Income payments are critical for engagement, but participant engagement remains challenging, particularly if employment opportunities do not match client interests. Some agencies modified the initial employment and training opportunities offered to better match client interest and market demand.

- **Staffing.** Agencies value hiring staff with similar backgrounds and experiences as participants, but find this challenging.

Figure ES.2. Adult EESS participant arrest rates prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite
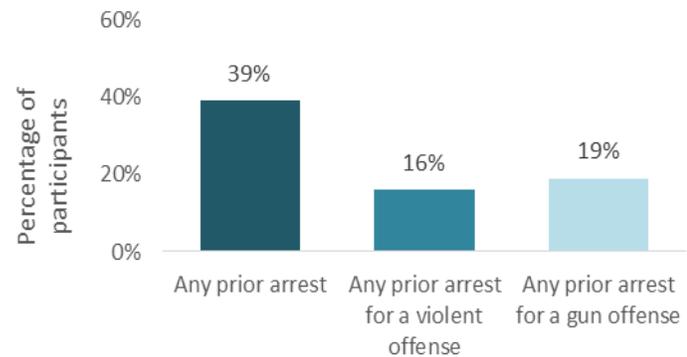
Source: Oakland Unite and OPD administrative data.
Note: These rates are based on 996 adult EESS participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 and consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult EESS consent rate was 98 percent.

- **Impact.** Participating in adult EESS decreases the likelihood of arrest for any offense in the six months after enrollment by 6 percentage points. Participation also decreases the likelihood of a violent offense by 1 percentage point, but there is no difference in the likelihood of arrest for a gun offense between the adult EESS group and the comparison group. Exploratory analyses suggest these effects are concentrated among participants with no prior arrests. Agencies report that almost 40 percent of adult EESS participants are placed in jobs.

Results: Network analysis

One goal of Measure Z is to create a citywide violence prevention network among grantees. The network analysis shows how Oakland Unite agencies are connected to one another by the number of clients receiving services from multiple agencies. We find that:

- Clients are more likely to be shared within the same strategy than across strategies.

- Adult life coaching, adult EESS, and street outreach agencies are more likely to share clients than agencies in other strategies.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACOE	Alameda County Office of Education
BACR	Bay Area Community Resources
BAWAR	Bay Area Women Against Rape
BE	Beyond Emancipation
BOSS	Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency
CEO	Center for Employment Opportunities
CSEC	Commercially sexually exploited children
CWW	Community Works West, Inc.
EBAC	East Bay Agency for Children
EBAYC	East Bay Asian Youth Center
EESS	Employment and education support services
FVLC	Family Violence Law Center
Health Comm.	Healthy Communities, Inc.
HSD	Human Services Department, City of Oakland
HSN	Homicide support network
MISSSEY	Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting and Serving Sexually Exploited Youth
OCYO	Community & Youth Outreach, Inc.
OPD	Oakland Police Department
OUSD	Oakland Unified School District
PIC	Oakland Private Industry Council
Roots	Roots Community Health Center
Seneca	Seneca Family of Agencies
TMC	The Mentoring Center
YA!	Youth ALIVE!
YEP	Youth Employment Partnership, Inc.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

Oakland Unite administers and supports grants to agencies offering community-based violence prevention programs in Oakland, California. The Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2004, also known as Measure Y, raised funds for community-based violence prevention programs and policing and fire safety personnel through a parcel tax on Oakland property and a parking tax assessment. In 2014, Oakland residents voted to extend these levies through Measure Z, which now raises about $24 million annually, to focus efforts on specific, serious types of violence, including gun violence, family violence, and sex trafficking. Measure Z funds violence prevention programs, police officers, fire services, and evaluation services. Forty percent of these funds are invested in community-based violence prevention programs through Oakland Unite, which is part of the City of Oakland (the City) Human Services Department.

Figure I.1. Conceptual model of Oakland Unite
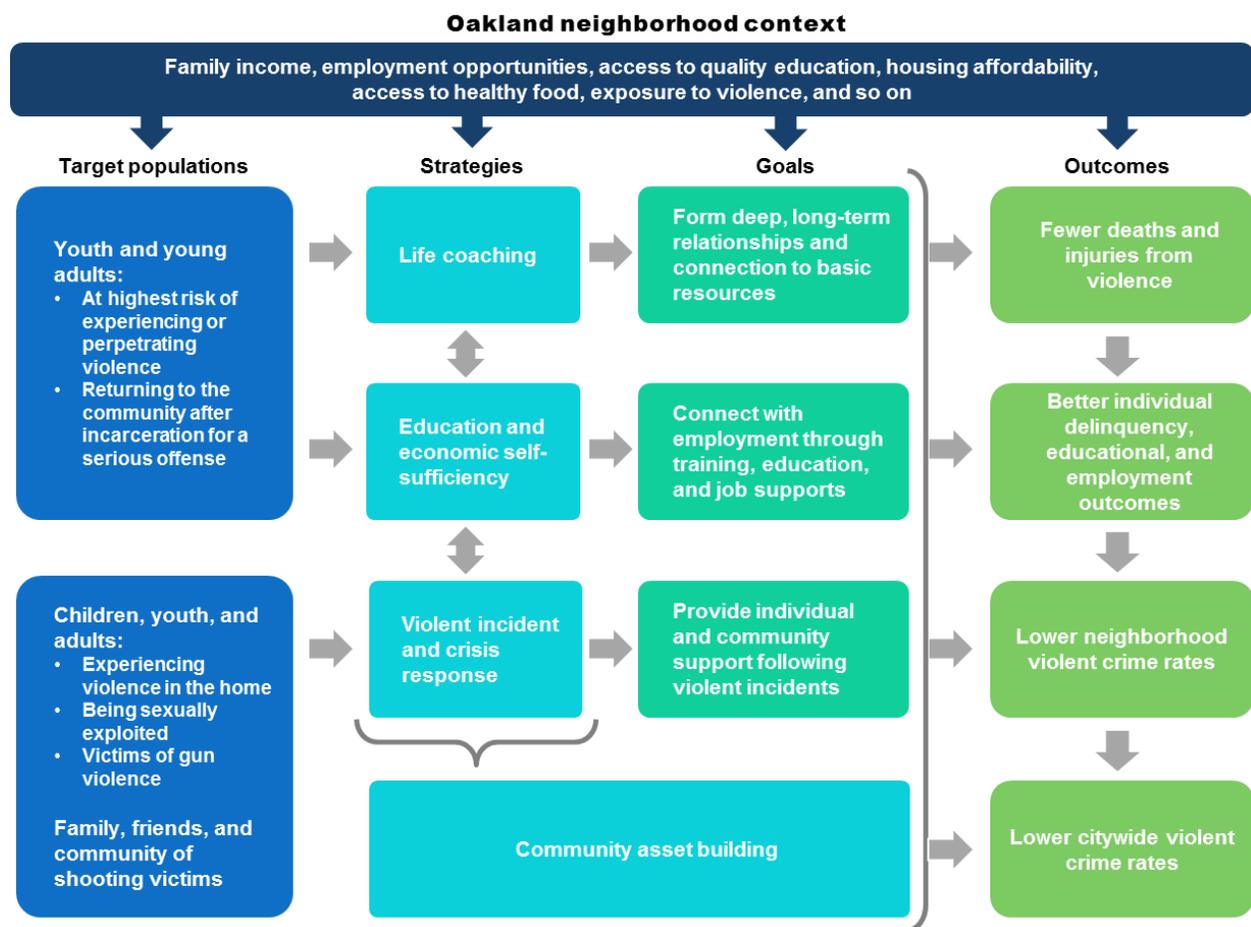
As part of this citywide effort to reduce violence, Oakland Unite aims to interrupt and prevent violence by focusing on the youth and young adults in Oakland who are at the highest risk of direct exposure to violence, violent victimization, and active involvement in violence. Figure I.1 illustrates the relationship between Oakland's neighborhood contexts, Oakland Unite strategies, and the outcomes Oakland Unite is designed to affect. The model highlights how the neighborhood context affects the population served by Oakland Unite, the strategies employed,

the goals of the strategies, and the expected outcomes. Other parts of Measure Z, such as Ceasefire, crime reduction teams, community resource officers, and emergency response through the Oakland Fire Department, are outside of the purview of Oakland Unite and this evaluation, but play important roles in the city's collaborative violence reduction effort.

Oakland Unite administers grants through a diverse set of strategies and sub-strategies to accomplish violence prevention and reduction. Figure I.2 presents the five strategies (life coaching, education and economic self-sufficiency, violent incident and crisis response, and community asset building) and the ten sub-strategies supported by Oakland Unite.

Figure I.2. Oakland Unite strategies and sub-strategies and funding amounts for fiscal year 2016-2017
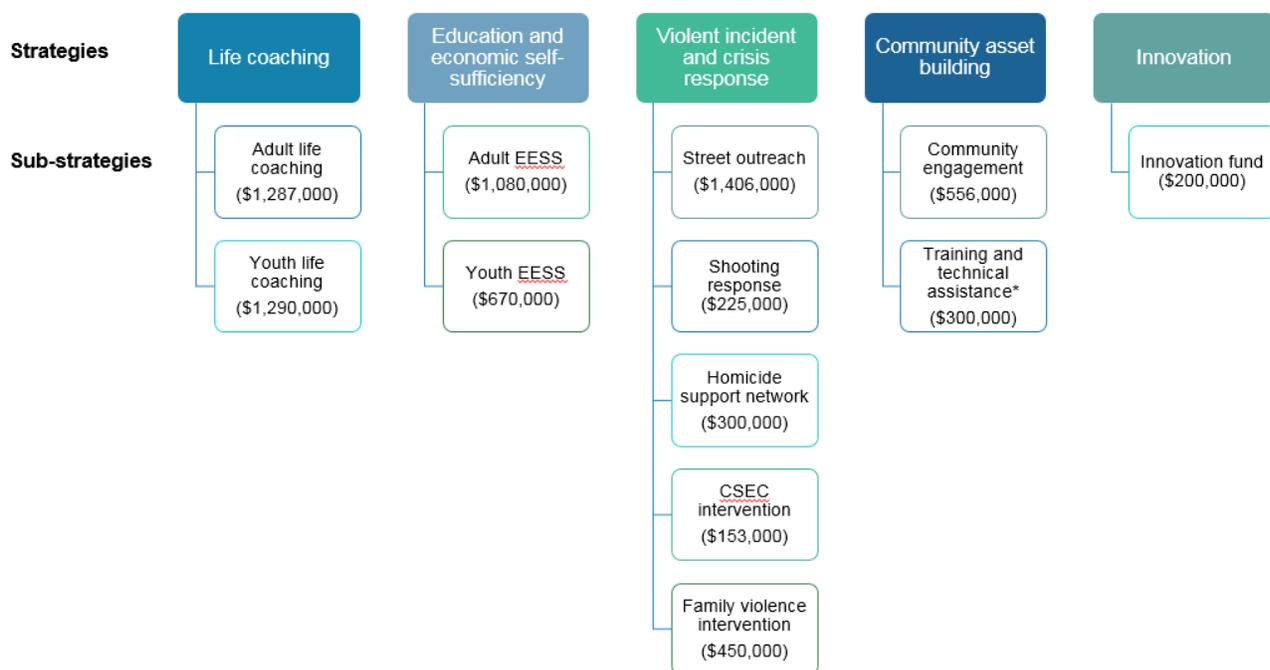
Note.   EESS = employment and education support services; CSEC = commercially sexually exploited children.
*Funding for trainings and technical assistance for the full Oakland Unite network.

- **Life coaching** uses mentoring and coaching to help high-risk youth and young adults move toward stable and successful lives. Coaches work with clients to develop individualized service plans and help connect clients to services. The life coaching model includes intensive and frequent contact to build strong relationships. **Adult life coaches** work closely with high-risk young adults to deter involvement in violence and in the justice system. **Youth life coaches** work closely with high-risk youth to help them engage in school and avoid violence and involvement in the justice system.

- **Education and economic self-sufficiency** helps high-risk youth and young adults secure employment and achieve self-sufficiency through a range of avenues, including increasing job-related skills and fostering relationships with employers. **Transition-age youth/young adult employment and education support services** (adult

EESS) agencies work to improve career prospects of hard-to-employ young adults through skill building and transitional employment. **Youth employment and education support services** (youth EESS) agencies aim to increase career readiness through academic support and employment experience.

- **Violent incident crisis response** supports people and communities following violent incidents to mitigate the consequences of violence and decrease the likelihood of future violence and revictimization. This strategy encompasses five sub-strategies with different aims. **Street outreach** aims to disrupt the cycle of violence by stopping retaliation and using conflict mediation and support services. **Shooting response** addresses the needs of shooting and stabbing victims by offering support during hospital stays and once victims return home, as well as relocation services for individuals in immediate risk of harm. The **homicide support network** provides support to victims' families and others affected by homicide. **Commercially sexually exploited children intervention** (CSEC) reaches out to youth, gets them into a safe environment, and provides wraparound supports to end their exploitation. **Family violence intervention** (family violence) supports victims of family violence with legal and socio-emotional services, as well as crisis response including emergency housing and a 24-hour hotline.

- **Community asset building** is designed to alter norms about violence in communities by developing supports within the community. The **community engagement** sub-strategy works to develop and expand leadership skills of community leaders to direct change in their own neighborhood, and includes a summer Friday night parks program. It includes the young adult leadership council, a panel of young adults with exposure to street violence that is convened to promote personal and community healing. Members also participate in life coaching and street outreach. The **training and technical assistance** sub-strategy includes funds for network-wide trainings and grantee support.

- **Innovation fund** is designed to support the development and testing of new ideas and practices for reducing violence. One funded program diverts youth with felony charges out of the juvenile justice systems using restorative justice, and the other aims to influence school climate and culture through training and trauma-informed education.

Who does Oakland Unite serve?

Agencies in the Oakland Unite network serve specific individuals based on their personal characteristics, areas of residence, and risk of violence exposure, victimization, and involvement. In this section we describe the 5,130 total number of people served by Oakland Unite between January 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017.

Oakland Unite participants are youth, young adults, and adults in Oakland. Across all strategies, approximately 35 percent of participants are 18 and under (Figure I.3).[1] Young children 12 and under, who make up 2 percent of Oakland Unite participants, are served primarily through the innovation fund sub-strategy. Youth ages 13 to 18 are served primarily by the sub-strategies of CSEC intervention, youth life coaching, and youth EESS. The sub-strategies

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[1] Date of birth information was available only for individuals who consented to share their identifying information for evaluation. See Appendix A for consent rates by strategy.

of adult EESS, adult life coaching, and street outreach serve adults, typically between the ages of 19 and 39, at the highest rates.

Figure I.3. Age and gender of Oakland Unite participants
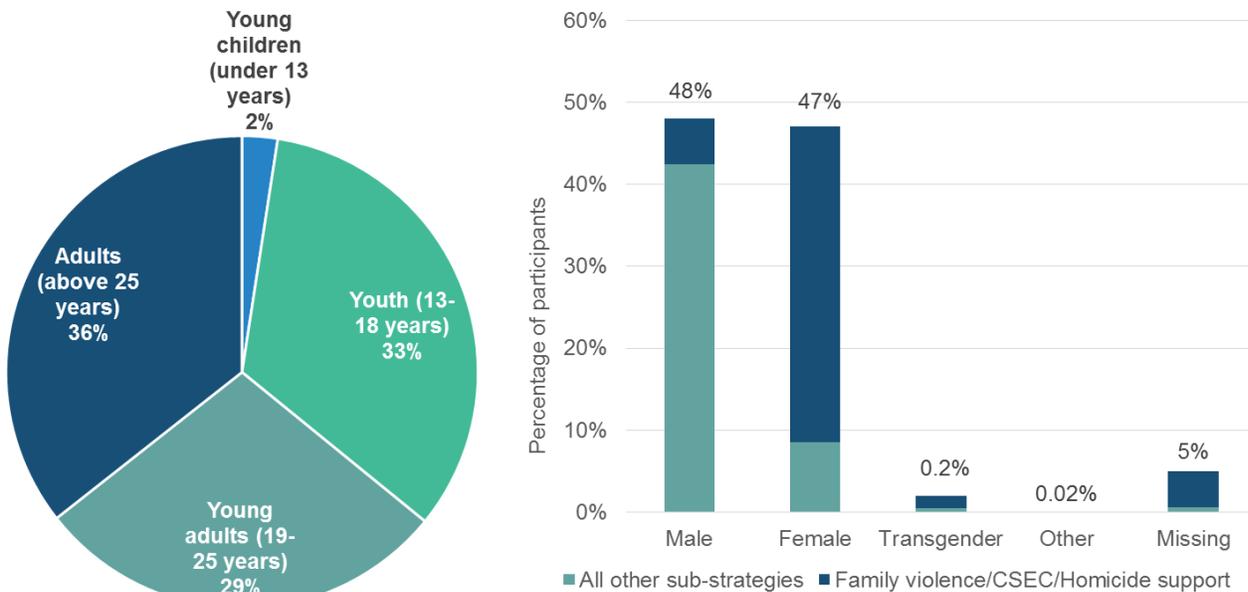
Source: Oakland Unite database.

Note: Date of birth information was available for 2,595 of the 2,620 individuals who consented to share their identifying information for evaluation. Information on gender was available for 4,879 participants and missing for 251.

Oakland Unite serves roughly the same number of men and women, but they are served through different sub-strategies. Most sub-strategies serve predominantly men, with the family violence and CSEC intervention sub-strategies responsible for the majority of women served through Oakland Unite (Figure I.3). By design, six sub-strategies serve predominantly male participants: adult EESS, innovation fund, adult and youth life coaching, street outreach, and leadership council. The CSEC and family violence sub-strategies serve predominantly female participants, reflecting the population at highest risk for these types of violence. Youth EESS and shooting/homicide response serve both males and females at roughly the same rate. Fewer than 1 percent of Oakland Unite participants are transgender.

Nearly two-thirds of Oakland Unite participants are African-American. African-Americans constitute the largest percentage of participants, making up 61 percent of all clients (Figure I.4). The second most represented ethnicity among Oakland Unite participants is Hispanic, at 20 percent. All other reported racial or ethnic groups combined make up 15 percent of Oakland Unite participants, and information about race and ethnicity is missing for 5 percent of participants.

Figure I.4. Race and ethnicity of Oakland Unite participants
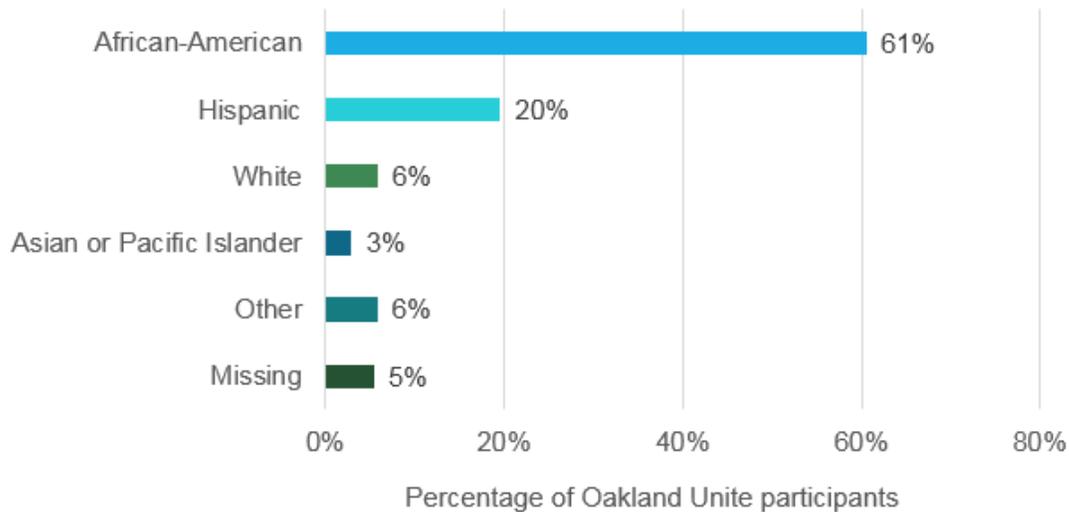
Source: Oakland Unite database.

Note: Information on race and ethnicity was available for 4,580 individuals and missing for 277.

The largest share of Oakland Unite participants reside in East Oakland. The majority of participants served by every sub-strategy except CSEC intervention and street outreach live in East Oakland (Figure I.5). The second most common residential location of participants served is West Oakland, where the majority of participants in CSEC intervention and street outreach live.

Figure I.5. Residential location of Oakland Unite participants
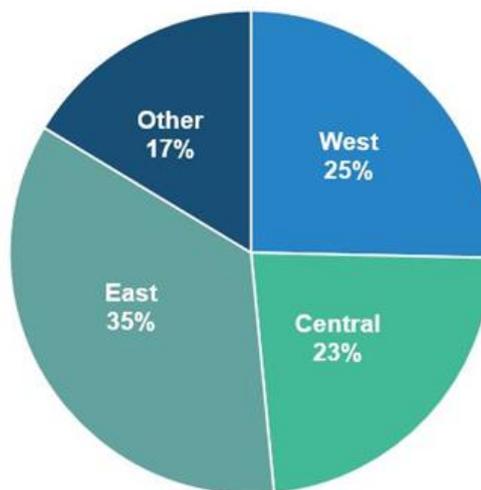
Source: Oakland Unite database.

Note: Residential location was available for 4,809 individuals and missing for 321.

Nearly all Oakland Unite participants report being at risk of direct exposure to violence, violent victimization, or active involvement in violence, and many face multiple risk factors.[2] Each sub-strategy is designed around specific referral mechanisms that target individuals at the center of violence. Within each sub-strategy, agencies collect the risk information that is relevant to the population served by the sub-strategy. Participants in adult EESS, adult life coaching, and street outreach are asked about three types of risk. Based on this information, the majority of participants in these strategies are at risk of direct exposure to violence and of active involvement in violence, and 31 to 49 percent are at risk of violent victimization (Figure I.6).

Figure I.6. Three sub-strategies serve adults with multiple risk factors
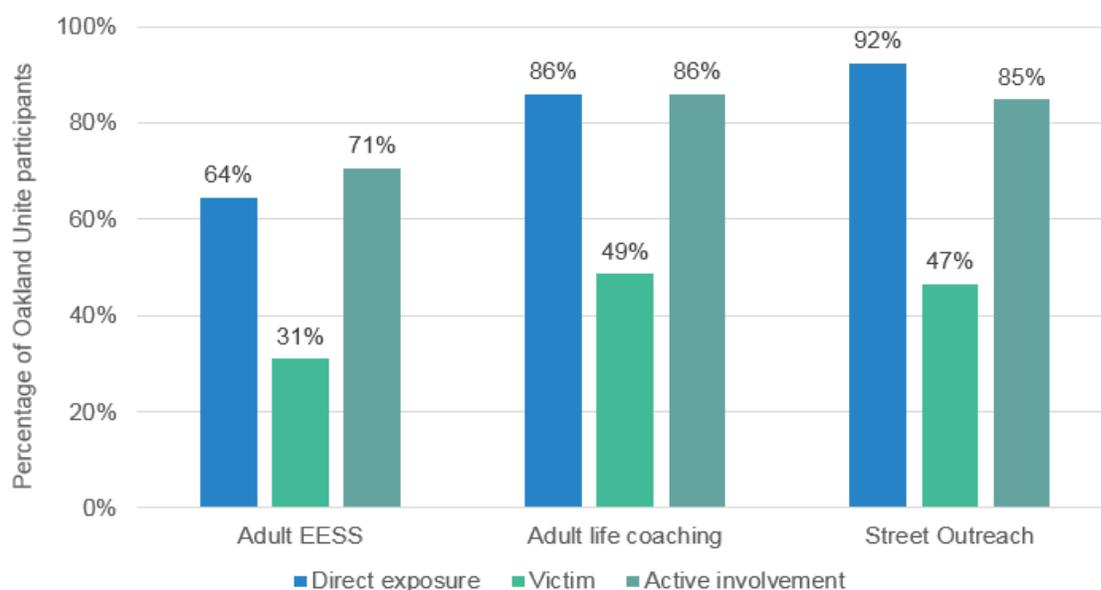
The remaining sub-strategies target other specific types of risk groups. The populations served by the leadership council, youth EESS, and youth life coaching are predominately at risk of active involvement in violence.[3] The CSEC intervention sub-strategy only serves participants who have been victims of violence and the family violence sub-strategy serves victims of violence and their families. The shooting response sub-strategy serves predominately victims of gun violence, and the homicide response network sub-strategy serves family members who have been directly exposed to violent events. The innovation fund has different risk criteria based on the program design—one program works with young people referred by the district attorney's office who are at risk of active involvement in violence, and the other targets a specific school

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[2] Each risk category was constructed by grouping individual risk factors. See Appendix A for details.

[3] Youth life coaching participants are not asked about direct exposure to violence or victimization.

community in a high crime neighborhood where young people are at risk of direct exposure to violence.

Overview of the report

The rest of the report is organized as follows: Chapter II provides an overview of the evaluation, describes the data collection and research methods, and discusses limitations. The next two chapters focus on the results of in-depth analyses of two Oakland Unite sub-strategies: adult life coaching and adult EESS. Chapter III presents the findings about adult life coaching, and Chapter IV presents the findings about adult EESS. Chapter V presents a network analysis that explores the extent to which participants access services from multiple agencies and sub-strategies. Chapter VI provides conclusions and suggested considerations for the future. A glossary of terms is available at the end of the report. Appendix A provides additional information about data collection and processing and Appendix B describes the methodologies and results.

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II. OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION

Despite a decade of declining violence in the United States, violence remains a critical area of concern for policymakers in many urban centers. Many evidence-based and promising practices have been put into place by agencies funded by Oakland Unite to prevent, disrupt, and effectively respond to violence. The City is eager to learn about the effectiveness of Oakland Unite's strategies to inform the direction of grant making in the future and the field more broadly. Under Measure Z, the City is also obligated to fund an independent evaluation of Oakland Unite. The four-year evaluation includes the following:

- **Annual strategy-level report.** Each year, the strategy-level report assesses the effectiveness of a selection of Oakland Unite strategies in reducing individual contact with the justice system, using both qualitative and quantitative analyses.

- **Annual agency-level snapshots.** The agency-level evaluation summarizes descriptive findings for each Oakland Unite agency on the basis of administrative data, site visits, grantee interviews, and participant surveys.

- **Comprehensive evaluation.** The comprehensive evaluation assesses the impact of select Oakland Unite programs on individual delinquency, victimization, education, and employment outcomes over a four-year period.

In this Year 1 strategy report, we conduct in-depth analyses of the implementation and impact of two sub-strategies—life coaching and EESS for adults—during the first year and a half of Measure Z funding, which began in January 2016. These two sub-strategies were selected by the City as the focus of the first annual strategy report. In future years, other sub-strategies may be selected for in-depth analysis. The strategy analysis is guided by a set of research questions, detailed in Table II.1. Below we describe the data sources and analysis methods we used to answer these questions, as well as potential limitations to our analyses. Additional details about the data sources and methods are available in the appendices.

Table II.1. Annual strategy evaluation research questions

Research questions
• What strategies lead to the best outcomes for high-risk youth and young adults?
• Is there variation in the implementation or approach to applying the strategy across programs?
• Does organizational support differ (staff training, continuity of case managers, et cetera)?
• How do we define high risk for each strategy?
• Is strategy implementation comparable to national best practice models?
• How do emerging models compare to best-practice models?
• Do program practices align with guiding principles and essential service elements?
• What is the extent of partnership/collaboration between public systems and community-based social services?

Data sources

To answer the research questions above, we collected and analyzed qualitative and quantitative information about agencies and participants. Our qualitative data collection included a review of grant documents, interviews with Human Services Department (HSD) staff, and in-depth site visits and interviews with agencies in the two focal sub-strategies. During each site visit, the research team conducted semistructured interviews with staff members and clients (whenever feasible). Site visits took place between July and August 2017. In total, we conducted 50 interviews at the 10 agencies providing adult life coaching and adult EESS services.

We collected individual-level records about Oakland Unite participants from the Cityspan database. About 50 percent of Oakland Unite participants consented to share their personally identifying information (name and date of birth) for evaluation purposes, although consent rates varied across strategies. For adult life coaching the consent rate was 86 percent, and for adult EESS the rate was 98 percent. Individuals who did not consent to share their personal information are included in descriptive statistics (unless otherwise noted, as no identifiable information was required for most of these summaries) but excluded from any analyses of arrests, because linking participants to arrest outcomes requires personally identifiable information.

In addition, we collected individual-level records about Oakland Unite participants and individuals who did not participate in Oakland Unite from two administrative data sources—Oakland Police Department (OPD) arrest records and Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) enrollment records. Each data source included different types of information for varying numbers of individuals and time periods (Table II.1). We matched records using their first and last name, date of birth, gender, and address (see Appendix A for details on data collection and matching). The matching procedure took into account the likelihood that two or more records represented the same person, even if there were minor differences between records (such as in the spelling of the name). Of the 5,130 individuals in the Oakland Unite data, we matched 1,093 to OPD data and 737 to OUSD data; 3,716 were in neither dataset or could not be matched because they did not consent to share their personally identifiable information (2,510 did not consent).

Table II.1. Administrative data sources

Data source	Information included	Number of individuals	Date range
Oakland Unite (Cityspan)	Oakland Unite participants only. Agencies and sub-strategies accessed, service contacts and hours, milestones reached, referral sources, and demographic and risk information.	5,130	January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017
Oakland Police Department	Oakland Unite participants and non-participants. Arrests, including their location and statute code, and demographic information about arrestees.	67,158	January 1, 2006 to April 30, 2017
Oakland Unified School District	Oakland Unite participants and non-participants. Schools where enrolled, days enrolled, days absent, days suspended, high school graduation, dual and college enrollment, and demographic information.	75,612	August 1, 2010 to May 31, 2017

Analysis methods

We used a mix of qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to assess the implementation of each sub-strategy as well as the short-term impact of participation on the likelihood of being arrested in the six-month period after beginning services. For the implementation analysis, we reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite; analyzed responses across interviewees within each agency and across agencies within the same sub-strategy to highlight key themes; and summarized administrative data about services and participants.

For the impact analysis, we identified a comparison group of individuals similar to Oakland Unite participants but who did not receive services. Any effort to measure the impact of Oakland Unite requires identifying a similar comparison group. A comparison group allows us to attribute any differences in outcomes we find between participants and nonparticipants to services provided by Oakland Unite, and not to other factors. Without a comparison group, we would not be able to say whether changes in outcomes for Oakland Unite participants before and after participation would have occurred without the program. Therefore, we compared Oakland Unite participants to matched comparison individuals using an approach known as propensity-score matching. Propensity-score matching is a well-established approach and has been found to approximate the results of experimental methods (Fortson et al. 2015; Gill et al. 2015).

To be included in the impact analyses, individuals had to meet the following criteria: (1) consent to share their personal information for evaluation, (2) receive services between January and October 2016 in order to allow for a six-month follow-up period, (3) meet a minimum service threshold (10 hours for adult life coaching and either 10 nonwork hours or 40 work hours for adult EESS), and (4) have recorded demographic data. After these restrictions were applied, there were 193 participants in adult life coaching and 563 participants in adult EESS available for matching. Appendix B describes how each restriction affected the sample sizes of the two analyses.

The potential comparison group was drawn from individuals in the OPD and OUSD data who did not participate in any Oakland Unite sub-strategy. We excluded individuals outside of the age range of Oakland Unite participants in the relevant sub-strategy, as well as individuals who did not live in Oakland. We also excluded individuals who had been arrested for homicide or rape in 2015, because people who were already incarcerated would not be able to be arrested by OPD during the follow-up period. After these restrictions were applied, there were 45,054 potential comparison individuals for the adult life coaching analysis and 56,543 potential comparison individuals for the adult EESS analysis.

We then calculated each individual's probability of participating in that Oakland Unite sub-strategy given his or her gender, ethnicity, age, region of Oakland residence, and prior educational and arrest histories through 2016 (see Figure II.1). We took into account the number and types of arrests individuals had in 2015 and before 2015. After generating these "propensity scores," we matched each Oakland Unite participant with up to 25 comparison individuals who had similar propensity scores. Of the 193 participants in the adult life coaching sample, 189 were matched to an average of 23 comparison individuals each. In adult EESS, 520 out of 563 participants received matches (19 each, on average). A small number of participants did not receive matches because no comparison group members resembled them sufficiently.

Figure II.1. Baseline and follow-up periods for Oakland Unite and comparison groups
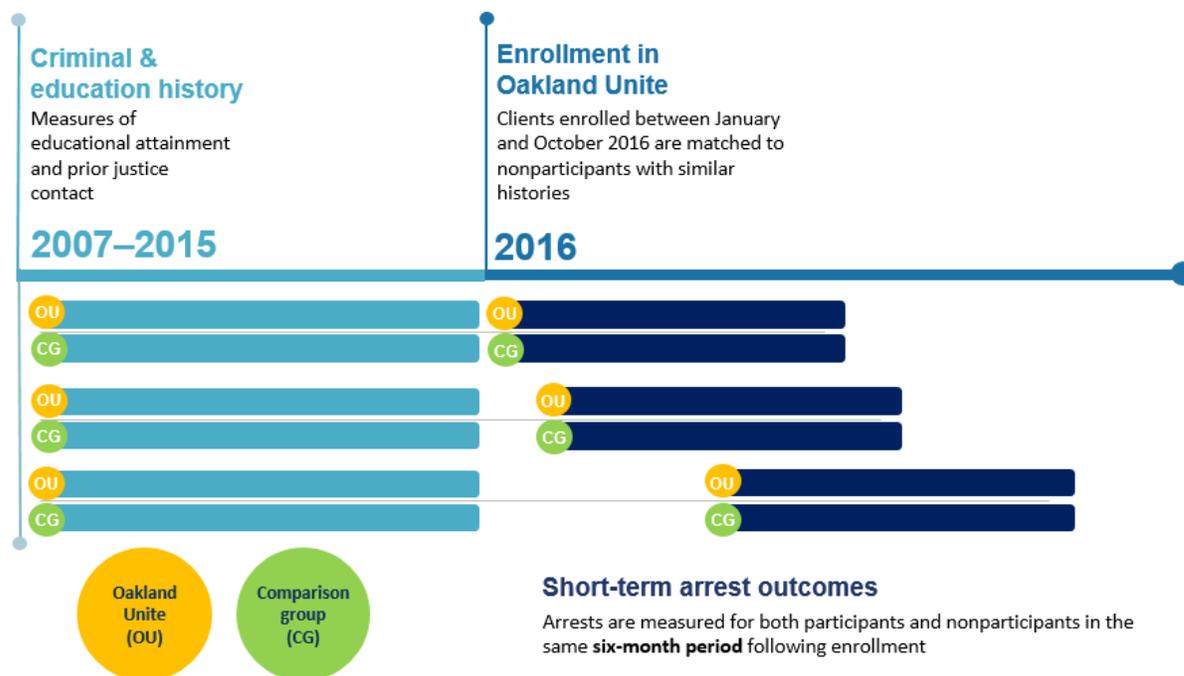
The propensity-score matching process resulted in comparison groups that were similar to the Oakland Unite participants in each of the two sub-strategies. Figures II.2 and II.3 compare selected baseline characteristics of Oakland Unite participants in the analysis sample and comparison individuals before and after matching. In adult life coaching, for example, 2 percent of participants in the analysis sample are female, 80 percent are African-American, and 68 percent had been arrested before 2016. Before matching, individuals in the OPD and OUSD datasets who had not participated in Oakland Unite were significantly more likely to be female and less likely to be African-American or have a prior arrest. After matching, 3 percent of comparison individuals are female, 79 percent are African-American, and 70 percent had a prior arrest. The matching process also identified similar comparison individuals for participants in adult EESS.

After conducting the match, we analyzed short-term arrest outcomes in the six-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. Participants began receiving services between January and October 2016 and therefore had different follow-up periods, ranging from February–July 2016 to November 2016–April 2017.[4] As illustrated in Figure II.1, the follow-up period for the comparison individuals corresponded to the same follow-up period for the Oakland Unite participant they were matched to. We determined whether individuals had been arrested for any offense, a gun offense, or a violent offense by the OPD during these follow-up periods. We then measured the impact of participating in Oakland Unite on these three outcomes using statistical

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[4] Some people who received services in the early months of 2016 had begun participating in Oakland Unite in the previous year. However, we did not have information about services received before January 1, 2016 for this report.

analyses that controlled for small remaining differences in arrest histories and other baseline characteristics.

Figure II.2. Adult life coaching participants and comparison individuals, before and after matching
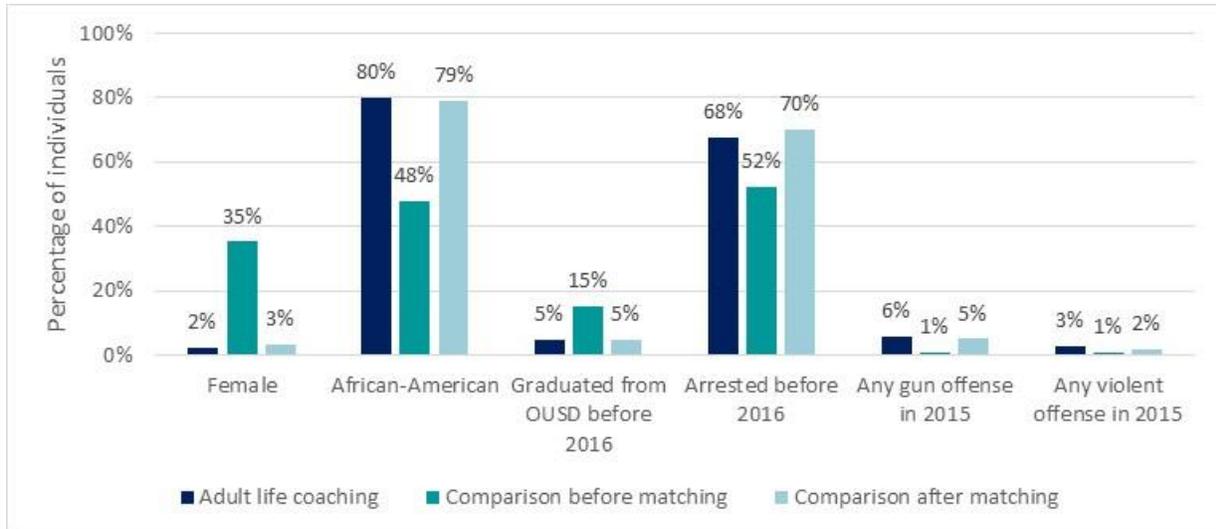
Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of services between January 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult life coaching consent rate was 86 percent.

Figure II.3. Adult EESS participants and comparison individuals, before and after matching
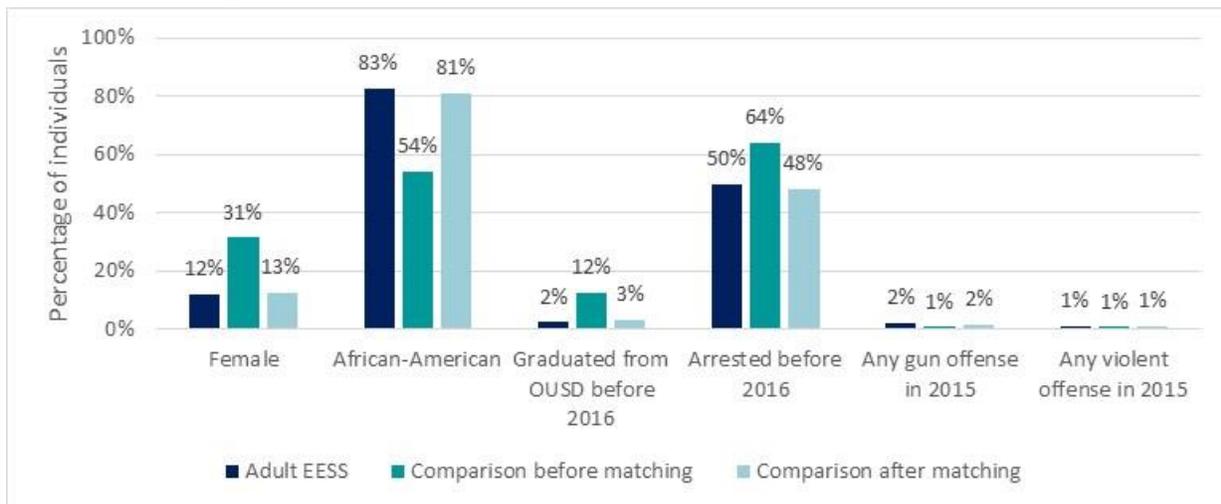
Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services or 40 work hours between January 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult EESS consent rate was 98 percent.

Finally, we conducted exploratory analyses of whether impacts differed for various participant types, on the basis of: (1) the intensity of Oakland Unite services they received, (2)

whether they also received services from other Oakland Unite sub-strategies, (3) whether they had a prior arrest before 2016, and (4) whether they met all of the risk types collected by Oakland Unite and could therefore potentially be considered at highest risk of experiencing violence. These results are considered exploratory because they might reflect the influence of other related but unobserved factors. For example, Oakland Unite participants who receive more service hours may be different from the comparison group in ways that the propensity-score matching model did not account for. Additional details about the analysis methods are available in Appendix B.

Limitations

Although the data sources available for this evaluation provided rich information about the adult life coaching and adult EESS sub-strategies, they have some limitations. Participant interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of clients who happened to be present during the site visit or had been specifically selected by the agency. In one agency, no clients were available to be interviewed. Therefore, the client responses analyzed in this report may not reflect the experiences of all clients. As with all data from interviews, it is possible that clients and staff could have provided responses that they felt would reflect favorably upon themselves or their agencies; although we conducted interviews in private spaces and informed each participant that their answers would be kept confidential, we cannot rule out this possibility.

In examining participant outcomes, we only had data on arrests conducted by OPD. Arrests in other jurisdictions, both within and outside of Oakland, are not recorded in OPD data. For example, arrests conducted by the Oakland School Police, Oakland Housing Authority Police, or police in neighboring cities were not available. In future reports, we aim to incorporate information about arrests and court processing that occur throughout Alameda County. Furthermore, arrests are not the only outcome that adult life coaching and adult EESS aim to improve. In future years we will explore the availability of employment and wage data from the California Employment Development Department. We will also conduct participant surveys and focus groups to elicit perceptions on other outcomes not measured in administrative data.

Given the timeline of the report, we were able to observe a follow-up period of only six months after enrollment in Oakland Unite. Traditionally, recidivism is measured for a longer period of time, such as one year, although new offenses are most likely to occur shortly after release from jail.[5] A longer follow-up period may be especially important for the life coaching model, which is intended to last 12 to 18 months. Moreover, measuring involvement in violent crime is of particular importance in the evaluation of Oakland Unite given the focus on reducing exposure to and involvement in violence. Arrests for violent offenses occur much more infrequently than arrests for property offenses or other less serious, public-order offenses. Therefore, it is even more challenging to capture the effects of participating in Oakland Unite on arrests for violent offenses in a short timeframe. In subsequent years, we will be able to measure the effect of participation in Oakland Unite on arrests over a longer period of time.

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[5] Specifically, one study using a sample of state prisoners from 2000 to 2013 estimated the hazard rate for reincarceration following a prison stay is highest during the first year following release and peaks at six months following release (Yang 2017).

Because the impact analyses were quasi-experimental, the results are not conclusive but still provide valuable evidence. We matched Oakland Unite participants to similar comparison individuals using a large number of characteristics, but it is possible that differences not captured in the available administrative data could remain. For example, adult life coaching programs are designed to serve individuals judged to be at greatest immediate risk for violence. The impact analyses were also limited to participants who consented to have their information matched to other data sources for the evaluation. While the consent rate is close to 100 percent for the adult EESS sub-strategy, 14 percent of adult life coaching participants did not consent. People who do not consent to participate in the evaluation may differ from those who do. Oakland Unite data show that adult life coaching participants who did not consent were more likely to be female and African-American and received fewer service hours, on average.

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III. ADULT LIFE COACHING

The adult life coaching sub-strategy uses mentoring and coaching to help high-risk young adults reduce their likelihood of engaging in violence, avoid involvement with the criminal justice system, and achieve stability and success in their lives. Following a model of relationship building, life coaches work with participants to develop individualized service plans, maintain frequent and intensive contact, and connect them to support services. Four agencies are currently funded by Oakland Unite to provide services in the adult life coaching sub-strategy. These agencies receive a total annual grant award of $932,000 to serve a target number of 200 participants. In addition, the City of Oakland's HSD employs life coaches to serve high-risk young adults. The agencies offering adult life coaching are listed in Figure III.1. In this chapter, we summarize evidence-based best practices and present the implementation and impact findings for this sub-strategy.

Figure III.1. Adult life coaching agencies

ABODE SERVICES *Because everyone should have a home.*	***Abode*** assists individuals and families experiencing homelessness by advocating for them, helping them secure housing in Oakland, and providing case management services.
Community & Youth OUTREACH	***Community & Youth Outreach, Inc.*** (CYO) provides outreach, mentoring, case management, and support to high-risk youth and adults in Oakland.
CITY OF OAKLAND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT *Helping our City grow strong!*	***Human Services Department*** (HSD) oversees Oakland Unite and also provides adult life coaching services to high-risk young adults in Oakland.
THE MENTORING CENTER	***The Mentoring Center*** (TMC) offers intensive services to Oakland youth and adults through case management, life coaching, and mentoring groups.
ROOTS community health center	***Roots Community Health Center*** (Roots) supports residents of East Oakland through a suite of community services, including healthcare, mental health, rehabilitation, education, training, and employment support.

Source: Documents provided by Oakland Unite and agency websites.

Evidence-based approaches to intensive case management

Systematic reviews of more than a decade of case management research have revealed that assertive community treatment and intensive case management are more effective than standard case management in improving participant outcomes in such areas as engagement with services and independent living skills (Smith and Newton 2007; Vanderplasschen et al. 2011). Essential features of these models include small caseloads, around-the-clock crisis support, direct

provision of clinical and vocational services, and part-time psychiatrist input. However, intensive case management programs for people with mental illness have rarely led to reductions in jail time or arrest rates over time, except when they included an integrated addiction treatment component or emphasized jail diversion and coordination of mental health and criminal justice systems (Loveland and Boyle 2007).

Other research on similar programs to Oakland Unite's adult life coaching sub-strategy has found that effective programs include a focus on mentoring activities provided by paid professional staff, along with individualized career counseling, access to GED study, education and vocational training, job search support, and committed follow-up of client placement (for example, Rossman et al. 2003; Bouffard and Bergseth 2008). In one of those studies, case managers were instrumental in helping clients navigate an often confusing network of social services by referring them to the appropriate resources and providing immediate support to client challenges (Rossman et al. 2003). This study also found that offering additional supports such as child care and clothing facilitated client employability.

Promising practices in intensive case management

One study showed promising outcomes from employing case managers who shared similar life experiences with their clients. Boyce et al. (2009) suggested that these "wounded healers" may be able to facilitate the successful reintegration of participants into post-incarcerated life. The researchers posited that employing wounded healers to assist other recently released prisoners might also improve those staff members' satisfaction with life and self-esteem by giving their life purpose, meaning, and significance.

A recent brief based on a convening of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners summarized guidance for reducing recidivism among young adults in the justice system (Council of State Governments [CSG] Justice Center 2017). Promising practices highlighted in this brief included using validated screening and assessment tools to tailor programming; offering wraparound supports in one place rather than referring young adults to several service providers; providing cognitive behavioral programs that address criminal thinking and behaviors; connecting young adults with mental health and substance abuse programs; and focusing on positive, sustained connections to prosocial peers and adults as much as on service delivery.

Best practices recommended by the City of Oakland

Consistent with the evidence base, the City of Oakland requires that agencies funded by Oakland Unite employ a defined set of best practices in their service delivery. The City's defined best practices for the life coaching strategy are detailed in Table III.1.

Table III.1. Oakland Unite best practices recommended for adult life coaching

Category	Recommended best practices
Shared experience	Life coaches share similar life experience or are otherwise intimately connected to the communities from which participants are drawn.
Dosage	Services are intensive, with low caseloads (15:1), high-frequency contacts, and service periods of 12 to 18 months, adapted on the basis of risk.
Outreach and flexibility	Life coaches make frequent, persistent efforts to engage participants and are responsive and flexible with their availability, to be able to meet participants' emergency needs.
Family involvement	Life coaches get to know participants' families and loved ones and involve them in planning and service provision.
Assessment	Life coaches use tools to determine participants' risks and needs. Agencies are asked to use tools provided by the HSD or submit tools for approval.
Focus on safety	Services respond to immediate safety concerns by connecting participants to conflict mediation, harm reduction, temporary emergency relocation services, and other supports.
Planning and follow-up	Services are based on an individualized, regularly updated plan developed in partnership with the participant and in coordination with other involved parties.
Linkage and advocacy	Life coaches refer participants and their family members to needed services, such as education, employment, mental health, substance abuse, and housing.
Documentation	Life coaches maintain organized case files and consistent, high-quality documentation of case notes and milestones in Oakland Unite's database.

Source: Oakland Unite January 2016 through June 2018 funding cycle Request for Proposals.

Findings

In this section, we describe the findings for our analyses of implementation, impacts, and employment-related milestones for the adult life coaching sub-strategy.

Implementation findings

To learn about how the adult life coaching sub-strategy was implemented directly from agency staff and participants, we conducted site visits and semistructured interviews at each of the five adult life coaching agencies. In addition, we reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite and agency staff and analyzed administrative data provided by Oakland Unite and OPD.[6] Table III.2 summarizes our implementation findings for each of the topic areas examined. In what follows, we highlight and discuss a number of key findings.

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[6] Additional details about the evaluation's data collection and methods are available in Appendix A.

Table III.2. Summary of implementation findings for adult life coaching

Category	Summary implementation findings
Target population	• All agencies under this sub-strategy target adults ranging from 18 to 35 years of age. Participants are primarily African-American males residing in east Oakland (46 percent) and central Oakland (28 percent). The average participant is 25 years old. • All agencies defined "high-risk" participants as victims or perpetrators of gun violence. About 86 percent of participants reported being perpetrators of violence; half reported being victims. • Before enrolling in Oakland Unite, 63 percent of participants had been arrested in Oakland, and 37 percent had been arrested for a gun offense.
Collaboration and referral networks	• Agencies actively referred clients to other Oakland Unite agencies both within and outside of life coaching. Referrals were made when specific resources or services were not available. • All frontline staff expressed satisfaction with the information and resources provided by the City and noted that it was easy to identify other organizations, the resources they offer, and the means to contact them. • Several sources referred clients to agencies. The most common referral source was Ceasefire, with 37 percent of clients being referred through the program. One agency commented that participants referred by Ceasefire had lower initial trust levels.
Materials and trainings	• Staff at all agencies participate in HSD trainings and have found them to be useful, although one agency (Abode) noted the trainings were more appropriate for a focus on life coaching and less so for a housing/social work/case management approach. • All agencies identified the life maps as essential to their work and their clients' success. • Agencies consistently use the materials and trainings provided by Oakland Unite and report that they are useful.
Service provision	• Caseloads varied across agencies, typically ranging from 7 to 15 participants per life coach. At Abode, which offers a different service model, the ratio is 34:1. • Life coaches reported efforts to maintain frequent and intensive contact with clients. On average, they received 2.5 contacts and 1.8 service hours per week, primarily one-on-one. • Agencies envisioned that the ideal service period would be longer than the 12 to 18 months required by Oakland Unite as preferable, given the strategy's goals. • On average, participants received services for 7 months. However, participation length varied widely, from less than a week to more than 18 months.
Incentives	• Agencies identified incentives as essential tools for engaging and supporting clients and stated that the overall responses to incentives were highly positive. • According to Cityspan records, 54 percent of participants received incentive payments. On average, these participants received four payments for a total of about $790. • Agencies used alternative incentives or perks in addition to standard financial incentives. • The criteria for receiving incentives were common across all agencies. Incentives are tied to the participant's life map as either a reward for meeting a set milestone or as a means of facilitating progress toward their milestones.
Substance abuse and mental health	• Most agencies commented that they referred clients to the behavioral therapist housed at Roots Community Health Center (Roots) for mental health services. • Although no staff or participants identified mental health resources as a need, the frequency of referrals to the behavioral therapist at Roots may indicate the need for more mental health resources within agencies.
Family engagement	• Agency staff reported that engaging families could serve as a helpful resource. • However, clients' individual needs dictate whether and how agencies engage families.
Participant successes and challenges	• All agencies stated that stability was the ultimate indicator of client success but reported numerous challenges to reaching that goal. • Staff at all agencies identified continued exposure to risk and clients' transitional status (due to a recent incarceration or inability to secure stable housing) as common obstacles.

Category	Summary implementation findings
Participant satisfaction and retention	• Overall, the participants interviewed reported positive experiences. They expressed feelings of gratitude, trust, and familiarity with the staff at their respective agencies. • They noted that life coaches understood their needs, and they liked working with the same person. • Participants reflected on how their views of violence and "the life" had changed. • On average, participants received life coaching services for 26 weeks. One quarter of clients participated for 9 weeks or less and a smaller number participated for over a year.
Staffing	• Staff at three agencies cited direct experience living lives similar to those of their clients, in line with Oakland Unite's recommended best practices. • Agencies noted difficulty in finding staff with the specific experiences and skillset required, but none of the agencies had any current issues with staffing, consistent with little turnover.

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents and administrative data provided by Oakland Unite.

Agencies consistently target the population recommended by Oakland Unite. The adult life coaching agencies serve participants with similar characteristics. Participants were primarily African-American males between the ages 18 and 35 residing in east Oakland (46 percent) and central Oakland (28 percent). All agencies reported targeting individuals at risk of involvement in gun violence. Specifically, participants are expected to meet at least four of the following risk factors: on probation or parole for a violent incident; lives in or hangs out in a designated target area; has a history and/or is in immediate risk of engaging in gun-involved activity; has been shot or seriously injured due to turf or group-related violence; has a close friend, peer or family member shot or killed due to turf or group-related violence in the last 3 years; or interacts regularly with known turfs or groups involved in violent activity.

Figure III.2. Adult life coaching participant arrest rates prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite
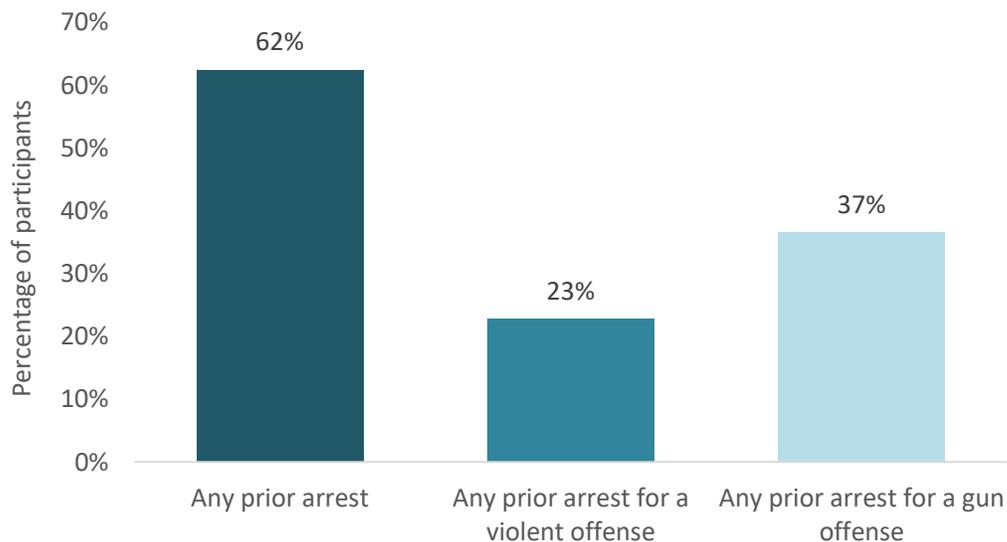
Source: Oakland Unite and OPD administrative data.

Note: These rates are based on 333 adult life coaching participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 and consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult life coaching consent rate was 86 percent.

Based on these risk factors collected at intake, 86 percent of participants had been, or were at risk of becoming, actively involved in violence. Most commonly, participants identified themselves as having a history and/or being in immediate risk of gun-involved activity. The majority of participants also reported being exposed to violence at intake, and almost half reported being victims of violence themselves. As one life coach described it, "A lot of [my clients] have been shot, or people want to kill them." Data from OPD showed that prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite, 62 percent of participants had been arrested in Oakland, 23 percent had been arrested for a violent offense, and 37 percent had been arrested for a gun offense (Figure III.2).

Agencies actively use the network of agencies under Oakland Unite to address participants' needs. Life coaches actively referred participants to support services such as education, employment, mental health, substance abuse, and housing. Agency staff cited previous relationships with other agencies within Oakland Unite, resource lists provided by HSD, monthly meetings with other Oakland Unite agencies, and direct assistance from HSD as factors that facilitated their ability to refer participants to required services. Oakland Unite administrative data showed that adult life coaching participants who accessed services from multiple Oakland Unite agencies most often received services from adult ESSS or other agencies in adult life coaching, consistent with the staff interview responses. As one participant put it, "If you have any issues they always have a referral for you."

Although the Ceasefire program is the most common referral source, it may affect the initial levels of client trust. Participants were most commonly referred to adult life coaching agencies by Ceasefire, with 37 percent of clients being referred through that program. The next two most common referral sources recorded in Oakland Unite's database were outreach (18 percent) and "other" (11 percent). In interviews, agency staff listed referral sources in line with those recommended by Oakland Unite, citing Ceasefire with the greatest frequency. Other referral sources mentioned included other Oakland Unite agencies (primarily Youth Alive! and HSD), probation and parole officers, and prior relationships with life coaches. Some of the referrals from HSD are Ceasefire referrals that are filtered by staff in HSD and sent to other agencies.

Despite the frequency of Ceasefire referrals, two agencies raised concerns about receiving referrals participants through Ceasefire. One staff person reflected on how the nature of the Ceasefire program affected initial trust levels between potential participants and agency staff:

> *"We haven't gotten a lot of Ceasefire call-in referrals. That hasn't really worked because […] it's a case by case basis, but a person who's forced to come to a thing where the police are talking about, 'You gotta make changes, you might get killed,' then they walk out and we come in, and they make a connection that you're associated with the police. People will respond differently but that look isn't the perfect look."*

Another agency, although citing a positive relationship with Ceasefire, also raised concerns about referrals through Ceasefire. The agency's staff reported seeing fewer referrals from Ceasefire than expected, forcing them to conduct more outreach and recruiting on their own.

Agencies consistently use the resources and trainings provided by Oakland Unite and report that they are useful. Staff at all agencies reported using the resources and trainings provided by Oakland Unite. One life coach described HSD's assessment tool as a "lead in" to the life map. However, life coaches at three agencies stressed the importance of establishing a rapport with participants and gathering information about them organically, in a way that couldn't be supported by the assessment tool alone. As life coaches described it, the assessment is a part of the intake process but not the most essential component.

> *"It's a beginning tool but there's no way that two pages of some questions will be able to assess the risk of the person—it's a generalized assessment. We have to get into a conversation and that conversation may not take place that day. It may take a number of meetings before you figure out how to best extract the information you need from the person to help them make lifestyle changes."*

Training in life coaching, a nine-month curriculum for life coaches, case managers, and other direct service professionals, focuses on teaching coaching skills, providing mentorship, and building peer networks in the profession. The aim of this program is to develop staff skills sets for promoting behavior change and positive life choices for clients. Staff observed that the training has helped life coaches develop the professional skills to facilitate this gradual intake process. One life coach said, "[The] life coach certification teaches us to ask empowering questions to individuals. All of the power is inside of you. I ask questions to pull it out of you."

It is important to note that Abode, though under the adult life coaching strategy, does not provide life coaching in the same form as the other agencies discussed in this section, as its focus is primarily on providing housing assistance. A case manager at the agency described their work as being different from life coaching: "I don't necessarily spend as much time as the other groups on the life coaching part…life coaching is more hands on and more frequent." Although staff at Abode remarked that the training provided by HSD was informative, they said it did not apply completely to their daily responsibilities and tasks.

In accordance with Oakland Unite's recommendations, all agency staff emphasized the life maps in helping participants work toward their goals. Staff at all agencies described the life map as a cooperative process between life coaches and participants in which personal goals—and milestones along the way to achieving those goals—were identified. One agency's staff described this as an iterative process that consisted of setting three initial milestones, then setting three more as the previous milestones were met, and so on. It was unclear from our interviews whether a similar process was used in other agencies. One case manager summarized the importance of the life maps in the following statement: "The life map is everything!"

All front line staff confirmed using the Cityspan database as their primary means of maintaining consistent documentation of case notes and milestones. Overall, all agencies reported positive experiences using Cityspan in their daily work, noting that they were able to grow accustomed to it, learn how to pull time-use reports, and use data to help them adhere to Oakland Unite deliverable requirements. Although all agencies also reported some complications in their use of the database, the majority were minor and were overcome once familiarity with the system increased or they received help from Cityspan's customer support. However, three

agencies described as burdensome the number of checkboxes, particularly for milestones, and the inability to batch transfer previous cases into the database.

Participants' risk levels determine the intensity of services provided and the feasibility of Oakland Unite's recommended 15:1 caseload. Life coaches' caseloads varied across agencies, typically ranging from 7 to 15 participants per life coach. At Abode, the ratio is 34:1. Staff there stated that their job function was more akin to a typical case manager role in which tasks are prescribed to clients, with less focus on mentoring and shared experiences. One agency expressed concern with maintaining 15 clients, stating that, "That's a lot of people to manage with what you're trying to accomplish—making major life changes that could mean life or death for an individual." This same agency, which received Oakland Unite funds to employ one full-time life coach, decided to hire two part-time coaches and split their caseload to make sure they were not "overwhelmed." Three agencies reported that maintaining a caseload of 15 participants was feasible, although this presented the risk of clients receiving less attention. As one life coach reflected, "I have had 15 people, but the more people, the less they get."

Staff noted that a participant's level of risk determined the intensity of services provided, and therefore the feasibility of a 15:1 caseload. As one life coach described, a high-risk participant, such as a victim of gun violence who is in immediate risk of retaliation, would require daily contact by phone and in-person follow-up two to three times a week, in addition to a team of interrupters to conduct mediation and assistance with medical needs. On the other end of the risk spectrum, a client who is employed and not in any immediate risk would not require daily visits but would still receive daily check-ins by phone or text messaging. Life coaches reported efforts to maintain frequent and intensive contact with clients. On average, participants received 2.5 contacts and 1.8 service hours per week, primarily one-on-one. One life coach reported maintaining two to three contacts per week via a mix of phone and in-person contact, with one weekly meeting.

A staff member at one agency reported regularly working with 29 participants or more and described this caseload as a challenge that allowed less time per participant. However, the services provided by this agency consisted of more traditional case management and social work, with little to no focus on life coaching.

Although Oakland Unite recommends service periods of 12 to 18 months, agencies reported longer service periods of 18 months to two years as ideal. However, few clients participate that long. According to agency staff, a shorter service provision period has been a cause for some concern because of the rising cost of housing in Oakland and the time required for participants to become able to sustain housing on their own. One agency, although operating under the recommended Oakland Unite service period, observed that, "It takes three years under the best conditions to change behavior. We don't have that time, so we usually get a year. The last Oakland Unite cycle had 18 months, which was outstanding, but then the challenge is letting go." However, in practice many participants do not stay in contact with life coaches for that long. According to Cityspan records, only about 16 percent of participants receive services for a year or longer. Service length varies widely, from less than a week to more than 18 months. On average, participants receive services for a period of 7 months.

Agencies identify financial incentives as essential tools for engaging and supporting clients but also report that they can present challenges. Agencies consistently reported that financial incentives served as effective tools for engaging and supporting clients. One life coach noted: "Incentives help us along. It's an important piece that helps with buy-in." Both agency staff and participants agreed that incentives play an integral role in supporting participants' progress toward achieving their milestones. Another life coach summarized the importance of incentives: "When they take steps toward goals that they have identified, they get incentivized…they love it, as you can imagine…[It's] our way of celebrating you doing well."

Although all agency staff and participants agreed that, overall, incentives were an essential resource, four agencies identified challenges with the incentive system. Staff at three agencies commented that some participants have been more focused on the financial gain provided by the incentives than reaching the milestones set in their life maps. As one life coach observed, "The challenge would be persons […] who dropped in looking for $1,600 saying all the things they think you want to hear, but what they're looking for is a check. We've had one or two or three but they don't last very long." Another life coach described challenges in learning how to set participant expectations correctly around the incentives. Once they learned through "trial and error" how to frame the incentive program correctly, however, they found they had fewer challenges. "It's all about communication. Most people aren't worried about the money; they want to be a part of something positive."

The criteria for receiving incentives as well as the maximum incentive payouts were consistent across all five agencies. However, according to Cityspan records, only 54 percent of participants received incentive payments, which suggests agencies might not consistently enter payment information into the database. On average, participants with payment information received four payments for a total of about $790. Participants were given stipends for meeting milestones outlined in the life maps, developed in partnership with their life coaches. In addition to the incentives, three agencies provided participants with additional incentive-like perks such as gift cards (for Safeway, Target, or Walmart), transportation assistance, tickets to the zoo or baseball games, and at times clothes for job interviews. One participant interviewed had the following to say about these supports: "They can't give you the world, but they can give you what you need."

Agencies' approaches to substance abuse and mental health needs vary and often rely on referrals to agencies with mental health resources—particularly Roots Community Health Center and Youth Alive!. Agencies often referred participants to other agencies to receive support with substance abuse and mental health needs when the required resources were not available on site. Mental health services were the services most frequently referred to other organizations within Oakland Unite. Staff at four of the five agencies identified Roots and Youth Alive! as common resources for participants in need of mental health, trauma, and substance abuse support services. The psychologist at Roots in particular appears to be a well-known resource. One life coach said, "I let [my clients] know she's one of those people, like a 'grandma they didn't have,' like one of my participants says." Staff at Roots reported a focus on offering "user friendly" mental health services and reducing the stigma associated with receiving mental health support.

Agencies share common definitions of participant success but identify numerous challenges to achieving success. All agencies stated that stability was the ultimate indicator of client success but identified numerous challenges to reaching that goal. Participant stability was defined across all agencies as an individual's ability to gain employment, secure housing, get off drugs, and reconnect with their families. In addition to these outcomes, four of the five agencies cited behavioral and attitudinal changes toward violence and retaliation as an integral aspect of attaining stability in a client's life. All described these behavioral and cognitive shifts manifesting as increased engagement in the program and increased self-efficacy, and many cited examples of success stories of participants who engaged with services. As one agency staff member said, "Not all participants are successful, some disappear or don't want to be involved—but those who are engaged succeed." In particular, life coaches said that even "the hardest clients" flourished once they had opportunities for employment.

However, not all participants experience life changes. Staff at all five agencies identified the following factors as common obstacles:

- **Continued exposure to risk.** Consistent program participation can be a challenge for individuals with "one foot in the street life and one foot out." One life coach provided an example of a participant who had enrolled in a drug rehabilitation program and found employment but was still being "hunted" in the streets, leading the person to leave the Bay area for several months. He had been shot twice before relocating. Life coaches also noted that participants are not always willing or able to leave the areas where they are being exposed to violence. Although participants can experience a positive and supportive environment with their life coaches, once they return to their communities their progress can be hampered by contact with police, family conflicts, probation issues, or other risks.

- **Transitional status.** In some cases, participants are in a period of transition following incarceration, are unable to secure stable housing, or lack the funds to keep their cell phones connected. One life coach noted that he had worked with participants who slept in their cars. These issues affect participants' ability to fully engage with services and can make it difficult for life coaches to maintain consistent contact.

Agencies' engagement with families can help support services, but depends on participants' individual needs and goals. Four of the five agencies identified establishing connections with a family member as an important factor in maintaining participant engagement. One life coach described the importance of family engagement: "The best way to keep [clients] engaged is to have relationships with family." Agency staff noted that engaging with families helps them understand their clients' support systems, and stated that family members can serve as resources. One life coach said that family members sometimes disclose information that participants neglect to mention during the intake process. Another explained, "[If] it is grandma, mom, dad, whoever, I can contact them and get them to help. They can call me and let me know if he's acting up." However, life coaches also said that engagement with families depended on each participant's needs and goals. One life coach said, "If my participant has a relationship, I will do a phone call. But if not, it's tough to reach out to a family member that's not messing with that person."

Agencies report that finding staff with both personal experience and professional training is difficult, but that retention is not an issue. Leaders at four of the five agencies cited life coach recruitment practices that were in line with the best practices recommended by Oakland Unite. Managers cited the importance of hiring staff who have a minimum number of years' experience working with communities of color, familiarity with the justice system, familiarity with the services available in the Oakland or East Bay area, shared life experiences with participant populations, a solid foundation in case management principles and/or skillset, and an ability to articulate their motivations for carrying out this type of work. Given these requirements, one agency's manager noted the difficulty in identifying candidates who embodied some, if not all, of these traits. Another agency manager reported working around this challenge by hiring a participant who successfully completed their program, while another agency hired staff who had completed similar programs at other agencies. At the five agencies we visited, two life coaches had personal experience with gun violence, had been participants in reentry programs, and had been hired as staff after completing these programs.

> *We had a gentleman who came in with gun violence issues, but he came in committed to participate in the program and buy into it. He didn't want to pass on his behaviors and his past to his three children. He participated in the program for 16 months. He engaged in the services…And eventually we hired him here."*

Despite the challenges in hiring staff with the desired background and skillset required for life coaches, however, all five agencies reported minimal staff turnover.

Impact findings

After matching adult life coaching participants to a similar comparison group, as described in Chapter II, we analyzed the impacts of participation in adult life coaching on short-term arrest outcomes in the six-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. In this follow-up period, we assessed whether adult life coaching participants were less likely than comparison individuals to have been arrested for any offense, a gun offense, or a violent offense by the OPD, and whether these impacts varied for different participant subgroups.

Participating in adult life coaching decreases the likelihood of violent arrests in the six months after enrollment by approximately 1 percentage point. For adult life coaching, the results show that Oakland Unite participants and comparison group members are similarly likely to be arrested during the six-month follow-up period (Figure III.3), with approximately 9 percent of individuals in each group having any arrests during that time (see Appendix B for full tables). Similarly, we find no difference between the groups in the likelihood of an arrest for a gun offense, with less than 3 percent of Oakland Unite participants and comparison group members being arrested for a gun offense. However, we identify a decrease in the likelihood of an arrest for a violent offense during the six-month follow-up period, with 0.5 percent of Oakland Unite participants arrested for a violent offense compared to 1.9 percent of the comparison group. This difference is statistically significant at the 10 percent level (that is, there is promising evidence that participating in adult life coaching had an impact on arrests for violent offenses).

Figure III.3. Impact of participation in adult life coaching on arrest outcomes in the 6 months following Oakland Unite enrollment
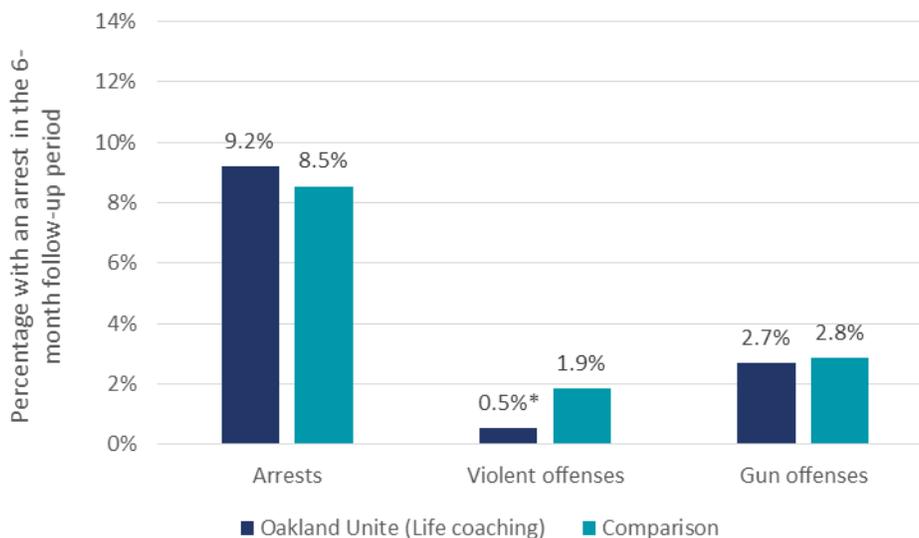
Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: The total sample is 4,399, with 185 adult life coaching participants matched to 4,214 comparison group members. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 service hours between January 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult life coaching consent rate was 86 percent.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

The impact of adult life coaching did not depend on service dosage, number of strategies, prior arrest history, or participant risk factors. We explored whether the impact of participating in adult life coaching on the probability of an arrest differed along a number of dimensions of interest: the intensity of services received (low, medium, or high), based on the participant's number of service hours;[7] whether the participant also accessed services from other Oakland Unite strategies; whether the participant had an arrest history before 2016; and whether the participant met all of the risk types (direct exposure, active involvement, and victim of violence) collected by agencies at intake. We do not find that the impacts of participating in adult life coaching were statistically different along any of the dimensions that we examined. Tables with the results of these analyses are available in Appendix B.

Employment-related training and milestones

Oakland Unite agency staff record participants' activities and accomplishments by tracking the number of hours they spend in activities and noting when they have completed specific milestones. Although we cannot compare rates of employment for Oakland Unite participants and our comparison group, we can consider rates of employment training and job placement among participants. However, these analyses are descriptive and should not be interpreted as causal effects of participation in Oakland Unite on employment.

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[7] Service hour thresholds for these categories were based on the 25th and 75th percentiles of total service hours recorded for the analysis sample. For adult life coaching, this resulted in the following groupings: 12–32 hours, 32–223 hours, and 223–2,116 hours.

One-third of adult life coaching participants are placed in jobs following participation. Figure III.4 presents the share of participants in adult life coaching who reach work-related milestones. Agencies report that 27 percent of adult life coaching participants reach employment training milestones, although these rates range from 7 to 42 percent of participants across agencies. Overall, 32 percent of adult life coaching participants are placed in jobs following participation in the program. Job placement rates also vary across agencies, from 14 to 62 percent. Varying rates may partly reflect agencies' different data tracking practices.

Figure III.4. Percentage of adult life coaching participants reaching employment and training milestones
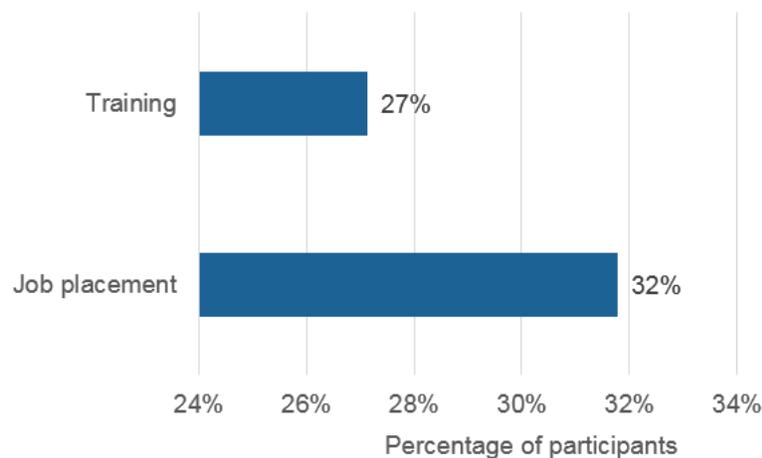
Source: Oakland Unite administrative data.

Note: These rates are based on the total of 387 adult life coaching participants from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

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IV. ADULT EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The adult EESS sub-strategy seeks to improve the career prospects of hard-to-employ adults in Oakland through education and skill development, transitional employment, and partnerships with employers in the community. Five agencies are currently funded by Oakland Unite to provide services in adult EESS. These agencies receive a total annual grant award of $1,080,000 to serve approximately 240 participants each. The agencies offering adult EESS services are listed in Figure IV.1. In this chapter, we summarize evidence-based best practices and present the implementation and impact findings for this sub-strategy.

Figure IV.1. Adult EESS agencies

Beyond Emancipation *(BE)* offers a range of services, including education, emancipation, and employment support, to current and former foster and probation youth as they transition to independent adulthood.

Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency *(BOSS)* assists low income, disabled, and homeless individuals by providing programming to help them attain a stable income source and permanent housing.

Center for Employment Opportunities *(CEO)* provides employment services for people with criminal records through life skills education, short-term paid transitional employment, full-time job placement, and post-placement services.

Civicorps provides young adults with the opportunity earn their high school diploma, receive vocational trainings, and pursue higher education and job opportunities.

Oakland Private Industry Council *(PIC)* provides support and employment services to both individuals seeking work and businesses seeking to employ these individuals.

Source: Documents provided by Oakland Unite and agency websites.

Evidence-based approaches to employment and education support

Employment and education-based programs for people with criminal or juvenile justice histories typically include best practice approaches such as academic and/or vocational training, counseling, and individually tailored services. A review of past research on employment programs revealed the following elements were effective in improving participant outcomes: job search assistance, job coaching, employment readiness classes, incentives for retaining employment, and subsidized employment (Aos et al. 2006; Bloom 2006; Finn 1998; Jacobs 2012; Redcross et al. 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012; Schochet et al. 2001; Wiebush et al. 2005; Zweig et al. 2011). For education-based programs, evidence-based best practices include offering individualized and self-paced remedial education, with an emphasis on reading and mathematics;

training in social skills; and instruction in basic hygiene, preventive medicine, and self-care (Bloom 2006; Schochet et al. 2001).

In addition to these best practices, the research literature suggests that program outcomes vary depending on participants' characteristics, such as age and offense history. Therefore, interventions should be tailored to individuals' needs and risk of re-offense. Studies evaluating the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) and Project Rio found that high-risk individuals experienced the greatest impact from the programming (Finn 1998; Redcross et al. 2007, 2009, 2010, 2012). The study on CEO identified the use of risk assessments as helpful in determining the appropriate service plans and resources for participants. Additionally, interventions should consider matching participants to the appropriate staff, because participants' needs will vary depending on their skills, mental health, and attitudes toward programming (Petersilia 2004).

Promising practices in education and employment support programs

Past research suggests that complementing education and employment programs with additional supports, such as case management, substance abuse treatment, and prosocial interventions, may be more effective. For example, a quasi-experimental study on the Kintock Group, Inc. Employment Resource Center, an employment support program also offering case management, substance abuse treatment, and educational referrals, found that the majority of participants did not recidivate after a two-year period (Jengeleski and Gordon 2003). An implementation analysis of Youthbuild, which also incorporated these supports, found that the program was successful in enrolling and graduating more participants than anticipated (Mitchell et al. 2003). Furthermore, an evaluation of the Boston Reentry Initiative suggested that prosocial interventions such as social service and mentorship were effective in reducing gang involvement and violence (Braga et al. 2009).

As mentioned earlier, a brief based on a convening of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners outlined suggestions for reducing recidivism among young adults in the justice system (CSG Justice Center 2017). The brief included recommendations for establishing "career pathways" that integrate workforce-readiness supports, education and technical training, and supported employment opportunities that focus on earning a certification and are connected to the local employment market. The brief also discourages relying on stand-alone programs that focus solely on employment or education without addressing the full range of young adults' needs.

Best practices recommended by the City of Oakland

Consistent with the evidence base, the City of Oakland asks that agencies funded by Oakland Unite to provide services in the EESS strategy employ the best practices detailed in Table IV.1.

Table IV.1. Oakland Unite best practices recommended for EESS

Category	Recommended best practices
Relationship building	Agencies develop deep levels of participant engagement through consistent relationship building and mentoring that focus on pro-work behaviors and attitudes.
Job readiness assessment	Agencies assess participants' job readiness needs and barriers and develop employment placements that anticipate their challenges and obstacles to employment.
Soft and hard skills	Services promote job readiness, with a focus on motivation, soft skills, and hard skills.
Incentives	Agencies incentivize educational attainment and provide funds to support job readiness and retention (travel, attire, tools, and certification).
Barriers to employment	Services address non–skill-related barriers to employment, often with other community-based programs, to develop resources or provide access to concrete supports.
Transitional jobs	Agencies offer transitional job placement, which is usually temporary, subsidized, income- and skill-generating and often combined with other financial incentives.
Learning on the job	Agencies provide learning work environments, such as internships or other on-the-job experience with open communication between worksites, participants, and program staff.
Connecting to jobs	Services focus on finding and retaining employment and include career planning; job coaching; connecting to work opportunities; development of retention plans; frequent contact with employer; and supporting individuals in advancement.
Increasing social capital	Agencies help clients increase their "social capital" through participation in social activities (sports teams, volunteering, etc.) where working people congregate.
Follow-up	Agencies conduct comprehensive follow-up with participants, families, and employers to address any issues quickly and celebrate success.

Source: Oakland Unite January 2016 through June 2018 funding cycle Request for Proposals.

Findings

In this section, we describe the findings for our analyses of implementation, impacts, and employment-related milestones for the adult life coaching sub-strategy.

Implementation findings

To learn about how the adult EESS strategy was implemented directly from agency staff and participants, we conducted site visits and semistructured interviews at each of the five adult EESS agencies. In addition, we reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite and agency staff and analyzed administrative data provided by Oakland Unite and OPD.[8] Table IV.2 summarizes our implementation findings for each of the topic areas examined. In what follows, we highlight and discuss a number of key findings.

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[8] Additional details about the evaluation's data collection and methods are available in Appendix A.

Table IV.2. Summary of implementation findings for adult EESS

Category	Summary implementation findings
Target population	• The majority of participants are male and African-American, residing in all areas of Oakland. The average participant is 29 years old. • About 39 percent of participants had been arrested in Oakland before enrolling in Oakland Unite, and 19 percent had been arrested for a gun offense. • Based on risk information collected by agencies, 70 percent of participants were identified as actively involved in violence or at risk of active involvement in violence, and 31 percent were identified as victims of violence or being at risk of violent victimization. Agencies reported targeting slightly different populations, resulting in broader coverage of the at-risk population.
Collaboration and referral networks	• The majority of participants (62 percent) are referred by the justice system. • Agencies also report receiving referrals from other Oakland Unite strategies (primarily adult life coaching and street outreach); two agencies said they do most recruiting on their own. • All agencies make referrals to other agencies within the strategy. • Agencies identified the following as challenges to referrals: Participants are not always a good fit for an agency's program, other agencies have additional eligibility criteria, and participants referred by Ceasefire are not as trusting as participants from other sources.
Materials and trainings	• All agencies use HSD's screening assessment to identify risk factors. Most administer it at intake, and one does it more informally as participants feel comfortable opening up. • All program staff found trainings offered by HSD helpful, particularly the burnout and compassion fatigue training.
Service provision	• Most agencies also conduct a job readiness assessment to guide program services. • All agencies provide job readiness, transitional employment, and job placement services; however, the service delivery, dosage, and length vary across all agencies. • On average, participants received less than one contact per week. However, they were engaged in 15 service hours weekly, most of that working (11 hours). • Most agencies assess and address personal challenges through counseling or case management. One site does not assess for personal challenges, but refers participants to HSD life coaching when these challenges come up. • Some agencies experienced challenges implementing their career pathways, and have since restructured their program models to address these challenges.
Incentives and income	• All agencies provide some financial incentives, but the structures vary. • Agencies report that income payments are critical for engagement, but participant engagement remains challenging. • One agency requires clients to attend counseling sessions or a skills workshop (such as resume preparation) before receiving paychecks.
Family engagement	• Despite the Oakland Unite focus on family involvement, engaging family members is not a key element of any of the agencies' approaches.
Participant successes and challenges	• Although some program requirements vary, all agencies consider a participant as having successfully transitioned out of Oakland Unite services after six months of job retention. Participants may still receive other services from agencies after exiting Oakland Unite-funded programming. • Agencies identified housing and personal barriers (such as anger management, lack of confidence, and mental health) as the biggest challenges that participants face.

Category	Summary implementation findings
Participant satisfaction and retention	• Most participants reported positive experiences in the programs. However, clients were not satisfied with staff turnover, especially when they had established a relationship with a staff member. • Participants also reported that permanent employment opportunities were sometimes too far away from where they live or paid less than transitional employment. • In two agencies, participants can be terminated for failure to comply (behavior, absences, tardiness). One agency uses a participant-led appeals process, which is well received. • On average, clients received services for 18 weeks, though this ranged widely. Half participated for 6 weeks or less, and a smaller number participated for over a year.
Staffing	• Staff size varied across agencies. Most agencies had program managers, job coaches, job developers, case managers, and retention specialists. • Caseloads were large at the three agencies that reported case sizes, ranging from 25 to 69 participants. • The majority of agencies hire staff with similar backgrounds as participants to help build rapport and establish relationships. All agencies preferred hiring staff who shared life experiences with participants.

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents and administrative data provided by Oakland Unite.

Agencies target different populations, resulting in broader coverage of the at-risk population. Agencies determine eligibility for Oakland Unite services using Oakland Unite's assessment of risk factors. As in the adult life coaching sub-strategy, participants are expected to meet at least four of the risk factors assessed by agencies. All agencies administer the assessment at intake, except Civicorps. There, the assessment is conducted informally as participants engage with their case managers and open up about their risk factors. In these self-reported risk assessments, 70 percent of participants in adult EESS were identified as being actively involved in or at risk of involvement in violence. Most commonly, participants said they had a history or were in immediate risk of gun-involved activity. According to data from OPD, about 39 percent of adult EESS participants had been arrested in Oakland before enrolling in Oakland Unite, 16 percent had been arrested for a violent offense, and 19 percent had been arrested for a gun offense (Figure IV.2). The majority of participants also reported being directly exposed to violence, and 31 percent reported being victims or being at risk of victimization of violence themselves.

Although all agencies target clients in reentry or at highest risk of violence, Civicorps and BE have more specific target populations (Figure IV.3). Civicorps participants must be seeking a high school diploma to receive services, and BE participants must be currently or formerly involved in the foster or justice systems. These two agencies primarily serve young adults of transitional ages (18–24) years old, while the other agencies serve older adults as well (typically ages 25–35). The average participant in this sub-strategy is 29 years old. The majority of participants across all adult EESS agencies are African-American males.

Figure IV.2. Adult EESS participant arrest rates prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite
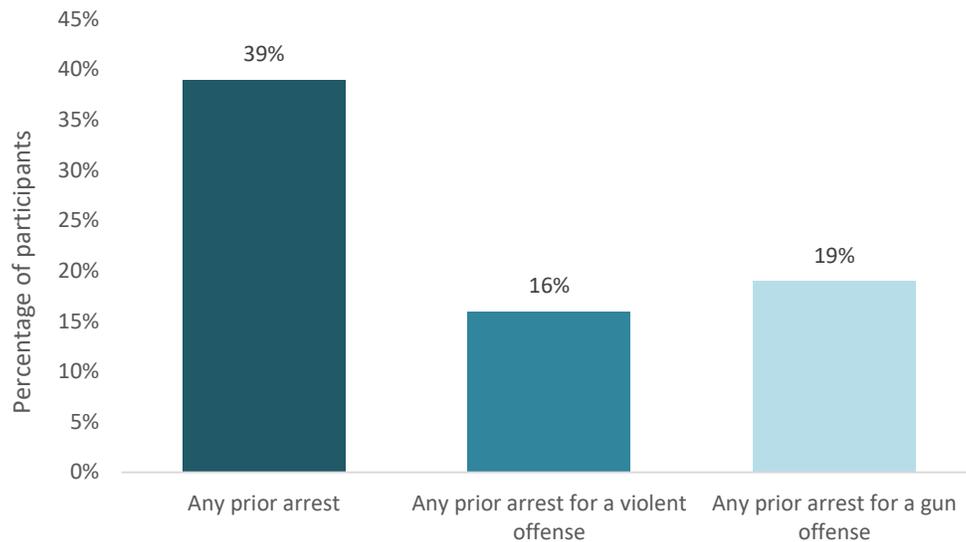
Source: Oakland Unite and OPD administrative data.

Note: These rates are based on 996 adult EESS participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 and consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult EESS consent rate was 98 percent.

Figure IV.3. Adult EESS target populations

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents provided by Oakland Unite.

Referrals come from and are made to other Oakland Unite agencies, both within and across strategies. According to Oakland Unite's database, 62 percent of participants were referred to adult EESS by the justice system.[9] However, most agencies reported receiving referrals from other Oakland Unite sub-strategies, primarily adult life coaching and street outreach. Civicorps and BE reported doing most recruiting on their own. All agencies also reported making referrals to other grantees within adult EESS. The most common reason for referring a participant to another agency is the participant was not a good fit and another agency was better suited to serve that participant. For example, if Civicorps identifies that a participant is not interested in attaining a high school diploma and would rather have a full-time job, the agency makes a referral to a grantee that prioritizes employment, such as CEO or PIC. Regarding referrals across the strategies, one case manager stated, "[You] can't be thinking about the numbers of one's own organization, but think first about the needs of the clients." This sentiment was shared by another organization, which, in addition to referring participants to other agencies, refers potential employers when none of its participants are interested in or qualified for that job opportunity.

Despite shared sentiments about referrals within adult EESS being positive, one agency was skeptical about the intention behind these referrals, suggesting that the referrals they received from other grantees were consistently for the hardest-to-serve participants. Agency staff also shared other challenges related to referrals. For example, one agency detailed that early on, the referrals from HSD's life coaches did not meet the additional eligibility criteria that agency required. This prompted the agency to focus on recruiting its own participants. Additionally, agencies reported that referrals from Ceasefire are typically less trusting of program staff and more difficult to engage.

The timing and content of intake assessments vary depending on agency preferences. Most agencies administer assessments at intake to guide program services, but agencies vary in terms of what is assessed and the assessments used. All agencies use the HSD assessment to identify risk factors and determine eligibility, and most conduct a job readiness assessment to guide program services and identify potential barriers that may affect employability. Such barriers typically include proper identification, transportation to interviews and job sites, proper work and interview attire, prior educational attainment, and soft skills. In addition to assessments for Oakland Unite services, some agencies administer assessments to determine eligibility for other funding streams such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The assessments used by grantees are specified in Table IV.3. Grantees assess job readiness needs and barriers to develop employment placements and anticipate challenges and obstacles to employment. Some grantees assess job readiness and educational skills once during enrollment, while others regularly assess these factors as participants complete assignments throughout the year.

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[9] This rate includes referrals from a parole officer (55 percent), a probation department (4 percent), and the California Department of Corrections (3 percent). Referral sources were recorded for 96 percent of participants in this sub-strategy.

Table IV.3. Assessments used by adult EESS agencies

Assessment	BE	BOSS	CEO	Civicorps	PIC
Oakland Unite risk factors	X	X	X	X	X
Intake assessment	X	X	X	X	X
Job readiness assessment	X	X	X	X	X
Job readiness reassessment		X	X		X
Tests of adult basic education				X	X
CASASª basic skills assessment					X
Department of Rehabilitation					X
SNAP eligibility		X			

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents provided by Oakland Unite.
ªCASAS = Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems

Along with the assessments, most agencies hold a one-on-one session to prepare an individual employment plan. Typically, the case managers work with participants to prepare the individual service plans at intake and then follow up with participants to track their progress. CEO's instructor prepares the individual service plan during the intake process, which is administered across three days of classroom instruction. Civicorps' career pathways coordinator prepares the individual employment plan during classroom instruction.

Housing and personal barriers (anger management, lack of confidence, and mental health) are the biggest challenges that participants face. Although participants tend not to open up about personal challenges in group settings, agency staff reported participants often build a relationship with at least one staff member and will confide in them about the challenges they are facing. The most common personal barrier reported was lack of stable and affordable housing. Some staff reported that several of their participants are homeless or were homeless at some point during programming. The lack of affordable housing has prevented some at-risk people from participating in the program who spend most of their time in Oakland but can no longer afford to live there. Four of the agencies provide participants with housing services. Approaches taken by agencies to address various types of personal barriers are described in Table IV.4.

Table IV.4. Addressing personal barriers of adult EESS clients

Grantee	Approach to addressing personal barriers
Beyond Emancipation	The agency offers one-on-one coaching sessions delivered by a coordinator and tailored to the appropriate program phase. Sessions focus on aligning values, choices, and actions and developing harm reduction skills. Sessions also include job readiness components such as addressing barriers to securing and maintaining employment, setting education and employment goals, and coaching to address employer feedback.
	The agency also offers crisis intervention, advocacy, brokering, and stabilization sessions between participants and a coordinator aimed at developing an action plan to identify areas of need and how to address barriers. Additionally, coordinators work with BE case managers to provide basic needs, such as housing and child care, crisis intervention, and access to food and transportation.
Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency	The agency offers case management to address personal barriers and mediation services to address gang rivalries between participants in conflicting gangs. Mediation is led by a program director or case manager who shares similar life experiences as participants. The agency also provides access to food, transportation, clothing, and housing.
Center for Employment Opportunities	Agency staff discuss only barriers related to employment. Staff are aware of participants' convictions but do not bring them up. When participants reveal personal barriers, staff will make a referral to Oakland Unite life coaches to provide supportive services.
Civicorps	Case managers work with participants to address barriers and refer them to supportive services such as child care, housing, and legal services. Case managers have an open-door policy in which participants are free to walk in without an appointment. Counselors offer students a safe space and encourage them to speak about their life experiences, including trauma and violence. Counselors make sure that participants with children are connected to social service child-care links and try to partner with Gma Village. Free meals are available to students.
Oakland Private Industry Council	The agency contracted a clinician who runs group and individual counseling sessions. Sessions are every two weeks, for 2 hours (group) or 1 hour (individual), focused on regulating emotions and using good judgment. Participants are encouraged to open up about any other barriers they are facing during these sessions.

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents provided by Oakland Unite.

At most agencies the counselors held an open door policy, accepted walk-ins, and created a safe space where participants could feel comfortable opening up about any issue. Most participants interviewed shared that staff were easily accessible and responded to their needs and concerns quickly. Furthermore, participants appreciated that staff members were welcoming and made themselves accessible. One participant stated that he felt he could go to any staff member and talk about challenges he was facing. For the most part, participants reported that staff members were helpful and provided the proper guidance. As one participant put it, "If I'm slacking off, they are like 'Hey, you're tripping. You gotta do this and gotta do that.'" However, the same participant shared that he was upset with how quickly the staff were to discipline participants. He later revealed that staff were not always aware or understanding of participants' personal challenges and recommended that staff engage with participants by asking, "Hey, what's up? What space are you in?"

All agencies provide job readiness, transitional employment, and job placement services; however, the service delivery, dosage, and length vary across all agencies. Job readiness services typically include vocational and job readiness training such as computer skills, job searching, resume development, and interviewing skills. Participants then have the opportunity to engage in transitional employment, typically at culinary, landscaping, and service-oriented

worksites. While participants are engaging in the job readiness and transitional employment components of their programs, the agencies also provide job placement services until participants find employment. However, the length of time and content of each of these components can vary widely (Figure IV.4). For example, CEO offers 20 hours of job readiness training over three days before participants move to transitional employment and receive concurrent job coaching. Clients at Civicorps, on the other hand, receive academic instruction and job readiness training for 14 weeks, attending classes for 32 hours per week, before starting transitional employment.

Despite Oakland Unite's focus on family and community engagement, involving family members is not a key element of any of the agencies' approaches. Agencies do not actively engage families in programming. When asked about family involvement, participants' common responses were that family members were not involved in programming, but would attend the graduation ceremony. Across all the agencies, referrals to childcare services were the most intentional means of including family in services. For example, one participant shared that the program staff were understanding of her situation as she sought childcare for her daughter to facilitate her participation in the program. The agency allowed her daughter to sit with her during classroom instruction, and eventually connected her to childcare services.

Community involvement was a component in four of the agencies' programs. Civicorps includes civic engagement in its graduation requirements, and participants typically attend discussions with elected officials. CEO's crew-based maintenance and labor services are offered primarily to public sector clients. BE encourages participants to engage in community service opportunities. For example, participants volunteer at community lunches to provide catering and work in community gardens where they engage with people about the food they are growing.

Income payments are critical for engagement, but participant engagement remains challenging. Although stipends and wages earned while in transitional employment are important program elements, all agencies anticipate and experience drop-off in participant engagement. On average, clients received services for 18 weeks, though this ranged widely. Half participated for 6 weeks or less, and a smaller number participated for over a year. Participant engagement sometimes depended on interest in the specific opportunities offered by the agency. For example, PIC offered a career pathway in baking, but participants were not as interested in this track as they were in others. The bakery pathway offered lower job earnings, and the early morning shifts were not appealing. PIC offered increased incentives to encourage participants to engage in this pathway, but interest remained low.

Figure IV.4. Length and dosage of employment services

Beyond Emancipation

Job readiness
: 32 hours over 2 weeks

Transitional employment
: Culinary: 160 hours over 8 weeks
: On-the-job: 120 hours over 8 weeks

Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency

Job readiness/life skills
: 80 hours over 4 weeks

Transitional employment
: 100 hours

Center for Employment Opportunities

Job readiness
: 20 hours over 3 days

Transitional employment
: 180 hours
: (plus Job Coaching for 6-8 weeks, 1-2 hours each week)

Civicorps

Job readiness/academic instruction
: 448 hours over 14 weeks
: (32 hours per week)

Transitional employment
: 150 hours

Oakland Private Industry Council

Job readiness
: 40 hours

Transitional employment
: 220 hours

*Source:* Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents provided by Oakland Unite.

Note: PIC does not require job readiness to be completed before moving participants to the transitional employment phase of programming.

All grantees consider a participant as having successfully transitioned out of Oakland Unite services after six months of job retention. Participants who retain employment for six months are considered to have successfully completed programming across all agencies, and each agency measures retention at 30, 90, and 180 days. Staff at one agency stated, "You get any one of these guys to retain employment for six months, that is a real sign of transformation." He explained that one month of job retention was difficult for the Oakland Unite target population to achieve and stressed the significance of six-month job retention. The completion requirements for each agency are presented in Figure IV.5. Some agencies have requirements for program completion in addition to those specified by the Oakland Unite grant. For example, in addition to employment, Civicorps views enrollment into higher education as another measure of success. CEO considers a participant as having successfully completed their programming after job retention for one year. BE continues to monitor participants beyond the six months of placement and counts wage increases beyond the minimum wage as measures of success. BOSS and Civicorps will continue to interact with program alumni and share job opportunities.

Figure IV.5. Adult EESS program requirements

Beyond Emancipation	Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency	Center for Employment Opportunities	Civicorps	Oakland Private Industry Council
Achieve 75% attendance rate at 2 weeks pre-employment readiness program	Complete 80 hours of job readiness training	Complete 20 hours of pre-employment/soft skills training	Complete 32 hours of pre-employment and soft skills training	Complete 40 hours of job readiness training*
Complete Track A (Culinary) or Track B(Employer-Informed Entry Level Employment)	Complete 100 hours of transitional employment	Complete 180 hours of work experience training	Earn HS diploma	Complete 220 hours of transitional employment*
Retain employment for six months	Retain employment for six months	Attain permanent employment	Complete 150 hours of work experience training	Retain employment for six months
		Retain employment for six months	Attain employment	
			Retain employment for six months	

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents provided by Oakland Unite.

* The agency does not require a specific number of hours of job readiness and transitional employment services for program completion.

Some agencies experienced challenges implementing their career pathways, but made modifications. Staff at one agency reported that participants are not always interested in the jobs available through the pathway they were assigned or could not find employment within the pathway. Therefore, the site modified its programming to provide job-readiness training before assigning participants to a pathway. In addition to this restructuring, the agency has focused its

programming around culinary training and employment in the food industry. A second agency also restructured its programming to deliver both the job readiness and transitional employment components simultaneously. Staff at this agency found that having to wait to be connected to income after completing job readiness was difficult for some participants. As mentioned above, staff also struggled with participants' disinterest in a career pathway in baking and planned to replace it. Both of these agencies had not yet implemented services under the new program structures at the time of the site visits.

Staffing structures and roles varied across agencies. Table IV.5 details the various staffing roles related to Oakland Unite programming at each adult EESS agency. As reflected in the slightly different service models they offer, agencies have different staffing structures, which affects the number and type of staff participants interact with.

Table IV.5. Adult EESS staffing structure and roles

Position	BE	BOSS	CEO	Civicorps	PIC
Program manager	Manages grant and data evaluation*	Manages grant; checks Cityspan data and runs reports; mentors staff and participants	Manages grant checks Cityspan data and runs reports	Manages grant; checks Cityspan data and runs reports	Manages grant and supervises staff
Classroom instructor	Provides job training and support outside of the classroom to participants	*Academic services are referred to partner agencies.*	Provides job readiness course; administers assessments and intake	Provides instruction in English, math, science, and health and wellness	*Job training instruction is completed at worksites*
Jobs coach	*Role fulfilled by Job Developer**	Provides group and one-on-one job readiness training	Provides one-on-one job readiness training	Teaches job readiness/soft-skills; develops service plans; provides college and career counseling; connects to job opportunities	*Fulfilled by job developer*
Job developer	Recruits and supports employer partners; provides job coaching; follows up on job retention*	Develops relationships with employers; shares information about state tax credits for hiring reentry population	Networks with employers; may act as human resources or case manager for participants after job placement	*Role fulfilled by jobs coach*	Provides job readiness training and job coaching; administers job readiness assessments; engages employers; makes job referrals; follows up on job retention

Position	BE	BOSS	CEO	Civicorps	PIC
Retention outreach specialist	*Role fulfilled by case managers and job developer*	*Role fulfilled by agency staff*	Tracks job retention; reaches out to disengaged participants; administers stipends	Maintains communication with alumni; posts jobs; tracks engagement; reaches out to disengaged participants	*Role fulfilled by job developer*
Case manager	Provides coaching and crisis intervention; refers to supportive services; follows up on service receipt	Conducts intake and assessments; develops individual service plans		Engages clients about strategies for self-care and coping skills; connects to support services and incentives	Administers assessments; makes referrals to support services

Source: Site visits, interviews with agency staff, and documents provided by Oakland Unite.

* Position was vacant at time of site visit, information is from Oakland Unite documents and agency job listings

Agencies value hiring staff with similar backgrounds and experiences as participants but find this challenging. Each agency valued employing staff with similar backgrounds as participants as a means of fostering relationship building. A staff member from one of the agencies stated, "You must be from the cave to lead someone out," and another shared that although she may not have the educational attainment that others in her field do, she was "from the soil," which could be just as valuable. Agencies reported that employing staff who are relatable and understanding of participants' situations is necessary to ensure they are comfortable and remain engaged as they move through the program. This assertion is supported by participant interviews, because the participants at each site tended to gravitate toward particular staff members more than others. Usually, this was due to a shared life experience or the staff member's personality. For example, at one site the staff members who were program alumni were the most relatable staff members because they shared both life and program experiences with the participants.

Agencies engaged in several practices to hire staff who met the job requirements and also shared life experiences with participants. Two of the agencies, Civicorps and BOSS, employed program alumni. BOSS implemented a "hire what you breed" practice and developed a talent pipeline in which participants were mentored to develop the skills to be considered for employment at similar organizations. Although BOSS cannot hire every alumni, as long as participants "show up and show out" they can be considered for employment. To find staff, every agency engaged in normal hiring practices, such as online postings highlighting a preference for participants with the necessary education, work experience, and shared life experiences. One site was currently hiring a program manager and program coordinators for their two career pathways. As part of the interview process, candidates for the positions were interviewed together and were given an assignment to work together on, in groups of three. The goal of this exercise was to test how well the applicants could collaborate with their team members.

Impact findings

After matching adult EESS participants to similar comparison individuals, as described in Chapter II and in Appendix B, we analyzed the impacts of participation in adult EESS on short-term arrest outcomes in the six-month period after enrolling in Oakland Unite. In this follow-up period, we assessed whether adult EESS participants were less likely than comparison individuals to have been arrested for any offense, a gun offense, or a violent offense by the OPD.

Participating in adult EESS decreases the likelihood of being arrested in the six months after enrollment by approximately 6 percentage points. The impact results for EESS, presented in Figure IV.6, show that Oakland Unite participants are 6 percentage points less likely to have an arrest in the six months following program enrollment than matched comparison group members during the same period of time. Specifically, 5 percent of Oakland Unite adult EESS participants are arrested following program enrollment compared to 11 percent of the comparison group. The difference is statistically significant at the 1 percent level, which means we can confidently conclude that participating in adult EESS had a positive impact. Further, there is a decrease in the likelihood of having a violent arrest in the six-month follow-up period that is statistically significant at the 10 percent level: 0.8 percent of EESS participants are arrested for violent offenses compared to 2.2 percent of the comparison group. There is no difference between the two groups in the likelihood of an arrest for a gun offense.

Figure IV.6. Impact of participation in adult EESS on arrest outcomes in the 6 months following Oakland Unite enrollment
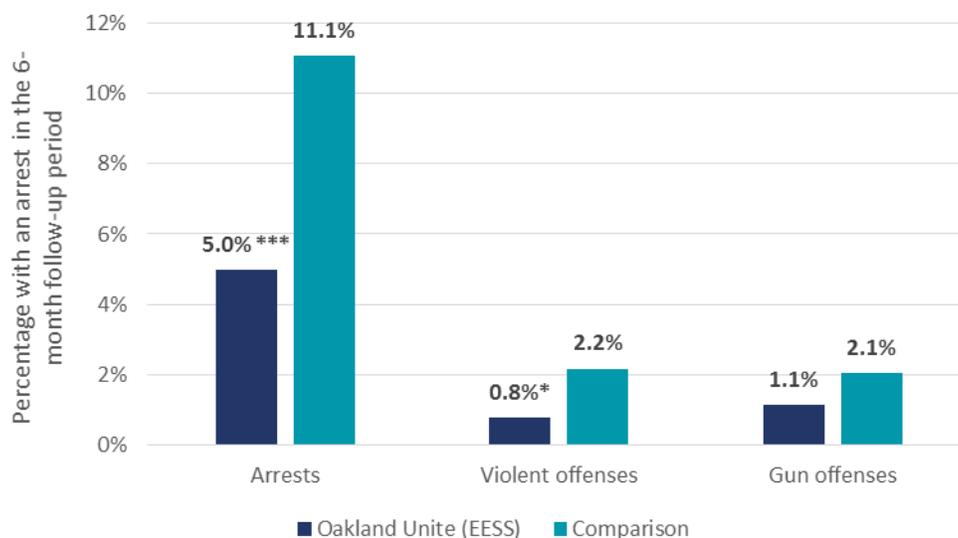
Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Note: The total sample is 10,197, with 522 adult EESS participants matched to 9,675 comparison group members. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services or 40 work hours between January 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult EESS consent rate was 98 percent.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

***Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

The impact of adult EESS was concentrated among participants with no prior arrest history. After obtaining the average effects of participation in adult EESS for all clients, we analyzed whether these effects differed by participant subgroups. We find that for clients with no arrest history before 2016, participating in adult EESS is associated with a lower likelihood of arrest in the six months following enrollment, relative to the comparison group. However, for individuals with at least one arrest before 2016, participation in adult EESS does not reduce the likelihood of arrest in the six months after enrollment. The impacts for participants with and without prior arrest histories (Figure IV.7) are statistically different at the 1 percent level. The other dimensions that we examined—the intensity of services received, number of Oakland Unite strategies accessed, and participant risk factors—were not associated with statistically different impacts.[10]

Figure IV.7. Impact of participation in adult EESS on the probability of being arrested in the 6 months after enrollment, by prior arrest history
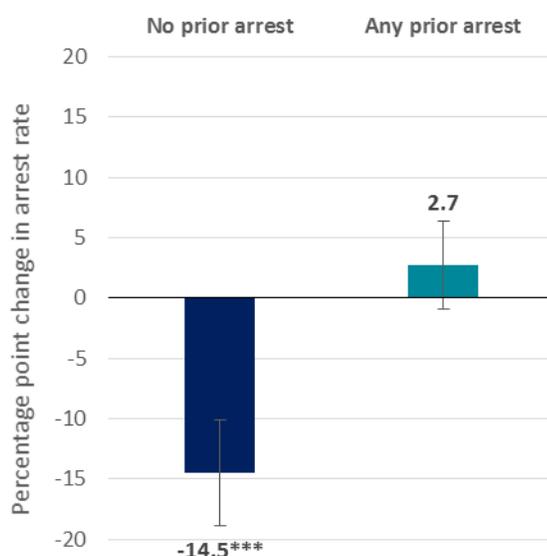
*Source:*   Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Notes: The total sample is 10,197, with 522 adult EESS participants matched to 9,675 comparison group members. To be included in this analysis, participants needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services or 40 work hours between January 1, 2016 and October 31, 2016, and have consented to share their data for evaluation. The adult EESS consent rate was 98 percent. Brackets indicate the 95 percent confidence interval.

***Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

Employment-related training and milestones

Oakland Unite agency staff record participants' activities and accomplishments by tracking the number of hours they spend in activities and noting when they have completed specific milestones. Although we cannot compare rates of employment for Oakland Unite participants

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[10] We classified service dosage into low, medium, and high categories, based on the number of services hours a participant received. For adult EESS, this resulted in the following groupings low = 11–21 hours, medium = 21–89 hours, and high = 89–279 hours. The full results for these analyses are available in Appendix B.

and our comparison group, we can consider rates of participation in job-related trainings and work experience, and job placement and retention among participants. These analyses are descriptive and should not be interpreted as causal effects of participation in Oakland Unite on employment.

Adult EESS participants who log work hours spend over 125 hours in group work experience, on average. In Figure IV.8, we show the average number of hours participants in adult EESS spend in five different activities—group basic education, vocational, and life skills trainings, group work experience, and individual work experience—among participants who logged at least 1 hour in that activity. On average, these participants spend 255 hours in group basic education and training (driven completely by Civicorps participants) and approximately 25 hours in group job skills/vocational training and group life skills/preemployment training. Adult EESS participants also spend an average of 125 hours in group work experience, such as work crews at Civicorps or CEO, and 151 hours in individual work experience, such as individual job placements through PIC or BOSS.

Figure IV.8. Average hours spent by adult EESS participants in select employment and training activities
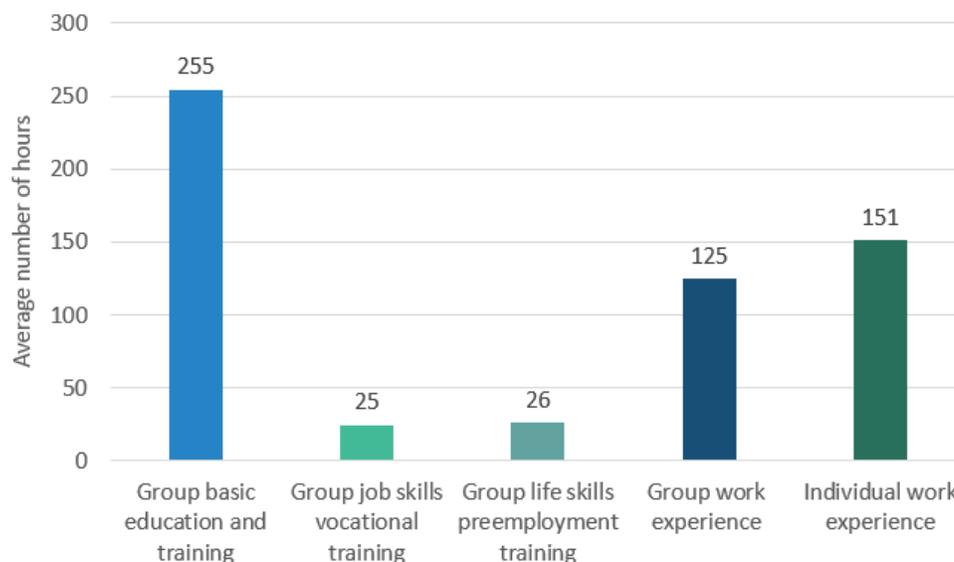
Source: Oakland Unite administrative data.

Note: The figure shows averages for participants who completed at least 1 hour in that work or training category, from among the total of 1,021 adult EESS participants from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

However, not all agencies log hours for adult EESS participants in these work and training categories. For example, 58 percent of participants completed group work experience hours and 13 percent completed individual work experience hours (Figure IV. 9). Some agencies may track group and individual work hours differently. Overall, agencies reported that 70 percent of adult EESS participants had at least one hour of group or individual work experience. The type of training received by participants also varies. While 77 percent of participants received life skills preemployment training, few participants received job skills vocational training (5 percent) or basic education and training (6 percent).

Figure IV.9. Percentage of adult EESS participants with work and training hours
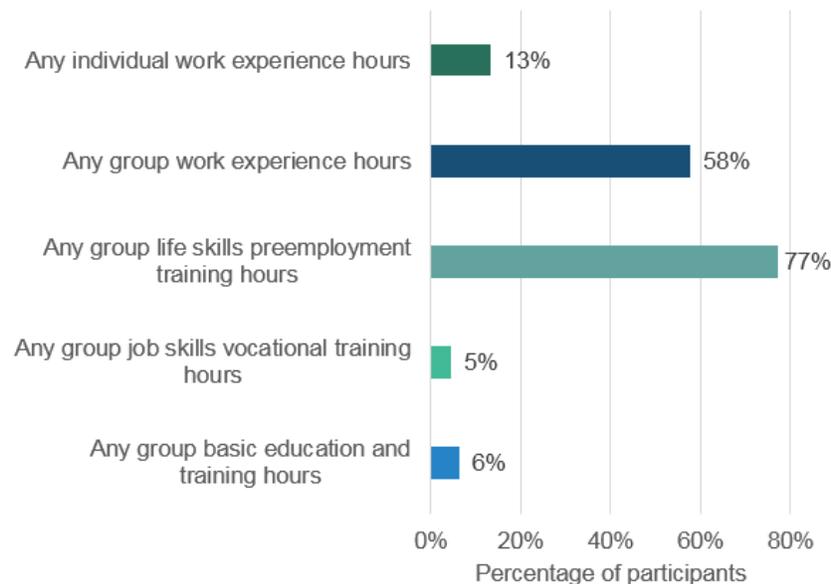
Source: Oakland Unite administrative data.

Note: These rates are based on the total of 1,021 adult EESS participants from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Almost 40 percent of adult EESS participants are placed in jobs following participation. Figure IV.10 presents the share of participants in adult EESS who reach work-related milestones. Agencies report that 39 percent of adult EESS participants are placed in jobs, although these rates vary across agencies, from 26 to 64 percent. For participants with a job placement, 45 retain those jobs for 90 days. A smaller share (29 percent) retain jobs for 180 days, although some agencies may not track participants over this longer period.

Figure IV.10. Percentage of adult EESS participants reaching employment milestones
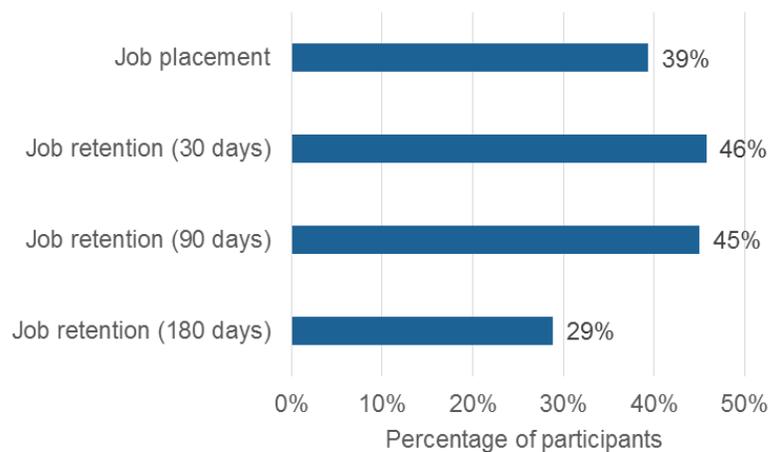
Source: Oakland Unite administrative data.

Note: The job placement rate is based on the total of 1,021 adult EESS participants from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017. Retention rates are based on the 402 participants with a recorded job placement.

V. ANALYSIS OF THE OAKLAND UNITE NETWORK

Oakland Unite aims to be an integrated citywide violence prevention and intervention system. To support this goal, Measure Z provides operating funds for specific programs at grantee agencies and for overarching coordination, support, and technical assistance from the HSD. As part of this effort, Oakland Unite regularly convenes agencies to share information on best practices, discuss referrals, and troubleshoot challenges. Since 2016, Oakland Unite has invested in a multicomponent grantee training and technical assistance program coordinated by competitively selected contractors (Bright Research Group, Pathways Consultants, and Urban Strategies Council). Training and technical assistance consists of certification opportunities in life coaching and job development, peer learning communities, one-on-one agency support primarily focused on organizational development, and shorter trainings on topics such as harm reduction, self-care, street outreach, and supervision.

Beyond building the capacity of individual agencies, Oakland Unite aims to create connections between agencies that might strengthen the network of violence prevention and response services available for Oakland residents. In Oakland Unite's planned service delivery system, highest-risk participants are expected to receive a mix of support from multiple agencies. For example, the community asset building and violent incident and crisis response strategies are intended to make referrals to life coaching and EESS strategies and vice versa. Agencies in other strategies, such as family violence intervention and CSEC intervention, may provide more stand-alone services, though some cross-referrals may occur. For instance, CSEC intervention occasionally makes referrals to EESS, and the grantee agencies within CSEC intervention may refer amongst one another. The goal of this chapter is to describe how Oakland Unite agencies are connected to one another. We address two primary research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the network of Oakland Unite agencies?

2. Which Oakland Unite strategies are most connected?

To answer these questions, we employ both descriptive and statistical network analysis approaches. These analyses are based on clients served by Oakland Unite between January 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017. Each client is connected to all of the agencies from which he or she received services during this timeframe, as long as they consented to share their identifying information for the evaluation. [11] Thus, the network connections analyzed are based on consenting participants, of which a relatively small share (12 percent) accessed services from more than one agency.

The network is defined by one primary cluster of agencies and several agencies that are not connected

To answer the first question, we generated a graphic representation of the network of Oakland Unite agencies (Figure V.1). We defined the network by connections of three or more

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[11] Participant names and dates of birth were required to identify when the same individual accessed more than one Oakland Unite agency. Therefore, these analyses may undercount the number of shared clients, particularly in agencies with low consent rates. See Appendix A for the consent rates in each sub-strategy.

shared clients, to avoid analyzing connections of just one or two people. The size of the circles represents the number of clients served by the agency, as some agencies receive larger grants and serve a greater number of clients. The thickness of the grey lines signifies the number of clients shared by two agencies. Dense and overlapping connections indicate more highly connected agencies. Agencies without connections (on the far right side of the figure) share less than three clients with another agency. Greater connections between agencies are expected for some strategies (for example, street outreach serves as a referral source for adult life coaching, which in turn often connects clients to adult EESS services) and less so for others (for example, family violence interventions are less likely to be connected to other agencies because they provide distinct services from the other agencies and because consent rates for their clients are very low).

The network analysis provides insight into the nature of the connections between connected agencies and can identify areas in which future collaboration may be beneficial (for example, expanding connections between youth life coaching and youth EESS agencies). Further, client sharing may reflect a high degree of collaboration between agencies that can benefit clients or, alternatively, it may reflect client churn between agencies and clients struggling to find the services they need. Most likely, it reflects both types of dynamics. This analysis is not able to provide information about the reason for connections between agencies or the quality of those connections.

Figure V.1. Oakland Unite network of agencies
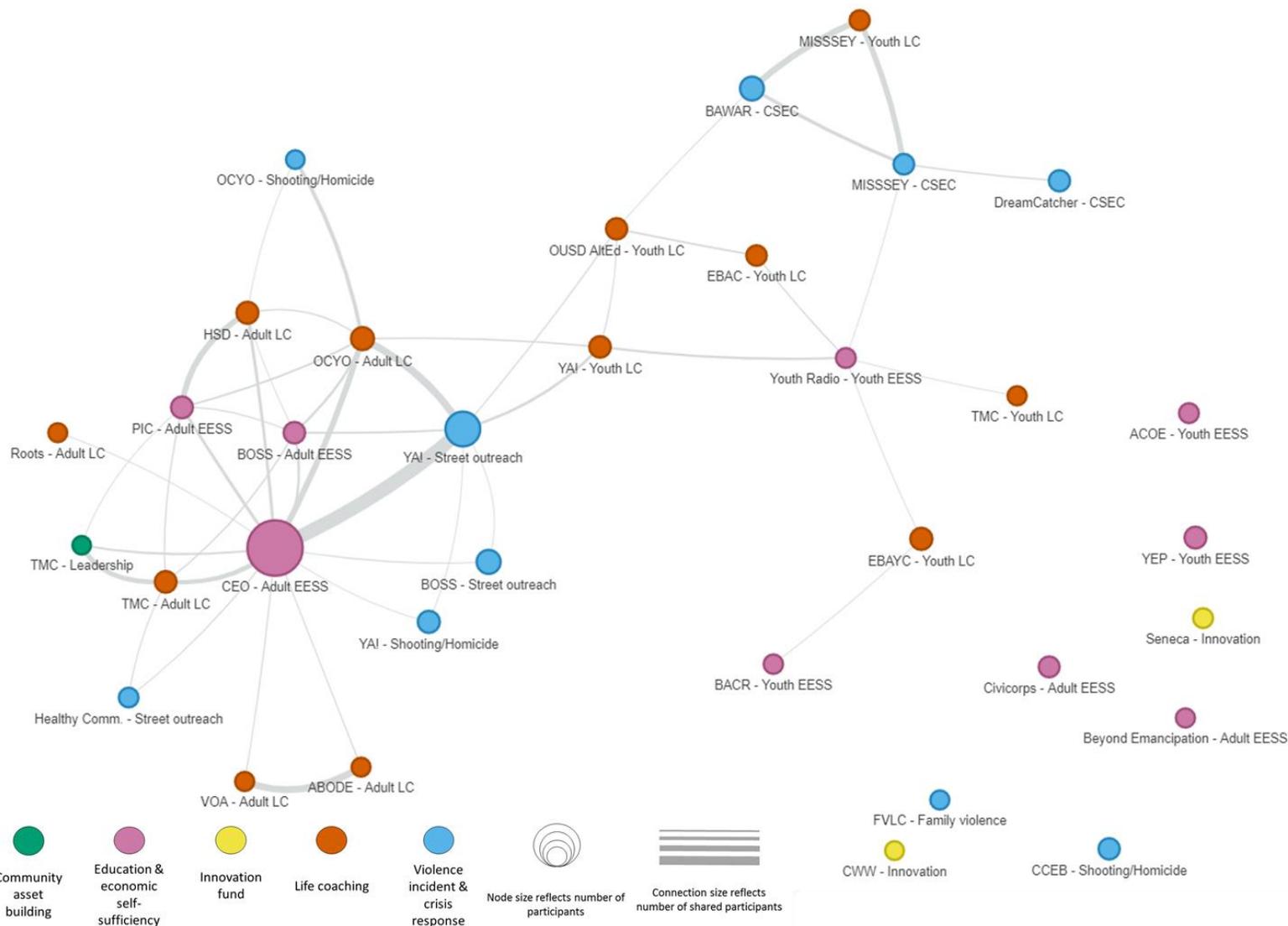
Notes: The network analysis is based on consenting clients who received services between January 1, 2016, and June 30, 2017. See page 51 for list of grantee names. Two agencies are included in the graphic that no longer receive Oakland Unite funding – VOA and Healthy Communities. YEP (youth EESS) may be connected to other agencies, but is not included in the network analysis because of missing data.

There are several ways to describe connections within a network. First, we consider whether any agencies form groups in which all of the agencies are connected to one another. In this context, groups are a subset of agencies that are closely linked to each other through the clients they share. The largest group consists of three adult EESS agencies (CEO, PIC, BOSS) and two adult life coaching agencies (HSD, OCYO), all of which are connected to one another.

Second, we identify agencies that play three key roles in the network.

- **The agency connected to the largest number of other agencies.** We begin by identifying which agency is connected to the largest number of other agencies. By this measure, CEO is a key agency in the network, being connected to 13 other agencies (primarily in adult case management and street outreach) (Figure V.2). CEO also serves the largest number of clients in the network.

- **The agency that is closest to other agencies.** Next, we consider which agency is closest to the other agencies in the network. This measure assesses the intensity of the relationship in terms of shared clients when identifying how close agencies are to one another. By this measure, the street outreach arm of YA! is closest to other agencies, due in part to the large number of clients shared with CEO (adult EESS) (Figure V.3).

- **The agency that is the connection between other agencies.** Finally, we identify the agency that serves as a connector between groups of agencies. By this measure, OUSD Alternative Education (youth life coaching) is a key agency in the network, connecting the CSEC agencies (BAWAR, MISSEY, Dreamcatchers) with other youth-serving agencies (EBAC, Youth Radio,

Figure V.2. CEO is connected to the largest number of other agencies
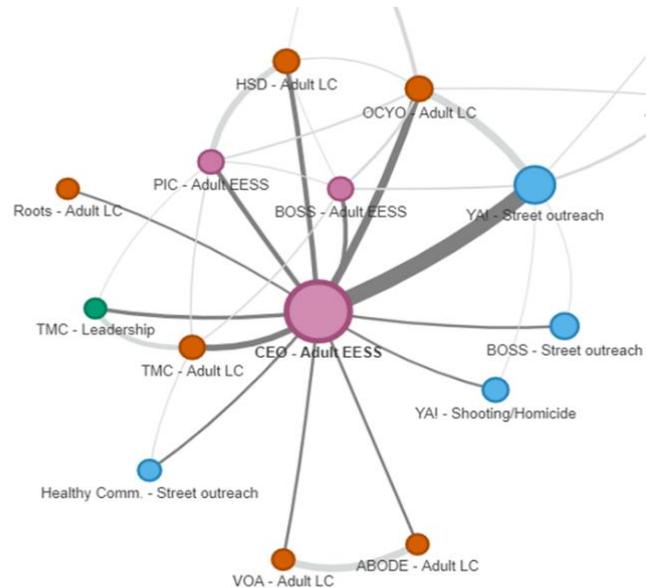
Figure V.3. YA! Street outreach is closest to the other agencies in the network
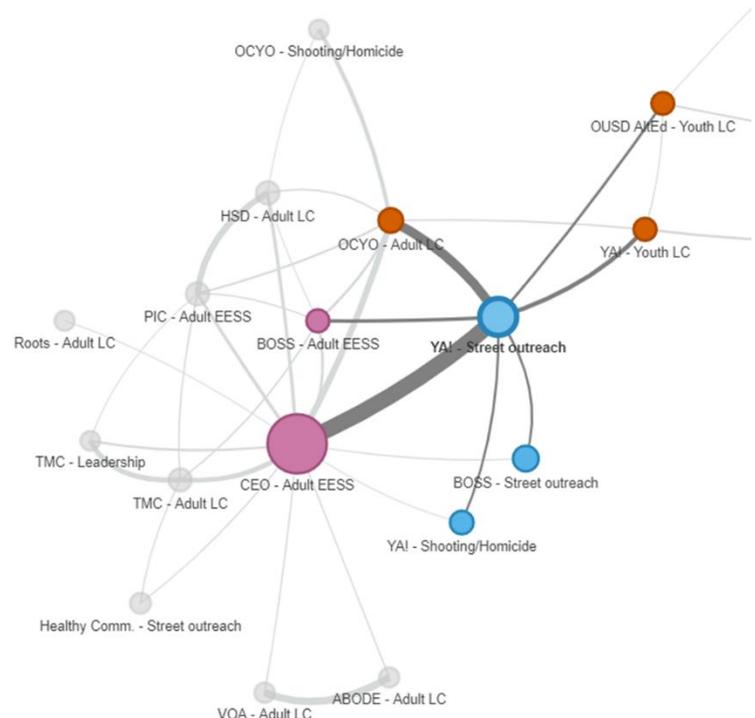
YA! life coaching) and the larger group of adult services (through the street outreach arm of YA!) (Figure V.4).

Figure V.4. OUSD Alternative Education connects agencies that otherwise would not be connected to the main network
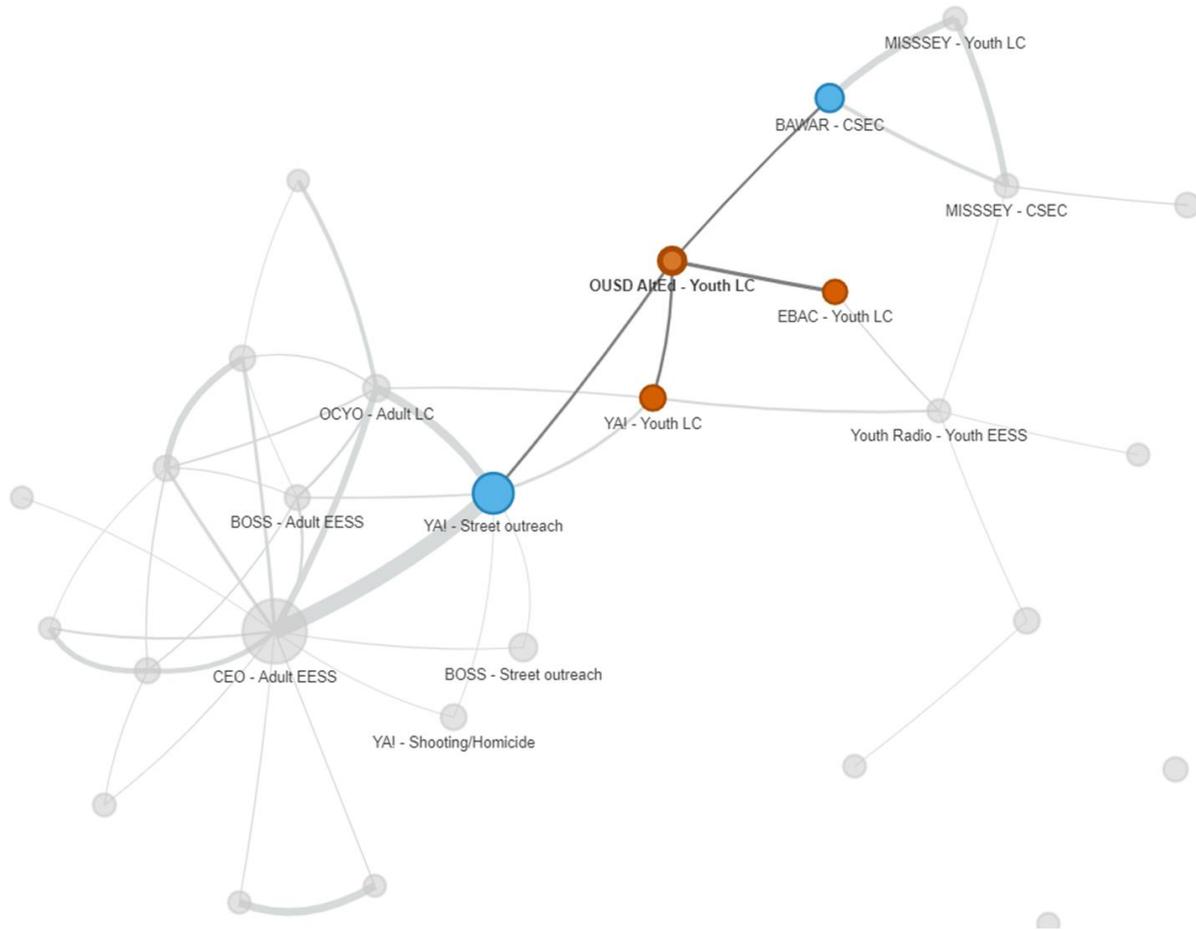
Agencies in adult life coaching, adult EESS, and street outreach are more likely to share clients with other agencies

To understand whether agencies within certain sub-strategies are more likely to share clients than agencies in other sub-strategies (Question 2), we used a statistical model for social network analysis called exponential random graph models (ERGM) (see Appendix B for details). The results show that agencies in adult life coaching, adult EESS, and street outreach have a greater number of connections compared to the average number of connections across all sub-strategies in the network (consistent with Figure V.1), while agencies in the remaining sub-strategies have fewer connections compared to the average. We also find that agencies are more likely to serve the same clients as agencies within the same sub-strategy than in different sub-strategies. This result may reflect communication among agencies in the same sub-strategy as they try to find the best placement for clients.

In summary, the network analysis gives insight into the extent and characteristics of the connections between Oakland Unite agencies. Though we see connections between many of the agencies where we expect connections—for instance, adult EESS and adult life coaching agencies often share clients—we see fewer connections in other areas (for example, among agencies in the youth-serving sub-strategies). Although network analyses provide a different perspective on how agencies within the network are connected through shared clients, they do not provide information about the nature of the connections. As noted above, a large number of shared clients might reflect both referral patterns (for example, referrals from life coaches at The Mentoring Center (TMC) to the employment services offered by CEO)and difficulty finding the appropriate fit for clients among agencies providing similar services (for example, clients who receive services from multiple adult EESS agencies). These are areas for further investigation.

VI. CONCLUSION AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

This report describes the services provided through Oakland Unite between January 2016 and June 2017 and takes a deeper look at the work of agencies funded under two sub-strategies focused on adults—life coaching and EESS. In summary, we offer the following findings:

- The majority of people receiving services from Oakland Unite agencies are at risk of exposure to violence, violent victimization, and/or active involvement in violence.

- Adult life coaching agencies offer mentoring and coaching to the target population recommended by Oakland Unite and reduce the likelihood of participants being arrested for a violent offense.

  - Staff descriptions of their work with participants were highly consistent with the life coaching model presented in the Oakland Unite trainings and best practices, which is based on building strong relationships through frequent interactions and identifying actionable goals and meaningful incentive structures.

  - The majority of participants in adult life coaching have past experiences with violence—62 percent of participants had an arrest prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite, with 23 percent arrested for a violent offense, and over one-third arrested for a gun offense. The majority of participants also reported being exposed to violence at intake, and almost half reported being victims of violence themselves.

  - Participating in adult life coaching decreases the likelihood of violent arrests in the six months after enrollment by approximately 1 percentage point, relative to a matched comparison group. There were no impacts on overall arrest rates or arrests for a gun offense.

  - Few studies of similar models, such as intensive case management, have found that the programs led to reductions in arrest rates. For instance, in an analysis of multiple studies of intensive case management programs for people with mental illness, the only studies that found a decrease in arrest rates did not include comparison groups (Loveland and Boyle 2007).

- Adult EESS agencies provide a range of services to hard-to-employ adults and reduce the likelihood that a participant is arrested for any offense or a violent offense.

  - The range of services provided by adult EESS agencies includes educational instruction resulting in high school diplomas, preemployment training in hard and soft skills, and on-the-job training and transitional employment. Agencies take a variety of approaches to supporting participants facing housing and personal challenges, such as anger management.

  - Almost 40 percent of adult EESS participants had an arrest prior to enrolling in Oakland Unite, and 16 percent had been arrested for a violent offense. In self-reported risk assessments, 70 percent of participants were identified as being actively involved in or at risk of involvement in violence.

  - Participating in adult EESS decreases the likelihood of being arrested in the six months after enrollment by approximately 6 percentage points. Participation also decreases the

likelihood of a violent offense by 1 percentage point, but has no impact on arrests for a gun offense. Exploratory analyses suggest these effects are concentrated among participants without a prior arrest history.

- These findings are notable, given that several evaluations of employment programs serving people with criminal records found no effect on subsequent arrests (Redcross et al., 2012, Jacobs 2012, Wiegand and Sussell 2015). One study of the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) in New York City found that participation in the program had no effect on arrest rates over a three-year follow up period, but led to declines in misdemeanor convictions (5.4 percentage points) and jail incarceration rates (6.4 percentage points) (Redcross et al. 2012). Evaluations of a transitional jobs programs and a re-entry employment program also found no effect on arrests following participation (Jacobs 2012, Wiegand and Sussell 2015).

Based on these results, the City might consider the following recommendations for programming and research going forward:

Programmatic considerations

1. **Help agencies effectively use monetary rewards and stipends to engage participants.** For adult EESS, we found that although stipends are important tools for engaging people in services, agencies still experience significant drop-off in participation in the first six weeks. For adult life coaching, agencies reported that incentive payments were helpful, but could at times result in participants being more focused on the financial incentive than the broader goals of the program. Convening agencies to discuss the benefits and challenges of providing monetary supports might surface more effective strategies and lessons learned.

2. **Use the network to help address challenges in finding and hiring the right staff.** Agencies in both sub-strategies described the critical importance of hiring staff with the right mix of personal and professional experience, as well as the challenges associated with finding these people. The Oakland Unite network could be a source of support for agencies as they seek to identify potential candidates, providing training about hiring practices, and helping to coordinate access to the pool of past participants of other Oakland Unite programs. This recruitment strategy is already leveraged by a few agencies.

3. **Continue to afford agencies flexibility in how to best serve participants.** A few organizations described growing pains during the grant period, including having to stop providing services as they rethink major pieces of the program. Although funding from Oakland Unite is largely intended to support services for participants, the grant and the accompanying trainings and support that come with it may provide crucial opportunities for programs to try something new, determine if it doesn't work, and evolve to provide more effective and responsive services to participants.

4. **Design the next generation of the life coaching model.** Given the relatively limited impacts of participation in adult life coaching on short-term arrest outcomes, it may be worth considering how the next iteration of the life coaching model might maximize the effects on participants. Our site visit findings and review of past research suggest that offering mental health supports, addiction treatment, and cognitive behavioral therapy more

systematically may strengthen the existing model. Continuing to provide training and support to life coaches will promote more consistent provision of services across agencies.

5. **Improve handoffs between law enforcement and Oakland Unite agencies.** Based on our site visits and interviews, the City should consider how Oakland Unite services are described and presented to Ceasefire participants and how to link participants referred from Ceasefire to agency staff in an authentic way that helps build trust and avoids negative associations with police.

6. **Identify approaches to best serve EESS participants with prior arrest histories.** The evidence provided in this study suggests that adult EESS participants with prior arrest histories benefit less than those without prior arrests in regard to declines in the likelihood of arrest following program enrollment. Although this finding may be due to other factors, it suggests that the City might want to consider how agencies could better serve these individuals. Further investigation into the specific challenges or barriers to success faced by this subgroup of the EESS population may illuminate directions for the future.

Areas for future research

1. **Further investigate why participants access multiple agencies and/or multiple strategies.** Although we find evidence that some participants access services from multiple agencies and/or sub-strategies, there are various possible explanations for the finding. Are individuals who access multiple agencies "shopping around" different programs before finding the best fit and ultimately finding program success? Or is it a signal of potential failure, indicating their inability to meet program requirements, get their needs for supportive service needs met, or connect to program staff?

2. **Identify the adult EESS model that is most effective.** Given the variation in adult EESS models and the finding of an overall positive impact of participation in adult EESS on short-term arrests, is there one model that works best? We do not find evidence that a higher dosage of services is associated with greater impacts, so other dimensions of service provision, including pre-employment preparation or the type of work experience (group setting or individualized), may be worth studying further.

3. **Evaluate cost-effectiveness by strategy.** What is the cost-effectiveness of certain strategies in reducing arrests? Does it make sense for the City to invest more or less money in some?

4. **Measure longer-term impacts on multiple outcomes.** In subsequent years, and through the comprehensive evaluation, it will be important to assess which programmatic impacts are sustained over time. In addition, evaluating impacts on other outcomes, including convictions, incarceration, and victimization, will provide a fuller picture of the impact of participation in Oakland Unite.

5. **Measure appropriately the risk of violence exposure, victimization, and involvement.** Linking the database of Oakland Unite participants matched to arrest and victimization information provides an opportunity to validate the risk assessment questions used by Oakland Unite. This analysis may provide some suggestions for standardizing risk measures across Oakland Unite strategies, allowing the City to more easily gauge whether the target population is being served.

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GLOSSARY

Career pathway: A set of education and training opportunities aimed at developing individuals' academic, technical, and employability skills for jobs in specific high-demand sectors.

Case management: Individual service coordination helping people access multiple health care, social work, disability insurance, employment, and law services.

Dosage: The length or frequency of service contacts, such as the number of service hours.

Experimental: A research design that compares outcomes between a program group and a group not participating in the program, where group status is determined by random chance (for example, by a coin flip).

Life coaching: A process for empowering individuals to gain greater awareness of their choices, set goals, and cultivate strong connections to others.

Qualitative research: A research method relying on interviews, focus groups, and observations to draw conclusions about a research question.

Quantitative research: A research method relying on analysis of numeric data, including administrative or survey data, to draw conclusions about a research question.

Quasi-experimental: A research design that compares outcomes between a program group and a group not participating in the program, where group status is not determined by random chance.

Recidivism: A measure of repeat involvement in the criminal or juvenile justice system, such as rearrest, reconviction, or reincarceration.

Risk assessment: A systematic process of evaluating the potential risks that may be involved in an activity or a decision, often used in the criminal and juvenile justice system to assess risk of failure to appear in court or risk of reoffense.

Statistically significant: A description of a quantitative result meaning the likelihood that a relationship between two variables, such as participation in a program and arrest rates, is due to something other than random chance.

Strategies: The primary approaches to violence prevention employed by Oakland Unite, including (1) life coaching, (2) education and economic self-sufficiency, (3) violent incident and crisis response, (4) community asset building, and (5) innovation fund.

Sub-strategies: The specific approaches to violence prevention within the primary strategies. For instance, within the violent incident and crisis response strategy, agencies are funded under five sub-strategies to address distinct sources of violent victimization, exposure, and perpetration: street outreach, shooting response, homicide support network, commercially sexually exploited children intervention, and family violence intervention.

Transitional employment: An employment-based reentry model that provides short-term subsidized employment for individuals re-entering society from prison or jail to build their experience and skills.

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APPENDIX A

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DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

We conducted this evaluation using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods that relied on multiple sources of data. The qualitative component included primary data collection through site visits and interviews with agency staff and clients, as well as a review of materials provided by Oakland Unite and collected during site visits. The quantitative analyses relied on administrative data maintained by Oakland Unite's Cityspan database, the Oakland Police Department (OPD), and the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). We discuss both the qualitative and administrative data sources in detail below. All data collection procedures were reviewed and approved by the New England Institutional Review Board.

Qualitative data

The purpose of the qualitative data collection was to gather information about Oakland Unite strategy implementation directly from agency staff and clients. The general topics of study included participant engagement, program implementation, program progress and tracking, collaboration networks, and successes and challenges. The primary source of data was a series of site visits conducted with all Oakland Unite agencies in the adult life coaching and adult EESS strategies. These site visits took place in July and August 2017. During each visit, Mathematica staff conducted semistructured interviews with grantee staff members, including managers and line staff, and clients aged 18 and older whenever feasible. In total, we conducted 50 interviews at the 10 agencies providing services in the focal strategies (see Table A.1 for interview counts by sub-strategy).

Table A.1. Site visit and interview summary

Sub-strategy	Site visits conducted	Director interviews	Frontline interviews	Client interviews
Adult life coaching	5	5	7	7
Adult EESS	5	10	13	8

At each site, we interviewed site directors and/or managers for approximately 45 to 60 minutes. These interviews focused on topics such as defining and reaching the program's target population, program performance measures, and staffing. We also conducted interviews with frontline staff members at each site. These interviews were typically 30-45 minutes and focused on participant engagement, service provision, and program data. Participant interviews typically lasted 15-30 minutes and focused on their experiences with Oakland Unite services. For agencies with grants across multiple strategies, we interviewed front-line staff members for each of the strategies and tried to interview clients in each of the strategies.

The interview protocols varied depending on the Oakland Unite sub-strategy. Interviews at all agencies included a set of topics, with questions varying depending on which type of respondent was interviewed. The protocol also included targeted questions about the focal strategies, which asked about sub-strategy-specific best practices and additional details about services and outcomes. The adult life coaching protocol included questions about implementing the life coaching model, staff work load, and client communication. The adult EESS protocol focused on skills assessment and development, as well as engagement with local employers.

The interviews were semistructured, meaning the evaluation team asked the same questions during each interview, but responses were open-ended and the interviewer had flexibility to probe for details or clarification in the responses. During the site visits, a note-taker recorded responses in a standardized template, which linked the responses to specific interview questions and to broader topics for analysis. The evaluation team analyzed responses across interviewees within the site, and also across agencies within the same sub-strategy. The goal was to highlight key themes about the implementation of the sub-strategy, as well as identify similarities and differences between agencies.

In addition to the site visits, the evaluation team reviewed materials provided by Oakland Unite staff as well as materials collected directly from agencies during the site visits. The documents included the scope of work statement, agency budgets, quarterly reports, and intake forms. We used this information to better understand the types of services offered by each agency, as well as the benchmarks and performance measures.

Although the qualitative data provided a rich source of information about the agencies and the Oakland Unite program, this evaluation approach has some limitations. In particular, the participant interviews were done with a convenience sample of clients who happened to be on site during the visit, or with clients specifically selected for participation by the agency, so their responses may not reflect the experiences of all clients. As with all data from interviews, particularly those including sensitive topics, there is also a potential for social desirability bias where participants tend to provide responses that reflect favorably upon themselves. Although we specifically informed each participant that their answers would be kept confidential and that there would be no impact on their employment or service receipt, or the agency's participation in Oakland Unite, respondents may still have felt that negative responses could have repercussions. We designed our site visit procedures to minimize the potential for this bias, including interviewing in private spaces and emphasizing the confidential nature of the research in the consent language, but we cannot rule out the impact of these factors in the results and interpret those findings cautiously.

Administrative data

The quantitative analyses in this report used administrative data from Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD that were linked together. Below we describe each source and the data processing and security steps we took.

Oakland Unite data

All Oakland Unite agencies are required to maintain administrative records in a common database managed by Cityspan. Agencies use the database to record service contacts and hours, milestones reached, incentives received, referral sources, and demographic and risk information about each participant. The data extract we received from Cityspan included participants who received services between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Although some individuals who received services in the early months of 2016 had begun participating in Oakland Unite in the prior year, we did not have information about services received or milestones achieved prior to January 1, 2016 for this report.

About 50 percent of Oakland Unite participants in the data extract consented to share their personal information for evaluation purposes, but consent rates varied widely across strategies (see Figure A.1). Consent rates tend to be lower in sub-strategies offering crisis response services, as these consist of brief, one-time interactions. Accordingly, Cityspan did not provide names or dates of birth for participants who did not consent. Although they are included in some descriptive statistics about Oakland Unite, they are excluded from any analyses of arrests, as these require identifying information in order to link participants to arrest outcomes.

Figure A.1. Participant consent rates by sub-strategy
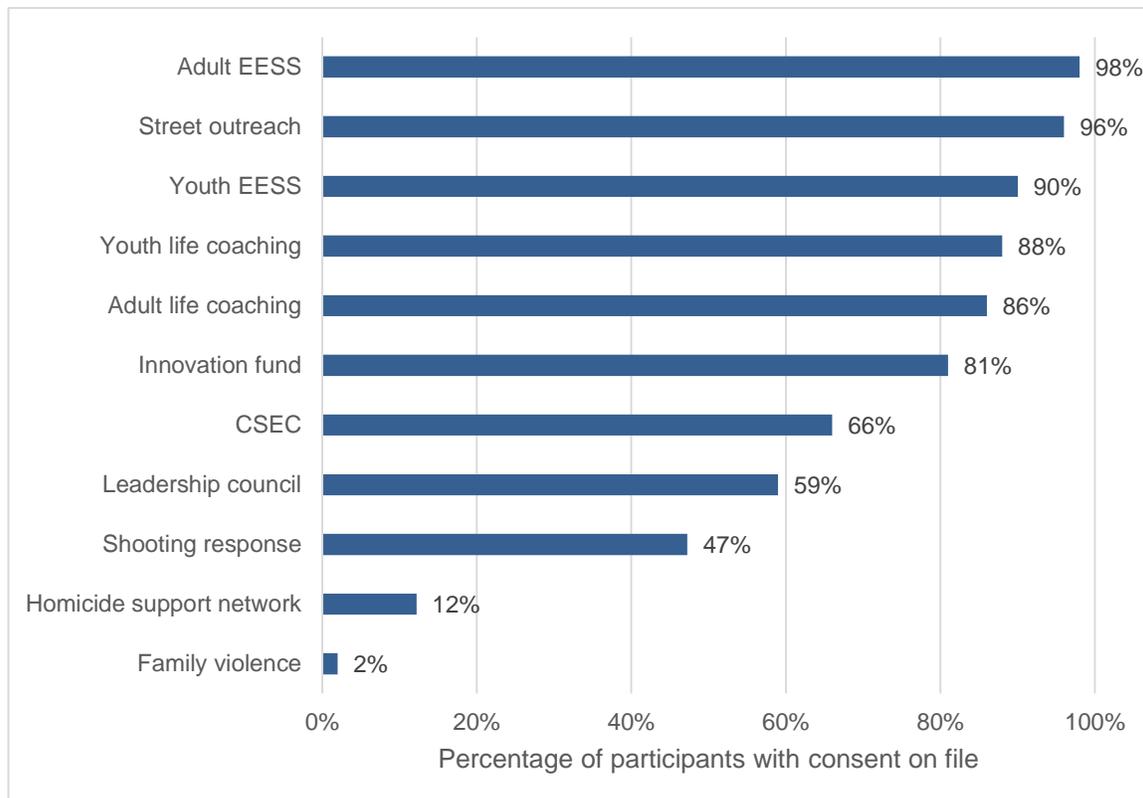
Source: Oakland Unite administrative data.

Oakland Police Department data

OPD provided data on arrests that occurred between January 1, 2006 and April 30, 2017. The data included information about each arrest, including its location, statute code, and UCR statute category code, as well as information about the arrestee, including his or her name, date of birth, address, and demographics. We used the UCR statute categories and statute codes to determine each arrest's severity and whether it involved a gun, weapon, public order, drug, or violent offense and a violation of probation or parole. For arrests with multiple offenses, we used the most serious offense to determine the severity. Finally, we identified new arrests that were not due to bench warrants or violations of probation and parole.

Oakland Unified School District data

OUSD provided data on all individuals enrolled in the district at any point between August 1, 2010 and May 31, 2017. For each academic year, the data included information about the student's school, days enrolled, days absent, days suspended, academic performance, high school graduation, and dual and college enrollment.[12] In addition, the data contained demographic and identifying information about each student.

Data matching

To conduct the analyses, we needed to link individuals within and across datasets. To conduct these matches, we used an algorithm to assign individuals a unique identifier both within and across datasets. The algorithm used consenting individuals' identifying information, including their first and last name, date of birth, gender, and address, to perform matches. All of these data points did not have to match exactly in order for records to be matched. Instead, the algorithm was designed to take into account the likelihood that two or more records represented the same person, even if there were minor differences across records (such as in the spelling of their name). The algorithm placed the most weight on name and date of birth, but also utilized gender and address if available. These weights were carefully calibrated to avoid making erroneous matches while still being flexible.

There were 5,684 unique Cityspan IDs in the Oakland Unite data. The matching algorithm identified 5,130 individuals, which reflects that a number of people received services from more than one Oakland Unite agency. Of the 5,130 unique individuals identified in the Oakland Unite data, the algorithm matched 1,093 to OPD data and 737 to OUSD data; 3,716 were in neither dataset or could not be matched because they did not consent to share their personally identifiable information.

Creating risk groups

After matching unique individuals and linking their information across datasets, we created several new variables to facilitate the analyses. We counted the number of service hours and contacts individuals received in each agency and sub-strategy and created risk groups that could be commonly defined across strategies based on the specific risk factors collected for each individual. Figure A.2 below summarizes the risk group definitions. Individuals in strategies that do not collect any indicators in a risk group were excluded from that group. In addition to creating these risk groups, we also created counts and indicators for each type of arrest by month and indicators of whether an individual was enrolled in any OUSD school or an alternative school and whether they graduated. Many of these variables were used in the matching and impact analyses, described in greater detail in Appendix B.

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[12] At the time the data were pulled, graduation and college enrollment data were not yet available for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Figure A.2. Participant risk groupings based on Oakland Unite data

At risk of direct exposure to violence	At risk of being a victim of violence	At risk of active involvement in violence
Had a peer, friend, or family member shot or killed due to turf/group-related violence in the last 3 years	Was shot and/or seriously injured due to turf/group-related violence	Referred by the district attorney's office or juvenile justice system
Interacts regularly with known turfs/groups involved in violent activity	Victim of violent injury	Parole or probation for a violent incident
Family or friend of homicide victim	Victim of family violence	History and/or immediate risk for gun-involved activity
Witness of family violence	Victim of sexual exploitation	Documented violent incident at school

Data security

Mathematica exercises due care to protect all data provided for this evaluation from unauthorized physical and electronic access. Per our current data sharing agreements, we do not share identifiable data with Oakland Unite or any other entity. All data are stored in an encrypted project-specific folder in a secure server. Access to this folder is restricted to authorized users through access control lists that require approval from the evaluation's project director. Only staff members needed to complete the evaluation objectives were granted access to the restricted data folder: three researchers (including the project director) and a lead programmer. These staff members have all completed data security training and background checks and are up to date on Mathematica's data storage and security policies.

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APPENDIX B

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METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

In this appendix, we describe the sample selection, matching, and analysis steps for the impact analyses and present the impact estimates that form the basis of the results summarized in the main text.

Sample selection

We applied a number of sample selection criteria to the Oakland Unite data before matching participants to comparison individuals. First, we excluded participants who did not consent to share their personally identifiable information for evaluation purposes. Consent rates were 86 percent for adult life coaching and 98 percent for adult EESS. Because we wished to examine arrest outcomes in a six-month follow-up window and data from OPD were available only through April 2017, we also restricted the sample to Oakland Unite participants who began receiving services by October 2016. In addition, we required participants to meet a minimum service threshold to be included in the analyses. For participants in adult life coaching, the service threshold was 10 hours. Participants in EESS needed to have at least 10 hours of nonwork services *or* 40 work hours. Finally, Oakland Unite participants had to have demographic information in order to be matched. After these restrictions were applied, there were 193 participants in adult life coaching and 563 participants in adult EESS available for matching. Table B.1 describes how each restriction affected the sample size available to conduct the matching.

Table B.1. Summary of sample size restrictions for the outcomes analysis

	Adult life coaching	Adult EESS
All participants in the Cityspan data	387	1,021
Consented to share data for evaluation	333	996
Received services by October 2016	241	616
Met the minimum service hour threshold	196	578
Had demographic data (sample size for matching)	193	563

Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

We also applied some criteria to the potential comparison group, drawn from OPD and OUSD data, before conducting the matching. First, comparison individuals could not participate in any Oakland Unite sub-strategy during the period available in the Cityspan data (January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017). We then restricted the age range of comparison individuals to overlap with the age range of Oakland Unite participants in the relevant sub-strategy. We also restricted the potential comparison group to individuals residing in Oakland to increase the likelihood that any future arrests would occur in Oakland and thus appear in the OPD data. In addition, we removed a small number of individuals with arrests for homicide or rape in 2015, because they were likely to be incarcerated during the follow-up period. Finally, as with Oakland Unite participants, comparison individuals had to have demographic information recorded in order to be matched. After these restrictions were applied, there were 45,054 potential comparison individuals for the adult life coaching analysis and 56,543 potential comparison individuals for the adult EESS analysis.

Matching

We matched Oakland Unite participants in each sub-strategy to similar comparison individuals using an approach known as propensity-score matching. For each sub-strategy, we estimated a propensity score for each eligible Oakland Unite participant and comparison individual using a logistic regression model. This propensity score indicates an individual's likelihood of participating in a particular Oakland Unite sub-strategy given their gender, ethnicity, age, area of residence, and prior educational and arrest histories up through 2016 (before participation in Oakland Unite). We accounted for the number and types of arrests individuals had in 2015 and before 2015. Table B.2 lists the variables used to estimate the propensity scores.

Table B.2. Variables used in the propensity-score models

- Demographics (gender, race/ethnicity, age)

- Area of residence (east Oakland, west Oakland, central Oakland, other)

- Indicators of whether the individual had an arrest between 2006 and 2015 by type of offense (felony, misdemeanor, gun, violent, property, weapon, drug, public offense, parole violation, probation violation)

- Number of arrests in 2015 by type of offense

- Total number of arrests between 2006 and 2016

- Indicators of whether the individual was enrolled in any OUSD school or in an alternative OUSD school from 2010 to 2016

- Indicator of whether the individual received a high school diploma from OUSD from 2010 to 2016

- Indicator of whether the individual was in the age range that could be covered in the OUSD data

- Interactions of whether the individual was African-American and their total number of arrests, gender, age, and area of residence

After estimating these "propensity scores," we matched each Oakland Unite participant with up to 25 comparison individuals who had similar propensity scores within a given threshold, or radius, of the Oakland Unite participant's propensity score.[13] A small number of Oakland Unite participants did not resemble any comparison individuals closely enough and therefore were not matched. Of the 193 participants in the adult life coaching sample, 185 were matched to an average of 23 comparison individuals each. In adult EESS, 522 out of 563 participants received matches (19 each, on average). We matched comparison individuals to Oakland Unite participants with replacement, meaning that the same comparison individual could be matched to more than one Oakland Unite participant.

Table B.3 presents summary statistics showing how well Oakland Unite participants were matched to comparison individuals on baseline characteristics. On average, comparison individuals were not significantly different from Oakland Uniste participants in either sub-strategy on the majority of baseline characteristics used in the analyses.

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[13] The matching radius used for both adult life coaching and adult EESS was 0.0008. This radius was selected in an iterative process to improve the quality and number of matches obtained.

Table B.3. Baseline characteristics of matched Oakland Unite participants and comparison individuals

	Adult life coaching	Matched comparison	Adult EESS	Matched comparison
Any arrest before 2016 (%)	67.6	70.1	49.8	48.3
Total arrests before 2016 (mean)	4.37	4.45	2.39	2.02
Total felony arrests in 2015 (mean)	0.24	0.30	0.13	0.11
Total misdemeanor arrests in 2015 (mean)	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.10**
Total gun offenses in 2015 (mean)	0.15	0.17	0.07	0.04
Total violent offenses in 2015 (mean)	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01
Total property offenses in 2015 (mean)	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03
Total weapon offenses in 2015 (mean)	0.12	0.12	0.05	0.03
Total drug offenses in 2015 (mean)	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.02
Total public offenses in 2015 (mean)	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03
Total parole violation arrests in 2015 (mean)	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03
Total probation violation arrests in 2015 (mean)	0.04	0.04	0.03	0.03
Any felony arrests before 2015 (%)	57.8	57.5	39.8	37.5
Any misdemeanor arrests before 2015 (%)	40.0	39.8	26.8	22.7
Any gun offenses before 2015 (%)	31.9	29.2	18.0	14.0*
Any violent offenses before 2015 (%)	21.6	19.9	15.1	13.1
Any property offenses before 2015 (%)	26.5	24.5	14.9	12.6
Any weapon offenses before 2015 (%)	13.5	13.1	6.5	5.0
Any drug offenses before 2015 (%)	25.9	27.0	18.0	17.1
Any public offenses before 2015 (%)	27.6	28.0	18.8	16.8
Any parole violation arrests before 2015 (%)	8.6	8.7	4.4	5.3
Any probation violation arrests before 2015 (%)	24.9	25.5	14.8	13.4
Enrolled in OUSD before 2016 (%)	20.0	15.2	13.4	9.1**
Enrolled in OUSD alternative school before 2016 (%)	11.9	10.3	7.3	4.7*
Graduated from OUSD before 2016 (%)	4.9	4.8	2.5	3.2
Female (%)	2.2	3.2	12.1	12.6
White (%)	0.5	0.7	5.7	5.5
African-American (%)	80.0	79.1	82.8	80.9
Asian or Pacific Islander (%)	1.6	2.3	2.3	3.5
Hispanic (%)	16.8	15.6	5.2	6.5
Other race/ethnicity (%)	1.1	2.3	4.0	3.7
Age (mean)	25.8	26.8	29.7	31.9***
Resides in west Oakland (%)	11.4	12.2	25.5	28.6
Resides in central Oakland (%)	35.7	32.8	21.1	18.1
Resides in east Oakland (%)	43.8	44.9	29.5	31.1
Other area of residence (%)	9.2	10.1	23.9	22.2
Number of individuals	**185**	**3,012**	**522**	**6,345**

Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data. *Difference is statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

**Difference is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. ***Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

For the adult EESS sample, a few differences reach statistical significance but are not materially different; for example, adult EESS participants had an average of 0.06 misdemeanor arrests in 2015 compared to the matched comparison group, which had an average of 0.10 misdemeanor arrests in this period. All of these differences are smaller than 0.2 standard deviations in magnitude. To address these differences, we include the measures in the impact models, described below.

Impact model

After conducting the match, we analyzed short-term arrest outcomes in the six-month period after participants began Oakland Unite services. Participants began receiving services between January and October 2016 and therefore had different follow-up periods, ranging from February to July 2016 to November 2016 to April 2017.[14] The follow-up periods of comparison individuals corresponded to the same follow-up periods of the Oakland Unite participants they were matched to. In these follow-up periods, we determined whether individuals had been arrested for any offense, a gun offense, or a violent offense by the OPD.

To measure the impacts of participating in adult life coaching and adult EESS on these outcomes, we estimated an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model that accounted for any small remaining differences between Oakland Unite and comparison individuals in their arrest histories and other baseline characteristics:

(B1) $y_i = \alpha + X_i\beta + \delta T_i + \varepsilon_i$

where y_i is a six-month arrest outcome; X_i is a vector of baseline characteristics for individual i accounting for the same demographic, educational, and arrest variables listed in Table B.2; T_i is the treatment status, indicating whether individual i participated in the Oakland Unite sub-strategy of interest; ε_i is a random error term that reflects the influence of unobserved factors on the outcome; and δ and β are parameters or vectors of parameters to be estimated, with δ representing the impact of participating in Oakland Unite. We used a weighting scheme in which each Oakland Unite participant had a weight of one, and the total weight of each participant's matched comparison individuals also summed to one. To accomplish this, each comparison individual had a weight inverse to the number of other comparison individuals matched to the same Oakland Unite participant. The standard errors were clustered at the individual level to account for the fact that the same comparison individual could appear multiple times in the data depending on the number of Oakland Unite participants they were matched to.

As exploratory analyses, we tested whether the impact of participating in Oakland Unite on the probability of being arrested in the six months after enrollment varied depending on: the intensity of Oakland Unite services received (low, medium, or high), based on the number of service hours;[15] whether the participant also accessed services from other Oakland Unite sub-strategies; whether the participant had any prior arrest before 2016; and whether the participant

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[14] Some people who received services in the early months of 2016 had begun participating in Oakland Unite in the previous year. However, we did not have information about services received before January 1, 2016 for this report.

[15] Service- hour thresholds for these categories were based on the 25th and 75th percentiles of total service hours recorded for the analysis sample. For adult life coaching, this resulted in the following groupings: 12–32 hours, 32–223 hours, and 223–2,116 hours. For adult EESS, the groupings were 11–21 hours, 21–89 hours, and 89–279 hours.

met all of the risk types (exposed, perpetrator, and victim of violence) collected by Oakland Unite at intake. Table B.4 summarizes the share of participants in each of these subgroups by sub-strategy. For each variable of interest, we estimated the following regression model, which adds an interaction term to the benchmark model in equation B1:

(B2) $y_i = \alpha + X_i\beta + \delta T_i + \gamma T_i S_i + \varepsilon_i$

The coefficient γ represents how the impact differs for the subgroup of interest (S_i) (for example, whether the individual had a prior arrest history). Because individuals were not randomly assigned to service dosages or numbers of sub-strategies, these analyses are exploratory and might reflect the influence of other related but unobserved factors. Similarly, individuals with higher self-reported risk may differ from the comparison group in ways that the propensity-score matching method cannot account for since these indicators were only available for Oakland Unite participants.

Table B.4. Categories of participants for exploratory analyses

	Adult life coaching	Adult EESS
Service dosage (%)		
Low dosage	26	23
Medium dosage	48	52
High dosage	26	25
Oakland Unite strategies (%)		
Focal sub-strategy only	56	82
Multiple sub-strategies	44	18
Arrest history (%)		
No prior arrests	32	50
One or more prior arrest	68	50
Risk assessment (%)		
Two or fewer risk types met	50	74
Exposed, perpetrator, and victim of violence	50	26
Total	**185**	**522**

Source: Oakland Unite and OPD administrative data.

Results

Table B.5 presents the impact estimates for each sub-strategy and arrest outcome in percentage point units. As discussed in the main text, we find that participation in adult life coaching reduced the arrest rate for a violent offense by approximately 1 percentage point. The impacts of this sub-strategy on overall arrests and arrests for gun offenses were not statistically significant. For adult EESS, participation reduced the overall arrest rate by 6 percentage points and the violent arrest rate by 1 percentage point. To illustrate these impacts relative to the matched comparison group, we calculated the percentage of Oakland Unite participants with each arrest outcome and then subtracted the impact estimates from this rate to obtain a counterfactual rate for the comparison group. These regression-adjusted rates are presented in Figures III.3 and IV.6 in the main text.

Table B.5. Impacts of Oakland Unite on arrest rates in the 6 months after enrollment

Impact of Oakland Unite on the probability of:	Adult life coaching	Adult EESS
A new arrest	0.63	-6.02***
	(2.02)	(1.47)
An arrest for a gun offense	-0.12	-0.88
	(1.25)	(0.69)
An arrest for a violent offense	-1.28*	-1.34*
	(0.70)	(0.72)
Number of observations in the analysis	4,399	10,197

Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Notes: This table displays impact estimates from a linear probability model in percentage points. A negative number indicates that Oakland Unite participants had a lower arrest rate than the comparison group. Standard errors are displayed in parentheses below each estimate. The sample size reflects the total number of Oakland Unite and comparison observations in each analysis.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 10 percent level. **Impact is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. ***Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

To check the sensitivity of the results to our choice of a linear probability (OLS) model, we also estimated a logistic regression model. A logistic regression models a linear relationship between the log of the odds of the outcome and the dependent variables, while an OLS regression models a linear relationship between the probability of the outcome and the dependent variables. The results of these logistic regressions are presented in Table B.6, expressed as marginal effects in percentage point units. The results are consistent with those obtained from the linear probability model, although the impact of adult life coaching on violent offenses is no longer statistically significant. The p-value for the linear probability estimate is 0.07, which is significant at the 10 percent level. Although linear probability models are easier to interpret and usually produce similar results, logistic regressions can be a better choice when the probabilities being studied are very large (close to one) or very small (close to zero), as is the case for arrests for violent offenses.

Table B.6. Impacts of Oakland Unite on arrest rates in the 6 months after enrollment (logistic model)

Impact of Oakland Unite on the probability of:	Adult life coaching	Adult EESS
A new arrest	1.28	-5.75***
	(1.80)	(1.63)
An arrest for a gun offense	0.32	-1.31*
	(1.17)	(0.71)
An arrest for a violent offense	-1.19	-1.70**
	(1.06)	(0.80)
Number of observations in the analysis	4,365	10,102

Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Notes: This table displays marginal effects from a logistic regression model in percentage points. A negative number indicates that Oakland Unite participants have a lower arrest rate than the comparison group. Standard errors are displayed in parentheses below each estimate. The sample size reflects the total number of Oakland Unite and comparison observations in each analysis.

*Impact is statistically significant at the 10 percent level. **Impact is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. ***Impact is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

After obtaining the effects of participation in adult life coaching and adult EESS, we analyzed whether these effects differed by participant subgroups. Table B.7 presents the results of these exploratory analyses. For each category, we obtained the impact of participating in Oakland Unite for a reference group and assessed whether the impact was statistically different for the other group(s) in that category. For example, when exploring whether impacts differed by arrest history, we estimated the impact for Oakland Unite participants with no prior arrests and the difference between the impacts for this reference group (no prior arrests) and Oakland Unite participants with one or more prior arrests. These differences between Oakland Unite participants with different arrest histories – relative to the reference group – are the focus of these analyses. We find that the only participant type with statistically different subgroup impacts were individuals with a prior arrest history in the adult EESS sub-strategy; the difference in the impact for these individuals was large and positive, indicating that participation in adult EESS only reduced arrest rates among individuals with no prior arrest history.

Table B.7. Differences in impacts of Oakland Unite on arrest rates in the 6 months after enrollment, by participant type

	Adult life coaching	Adult EESS
Service dosage		
Impact on individuals with low dosage (reference group)	4.12	-4.68*
	(4.17)	(2.42)
Difference between impacts for low and medium dosage	-3.32	-1.92
	(4.63)	(2.33)
Difference between impacts for low and high dosage	-7.34	-1.40
	(5.18)	(2.70)
Oakland Unite strategies		
Impact for individuals receiving services from one sub-strategy (reference group)	1.57	-6.58***
	(2.70)	(1.59)
Difference between impacts for individuals receiving services from one sub-strategy vs. multiple sub-strategies	-2.14	3.34
	(3.44)	(2.83)
Arrest history		
Impact for individuals with no prior arrests (reference group)	-2.68	-14.46***
	(2.49)	(2.25)
Difference in impacts for no prior arrest and one or more prior arrests	4.89	17.53***
	(3.79)	(3.17)
Risk level		
Impact for individuals with two or fewer risk types (not highest risk) (reference group)	-3.03	-6.52***
	(2.05)	(1.58)
Difference between impacts for not highest risk and highest risk	7.25	1.97
	(3.92)	(2.06)
Number of observations in the analysis	4,399	10,197

Source: Oakland Unite, OPD, and OUSD administrative data.

Notes: This table displays impact estimates and differences between impact estimates from a linear probability model in percentage points. Standard errors are displayed in parentheses below each estimate. The sample size reflects the total number of Oakland Unite and comparison observations in each analysis.

*Impact or difference is statistically significant at the 10 percent level. **Impact or difference is statistically significant at the 5 percent level. ***Impact or difference is statistically significant at the 1 percent level.

Network analysis and results

To study how Oakland Unite agencies are connected to each other by the participants they share, we conducted descriptive and statistical network analyses. The basis for these analyses is individual-level Cityspan records for clients served by Oakland Unite between January 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Approximately 12 percent of Oakland Unite participants who consented to share identifying information accessed services from more than one agency in this period.[16] We generated a client sharing network by connecting agencies that served common clients. Two agencies were defined as being connected to each other if they shared three or more participants. We used this threshold to avoid analyzing connections based only on one or two clients. Agencies offering services in more than one sub-strategy were represented as separate entities.

Chapter 5 summarizes several descriptive statistics commonly used in network analyses to identify agencies that play different key roles in the network.[17] For the statistical analyses, we used an exponential random graph model (ERGM) to estimate the propensity of a connection between agencies as a function of their sub-strategy and the overall density of the overall network, or the number of connections relative to the maximum number possible.[18] Compared to the OLS and logistic regression models we used for the impact analyses, ERGM accounts for the network structure of the data. Table B.9 presents the results of this ERGM model for network data based on 1) all participants and 2) the Oakland Unite participants that met one or more risk type (exposed to violence, victim of violence, and perpetrator of violence). The interpretation of the results focuses on the signs of the estimates rather than their magnitudes.[19] A positive value indicates that agencies in that sub-strategy are more likely to share participants compared to agencies in other sub-strategies.

As summarized in Chapter 5, we find that the adult EESS, adult life coaching, and street outreach sub-strategies are more likely to form connections compared to the average number of connections across all sub-strategies in the network. The results are consistent for the network based only on higher risk participants. These estimates are not statistically significant, but this is likely due to limited statistical power given the size of the Oakland Unite network.

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[16] Participant names and dates of birth were required to identify when the same individual accessed more than one Oakland Unite agency. Therefore, these analyses may undercount the number of shared clients, particularly in agencies with low consent rates.

[17] The descriptive statistics reported in Chapter 5 are cliques (groups of agencies in which all agencies are connected to one another); degree centrality (the agency connected to the largest number of other agencies); closeness centrality (the agency with the shortest average "distance" to other agencies based on shared clients); and betweeness centrality (the agency which connects groups of agencies that would otherwise not be connected to the main network).

[18] To avoid multicollinearity, we excluded the community asset building sub-, which was the smallest sub-, from the model.

[19] The estimates shown are the change in the log-odds likelihood of connections for each sub-.

Table B.9. Differences in the probability of agencies sharing clients, by sub-strategy

	All participants
Density of the network	-2.22*
	(1.24)
Adult EESS	0.63
	(0.67)
Adult life coaching	0.24
	(0.67)
CSEC	-0.14
	(0.73)
Family violence	n.a.
Innovation fund	n.a.
Shooting/homicide	0.90
	(0.81)
Street outreach	0.24
	(0.71)
Youth EESS	-0.78
	(0.76)
Youth life coaching	-0.21
	(0.68)

Source: Oakland Unite administrative data.

Notes: This table displays differences in the log-odds likelihood of agencies sharing clients from an ERGM model. Standard errors are displayed in parentheses below each estimate.

*Difference is statistically significant at the 10 percent level.

n.a. = not applicable (because agencies in these sub-strategies do not share clients with other agencies)

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